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## **Feng Shui: A Comparison of the Original Concept and Its Current Westernized Version**

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**FENG SHUI:**  
**A COMPARISON OF THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT AND ITS**  
**CURRENT WESTERNIZED VERSION**

By

Shih-Jung Wu

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
The Degree of Master of Architecture

Department of Architecture  
Golisano Institute for Sustainability

Rochester Institute of Technology

Date of approval: 30 August 2019

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## **ABSTRACT**

Feng Shui is an ancient art, science, and philosophy that originated in China 3000 years ago. Followers of Feng Shui believe that they can find a better place or create a better living environment through the Feng Shui principles. Feng Shui is not only popular in China and Asia; its popularity also has dramatically increased in Western countries. Architects, interior designers, and landscape architects in the West have used Feng Shui as a design guideline for pursuing a harmonious living environment for many years. However, the different cultural backgrounds, the lack of basic knowledge of its true principles, and the lack of scientific data have resulted in concerns over the application of Feng Shui in the West. The Black-Sect Tibetan Tantric School of Feng Shui (known as Modern Feng Shui or BTB Feng Shui) is a very common school of Feng Shui in Western culture. The purpose of Modern Feng Shui is to help the discipline become easier to adapt and more suitable for the West and to encourage the application of Feng Shui principles into daily life. However, by trying to simplify its principles, Modern Feng Shui is potentially deviating from the true core wisdom of Feng Shui. Since the popularity of Feng Shui is continuously growing and many different professionals are attempting to apply the discipline to their fields, it is important to understand what is meant by Traditional Feng Shui principles and their core concepts and how to incorporate them.

The purpose of this thesis is, first, to discuss the principles and history of Feng Shui, and second, to provide a design metric that follows both the Traditional Feng Shui

principles and BTB Modern Feng Shui principles. Finally, using the Traditional Feng Shui principles and Modern Feng Shui design metrics on the same floor plan, the two different results are compared to understand why the application of Modern Feng Shui might be at risk of losing the core concepts of Traditional Feng Shui.

## Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
2.1	Why are Feng Shui principles important? Why should they be understood within the architectural field?.....	8
2.1.1	The benefits of Feng Shui:.....	8
2.1.2	Raising housing values .....	10
2.1.3	Increasing popularity .....	10
2.2	What is Traditional Feng Shui?.....	13
2.2.1	Bagua.....	14
2.2.2	I-Ching .....	17
2.2.3	Yin and yang.....	24
2.2.4	Tai chi.....	26
2.2.5	Five elements.....	27
2.2.6	Qi.....	30
2.3	The challenge of introducing Feng Shui principles into Western culture ....	33
2.3.1	Cultural differences .....	33
2.3.2	Misunderstandings or misconceptions .....	34
2.4	Different Feng Shui schools.....	34
2.5	Application of Traditional Feng Shui principles .....	36
2.5.1	Sheng Qi (Cai Wei).....	39
2.5.2	Tien Yi (Guan Wei).....	40
2.5.3	Yan Nian (Shou Wei) .....	40
2.5.4	Fu Wei (Ru Men).....	41

2.5.5	Wu Gui (Huo Xing Wei).....	41
2.5.6	Liu Sha (Wen Chang, Tao Hua) .....	41
2.5.7	Jue Ming (Ai Wei) .....	42
2.5.8	Huo Hai (Gu Wei).....	42
2.5.9	Zhong Gong.....	43
2.6	What is Black Sect Tantric Feng Shui/Modern Feng Shui?.....	49
2.6.1	Exterior diagnosis, including pathways and landscape. ....	51
2.6.2	Prepare a floor plan and Modern Feng Shui Bagua .....	55
2.6.3	Apply Feng Shui cures into different life areas.....	59
2.6.4	Feng Shui cures .....	66
3	HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH PROBLEMS .....	68
4	METHODOLOGY .....	69
4.1	Design process.....	69
4.1.1	Apply Modern Feng Shui principles.....	72
4.1.2	Apply Traditional Feng Shui principles. ....	77
5	COMPARISON.....	98
5.1	Religious.....	99
5.2	Humans' life destiny .....	99
5.3	Bagua.....	100
5.4	Landscape design.....	102
5.5	Orientaion.....	102
5.6	Life areas .....	105
6	CONCLUSION.....	107
	Bibliography .....	110





# 1 INTRODUCTION

Feng Shui means wind (風) and water (水) in Chinese. The Chinese studied the effects of these elements to select the best places to farm in 3000 years ago. They believed that energy, known as Qi, flows in the universe (天), earth (地), and people (人), and they discovered that if they lived in harmonious balance with the universe, earth, and its people, then they would have peace and prosperity. For the modern generation, Feng Shui principles are the basis of more than just finding a good place for farming; the concept helps people design a space with a high flow of Qi that can give them good energy and positive connotations.

The Chinese believe that living in a place with harmony and a high quality of Qi can promote happiness, prosperity, and good health and help people feel energized, positive, and passionate about life. For instance, 51.8% of the Taiwanese people believe in Feng Shui, based on a survey by the Ministry of Science and Technology in Taiwan in 2015.<sup>1</sup> In China, dissertations related to Feng Shui have also increased year on year, especially in architecture, landscape, and interior design; it constitutes 36% of the total number of papers.<sup>2</sup> According to Gardens Real Estate and the American Real Estate Association of America (AREAA), 76% of the Chinese-Americans surveyed said they were familiar with Feng Shui principles; 79% will pay more for a house that follows Feng Shui principles; 81% indicated that Feng Shui factored into their most recent home purchase; and 90% of Chinese-Americans believe that implementing its principles increases a home's resale value (Figure 1-1, 1-2).<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Yee Lam Elim Ng shows

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<sup>1</sup> ("Ministry of Science and Technology in Taiwan 「科技部全球資訊網」 (MOST)" n.d.)

<sup>2</sup> (Liu et al., n.d., 44)

<sup>3</sup> ("Feng Shui a Driver of Home Selection and Investment for Chinese-Americans" n.d.)

that evidence of the increase in Feng Shui’s popularity can be found in references to Feng Shui and a demand for their consultants in different magazines and from interior decorators.<sup>4</sup>

## What is Feng Shui?



Figure 1-1: Survey infographic: What is Feng Shui?

## Impact on Home Selection and Investment

The importance of feng shui extends to home buying:



Figure 1-2: Survey Infographic: Impact on Home Selection and Investment

Not only is the general public interested in Feng Shui, but many professional

<sup>4</sup> (Ng 2016)

experts who have a background in different fields have also interpreted the Feng Shui principles in their own fields. Dr. Simona Mainini, for example, is a doctor of architecture and a Feng Shui consultant who uses Feng Shui principles to help others increase the wellness, abundance, and success in their lives. In particular, she has specialized in architectural projects involving design, new construction, and renovation. In addition, she was a professor at the Department of Architecture and Interior Design of UCLA Extension, teaching Feng Shui there since 2000.<sup>5</sup> Alex Stark, who has an architecture background from the United States and Europe, is also a Feng Shui consultant and teacher,<sup>6</sup> while Barbara Lyons Steward, an architect and a writer, has published a book with a Feng Shui consultant.<sup>7</sup> Finally, Jayme Barrett is a well-known Feng Shui consultant, writer, and speaker. Her book “Feng Shui Your Life” is the number one Feng Shui book on Amazon, and over 100,000 copies have been sold.<sup>8</sup>

These examples indicate that the popularity of Feng Shui principles has increased in both East and West, which means that an increasing number of people believe in Feng Shui and are interested in improving their lives by applying its principles. However, there is a challenge to the use of Feng Shui principles in Western culture. The different cultural backgrounds might cause some Westerners to have difficulties in understanding the discipline. Komf, Denicolo, and Chen express this idea in the book “Chinese Scholars on Western Ideas about Thinking, Leadership, Reform, and Development in Education,” explaining that Asians or people with an Eastern cultural background tend to pay more

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<sup>5</sup> (“About Feng Shui Consultant Dr. Simona Mainini” n.d.)

<sup>6</sup> (“Alex Stark Feng Shui — an Internationally Recognized Consultant, Advisor, and Teacher on Issues of Creativity, Efficiency, and Design” n.d.)

<sup>7</sup> (“Golden Gate School of Feng Shui” n.d.)

<sup>8</sup> (“About Jayme Barrett” n.d.)

attention to the whole and harmon, emphasizing the relationships between people and people, and people and the natural world; they believe that the whole world is constantly changing and is interrelated and complex. On the other hand, Westerners pay more attention to personal values. They believe that the world is fundamentally static and that objects are isolated and independent. Therefore, Westerners reason through tactical and scientific processes, whereas Asians are willing to access a middle ground and focus on the background of the substance.<sup>9</sup> A good example of this is comparing Feng Shui with biomimicry, which is a study that uses nature as a measure. It uses an ecological standard to judge the “rightness” of our innovations. Biomimicry uses nature as a mentor; it is a new way of viewing and valuing nature. Janine M. Benyus, a pioneer in this field, writes: “We focus on what we can learn from nature, instead of what we can extract from it.” In the book “Biomimicry, Innovation Inspired by Nature,” Benyus draws a conclusion about what we can learn from nature:

- Nature runs on sunlight
- Nature uses only the energy it needs
- Nature fits form to function
- Nature recycles everything
- Nature rewards cooperation<sup>10</sup>

As Benyus explains, the core concepts of biomimicry and Feng Shui both involve “learning from nature and observing the natural.” However, the way the concepts are approached is different. For biomimicry, similar to Western culture, researchers have

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<sup>9</sup> (Kompf, Denicolo, and Chen 2012)

<sup>10</sup>(Benyus 1997)

conducted many experiments and collected numerous data to prove its benefits. On the other hand, Feng Shui, similar to Eastern culture, is more about feelings. The Feng Shui consultant or master always tell us that we can “feel” the energy flow better rather than showing us how it flows differently.

This comparison is a good example of how Easterners and Westerners think differently. Feng Shui has been used in Chinese for 3000 years, yet it is difficult for some Westerners to accept its principles or avoid misunderstandings because of the lack of scientific evidence for it.

Master Lin Hui-Tzu has similar ideas regarding the challenges of cultural differences. She explains that the thinking path is linear in Western culture, so most Westerners like to follow steps when learning or thinking. However, the thinking path in Eastern culture is spiral; the process does not always follow the usual 1, 2, 3... rather, one step forward might be followed by two steps back. Figure 1-3 shows calligraphy that shows the typical Eastern cultural thinking of the past.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> (Lin 2017)



*Figure 1-3: Chinese thinking path*

The cultural differences and complexity of Feng Shui have become obstacles for some Westerners in applying its principles. To address the issue, Master Yun Lin created the Black Hat Sect Tantric Buddhist Feng Shui School (BTB), also known as Western Modern Feng Shui. Master Yun Lin simplified the process of applying Feng Shui into our daily lives; there are clear instructions about how to use Feng Shui principles, step by step. Moreover, Master Yun Lin made Feng Shui more superstitious and mysterious by combining it with Buddhism. He claimed to have been enthroned by His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima, the supreme leader of the Tibetan Bon Tradition and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Abbot of the Monpo Menri Monastery.<sup>12</sup> However, as Renuka Agrawal notes in the article “Feng Shui: Bursting the Bubble,” Traditional Feng Shui is more about studying and observing the natural and finding the harmony and balance between natural and human, rather than following a religious approach.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> (“Yun Lin Temple” n.d.)

<sup>13</sup> (Agrawal 2017)

Because of the popularity of Feng Shui principles, it is very important to truly understand and proceed in the right direction regarding what the core of Feng Shui is and how to apply Feng Shui principles into our designs properly. The main purpose of this thesis is to clarify the differences between Traditional Feng Shui and Modern Feng Shui and to explain why we should follow Traditional Feng Shui principles rather than the Modern Feng Shui ones. There are three major steps to this paper:

Step I: understand what we mean by Traditional Feng Shui and Modern Feng Shui;

Step II: provide a design metric for both Traditional Feng Shui and Modern Feng Shui and import both design metrics into the same single-family floor; and

Step III: compare the results to understand why Modern Feng Shui might involve a loss of the real concepts of Feng Shui.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Why are Feng Shui principles important? Why should they be understood within the architectural field?

#### 2.1.1 The benefits of Feng Shui:

In the modern world, Feng Shui has been used in a wealth of popular pursuits, such as to redecorate or clean up houses to ensure greater happiness, ensure a balance of personality and interior design, improve career opportunities and work performance, focus on simple living, achieve harmonious relationships with the environment, or simply to make quick changes to increase the quality of life.<sup>14</sup> Feng Shui has also been applied professionally to expand businesses, increase sales, improve the health and performance of employees, renew principles for architecture, better the performance of clinics and hospitals, and treat illnesses in children's institutions. Despite the great interest it has generated in the West, people tend to have only vague notions of its origin and meaning and even less understanding of the controversial nature of Feng Shui practices in their home country.

There are many benefits to applying Feng Shui principles in our lives; however, the majority of Feng Shui studies have focused more on the emotional changes rather than data collection or analysis, although we do have some excellent case studies. For example, the video "Feng Shui: Creating Environments for Success and Well-being" documents how a shopping mall in California, the Corte Madera Town Center, had

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<sup>14</sup> (Bruun 2008)



problems attracting customers. After using Feng Shui principles and rearranging the design and layout of the shopping mall, it saw a dramatic increase in the number of customers, so much so that the owner sold the mall at double the price he or she paid for it. Meanwhile, Lynne Witsler, a home owner in California, saw significant improvements, including emotional and physical ones, for her whole family after a Feng Shui consultant redesigned her home. She mentions in the video how she rarely used the living room, although she could not explain why. However, after incorporating Feng Shui, the living room became the first place she wanted to stay in after work. She also mentions many other changes in her life. For example, her children became better behaved and her relationship with her parents improved significantly.<sup>15</sup>

“The Practical Encyclopedia of Feng Shui” includes some useful case studies. One concerns William, Julia, and their son Steven. William and Steven did not feel well after moving into their new apartment. Steven had gradually become very rundown and could not concentrate at school. William’s freelance cases also fell off considerably. They hired a Feng Shui consultant and saw a considerable change to their situation after the consultant applied Feng Shui principles to their new apartment based on the family members’ five elements, the zodiac, and the orientation of the apartment.

Another case is that of Richard and Anne. They had lived in their house for many years and had never felt settled. Through lethargy, they had let it deteriorate, and now they could not sell it. The electric lights blew out regularly, and there was evidence of a

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<sup>15</sup> (Gee 1999)

water leak outside the house. The only decorating they had done was to paint the walls in the living room a deep pink that went with the red carpet laid throughout the house. They did not change the carpet, and they were advised to paint the walls and installed a large fish tank base on Feng Shui principle. They made some minor changes, but not the major one: the wall. The result was that the energies took over. Within a week, the washing machine flooded the ground floor, ruining the carpet and forcing out the Fire energy. Then the overloaded electrical system finally failed, and the fish in the tank died. The Chinese use fish as a sacrifice to human bad luck, believing that they soak it up on behalf of people. Thus, Feng Shui achieved its objectives and moved the energy on. Richard and Anne were left with no choice but to fix the electrical system and change the carpet. The changes made the house peaceful, and they were finally able to move.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.1.2 Raising housing values

Feng Shui principles also increase the value for a house itself. Research by C. M. Tam, Tony Y. N. Tso, and K. C. Lam shows that housing prices were directly related to the Feng Shui score which designed by the research team.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.1.3 Increasing popularity

As mentioned, there are an increasing number of people willing to apply Feng Shui principles in their life. In his dissertation “Exploring Feng Shui—A Real-time Learning Experience,” Fan Yue includes a survey that shows that 84.21% have some idea

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<sup>16</sup> (Hale 1999)

<sup>17</sup> (Tam C. M., Tso Tony Y. N., and Lam K. C. 1999)

about what Feng Shui is, 47.37% know a lot about Feng Shui, and 60.42% are interested in learning more about it.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, a research paper titled “Using Traditional Rituals in Hospitality to Gain Value: A study on the Impact of Feng Shui” by Madeleine Ogilvie includes a survey with 20 business owners, including restaurant, retail store, and small commercial businesses. Seventy-six percent believed that Feng Shui offers certain benefits, and 47% claimed to be strong Feng Shui believers. Even those who do not claim to believe in Feng Shui (24%) are still willing to consult with a Feng Shui Master when they redesign the space.<sup>19</sup> According to a book “Feng Shui Modern Situation—“Research and Analyze,”” in 2015, 17 colleges offered courses related to Feng Shui in the United States and 110 colleges offered Feng Shui courses in Japan.<sup>20</sup>

An architect's goal is to help the client achieve what he or she wants, either by designing or finding the best place to live or designing a commercial space to attract many customers. Feng Shui is a guideline for the architect to understand how to incorporate natural elements, from macro (universe) to micro (interior arrangement). As Michael Y. Mak and Thomas Ng suggest, incorporating Feng Shui into a design framework allows integration with other elements such as the selection of site and location, spatial organization, and building surrounding environment.<sup>21</sup> Ng and Yee Lam Elim also claim that studying Feng Shui provides architects with a framework that moves from the macro (site selection, surrounding environment analysis) to the micro scale (external layout, internal layout, and interior arrangement). Table 2.1.3-1 lists the macro

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<sup>18</sup> (Fan 2014)

<sup>19</sup> (Ogilvie et al. 2018)

<sup>20</sup> (Liu et al., n.d.)

<sup>21</sup> (Mak and Ng 2008)

scale and micro scale frameworks.<sup>22</sup>

<b>MACRO SCALE</b>	<b>MICRO SCALE</b>		
SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT	EXTERNAL LAYOUT	INTERNAL LAYOUT	INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT
Topography	Shape of Land	Layout	Door Opening
Front of Site	Entrance	Doors	Bedroom
Rear of Site	Shape of Building	Windows	Kitchen
Sides of Site	Orientation	Shape of Rooms	Living Room
Street Location	Trees	Staircase	Bathroom
Water	Pond	Ceiling	
Wind Direction			

*Table 2.1.3-1: From Macro to Micro*

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<sup>22</sup> (Ng 2016)

## 2.2 What is Traditional Feng Shui?



*Figure 2.2-1: Feng Shui Chinese Characters*

According to Bruun, the Feng Shui tradition is a piece of Chinese history, inseparable from Chinese cosmology. The first evidence of Feng Shui was found over six thousand years ago. Pieces of Feng Shui symbolism discovered in graves from 4000 BC point to the pre-historic roots of Feng Shui. The leading ideas of Feng Shui were inspired by one of the ancient classic texts “*I-Ching*” or “*Yi Jing*” (*The Book of Changes*), which is believed to have been written by an emperor in 3000 BC. As the most influential divination text in Chinese culture, *I-Ching* introduces the theory that “things eternally change; that the universe is made by creative forces represented by opposites; that there is a fundamental correlation between all events; that there is no distinction between...that situations on the macro level may be encapsulated in the divination act on a micro level.” In other words, the universe is made of constant flowing forces that affect the activities of daily life.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> (Bruun 2008)

## 2.2.1 Bagua

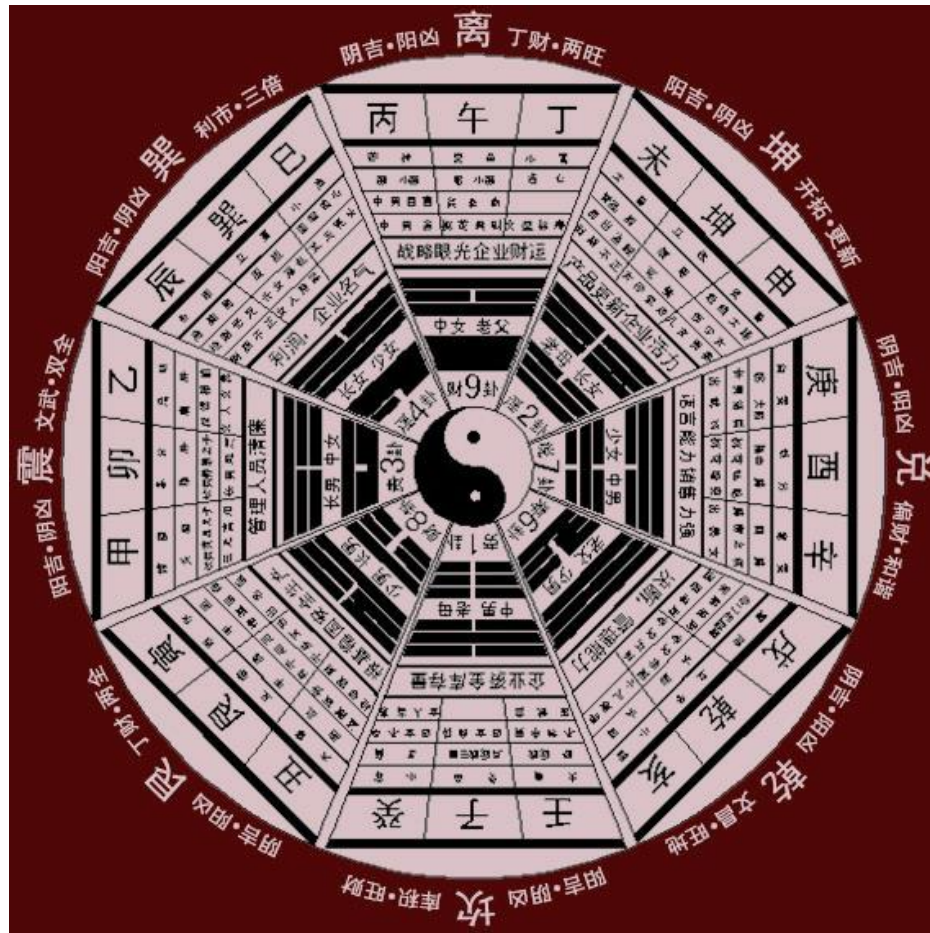


Figure 2.2.1-1: Traditional Bagua

Figure 2.2.1-1 depicts the pattern of traditional Bagua,<sup>24</sup> the basic concept of I-Ching, which can represent the dynamic state of all natural phenomena. According to the “Encyclopedia of The Book of Change with Illustration (圖解周易大全),” there is considerable evidence showing that the first Bagua figure was created in 6000 BC, and it is believed that the ancient Chinese Emperor “Fu Xi” was the first to create the Bagua. Figure 2.2.1-2 shows the engraved rectangular jade piece unearthed in the Jianghuai area; the number of figures in the outer circle is related to eight, which may represent the

<sup>24</sup> (“The Yangist Experience (楊家體驗)” n.d.)

gossip figure drawn by ancient people.



*Figure 2.2.1-2: Ancient Jade with Bagua pattern*

Bagua is formed by eight trigram groups (see Figure 2.2.1-3). Each trigram has a three-line symbol, and there are two types of line symbol: one continuous line that represents Yang and two small breaking lines that represents Ying. Chinese people believe that Fu Xi drew the Bagua based on observing the changes of the sky and natural environment to record the pattern and relationships that would help ancient peoples

survive.<sup>25</sup>

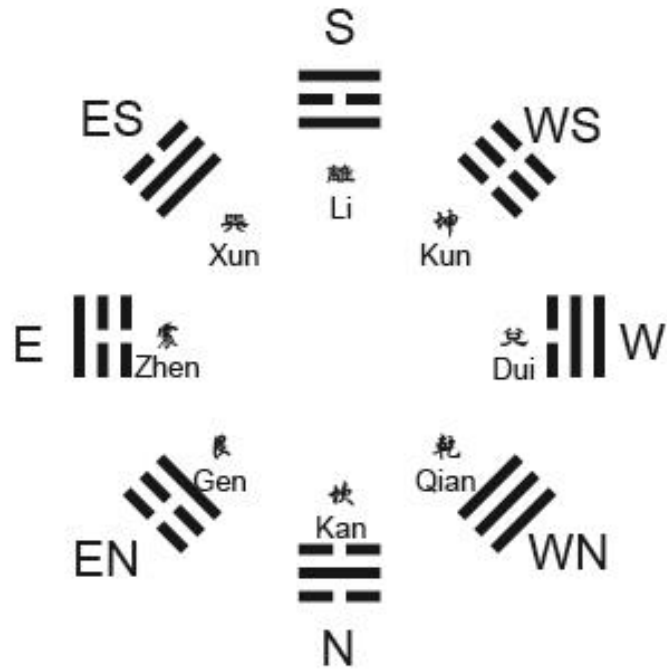


Figure 2.2.1-3: Bagua and eight Trigrams

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<sup>25</sup> (He 2014, 24–45)



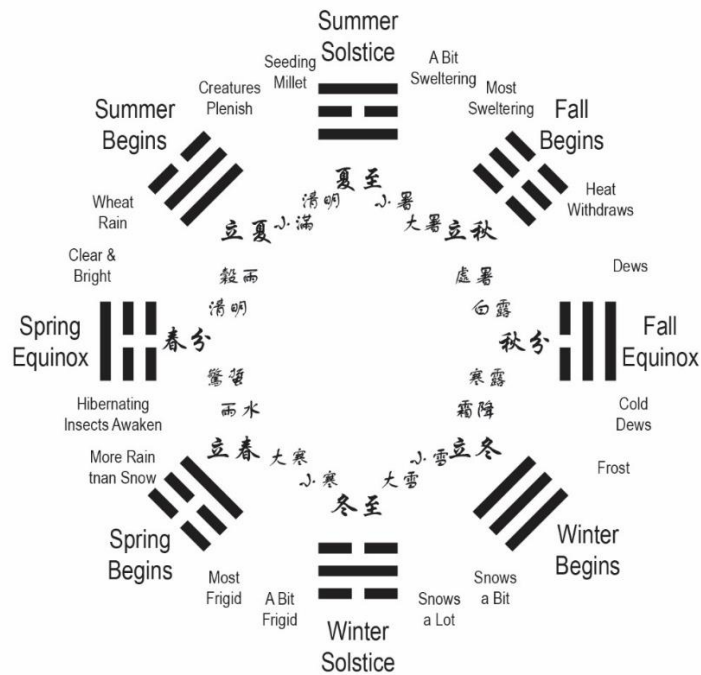


Figure 2.2.1-4: Bagua and 24 Solar Terms

## 2.2.2 I-Ching

Three thousand years after Fu-Xi created Bagua, Emperor Wen of Zhou wrote, “I-Ching,” also called the “Book of Changes,” inspired by Bagua. As Professor Zeng explains in his presentation “The Wisdom of The Book of Changes,” 5000 years of Chinese culture have been inspired by I-Ching, so we consider that I-Ching marks the beginning of Chinese culture. Emperor Wen of Zhou explored the Bagua with more meaning, recognizing that everything is related to everything else and is always changing. Bagua not only had the function of a calendar but also included the intelligence and wisdom of how everything relates to everything else and how balance can be achieved. As a result, he wrote the I-Ching to explain Bagua in more depth.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> (Zeng 2009)

Each trigram represents a different direction, date, natural elements, parts of the body, and families (see Figures 2.2.2-1 to 2.2.2-4).<sup>27</sup>

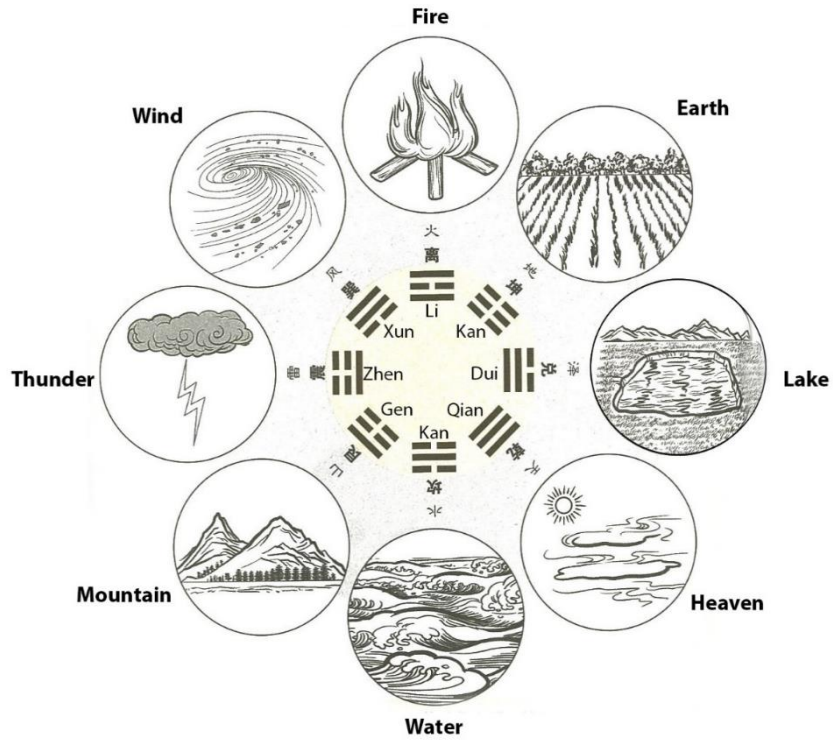


Figure 2.2.2-1: Bagua and the Natural World

<sup>27</sup> (He 2014)

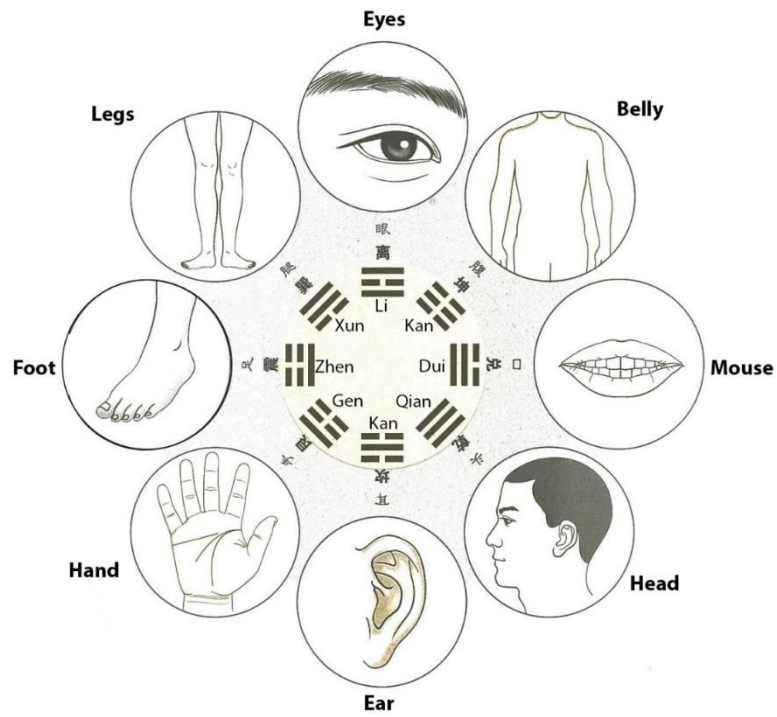


Figure 2.2.2-2: Baugu and the Body

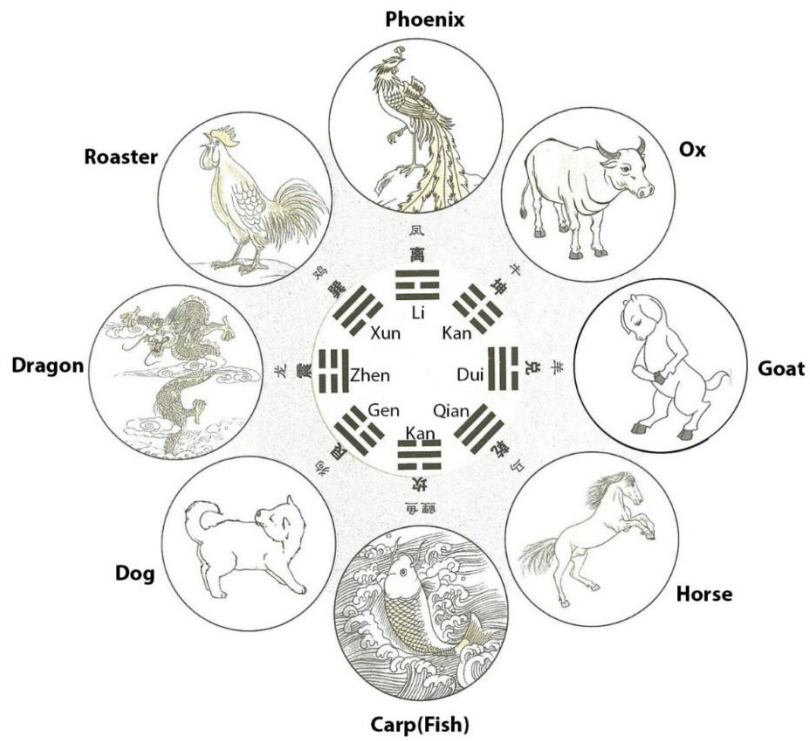


Figure 2.2.2-3: Bagua and Animals

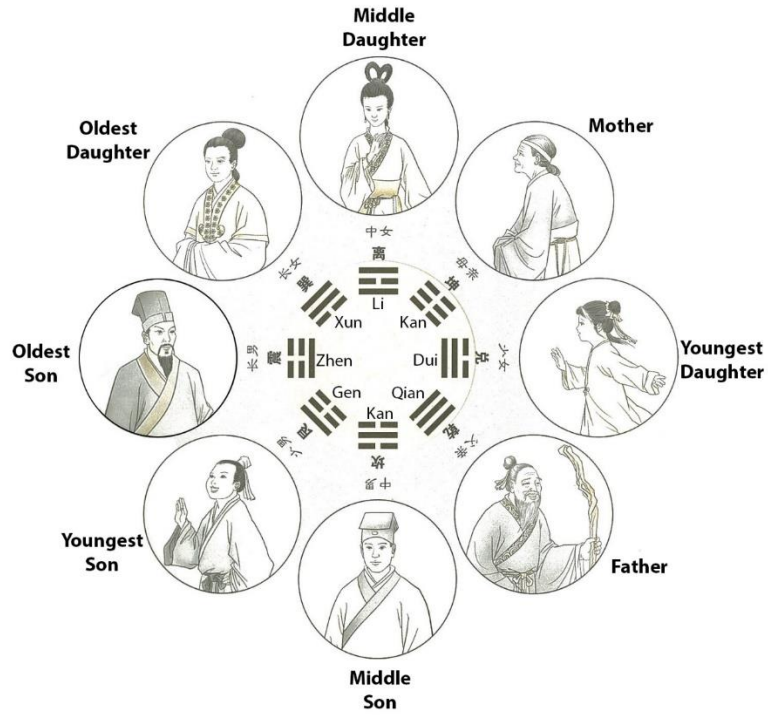


Figure 2.2.2-4: Bagua and Family

Emperor Wen of Zhou also explained the eight trigrams in I-Ching. Figures display each of the different trigram symbols and its explanation.<sup>28</sup>



Figure 2.2.2-5: Zhen Trigram

Zhen symbolizes Thunder: the solid line is ready to “break through” the broken lines above it, shaking things up and down. The Zhen trigram represents the idea of a “new start” in our lives.

---

<sup>28</sup> (He 2014)



*Figure 2.2.2-6: Xun Trigram*

Xun symbolizes a gentle, gathering Wind. It represents how the wind gathers prosperity, brings it to us, and then disperses it throughout our lives.



*Figure 2.2.2-7: Li Trigram*

The broken line between the solid lines symbolizes Fire, illuminating our path and spreading our reputations out into the world.



*Figure 2.2.2-8: Kun Trigram*

Kun symbolizes Mother Earth. In this sector, we nourish our most intimate relationships, just as a nurturing, supportive mother would.



*Figure 2.2.2-9: Dui Trigram*

Dui symbolizes Lake, a symbol of childlike joy. A lake leads to delight because without this source of water, the all-important rice harvest would not have been possible in ancient China.



*Figure 2.2.2-10: Qian Trigram*

The three solid lines here represent Heaven, the creative power of the universe. This sector is important because it is considered the initiating force for all activities in the world.



*Figure 2.2.2-11: Kan Trigram*

Kan means Water. The symbol looks a little like a stream of water; whereby Qi energy flows like a continuously nourishing stream.



*Figure 2.2.2-12: Gen Trigram*

Gen symbolizes Mountain. The stillness we experience at the foot of the mountain helps us rest and open our minds to the understanding that we need to proceed further in life.

Emperor Wen of Chou used these eight trigrams as a standard and developed more than 64 others. Each has more specific detail and specification (see Figure 2.2.-13).<sup>29</sup> Each of the 64 combinations has a meaning and an explanation.

	不变	一变	二变	三变	四变	五变	游魂	归魂
乾宫								
	乾	姤	遯	否	观	剥	晋	大有
震宫								
	震	豫	解	恒	升	井	大过	随
坎宫								
	坎	节	屯	既济	革	丰	明夷	师
艮宫								
	艮	贲	大畜	损	睽	履	中孚	渐
坤宫								
	坤	复	临	泰	大壮	夬	需	比
巽宫								
	巽	小畜	家人	益	无妄	噬嗑	颐	蛊
离宫								
	离	旅	鼎	未济	蒙	涣	讼	同人
兑宫								
	兑	困	萃	咸	蹇	谦	小过	归妹

Figure 2.2.2-13: I Ching 64 Trigram

As Master Lin Hui-Tzu explains: “I-Ching includes all the secrets in the universe, and Feng Shui is the guideline to show how to understand the secret and apply into our daily life.”<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> (He 2014)

<sup>30</sup> (Lin 2017)

### 2.2.3 Yin and Yang



*Figure 2.2.3-1: Yin Yang Chinese Characters*

The Feng Shui Encyclopedia (風水圖文大百科) explains that Yin and Yang are just like the positive and negative charges of a magnet or battery and are ultimately concerned with manipulating the exterior world (Yang) to maintain or create the balance within ourselves (yin).<sup>31</sup> Table 2.2.3-1 depicts the generous ideas concerning what Yin and Yang are, respectively.<sup>32</sup>

<b>Yin</b>	<b>Yang</b>
Earth	Heaven
Moon	Sun
Winter	Summer
Dark	Light
Moisture	Dryness
Feminine	Masculine
Interior	Exterior

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<sup>31</sup> (Chen, n.d.)

<sup>32</sup> (Bruun 2008)



Water	Mountain
Garden	House
Human Being	Natural Environment
Back of Hand	Palm of Hand
Tree Leaf	Tree Bud
Quiescence	Movement
Depletion	Repletion
Incipience	Development
Responsiveness	Aggressiveness
Contraction	Expansion
Conservation	Destruction
Apricot	Bamboo
Jasmine	Cherry
Magnolia	Chrysanthemum
Pear	Orchid
Rhododendron	Peony
Rose	Willow

*Table 2.2.3-1: Yin Yang objects*

Yin and Yang are interdependent; without the concept of dark (yin), the concept of light (Yang) would not exist. There is no positive (Yang) concept if there is no negative (yin). Yin and Yang are not only relative, but also inseparable. To pursue harmony and a comfortable living environment, it is necessary to balance Yin and Yang, to ensure the

energy flow is good and stable. Feng Shui shows us how to balance the energy flow and create the most harmonious living space.<sup>33</sup>

#### 2.2.4 Tai Chi



*Figure 2.2.4-1: Chinese characters for Tai Chi*

According to Professor Zeng, Confucius is the first to have used the term “Tai Chi (太極).” “Tai” is a combination of two Chinese characters, the first being “大”, which means “big,” and the other being “丶”—just like a dot—which means “small.”



*Figure 2.2.4-2: The Chinese characters of Tai that combine big and small*

Therefore, Tai Chi tells us that it is very big and that it is very small. "It's big, and not big outside, no boundary." "It's small, and has no limitation." It is small enough to find

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<sup>33</sup> (He 2014)

inside. Confucius knew Fuxi ,who is the first Chinese Emperor and created Bagua, very well. He explained that there is something in the world that is too big to be outside and so small that there is no inside—and that is Tai Chi. Tai Chi is the platform for all things in the universe to live together. There are two parts in this large platform: one is the platform of the Yang, and the other is the platform of the Yin. However, if one separates the Yang and the Yin, it will become two platforms, and one cannot get them together. Therefore, Yin and Yang must interact; sometimes the Yin moves to the Yang side, sometimes Yang moves to the Yin side. Only when then is there change in life, and this is sustainability.<sup>34</sup>

#### 2.2.5 Five elements

According to the “Feng Shui Encyclopedia” (風水圖文大百科), the ancient Chinese believe that the universe has five basic elements: Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth. Every object belongs to one element, and the five elements influence each other, so Water grows Wood, Wood gives rise to Fire, Fire yields Earth in the form of ash, and Earth produces Metal growing in its ores.

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<sup>34</sup> (Zeng 2009)

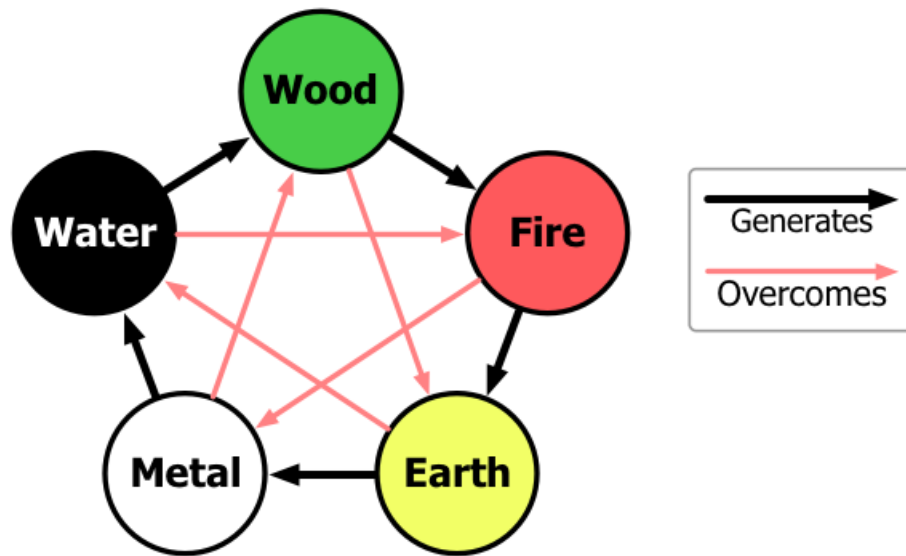


Figure 2: Relationship of the five elements

Master Lin Hui-Tzu notes, “It is important to understand how five elements interactive to each other and which elements each object belong.” She also mentions that each element has two sub-categories: Yin and Yang. For instance, water is not good for Yin Fire, because Yin Fire means small fire, and water will extinguish it. However, Yang Fire means strong Fire, so water can help it come down.<sup>35</sup> Yin elements and Yang elements are not considered static substances because they will change based on different locations or surroundings.

#### 2.2.5.a Wood

Wood harnesses the power of creativity and expansion while representing traits such as growth, birth, strength, flexibility, and intuition. Too much Wood in our surroundings can make us feel overwhelmed, rigid, stubborn, and inflexible, whereas too little can show a lack of creativity or depression, ambivalence, and stagnancy.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> (Lin 2017)

<sup>36</sup> (Huo 2015e)

### 2.2.5.b *Fire*

Enthusiasm and leadership skills can be increased by maximizing the fire element. This element can be used in design to encourage expressiveness, inspiration, and boldness. When there is an overabundance of fire, it can show itself as anger, aggression, irritability, and impulsive behavior, whereas too little can show up as emotional coldness, lack of vision, inexpressiveness, and a lack of self-esteem.<sup>37</sup>

### 2.2.5.c *Earth*

Earth affects physical strength and order while generating an overall feeling of grounding, balance, and stability. When there is an overabundance of earth in a space, people will often notice a heavy sensation and experience more boredom, sluggishness, and seriousness. When there is too little earth, people may feel disorganized, chaotic, and unfocused.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.2.5.d *Metal*

Metal affects mental clarity and logic. The presence of metal in a room can be felt in personal characteristics such as organization, focus, righteousness, and analytical abilities. When surrounded with a lot of metal, people can be perceived as chatty, overly critical, and prone to speaking without thinking. When there is not enough metal, we may feel quiet, cautious, and lack focus.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> (Huo 2015b)

<sup>38</sup> (Huo 2015a)

<sup>39</sup> (Huo 2015c)

### 2.2.5.e *Water*

Water's domain encompasses spirituality and the emotions. A balance of water brings about inspiration, wisdom, and insightfulness. We have a feeling of unbalance and the sense that we are drowning emotionally if there is too much of the water element around us. It can make us feel overwhelmed and overly social. When there is too little water, we may experience a lack of sympathy, loneliness, isolation, stress, and pettiness.<sup>40</sup>

### 2.2.6 Qi

The concept of Qi, pronounced "chi," is the most important concept in Feng Shui and exists in every aspect of life. Written as “氣” in Chinese, Qi is translated as “spirit,” “vital energy,” and “energy of life” in English. It is the breath of nature, the movement and natural flow of the surrounding environment. As the book “Cultivating Qi” explains, “qi was the fundamental substance that made up everything in the world and that all things came into being through the movement and flux of qi.” More importantly, the definition of Qi is what forms the foundation upon which Feng Shui is built.<sup>41</sup> According to Master Lin Hui-Tzu, three principles define Qi:

- First, everything is alive, which means that all things in the physical world have qi. All things, including material possessions and buildings made of stone, concrete etc. are living bodies whose purpose is to harmonize and nurture people.

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<sup>40</sup> (Huo 2015d)

<sup>41</sup> (Clippinger and Gracenin 2016)

- Second, everything is connected, which creates a ripple effect. This means Feng Shui pays attention to all surroundings: from communities to neighborhoods, outdoor to indoor, and external to internal, anything that could potentially impact the energy of the home.
- Third, everything is changing, which promotes the dynamic signs of living qi. This can be seen through the change of the seasons and, more subjectively, through the changes in our states of mind and emotions. Therefore, it is believed that positively changing the home environment encourages new habits and needs of the inhabitants. In fact, Qi is a cosmic stream that connects the universe, earth, and man together. This reinforces the fact that all things have a spirit that connects everything together. On the same note, qi can also be bad. Master Lin Hui-Tzu emphasizes that qi is divided into auspicious and inauspicious, good or sheng qi and bad or sha qi that comes from the needs of people. By extension, good and bad qi can be delivered by wind and water, which translates to the environmental aspects of Feng Shui. Understanding how qi flows through the environment is essential in Feng Shui.<sup>42</sup>

Dr. William Tiller, a physicist in the Department of Materials Science at Stanford University, wrote a book called “Science and Human Transformation—Subtle Energies, Intentionality & Consciousness” that reveals a new scientific understanding of unexplainable phenomena related to “Qi.” Subtle energy is created by electromagnetic wavelengths, rates of vibration, and patterns of pulsation from all materials. As Figures

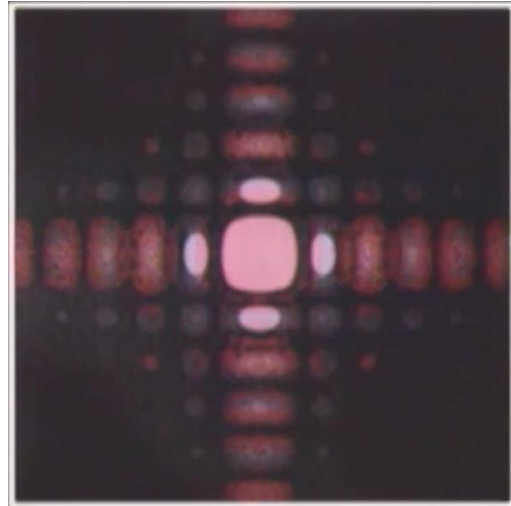
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<sup>42</sup> (Lin 2017)

2.2.6-1 and 2.2.6-2 show, the circular shape and rectangle shape have their own subtle energy patterns. Tiller believes that different patterns have a different impact on people, and this is what he means by “extrasensory perception.”<sup>43</sup>



*Figure 2.2.6-1: Subtle energy from a round-shaped object*



*Figure 2.2.6-2: Subtle energy from a square-shaped object*

The study of subtle energy involves very similar concepts as Qi, and this study provides numerous scientific experiments that explain what Qi is (subtle energy).

To summarize, Qi is energy, and everything has energy and affects everything else. Master Lin Hui- Tzu, a well-known Feng Shui consultant in Taiwan, uses microwave machines as an example. Everyone knows that microwaves creates strong energy because we can see something changes: water becomes hotter; food becomes thawed. We also know that the microwave has a certain impact on human health, so we

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<sup>43</sup> (Tiller 1997)



always pay attention when we use the microwave machine. The same concept works with Qi; all the objects have a certain Qi flow, and different impacts are caused by different flows. This is a key concept with Feng Shui. To understand how the Qi flow works between every object, we have to pay attention to how we arrange everything, because everything has its own energy and all energy has a certain impact on us.<sup>44</sup>

## **2.3 The challenge of introducing Feng Shui principles into Western culture**

### 2.3.1 Cultural differences

The introduction to the book “Feng Shui: A Practical Guide for Architects and Designers” mentions that one of the challenges for some Westerners to understand Feng Shui arises from the language. The ancient communications were oral and mental pictures that are interpreted by using the right brain. Western languages, however, use more abstract letters that do not get any information from pictures. The content of Western language comes from when we combine the letters together. The language function comes from our left brain.<sup>45</sup> To summarize, it is very difficult to translate certain concepts and meaning from Mandarin to English based on the language perspective.

Komf, Denicolo, and Chen express this idea in their book “Chinese Scholars on Western Ideas about Thinking, Leadership, Reform and Development in Education,” noting that Asians or people with an Eastern cultural background tend to pay more attention to the whole and harmony, emphasizing the relationships between human and

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<sup>44</sup> (Lin 2017)

<sup>45</sup> (Smith and Lyons 2006)

human, human and the natural world. They believe that the whole world is constantly changing, interrelated, and complex. On the other hand, Westerners pay more attention to personal values. They think that the world is fundamentally unchanging and static and the object is isolated. Therefore, Westerners reason through tactical and scientific processes, while Asians are willing to access a middle ground and focus on the background of the substance.<sup>46</sup>

### 2.3.2 Misunderstandings or misconceptions

#### **Religion**

According to Dr. Zeng Shih-Ching, because of a lack of scientific knowledge, people tend to connect Feng Shui and religion to explain many different phenomena. However, the core concept of Feng Shui principles themselves does not bear any relationship to religion or god.<sup>47</sup>

## **2.4 Different Feng Shui schools**

According to Ole Bruun, there are many different Feng Shui schools: the School of Forms (Figure 2.4-1), School of Orientations, School of Feng Shui Compass (Figure 2.4-2), Night Fly Stars School, and the Black-Sect Tantric Feng Shui (BTB). Aside from the BTB, all the Feng Shui Schools use the same concepts and tool: “The Book of Change and Bagua.”<sup>48</sup> Teh Tien Yong, a partner at Design International Architects LLP in Singapore with more than 28 years of experience in urban design and architecture, and

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<sup>46</sup> (Kompf, Denicolo, and Chen 2012)

<sup>47</sup> (Zeng 2009)

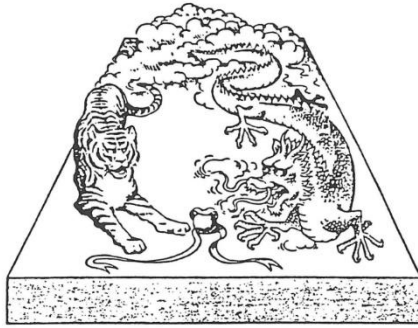
<sup>48</sup> (Bruun 2008)

a Feng Shui expert, explains in the article “Feng Shui: Its application in Contemporary Architecture” that there are many vital categories to consider when using Feng Shui principles, including Form, Orientation, Placement, Color, Material, Texture, and Numbers. Even different Feng Shui Schools still follow the same principles and use the same tools; the difference is that they pay more attention to different categories.<sup>49</sup> Gill Hale argues that we should look at Feng Shui from a bigger scale to a smaller scale.<sup>50</sup> The bigger scale means the sun’s direction, the existing topology, and features of a site such as a mountain and river. This is the first step in looking at energy flow. The smaller scale means a human being him- or herself. Feng Shui uses Chinese astrology and five elements (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water) to represent different types of characteristics; each characteristic needs different elements to enhance its own energy flow. We should therefore consider everything to create a harmonious environment. Only the BTB school has its own tool and a new approach regarding how to apply Feng Shui, and it is the most popular Feng Shui school in Western countries.

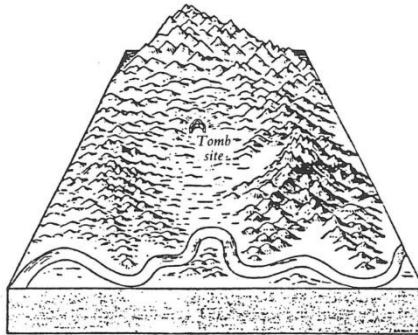
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<sup>49</sup> (Yong 1988)

<sup>50</sup> (Hale 1999)

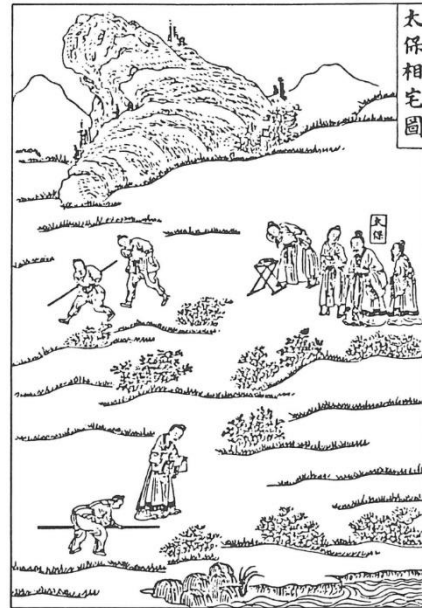


Conceptual model



Topographical model

Figure 1.4-1: Feng Shui Form school



Using the Fengshui compass in the Ch'ing dynasty.

Figure 2.4-2: Compass Feng Shui school

## 2.5 Application of Traditional Feng Shui Principles

Even though there are many different Feng Shui Schools, the design metric is very similar. The following steps, which Master Lin Hui-Tzu explained during the interview, are the process of applying the Traditional Feng School principles into a typical residential floor plan.<sup>51</sup>

### 1. Identify the homeowner's destiny.

Before applying Feng Shui principles into the design phase, it is very important to know the house owner's destiny. The concept comes from "I-Ching," in which destiny means natural born. Everyone has his or her own

<sup>51</sup> (Lin 2017)

five elements and trigram. We must find the owner's five elements and trigram to know how they interact with nature and the surrounding objects.

Calculate the male destiny:  $(100\text{-year of birth})/9$

Calculate the female destiny:  $(\text{year of birth}-4)/9$

Using these two formulas, if there is no remainder or it is divided, it is regarded as 9. The birth year in this formula is made up of only a single digit and a ten digit number. For example, a person born in 1976 uses the number 76 in the formula.

0 (9)	Li
1	Kan
2	Kun
3	Zhen
4	Xun
5	Male: Kun Female: Gen
6	Qian
7	Dui
8	Gen

*Table 2.5-1: Life destiny and remainder number*

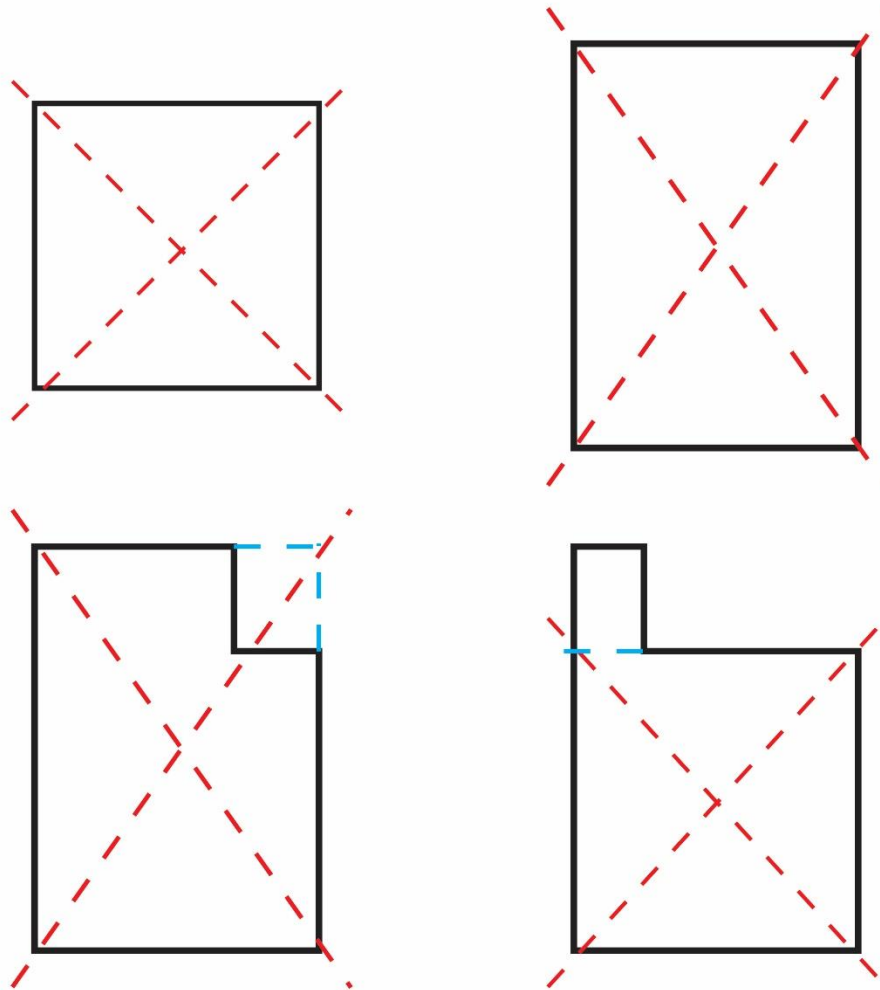
## 2. Observe the surroundings

The observations include the natural environment (mountain, river, weather, etc.) and artificial elements (light poles, buildings, road, bridge, etc.)

## 3. Define the trigram areas based on traditional Bagua.

4. Determine the house location and orientation considering both the macro scale (site trigram) and the micro scale (homeowner's desnity trigram).
5. Locate the center point of the floor plan.

Because of the variety of house shapes, a certain method is used to locate the center of the floor plan.



*Figure 2.5-1: Locate the center point of the floor plan*

6. Define the eight life areas and trigrams for the nine areas based on the front door location.

**7. Arrange the floor plan and different programs according to the nine life areas.**

Considering the Traditional Feng Shui principles, there are nine different life areas, each with its own characteristics and different impact for people who live in the house. These nine life areas are described and illustrated in the Feng Shui Encyclopedia.<sup>52</sup>

2.5.1 Sheng Qi (Cai Wei)

This life area has a powerful vitality and energy flow, so it has a great relationship with the prosperity of families and people. Sheng Qi holds an important position in Feng Shui for wealth, career development, and for those seeking to have children. Overall, the Sheng Qi life area is considered a good life area.

When an architect develops a program for the Sheng Qi life area, the master bedroom is the primary option if the homeowners are a young couple. This can improve the lack of career and wealth. However, the master bedroom might not be a good idea if the client is an elderly couple, because Sheng Qi brings the characteristics of positivity, competition, energeticness, strong actions, aggression and courageousness, and is not particularly suitable for the elderly, especially post-retirement. Using it in the child's bedroom is not a good idea, either. Children will become materialistic and so lose their interest in school.

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<sup>52</sup> (Chen, n.d.)

### 2.5.2 Tien Yi (Guan Wei)

Qi flows in Tien Yi are stable and practical, which can supplement the lack of a personal Qi flow, develop intelligence, and enhance learning. Tien Yi is related to both health and wealth. It is considered an essential position for those seeking wealth and protection from plague in Feng Shui principles.

For those who sleep in Tien Yi, life is stable, they eat well, and they have less trouble and better health. Therefore, Tien Yi is the perfect life area for students or an owner who is a teacher or is more stable. Tien Yi has also been considered a good luck life area.

### 2.5.3 Yan Nian (Shou Wei)

Here, the Qi flows inward and has the ability to cover and aggregate; it is considered the most critical position in the night life areas related to relationships and marriage. When this area is used, the marriage of the owner is stable, and the marriage will be happy; interpersonal relationships can be promoted if we put the master bedroom in Yan Nian. Yan Nian is also related to life, so we can make people live longer and healthier if we design Yan Nian well.

Like the previous speciality, Yan Nian is the perfect life area for the master bedroom, but it is not a good area for children's bedrooms. Yan Nian is suitable for children with introverted personalities; it can help them develop good interpersonal relationships, but for very extroverted children, it might cause some problems if they



have too many friends and are busy with relationships. They may become too precocious in terms of feelings.

#### 2.5.4 Fu Wei (Ru Men)

Fu Wei is considered a neutral place; it can be good or bad depending on the interior layout and its function.

#### 2.5.5 Wu Gui (Huo Xing Wei)

Wu Gui belongs to fire, so the Qi flow in Wu Gui is very fast, usually creating the feeling of being fierce and chaotic. Wu Gui makes people's tempers violent; it is not easy for them to get along with others, and they often have conflicts with friends or even relatives. It makes it difficult to do things, and it attracts fierce disasters.

Usually, Wu Gui does not have a positive impact on the people who live its areas, so it is best used in storage rooms and bathrooms. However, regarding commercial spaces, because the Qi flow moves fast, Wu Gui has a positive impact if it can be designed as a production space.

#### 2.5.6 Liu Sha (Wen Chang, Tao Hua)

Liu Sha belongs to water, so it will cause the Qi to flow downward and be messy. The Qi in this position will be destructive to emotional marriages, careers, interpersonal relationships, and health. People who live in Liu Sha will be bored and

unable to think of things, often make mistakes, are afraid to face reality, and lose property. It is also bad for health, including neurasthenia caused by poor sleep.

The biggest impact for people who live in Liu Sha is related to their relationships; usually it is a bad relationship that causes the problems. Indeed, Liu Sha is not a good place for the marriage bedroom. However, Liu Sha can be a second choice for a single person's bedroom compared to Yan Nian.

#### 2.5.7 Jue Ming (Ai Wei)

Jue Ming is Yin metal, and the Qi flow in Jue Ming is pioneering, but it can be both destructive and cause self-destruction. It is definitely not a good place for people who belong to the wood element because it is very unfavorable and has a serious impact on health.

#### 2.5.8 Huo Hai (Gu Wei)

Huo Hai belongs to Yin earth; the Qi flow in this position is stubborn and less moving, and it has the power to influence people's minds. When people encounter different situations, they become depressed, lack the spirit of struggle, or are often troubled by some small things, causing fatigue. It also affects people's health. Therefore, if people stay in Huo Hai, it will be detrimental to the emotional and psychological aspects of the family.

Huo Hai should be avoided in a space for people who have to stay there a long time, such as the bedroom. However, because the characteristics of its Qi are stubborn

and less moving, Huo Hai can be a good space for research or a laboratory if the design is for a commercial space.

#### 2.5.9 Zhong Gong

Zhong Gong is the center of the house; usually it is the place for gathering, such as the living room. Therefore, it is very important to have a good design for the interior arrangement based on the owner's density trigram.

Depending on the placement of a front door; there are eight different arrangements for the nine life areas.

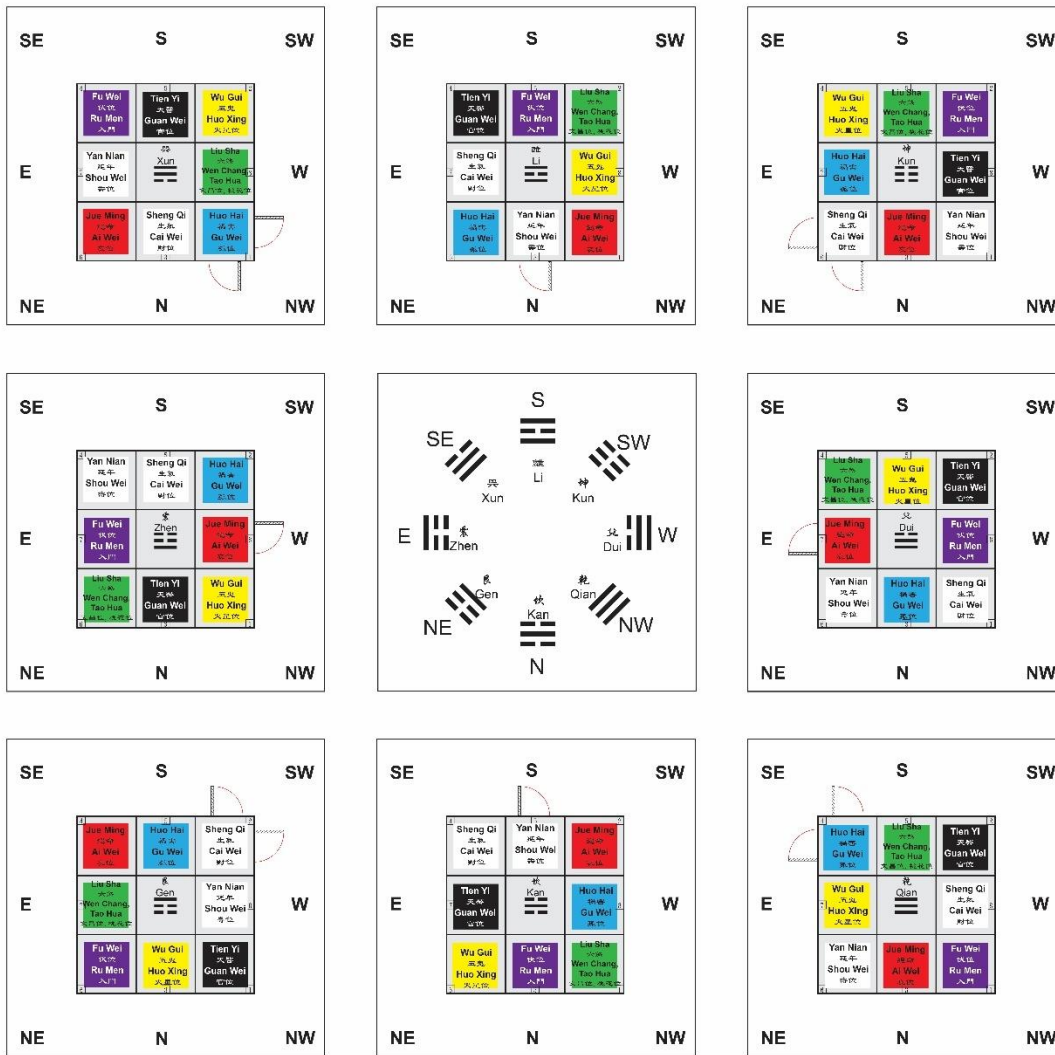


Figure 2.5.9-1: Eight life area arrangements

### East Four House: Kan, Li, Zhen, Xun

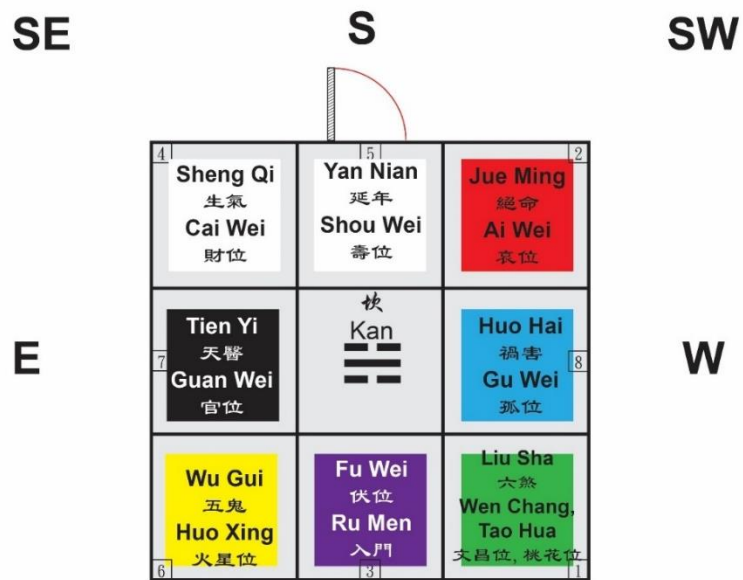


Figure 2.5.9-2: Kan house arrangement

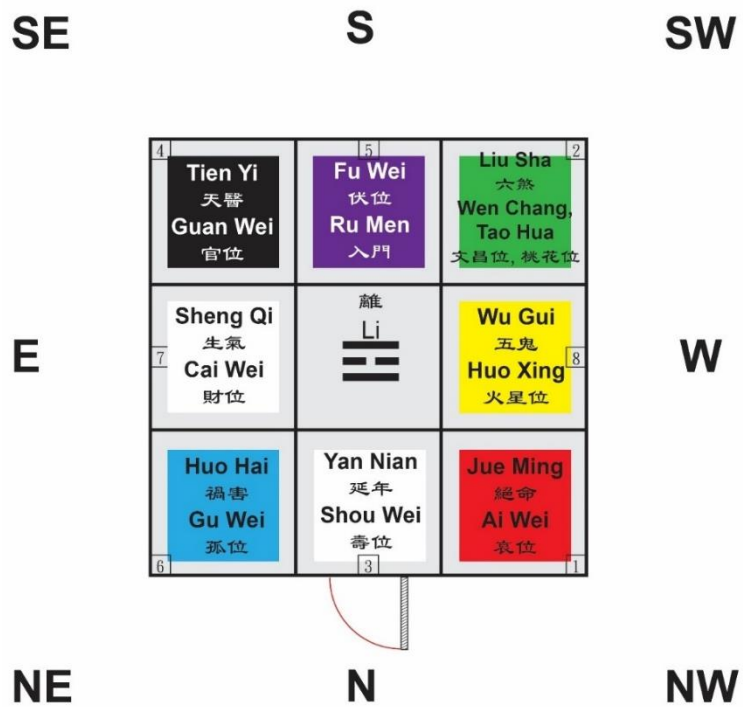


Figure 2.5.9.-3: Li house arrangement

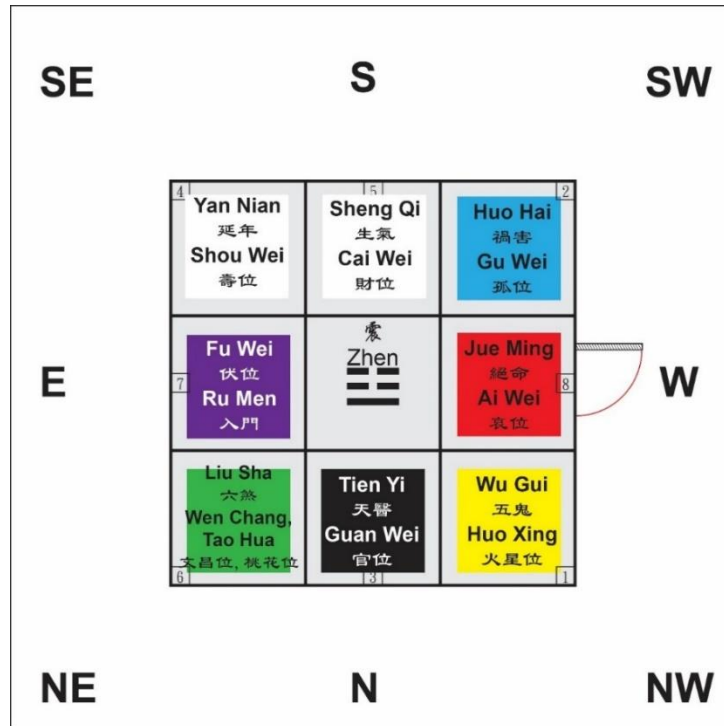


Figure 2.5.9-4: Zhen house arrangement

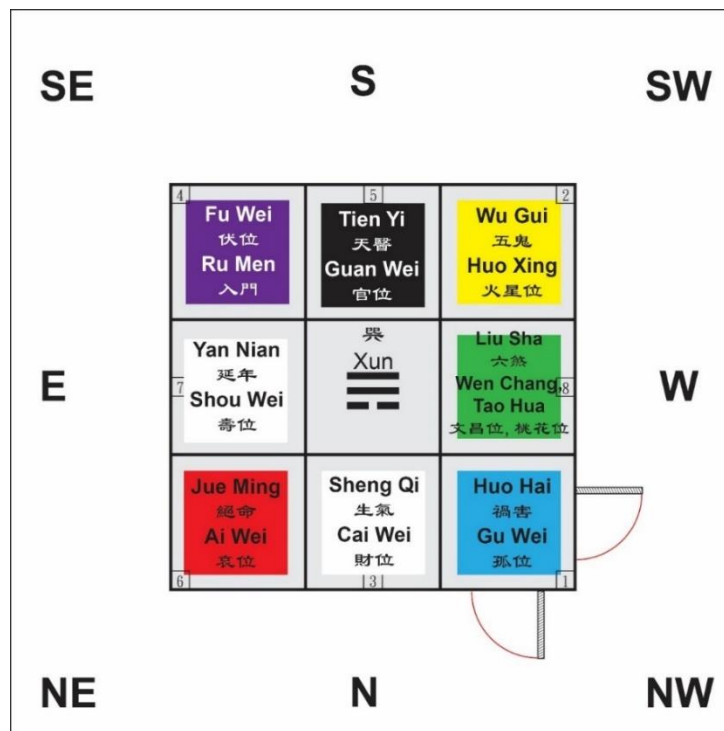


Figure 2.5.9-5: Xun house arrangement

West Four House: Qian, Kun, Dui, Gen

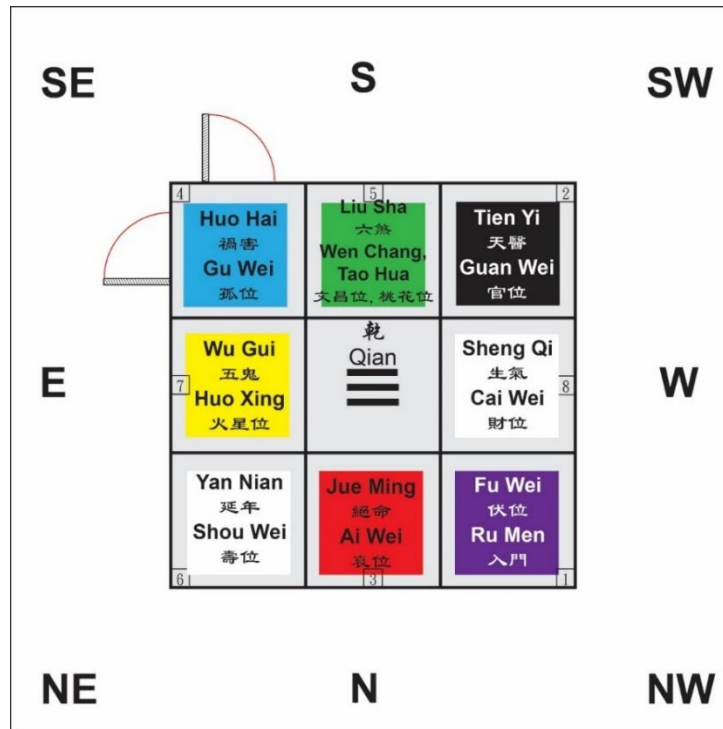


Figure 2.5.9-6: Qian house arrangement

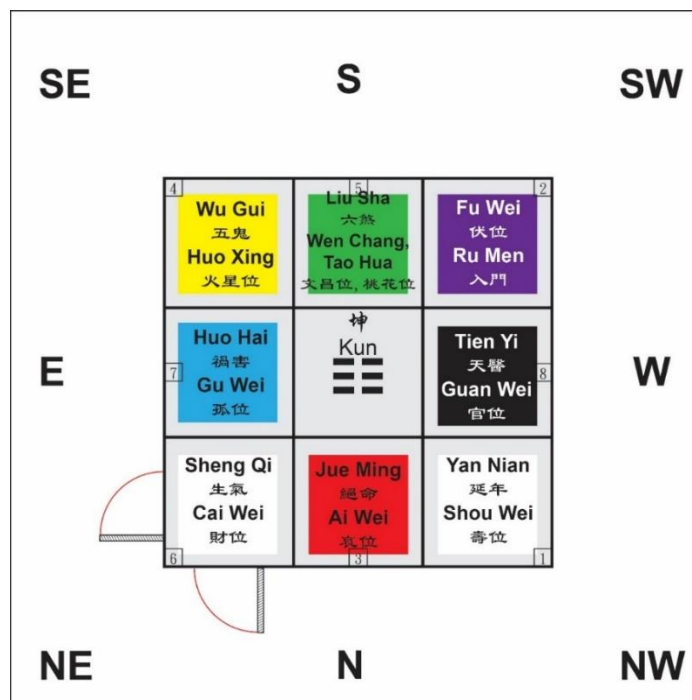


Figure 2.5.9-7: Kun house arrangement

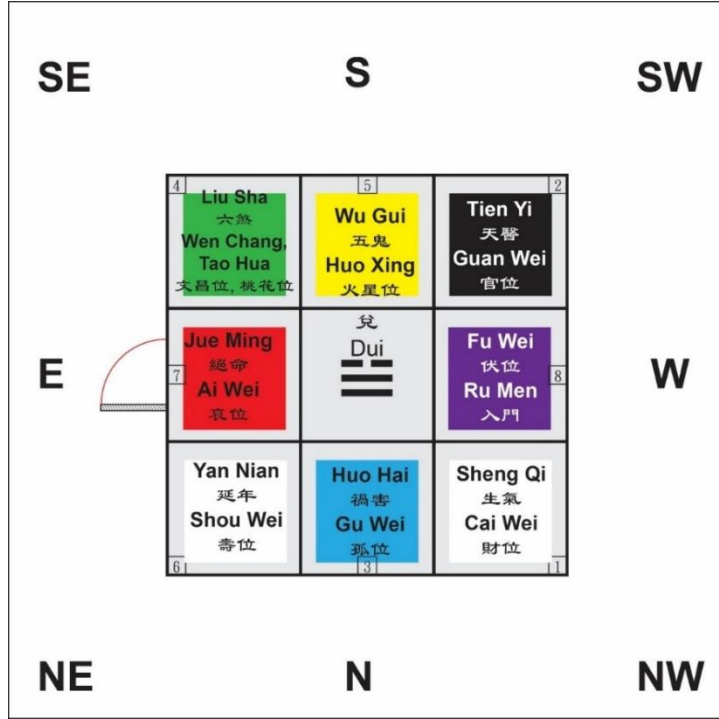


Figure 2.5.9-8: Dui house arrangement

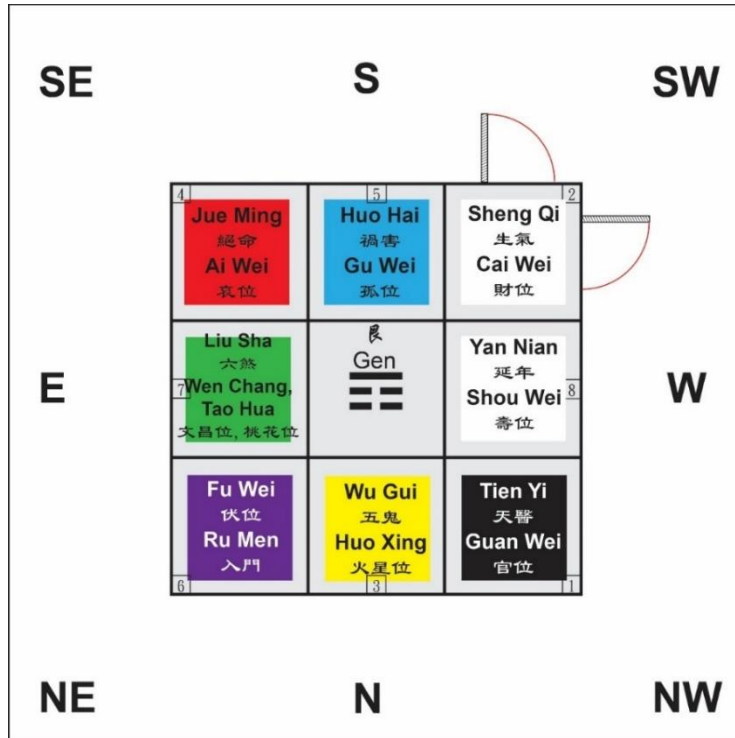


Figure 2.5.9-9: Gen house arrangement



## **8. Arrange the interior design and furniture for each of the different room cures**

Many objects can be used as a cure to increase the good Qi flow or avoid bad Qi flow. As the same concept, each cures have each own five elements, so we have to consider all the relationships with the location, owner, life area, and cures object. For example, electronic equipment such as a computer belongs to fire. If the house owner's five elements are overcome by fire, we should avoid using electronic equipment as a cure.

### **2.6 What is Black Sect Tantric Feng Shui/Modern Feng Shui?**

Master Lin Yun, the founder of the Black Sect Tibetan Tantric School of Feng Shui, is often called His Holiness Grandmaster Professor Thomas Lin Yun. He is also the founder and supreme leader of the contemporary Black Sect Tantric Buddhism at its fourth stage.<sup>53</sup> According to the book “Feng Shui Design—The Art of Creating Harmony for Interiors, Landscape and Architecture,” Master Lin Yun is a distinguished Buddhist scholar, philosopher, and calligrapher and the leading authority on Feng Shui. An adviser to many major political and business leaders, Master Lin Yun has lectured worldwide on Feng Shui, I Ching, Buddhist practice, meditation, and Chinese culture at such institutions as Harvard University, the American Institute of Architects, and the United Nations. He is the leader of the Black Sect Tantric Buddhism and the founder of the Yun Lin Temple in Berkeley, California. Master Lin Yun counts among his students many of the Feng Shui authors, consultants and teachers now practicing.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> (“Yun Lin Temple” n.d.)

<sup>54</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

According to the [yunlintemple.org](http://yunlintemple.org) website, Professor Lin Yun's teaching is, “Comprehensive, philosophical, and spiritual. BTB Feng Shui School incorporates the essence of Confucianism, Taoism, Yin-Yang philosophy, Eclecticism, Exoteric Buddhism, Esoteric Buddhism, I-Ching, Theory of Chi, holistic healing, Feng Shui, and folkloric studies.” He claimed he was enthroned by His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima, the supreme leader of the Tibetan Bon Tradition and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Abbot of the Monpo Menri Monastery.<sup>55</sup>

Master Lin Yun was an adjunct professor of the School of Arts and Letters at San Diego State University, lecturer at the Yale-in-China Program at Hong Kong Chinese University, visiting professor at University of San Francisco, visiting professor at Stanford University, and research professor at the Institute of Far Eastern Studies at Seton Hall University.

Master Lin Yun is consciously seeking to “unite Eastern ideologies and Western concepts, in the sense of blending ‘wisdom, theories, and practicality.’”<sup>56</sup> Therefore, he proposed a new Feng Shui School called the “BTB Modern Feng Shui school.” He has developed and transmitted the teachings of the BTB Feng Shui in the West since the early 1970s. It is not like other Feng Shui Schools; the BTB Modern Feng Shui School has clear instructions to follow that are easy to apply.

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<sup>55</sup> (“Yun Lin Temple” n.d.)

<sup>56</sup> (Bruun 2008)

The following steps describe its application:

- exterior diagnosis, including pathways and landscape;
- prepare a floor plan and Modern Feng Shui Bagua;
- superimpose Modern Feng Shui Bagua onto the floor plan;
- define nine life areas;
- apply Feng Shui cures into different life areas to increase good Qi flow or decrease bad Qi flow; and
- apply Feng Shui cures into spaces.<sup>57</sup>

#### 2.6.1 Exterior diagnosis, including pathways and landscape

In “Feng Shui Design—The Art of Creating Harmony for Interior, Landscape and Architecture,” Master Lin Yun writes that exterior space has a huge impact upon us; whether we stay outside or merely look through the window, we respond to the restful and invigorating aspects of nature.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, creating balanced exteriors is also important. The diagram (Figure 2.6.1-1) shows the different impacts on driveways, pathways, and landscape arrangements.

Figure 2.6.1-1 shows the different impacts of different tree positions.<sup>59</sup> When selecting a tree or bush, be aware of its color and shape and the changes in its appearance as the seasons come and go. Essentially, evergreen trees such as spruces, pines, holly trees, boxwoods and rhododendrons and evergreen bushes such as azaleas, junipers, and

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<sup>57</sup> (“How to Apply the Western Feng Shui Bagua (Home or Office)” n.d.)

<sup>58</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

<sup>59</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

laurels are good choices for landscape. Deciduous plants, which lose foliage in the autumn, will be not a good suggestion in Modern Feng Shui.

The shape of a tree can itself influence residents' Qi. Trees that branch upwards such as cypresses or certain pines create a more positive upbeat feeling in a property (Figure 2.6.1-2).<sup>60</sup>



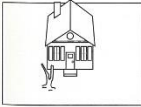


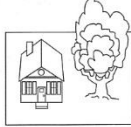


	PROBLEMATIC TREES	DIAGNOSIS	CURE
	Tree too close to the front door	Oppresses ch'i and keeps out money and possibilities.	Hang a ba-gua mirror at eye level on the tree, or a note: "When exiting, receive blessings."
	Tree that stands too close to the window and blocks sunlight and views	Blocks chi and brings in dark--negative--ch'i, resulting in death and misfortune.	Hang five firecrackers, or imitation firecrackers, in the window frame.
	Dead tree on property	Foretells a sad event--accident or death in the family--hardship, decay of plot and occupants' ch'i.	1 When removing a dead tree and roots, sprinkle a mixture of uncooked rice, alcohol/liquor and ju-sha around the tree; visualizing the ch'i of the tree will enable it to become a higher being and not disturb the site. 2 If the trunk is left, place a pot of live plants next to it and sprinkle 3 handfuls of rice, alcohol/liquor and ju-sha over the trunk.

Figure 2.6.1-1: Tree location diagnosis

<sup>60</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

WHEN TREES ARE POSITIVE	
	A tree behind a house—not too close—creates stability and luck.
	A hedge of trees or bushes in a row of multiples of three protects and guards a house.
	Any plant or tree with green foliage enhances a property; a beautiful tree near a house that allows the sun to filter through is especially good.
	Trees balance an awkward house shape.
	Trees enhance specific areas of residents' lives (see the ba-gua, page 44).

*Figure 2.6.1-2: Positive tree locations*

The influences of driveways and paths conduct Qi and guide residents and visitors alike to the house, thus creating the initial impression of the property. The link between the house and outside world should create a gracious entry. A gently curving and level drive or path best filters out negative Qi and provides a smooth, cordial approach. A drive or path should be in balance with the property.

GOOD PATHWAYS TO HOUSE
An open, spacious path, wider than the door
A path opening out as it progresses away from the house
Round, unobtrusive porch columns flanking, but not crowding, the door
Curved paths
A gently graded downward slope
Healthy plants flanking, but not obstructing, the path
A gradual step leading from a wide landing

*Figure 2.6.1-3: Good pathways to house*

POOR PATHWAYS TO HOUSE	DIAGNOSIS	CURE
Narrow, less wide than the entrance door	Limits career and finances.	Widen the path or border it with red bricks or flowerbeds.
Narrowing as it progresses	Prospects narrow.	Widen the path.
Large, round, obstructive columns near the door	Hinders ch'i, health and finances.	Hang a mirror at eye level on a column, or a note: "When exiting, receive blessings."
Square obstructive pillars	Bankruptcy.	Grow vines up the edges of the pillars.
Uphill slope	Residents bring home bad ch'i every day, so careers and finances face uphill battle.	Place convex mirrors on both sides of the house entrance, so when the residents walk home, the mirror will reflect them ascending instead of descending.
Plants with spiky leaves flank the path	Plagued with prickly problems and struggles.	Cut back the plants or replace them with softer-leaved ones.
Narrow steps down	Money will roll out.	Widen the look of the path with red bricks or flower borders or low, fruit-bearing plants.
Narrow steps up	Career faces an uphill battle.	Install a spotlight at the back of the house, aimed at the roof.
Steep slope	Money rolls out.	Install a spotlight in front of the house, aimed at the roof.

*Figure 2.6.1-4: Pathway diagnosis*

2.6.2 Prepare a floor plan and Modern Feng Shui Bagua

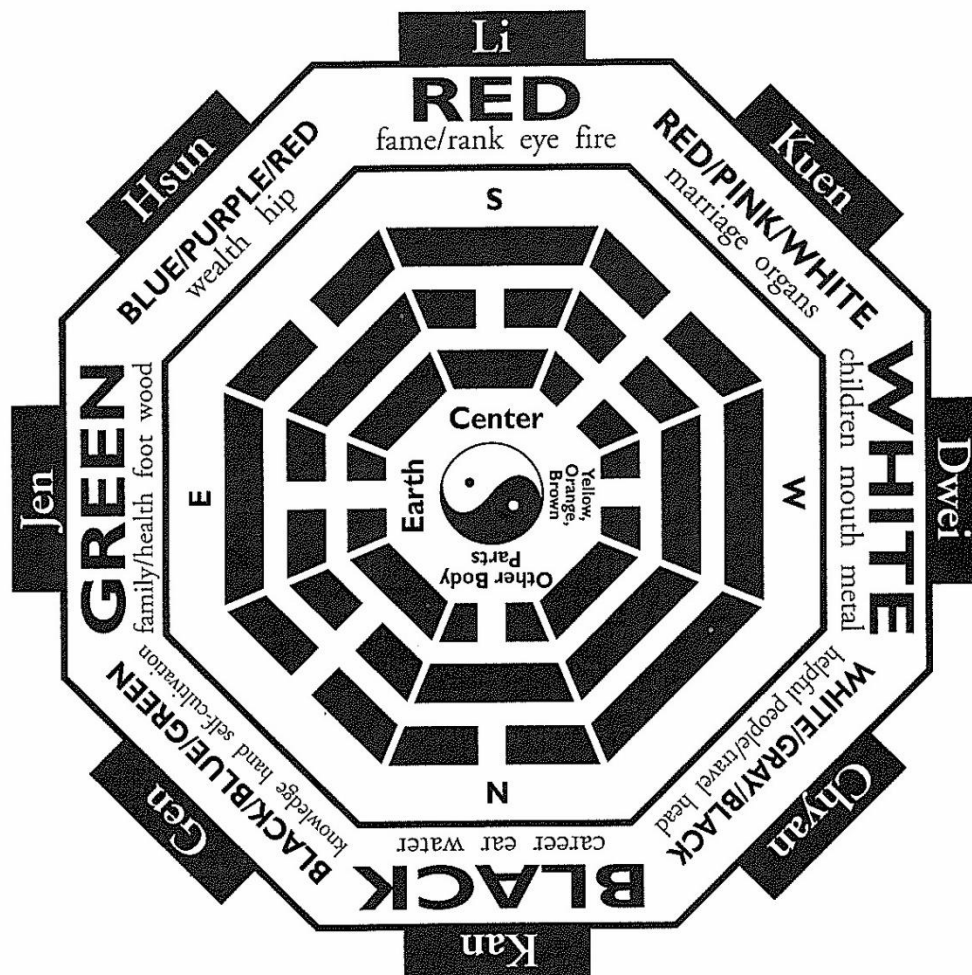


Figure 2.6.2-1: BTB Bagua

The method of applying the Bagua (Figure 2.6.2-1<sup>61</sup>) to a property, building, or room is quite simple and is called the Three-door Bagua. First, identify the main entrance; this is considered the mouth of Qi. Next, overlay the entry point with the Bagua octagon, matching up the entrance with the side that has “Gen,” “Kan,” “Qian,” the knowledge, career, and helpful people areas, respectively. If when we face into a room

<sup>61</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

the entrance is in the center, it lines up with Kan or career. If it is to the left, it is at Gen or the knowledge area. An entry to the right sits in the Qian or helpful people area. No matter where the entry lies, the wealth area is always in the far left corner of the room, the marriage position is in the far right corner, and the fame area is in the center of the wall to the left, while the children position lies in the middle of the wall to the right and the orientation of the Bagua follows the orientation of the house (Figures 2.6.2-2 to 2.6.2-4)<sup>62</sup>.

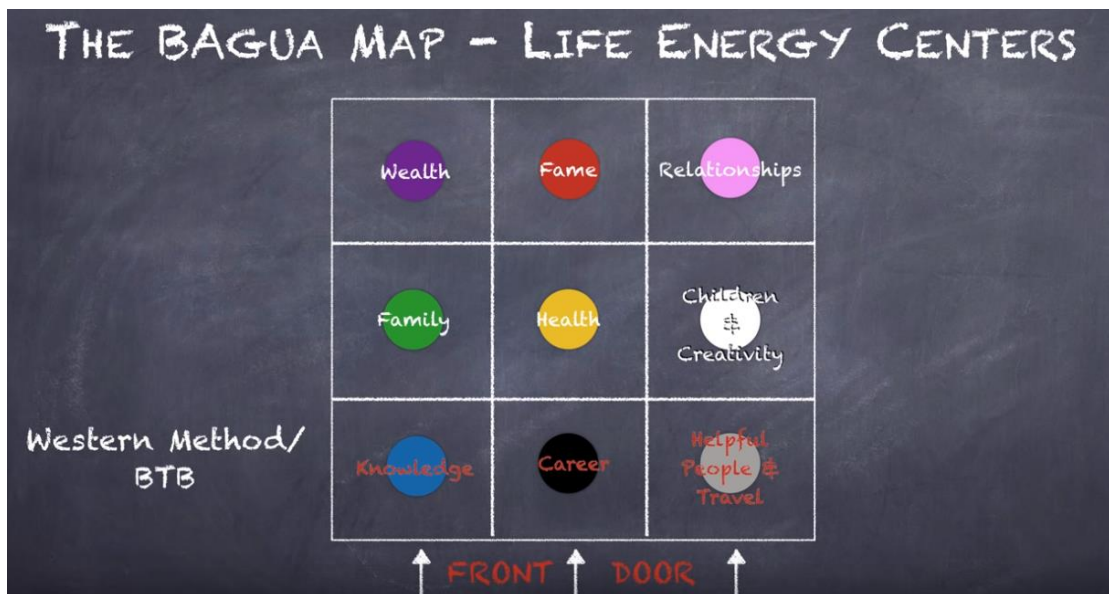


Figure 2.6.2-2: BTB Bagua with nine life areas

<sup>62</sup> ("How To Apply the Feng Shui Bagua Map - Quick & Easy (with Subtitles) - YouTube" n.d.)



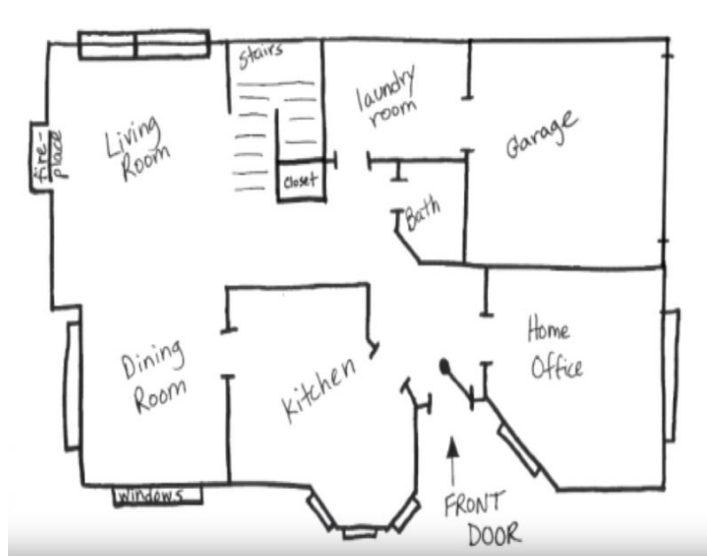


Figure 2.6.2-3: Design floor plan

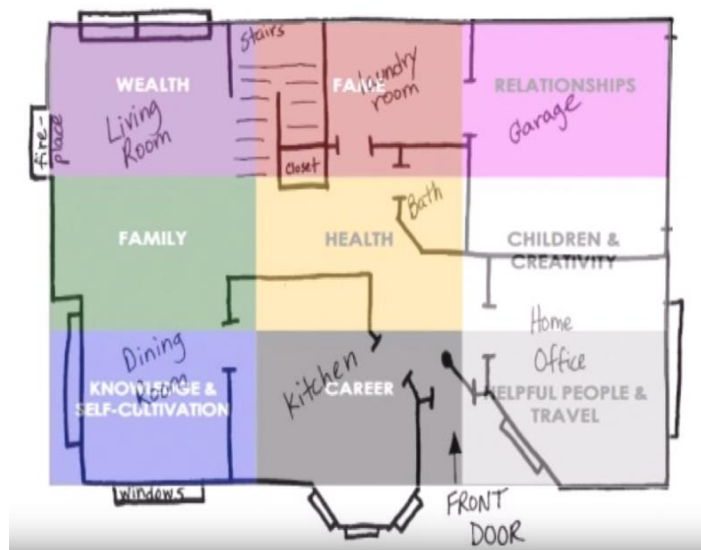
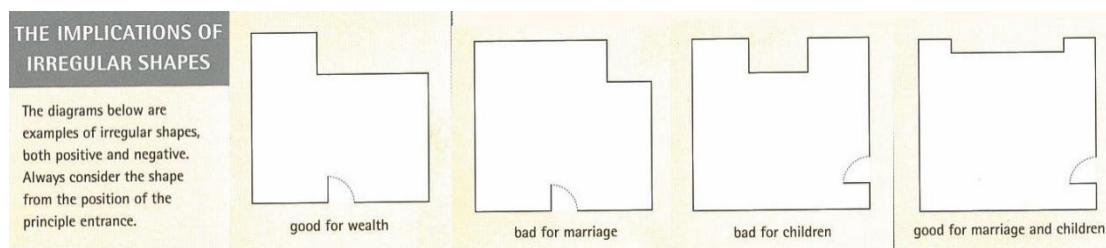


Figure 2.6.2-4: Superimpose Bagua onto the floor plan

The Modern Feng Shui Bagua can also be used to determine whether a room, building, or property shape is lucky or unlucky. Discerning whether it is positive or negative is generally pretty simple. If a shape is regular or “whole”—a square or a rectangle—it is deemed complete and balanced. However, if it is an irregular shape, such

as an L, T, and U shape, further inspection will indicate whether it is missing something or enjoying an addition. If the shape is found to be lacking, the corresponding area of its occupants' lives may suffer (Figure 2.6.2-5).<sup>63</sup>

Analyzing the proportions of the shape will help determine whether it is fortunate or not. If the missing area is less than half the width and length of a space, the shape is incomplete, and residents may find they are lacking in one, two, or three life areas. However, if a missing area is greater than half the length and width, the area is considered an addition, with positive connotations.



*Figure 2.6.2-5: Different shape of houses and related issue*

A slant (which means the house is not square or rectangular) is a double-trouble shape. In addition to creating an incomplete shape that indicates a missing area in the occupants' lives, it is considered structurally unlucky and unbalancing for any space, including commercial or residential space. Slants portend unexpected events, usually meaning a bad event or even a disaster. In addition, certain slanted walls can affect Qi flow. For instance, Qi can get trapped in the acute angles created by some slanted walls.

<sup>63</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

### 2.6.3 Apply Feng Shui cures into different life areas

Once we have identified the life areas associated with a space, we can enhance the specific area and thus improve the corresponding areas of our lives by using night Feng Shui cures. Different types of cures have specific functions and purposes. The following lists are the nine basic cures based on the book “Feng Shui Design: From History and Landscape to Modern Gardens and Interiors.”<sup>64</sup>

#### **Bright or light-refracting object: Lights, mirrors, crystal balls**

**Lights:** This cure can be used to solve awkward shapes: outside an L-shaped building, a spotlight or lamp can square off the shape or inside a space with an acute angle. A lighting object can also encourage Qi circulation.

**Mirrors:** Known as the “aspirin of Feng Shui” (Figure 2.6.3-1),<sup>65</sup> mirrors alleviate a host of Feng Shui ills resulting from slanted or oppressively close walls, awkward room shapes or poorly sited beds, desks, and stoves. Interior mirrors serve many purposes; a general rule is the bigger, the better. Never hang one so low that it cuts off the top of someone’s head, creating tension and headaches, or so high that it makes the occupants feel uncomfortable. Avoid mirror tiles, because they can distort the image; also, dark or smoky mirrors seem oppressive and can lower Qi. Mirrors can also enhance any Bagua life areas. Popular areas for enhancement are wealth, career, and family.

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<sup>64</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

<sup>65</sup> (“How to Use Mirrors for Good Feng Shui” n.d.)



*Figure 2.6.3-1: Feng Shui cure mirror*

### **Objects that make sounds: wind chimes, bells**

**Wind chimes and bells:** Used inside and outside, wind chimes moderate the circulation of Qi, dispersing strong or malign energy (such as the effects of a long corridor or a road that may aim directly at a house). Hanging a bell or a wind chime on the eave will symbolically improve the house's Qi and its residents' finances. Hung on the outside of business premises, they attract Qi, clients, and profits. Hung near the entrance, they provide a simple security system.

### **Living objects: plants (real or artificial) bonsai, flowers, and aquarium or fishbowls/tanks**

**Plants and flowers:** Symbolic of growth and development, they provide

nourishing Qi within a space. Plants on the outside are indicators of good Qi. Plants not only give hope to an interior's occupants, but can also help resolve sharp corners that jut into a room; awkward, acute angles stairwell. Within and flanking the entrance to a store or a restaurant, healthy plants and flowers are subtle beacons attracting clients, business, and Qi.

**Fishbowls and aquariums:** Fishbowls are positive interior cures evoking nourishing and money-enhancing Qi. Because the presence of water is essential for crop cultivation and aquaculture, water and views of water symbolize wealth-endowing properties and are seen as enriching a home or a business. Live fish enhance the symbol of water's property of endowing riches; they are also seen as a form of aquatic scapegoat, absorbing bad luck and accidents that might have affected the human occupants of the space (Figure 2.6.3-2).<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> ("How to Attract Wealth With Fish in Feng Shui" n.d.)



*Figure 2.6.3-2: Feng Shui cure fish tank*

**Moving objects: Mobiles, whirligigs, fountains, waterfalls, windmills**

Whether wind-powered or electrical, moving objects such as indoor mobiles or windmills and whirligigs and outdoor weathervanes are used to deflect or disperse the negative effects of “Killing Qi” (a risk in long hallways or when a building faces arrow-like roads and overbearing neighboring buildings or landscape features such as an overhanging outcropping). Water fountains, man-made geysers, and waterfalls—all microcosms of Qi-enhancing and wealth-producing water—create active, positive Qi too, as well as enhancing both the family and the business.



*Figure 2.6.3-3: Feng Shui cure fountain<sup>67</sup>*

### **Heavy objects: Stones, statues, rock gardens**

Heavy objects such as stones and heavy material statues, when properly placed according to the Bagua life areas, can harmonize unbalanced shapes or stabilize unsettling or elusive situations, ranging from maintaining a job to maintaining a marriage (Figure 2.6.3-4).<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> (“Use Water Fountains to Bring Wealth and Prosperity Into Your Home” n.d.)

<sup>68</sup> (“Invite Good Feng Shui Into Your Home With a Quan Yin Statue” n.d.)



*Figure 2.6.3-4: Feng Shui cure Quan Yin status*

**Electrically powered objects: Televisions, stereo systems, air conditioners, computers**

Electrically powered machines can stimulate interiors. They are useful for adjusting the areas of a resident's life by adjusting the corresponding areas according to the Bagua life area in a home or a business. For example, a sound system in the wealth area of a bar will amplify profit, or an air-conditioning unit in the fame area of a business will raise the business's profile.

**Bamboo flutes**



Because bamboo flutes were used in ancient China to announce peace and good news, they are symbolic of safety, peace, and stability. Bamboo flutes can symbolically penetrate an oppressive beam; two flutes with red ribbons tied around them are hung






slanting inward on a beam, creating a partial octagon that both evokes the Bagua and pumps Qi upward.

### **Color associations**

Table 2.6.3-1 illustrates how to use color to benefit people.<sup>69</sup>

	<b>Purple, deep red, or plum</b>	Auspiciousness, nobility, richness, and power
	<b>Red</b>	Auspiciousness, happiness, fire and passion, fame, strength, and power
	<b>Pink</b>	Love, pure intent, joy, romance, and happiness
	<b>Peach</b>	Romance and attraction
	<b>Orange</b>	Auspiciousness, happiness, and power
	<b>Yellow</b>	Tolerance, patience, wisdom, perspective, power, earth, and loyalty.
	<b>Green</b>	Hope, development, family, tranquility, spring, and growth
	<b>Blue-green</b>	Less auspicious than green. Blue is a secondary mourning color, but it can also stand for growth and new beginnings.
	<b>Black or deep dark color</b>	Spirituality, psychological and intellectual depth, wisdom and perspective, but also

<sup>69</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

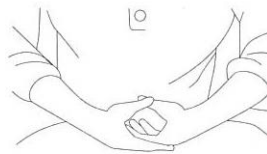
		depression and lack of hope
	<b>Gray</b>	Frustration and hopelessness; also the marriage of opposites such as black and white and thus the creation of balance and resolving conflict
	<b>Brown</b>	Stability, depth, something long-established and enduring, elegance, autumn, the passage of time, and heaviness
	<b>Tan</b>	New possibilities: after disappointment comes a successful beginning

*Table 2.6.3-1: Feng Shui cure-colors*

#### 2.6.4 Feng Shui cures

Feng Shui cures operate on two levels: Sying and Yi. Sying encompasses the material land visible rules and cures of Feng Shui. The nine cures mentioned earlier belong to “Sying.” Yi addresses its more transcendental and intuitive practices, such as blessings, meditations, and rituals. Three simple “Yi” cures are described in “Feng Shui Design: From History and Landscape to Modern Gardens and Interiors.”<sup>70</sup>

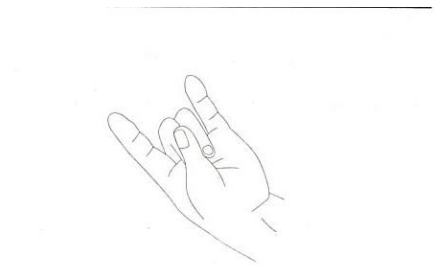
**Heart Mudra:** The body and hand gesture expresses homage, offerings, or blessings. The Heart Mudra calms the mind and the heart.



*Figure 2.6.4-1: Heart Mudra gesture*

<sup>70</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

**Exorcism Mudra:** This gesture expands and improves Qi or dispels malign spirits and bad luck.



*Figure 2.6.4-2: Exorcism Mudra gesture*

**Six True Word:** This is the “Om Ma Ni Pad Mi Hum” or the Heart Sutra: Gatay, Gatay, Boro Gatay, Boro Sun Gatay, and Bodhi So Po He.

ཨོཾ་མ་ཎི་པད་མེ་ཏུ་  
ong ma ni bei mei hong  
嗡 嘛 呢 呗 咪 吽

*Figure 2.6.4-3: Six True Word*

### 3 Hypothesis and Research Problems

This study takes as its hypothesis the idea that the BTB Feng Shui school, also known as Modern Feng Shui, does not follow the same core concept as Traditional Feng Shui principles and that people might not be able to enjoy its benefits if we do not follow the Traditional Feng Shui core concept.

The hypothesis leads to the following research questions.

1. How does Modern Feng Shui differ from Traditional Feng Shui?
2. Why should we apply Traditional Feng Shui principles rather than Modern Feng Shui principles?

## **4 Methodology**

Comparing all the differences between Modern Feng Shui principles and Traditional Feng Shui principles requires both process and results.

### **4.1 Design process**

To compare the two principles, this thesis creates a situation that allows the two different principles to be used in the same environment. The purpose focuses on two Feng Shui principles, so little attention is paid to addressing zoning and building code issues.

The design client is a family looking to build a newly designed house on property they already own. The family members include the house owner, who was born in 1983, and his wife, both of whom are college professors. They have a ten-year-old boy. The relationship between the client and his wife is very good. Their parents will live with them, and both of them are retired. The property is on Crittenden Road, Rochester, NY. It is vacant land without a building. The zone for this property is a single-family zone, so there is no zoning code issue.

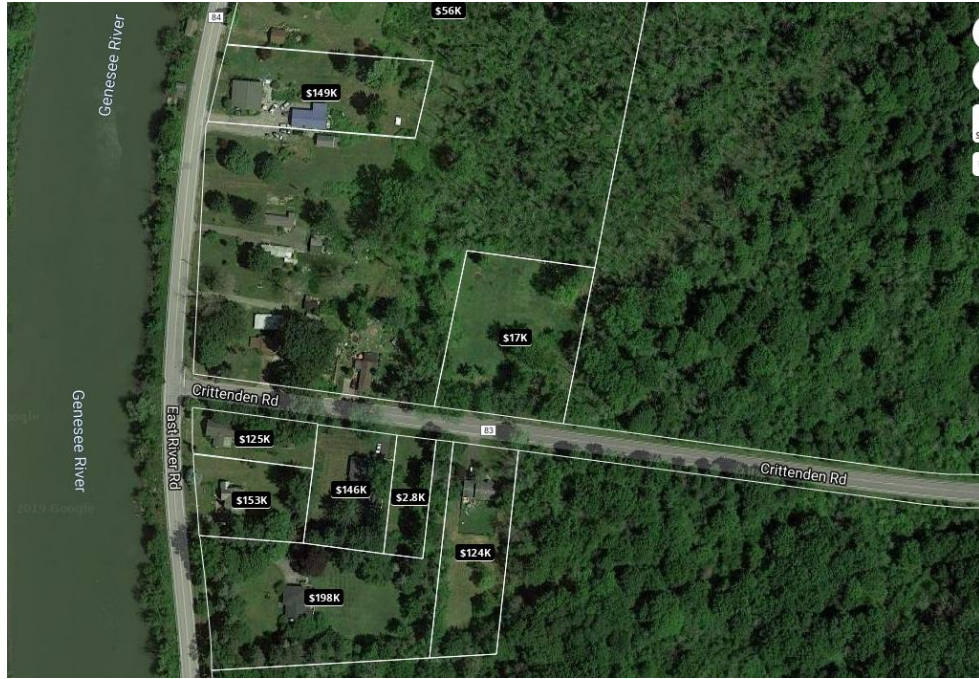


Figure 4.1-1: Site map



Figure 4.1-2: Site photo 1



*Figure 4.1-3: Site photo 2*

The property is 1.1 acres (around 47000 sq.). Crittenden Road is on the front side, and there are no roads on any two sides. The property is surrounded by natural plants on the right side and back side. The majority of the plants are 60'–80' tall trees. There is no sidewalk in the front, and there is one utility pole in the front. The side is flat and there is no large degree slope.



Figure 4.1-4: Site map

#### 4.1.1 Apply Modern Feng Shui principles

##### 1. Surrounding observations

Tall trees are the dominant objects in this property. Based on Modern Feng Shui, the house will be protected and surrounded by the good Qi flow if there are tall trees around the house. It simply needs to be ensured that the trees are not too close to the house. If there is a big tree at the back of the house, it can create stability and luck. The good driveway shape is circular, with some grass, flowers, or a fountain in the center island. Based on these suggestions, the preliminary design shape is shown in Figure 4.1.1-1.



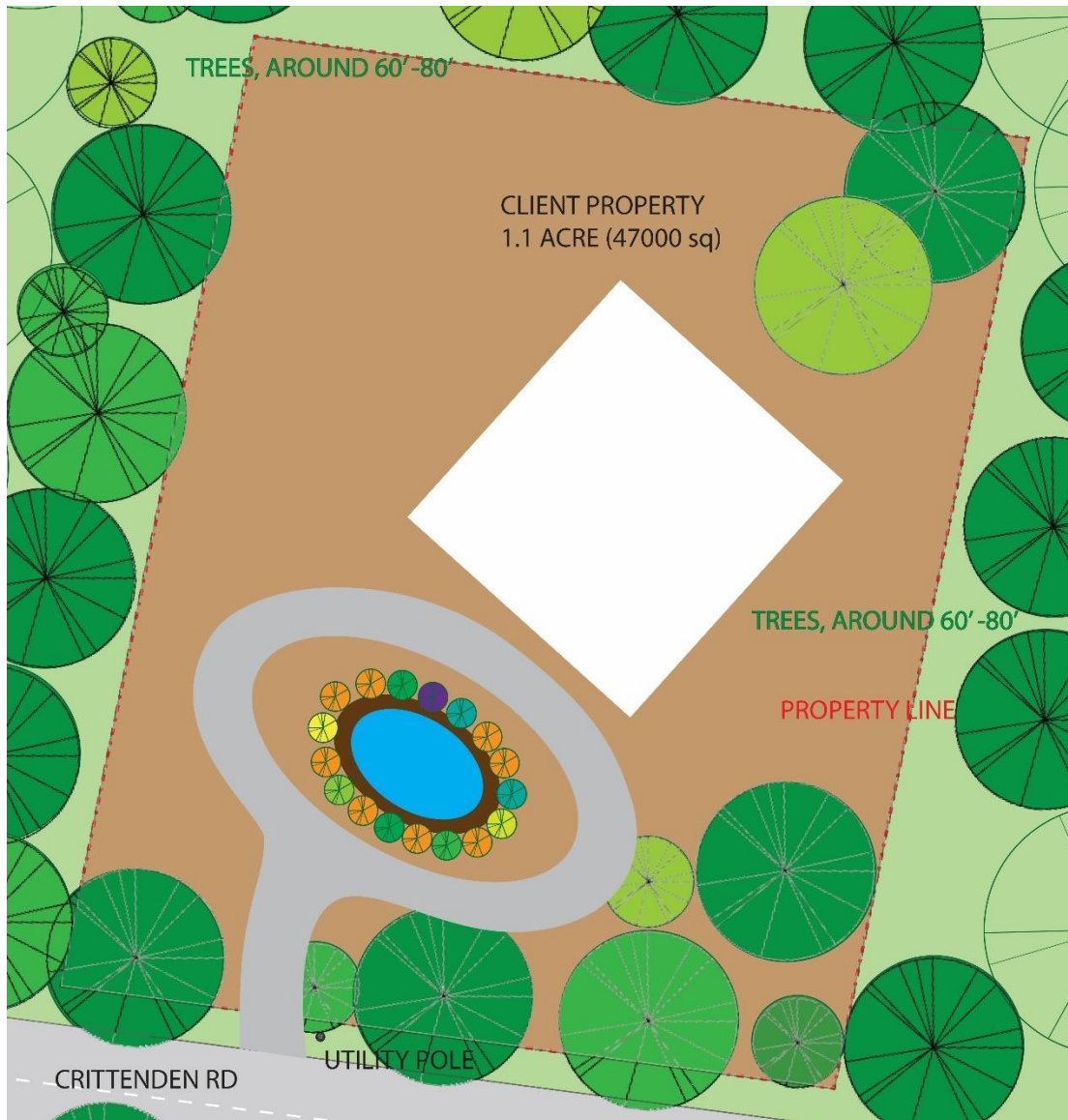


Figure 4.1.1-1: Modern Feng Shui application

2. Locate the front door and program the spaces.

Based on the client's requirement, one master bedroom and one elder bedroom for the owner's parents are needed, as well as one children's room, one office, and one guest room.



*Figure 4.1.1-2: Floor plan layout*

3. Superimpose the Modern Feng Shui Bagua and define the nine life areas. Modern Feng Shui Bagua defines nine life areas, and each one has its five elements and color. The bottom line of the Bagua always aligns with the main door.



Figure 4.1.1-3: Superimpose Modern Bagua 1



Figure 4.1.1-4: Superimpose Modern Bagua 2

4. Using Modern Feng Shui Bagua as an interior design guideline

The Bagua has specific information related to different life areas. For instance, the office is located in the wealth life area, so if the owner wants to enhance luck for wealth, then purple, blue, or red can be used to decorate the office. Also, this life area is a wood element, so adding some water elements such as a fish tank can increase the luck of wealth. Other cures such as a mirror also can enhance the luck of wealth.

To summarize, as the initial goal of Modern Feng Shui principle, it is very

straightforward to apply it into the design process. Essentially, the application of Modern Feng Shui does not need to consider the orientation of house, because the bottom of the Bagua is always aligned with the front door, no matter which orientation it faces. Moreover, the arrangement of the interior spaces does not relate to the life area, either. For instance, the middle of the right side is the children life area, but this does not mean we should put the children's room there. For the scenario in our design, we need to follow the Bagua suggestion to decorate the bathroom, and then we can improve our children's luck.

#### 4.1.2 Apply Traditional Feng Shui principles

##### **1. Get the owner's life destiny by applying the formula.**

Finding the balance between Universe, Earth, and Human is the goal for Feng Shui, so before starting the design phase, it is important to know about the owner of the house. The owner was born in 1983, so based on the formula provided,  $(100 - \text{years})/9$ , and the remainder is 8, so the owner is Gen destiny and it belongs to West Four destiny. Therefore, a West Four house is good for the house owner: these are Qian, Kun, Dui, and Gen houses.

##### **2. Superimpose the Bagua and locate the eight trigrams. Observe the surroundings.**

For Traditional Feng Shui principles, the Bagua will always follow the geologic direction. Kan is North, and Zhen is East. After superimposing the Bagua, we will know each element for space. For the Traditional Feng Shui,

the house is surrounded by trees, which is good for Qi flow, but we must be sure the trees are not close to the four sides of the house. Therefore, we will locate the house in the center of the property.

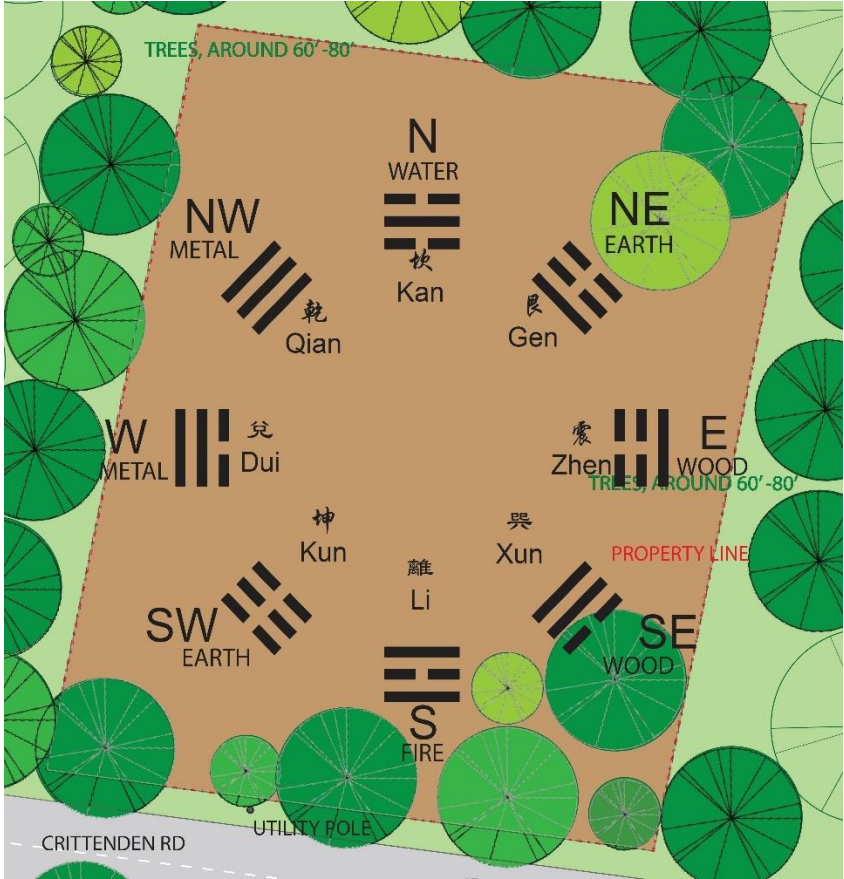


Figure 4.1.2-1: Superimpose the Gagua

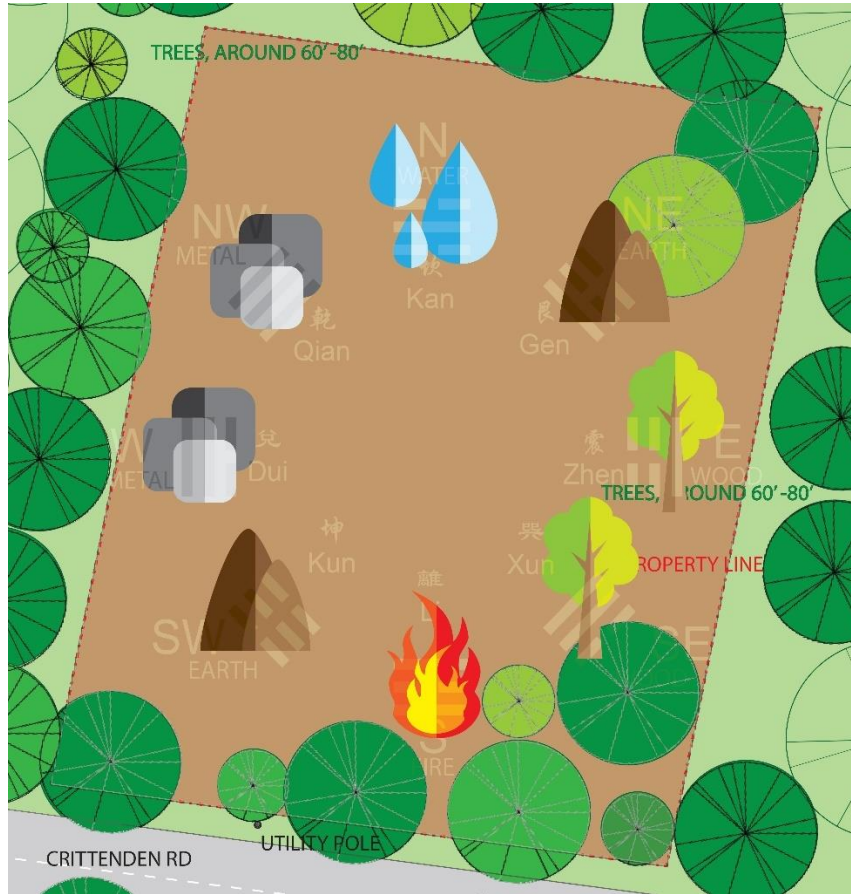


Figure 4.1.2-2: Identify five elements for each locations

**3. Superimpose West Four house arrangements onto the property.**

Because of the owner’s life destiny, a West Four house arrangement will be good for the owner’s family. Therefore, we superimpose West Four house arrangements here. Each house arrangement will have a different benefit and impact for the family members, so we will have four different design layouts based on four house arrangements.

## Qian house

The main entrance is located at the bottom right corner. The arrangement of the life areas is displayed in Figure 4.1.2-3.

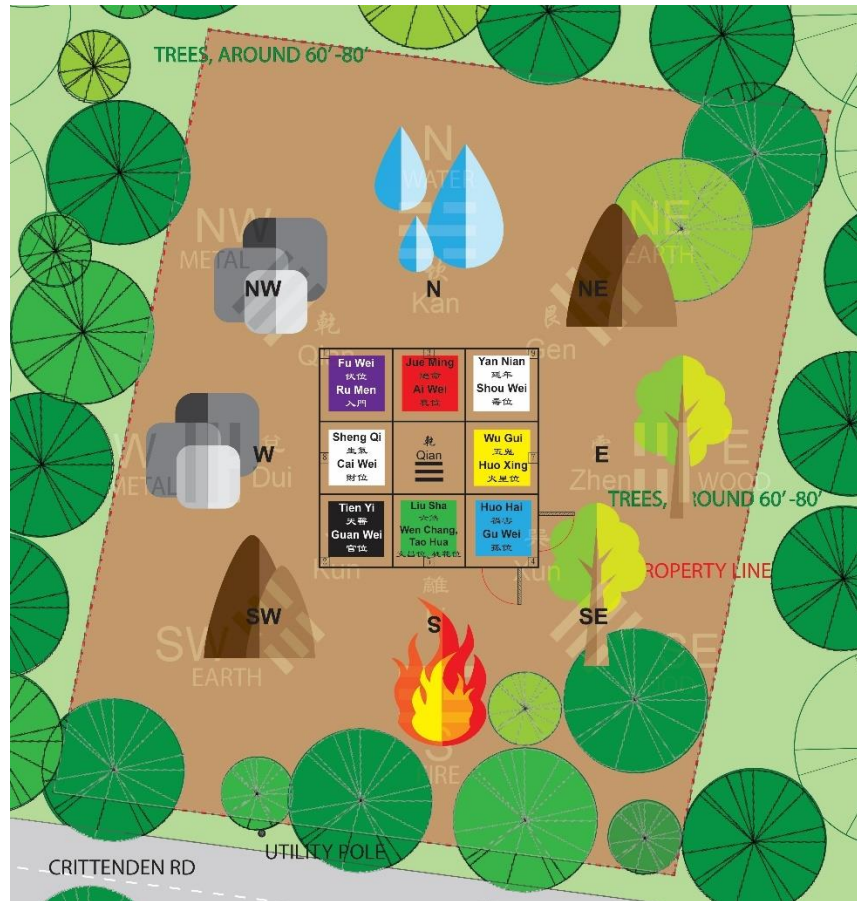


Figure 4.1.2-3: Superimpose Qian House life area

The design process for arranging the spaces is not linear or step-by-step. We should consider all the family members and how the different Qi flow in each life space and design the most suitable house for the client. For instance, Tien Yi, Yan Nian, and Sheng Qi all have benefits for the house owner. Tien Yi has an impact related to stability and practicality; Yan Nian has benefits related to relationship and marriage; and the influence of Sheng Qi is related to career development and seeking children. Since the owners have already had children and career promotion is not the priority for them, we



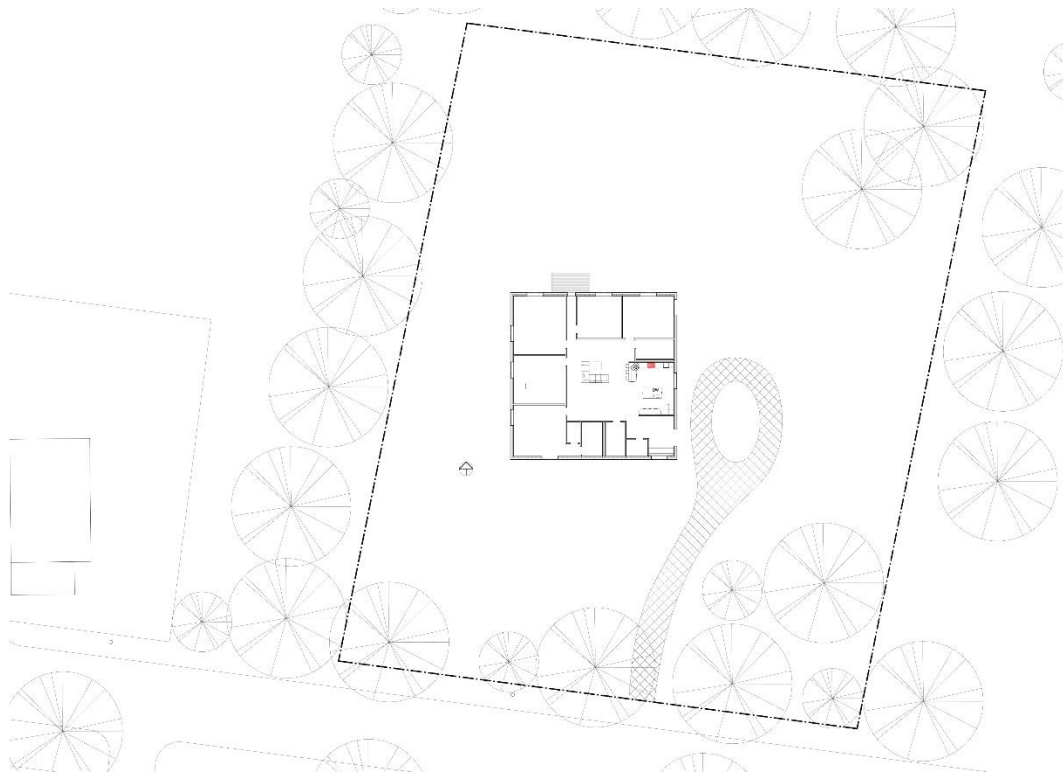
will not consider Sheng Qi to be the place for the master bedroom. To gather many different perspectives to consider the layout with Feng Shui principles, a design metric is provided to observe the influence between the eight life areas and spaces.

		Entry	Master Bedroom	Elder Bedroom	Children Bedroom	Kitchen	Bathroom (Master)	Bathroom	Office	Guest Room
乾 Qian	Sheng Qi 生氣		Good for job promotion	Aggressive, motivated, but not necessary for retirement	Have Difficult time to focus on school	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Qi flow is quick, hard time to focus	Good for job promotion & wealth
	Tien Yi 天啓		Stable & less trouble, very good for teaching job	Stable & less trouble	less trouble, and good for student	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Good place for working and studying	Good for job promotion
	Yan Nian 延年		Good for marriage and relationship	Good health and life	Good for introverted child, not for extroverted child	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Does not have good or bad benefit for office	Good for health
	Fu Wei 伏位		Natural place, can be good or bad	Natural place, can be good or bad	Natural place, can be good or bad	Natural place, can be good or bad	Not have benefit in here	Not have benefit in here	Natural place, can be good or bad	Natural place, can be good or bad
	Wu Gui 五鬼		Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic, easy to have healthy issue	Violent	Decrease the bad Qi flow & raise the Sheng Qi Energy	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic if stay here too long
	Jue Ming 絕命		Destructive and self destruction	Not calm and piece	Destructive and self destruction	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Not calm and piece	Not calm and piece if stay here too long
	Huo Hai 禍害	Entry								
	Liu Sha 六煞		Destructive relationship, marriage	Bad for health	Bad for relationship but good for study	Decrease the bad Qi flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, close to Master Bedroom	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, far for other bedrooms	Can be concentrated	Bad for health if stay here too long

Figure 4.1.2-4: Design metric for the Qian house



Figure 4.1.2-5: Interior layout for the Qian house



*Figure 4.1.2-6: Qian house site layout*

# Kun House

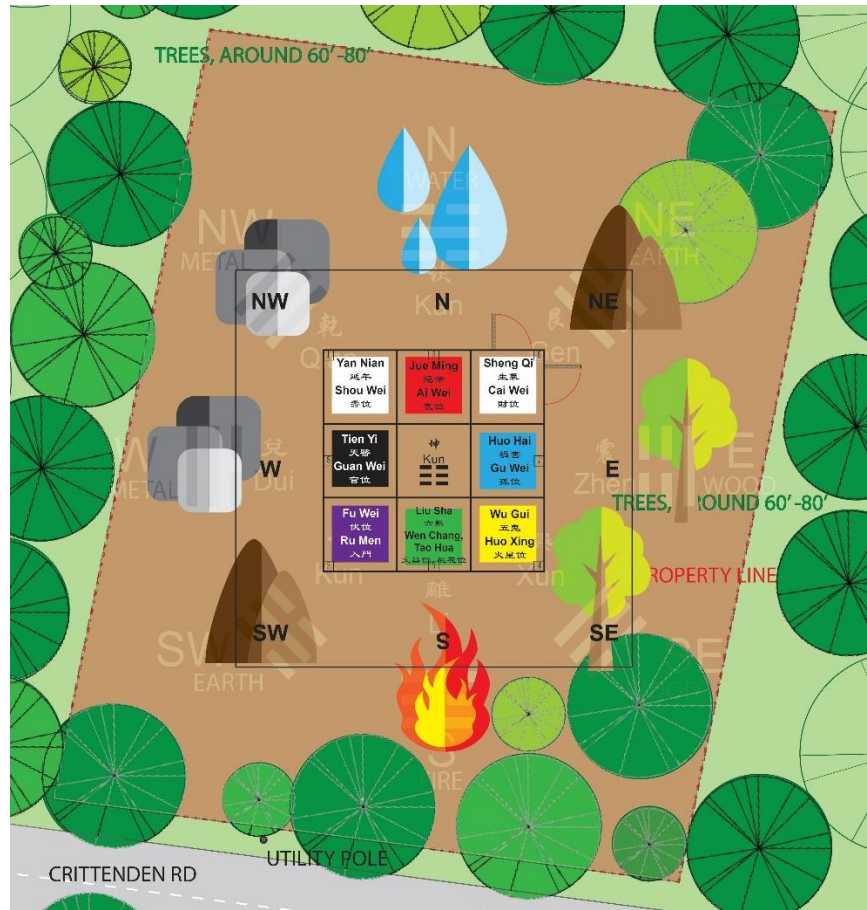


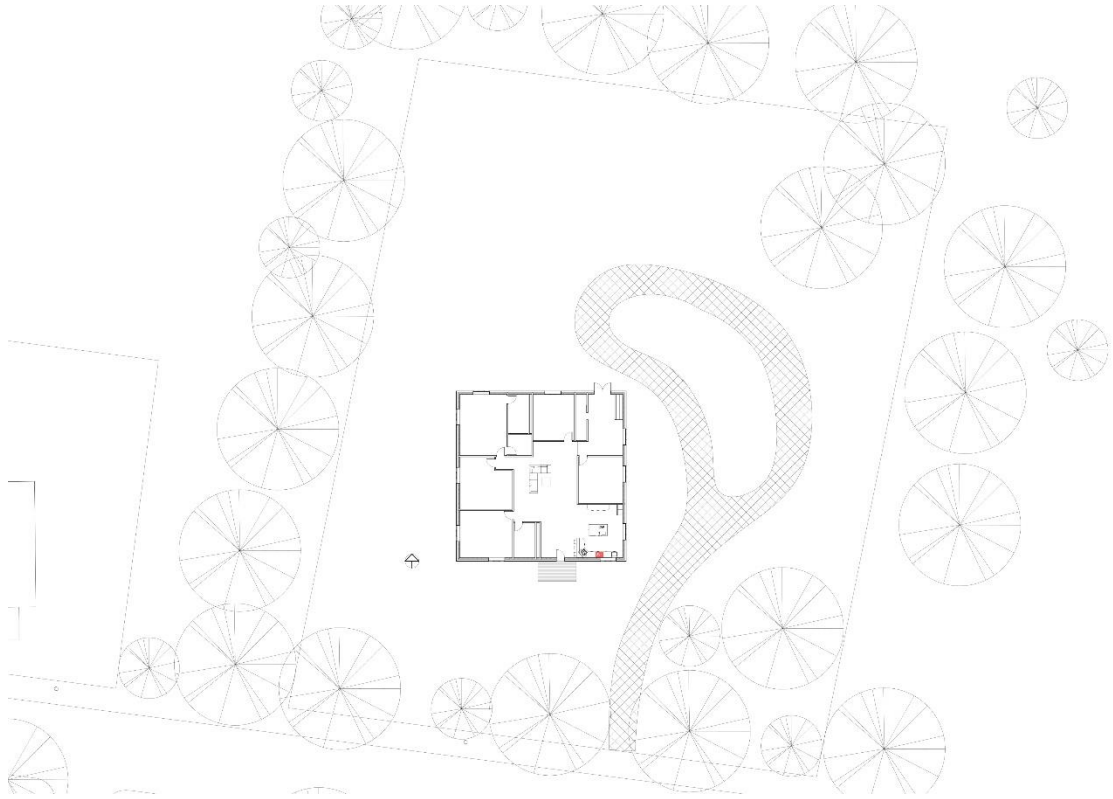
Figure 4.1.2-7: Superimposition of Kun house life areas

		Entry	Master Bedroom	Elder Bedroom	Children Bedroom	Kitchen	Bathroom (Master)	Bathroom	Office	Guest Room
神 Kun	Sheng Qi 生氣	Entry								
	Tien Yi 天醫		Stable & less trouble, very good for teaching job	Stable & less trouble	less trouble, and good for student	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Good place for working and studying	Good for job promotion
	Yan Nian 延年		Good for marriage and relationship	Good health and life	Good for introverted child, not for extroverted child	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Does not have good or bad benefit for office	Good for health
	Fu Wei 伏位		Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Not have benefit in here	Not have benefit in here	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad
	Wu Gui 五鬼		Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic, easy to have healthy issue	Violent	Decrease the bad Qi flow & raise the Yan Nian Energy	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic if stay here too long
	Jue Ming 絕命		Destructive and self destruction	Not calm and piece	Destructive and self destruction	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Not calm and piece	Not calm and piece if stay here too long
	Huo Hai 禍害		Causing fatigue and getting tired	Health issue	Causing fatigue and getting tired	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	More isolate but focus	
	Liu Sha 六煞		Destructive relationship, marriage	Bad for health	Bad for relationship but good for study	Decrease the bad Qi flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, close to other bedrooms	Can be concentrated	Bad for health if stay here too long

Figure 4.1.2-8: Design metric of the Kun house



Figure 4.1.2-9: Interior layout of the Kun house



*Figure 4.1.2-10: Kun house site layout*

# Gen House

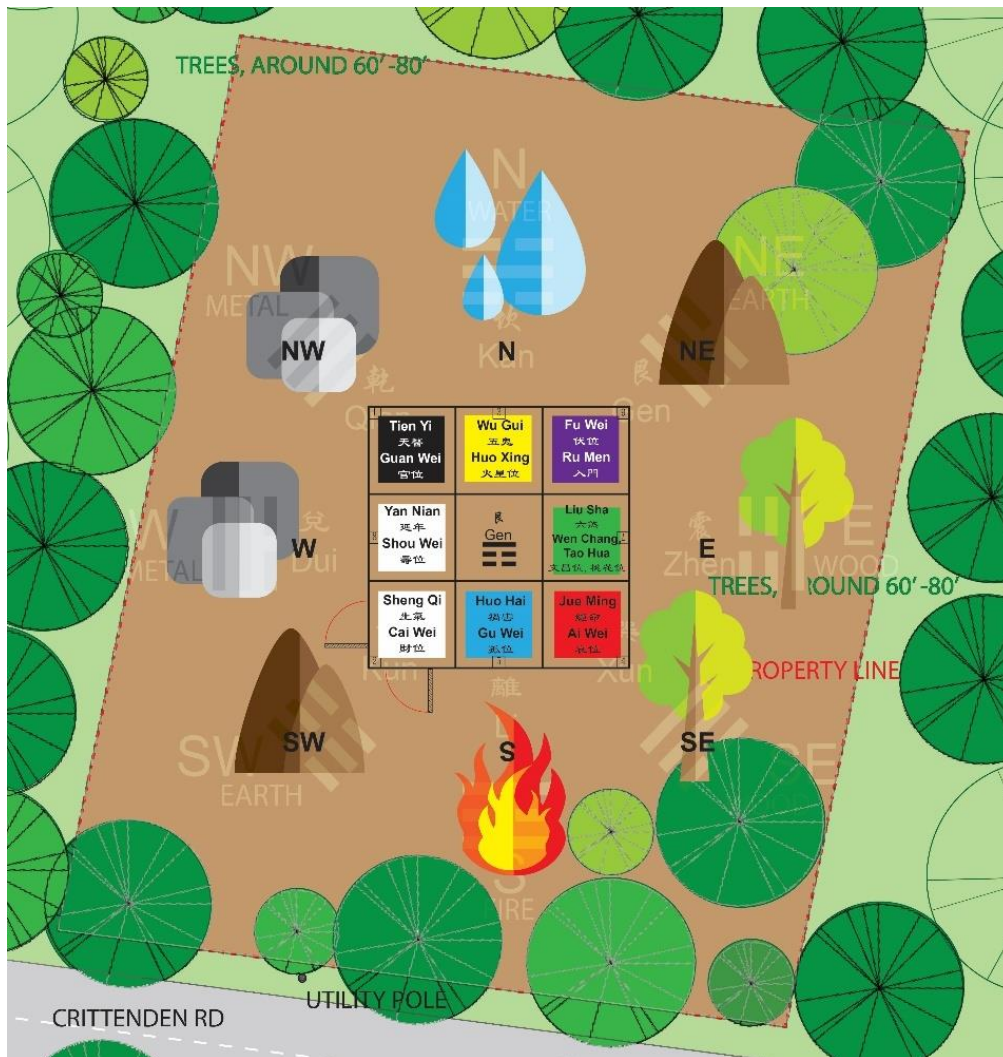
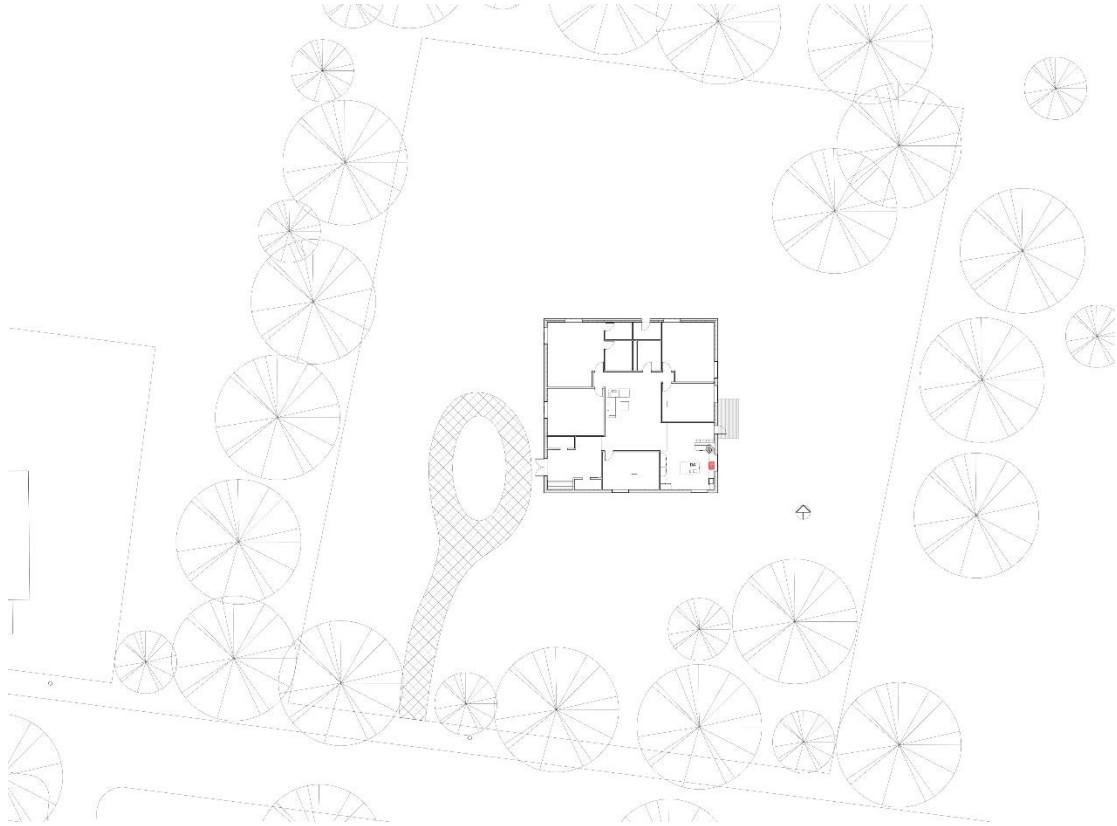


Figure 4.1.2-11: Superimposition of the Gen house life area



	Entry	Master Bedroom	Elder Bedroom	Children Bedroom	Kitchen	Bathroom (Master)	Bathroom	Office	Guest Room	
良 Gen	Sheng Qi 生氣	Entry								
	Tien Yi 天醫		Stable & less trouble, very good for teaching job	Stable & less trouble	less trouble, and good for student	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Good place for working and studying	Good for job promotion
	Yan Nian 延年		Good for marriage and relationship	Good health and life	Good for introverted child, not for extroverted child	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Does not have good or bad benefit for office	Good for health
	Fu Wei 伏位		Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Not have benefit in here	Not have benefit in here	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad
	Wu Gui 五鬼		Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic, easy to have healthy issue	Violent	Decrease the bad Qi flow & raise the Yan Nian Energy	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic if stay here too long
	Jue Ming 絕命		Destructive and self destruction	Not calm and piece	Destructive and self destruction	Decrease the bad Qi Flow & increase Tien Yi energy	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Not calm and piece	Not calm and piece if stay here too long
	Huo Hai 禍害		Causing fatigue and getting tired	Health issue	Causing fatigue and getting tired	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	More isolate but focus	
	Liu Sha 六煞		Destructive relationship, marriage	Bad for health	Bad for relationship but good for study	Decrease the bad Qi flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, close to other bedrooms	Can be concentrated	Bad for health if stay here too long

Figure 4.1.2-12: Design metric for the Dui house



*Figure 4.1.2-13: Gen house site layout*



Figure 4.1.2-14: Interior layout for the Gen house

## Dui House

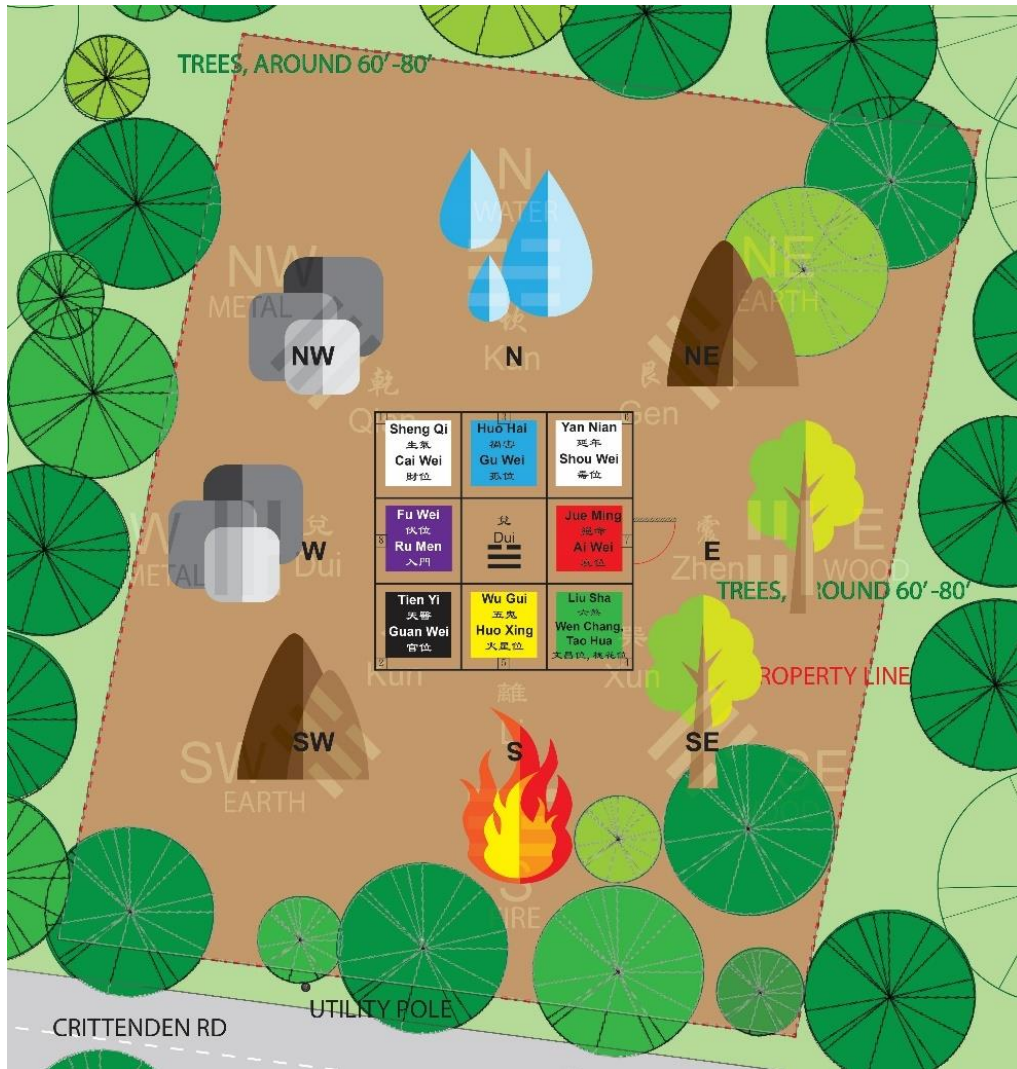


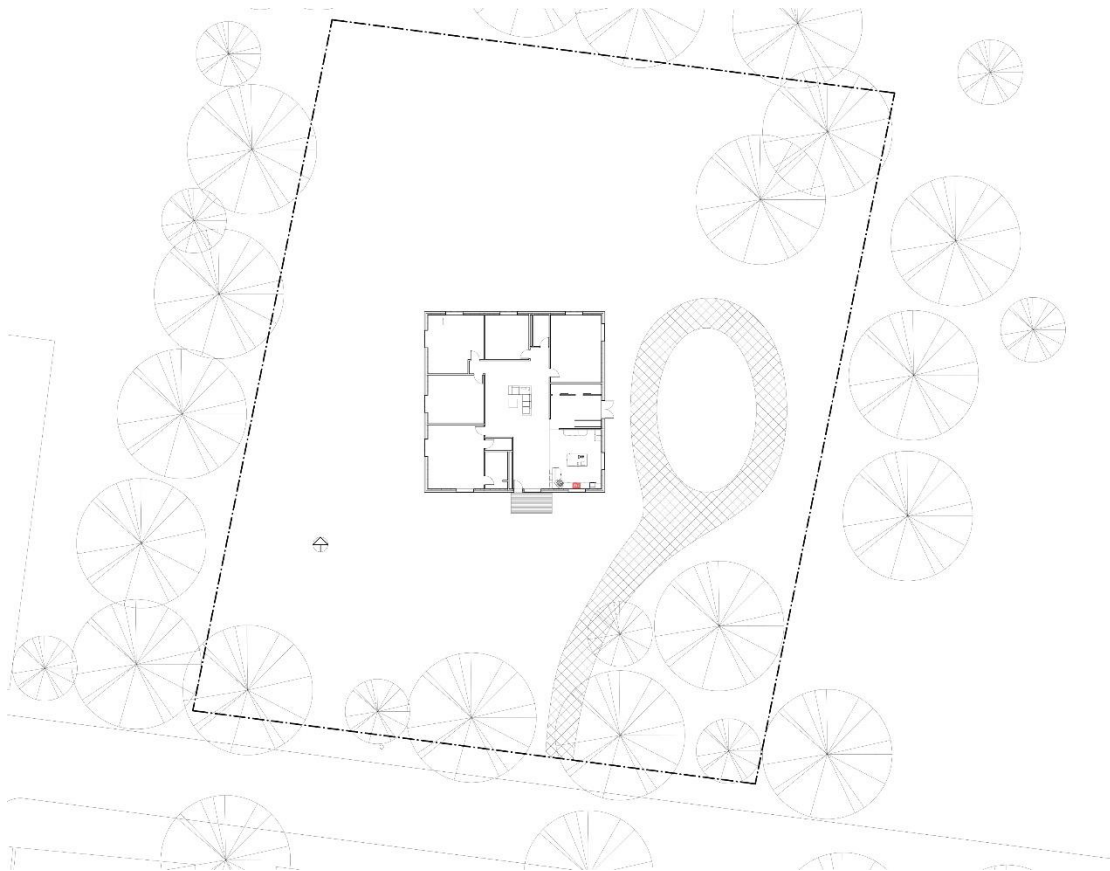
Figure 4.1.2-15: Superimposition of the Dui house life areas

		Entry	Master Bedroom	Elder Bedroom	Children Bedroom	Kitchen	Bathroom (Master)	Bathroom	Office	Guest Room
兌 Dui	Sheng Qi 生氣		Good for job promotion	Aggressive, motivated, but not necessary for retirement	Have Difficult time to focus on school	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Qi flow is quick, hard time to focus	Good for job promotion & wealth
	Tien Yi 天醫		Stable & less trouble, very good for teaching job	Stable & less trouble, very good for teaching job	less trouble, and good for student	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Good place for working and studying	Good for job promotion
	Yan Nian 延年		Good for marriage and relationship	Good health and life	Good for introverted child, not for extroverted child	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Disturb the Qi flow	Does not have good or bad benefit for office	Good for health
	Fu Wei 伏位		Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Not have benefit in here	Not have benefit in here	Neutral place, can be good or bad	Neutral place, can be good or bad
	Wu Gui 五鬼		Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic, easy to have healthy issue	Violent	Decrease the bad Qi flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Fierce and chaotic	Fierce and chaotic if stay here too long
	Jue Ming 絕命	Entry								
	Huo Hai 禍害		Destructive and self destruction	Not calm and piece	Destructive and self destruction	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Decrease the bad Qi Flow	Not calm and piece	Not calm and piece if stay here too long
	Liu Sha 六煞		Destructive relationship, marriage	Bad for health	Bad for relationship but good for study	Decrease the bad Qi flow & raise the Sheng Qi Energy	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, close to Master Bedroom	Decrease the bad Qi Flow, far for other bedrooms	Can be concentrated	Bad for health if stay here too long

Figure 4.1.2-16: Design metric for the Gen house



Figure 4.1.2-17: Interior layout for the Dui house



*Figure 4.1.2-18: Dui house site layout*

4. Design the interior space based on the Gen house arrangement.

It is very important to arrange the space based on the Gen house arrangement. For instance, the top left corner is Tien Yi, and Tien Yi is the perfect place for students or the owner, who is a teacher and so more stable, but it is not good for elderly people. Therefore, Tien Yi is a good place for the master bedroom, whereas the Qi flow in Yan Nian is stable and smooth, so the middle left side is a good place for the elder bedroom. Following the Gen house arrangement, we get the layout shown by Figure 4.1.2-19.

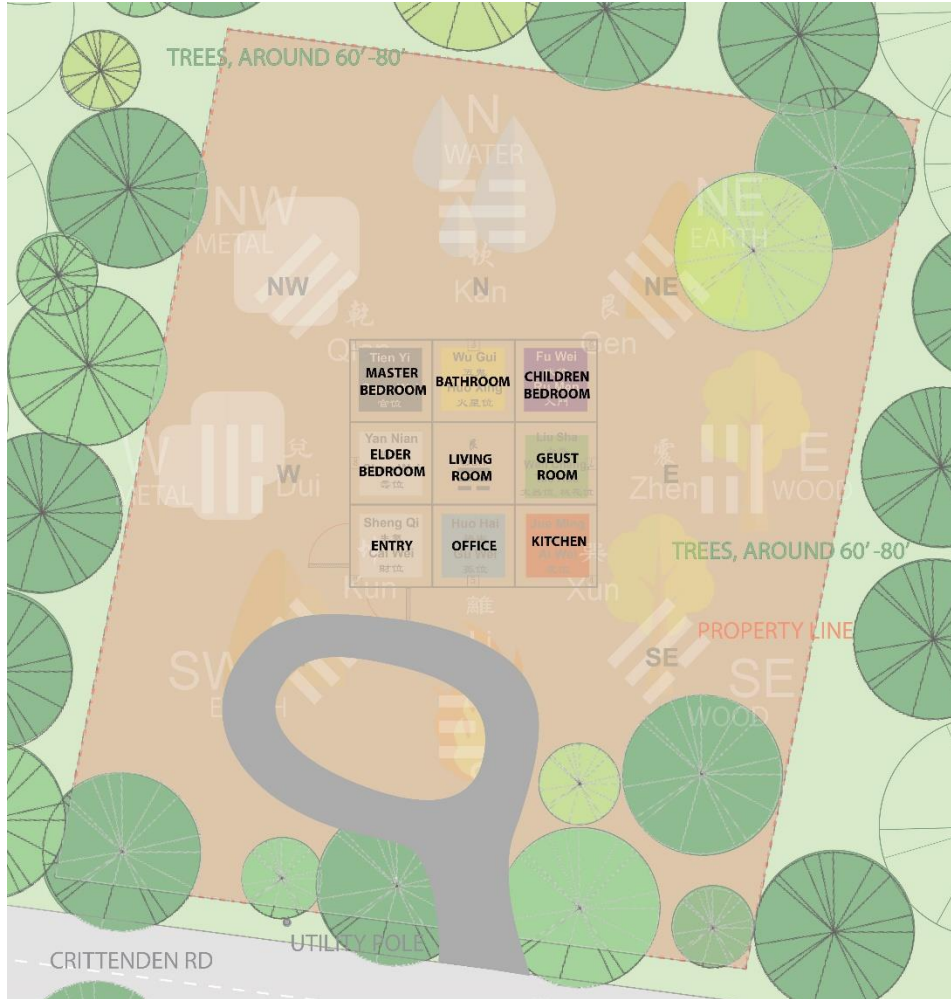


Figure 4.1.2-19: Gen house interior layout

## 5. Landscape design based on the five elements and functions

The five elements are always interactive each other, and each space has its own element. For instance, it is not a good idea to add a water fountain in the south side because that side is the fire element, and water will work against fire. For the same reason, heavy stone and status are considered an earth element, so the west side is a good place to have status or heavy stone because the west side is metal, and earth grows metal.





Figure 4.1.2-20: Gen house landscape design layout

- Using Feng Shui cures and color to adjust the detail based on overall design and the whole family's life destiny

The life destiny for each of the family members is different, so there will be a more complex connection between everyone. We will therefore use Feng Shui cures to adjust the detail. For instance, the young boy was born on October 9, 1997, which is the Ying metal element. We should therefore not decorate his

room with a fishbowl because this would be water against metal.

## 5 COMPARISON

Table 5 below lists six different concepts comparing the Modern Feng Shui and Traditional Feng Shui principles.

	<b>Traditional Feng Shui</b>	<b>Modern Feng Shui</b>
<b>Religious</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Tibet Buddhism</b>
<b>Human's life destiny</b>	<b>From owner to all family members</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Bagua</b>	<b>Traditional Bagua</b>	<b>New Modern Feng Shui Bagua</b>
<b>Landscape design</b>	<b>Using traditional Bagua to find each element for each location</b>	<b>Does not need to apply Bagua into landscape design</b>
<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Have to follow the eight house arrangements and relate to the house owner</b>	<b>Different orientation will not change the impact from the Modern Feng Shui approach.</b>
<b>Interior layout</b>	<b>Follow the eight-house arrangement</b>	<b>Designer can arrange the interior layout by</b>

		<b>owner's preference and with more freedom.</b>
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*Table 2-1: Comparison*

## 5.1 RELIGIOUS

Modern Feng Shui has a strong connection with Tibetan Buddhism. Heart Mudra, Exorcism Mudra, and Six True Word are common ways in Buddhism to pursue good fortune and avoid disaster. Modern Feng Shui is the only Feng Shui school related to Tibetan Buddhism.

If we follow the historic perspective, then from Bagua to I-Ching, Tai Chi, Yin Yang, the Five elements, and Qi, Traditional Feng Shui principles are more akin to professional knowledge than a religious approach.

To summarize, the connection with religion might mislead people about the value of Feng Shui, and it might also cause some concerns if people who have different religions want to apply it.

## 5.2 HUMANS' LIFE DESTINY

Modern Feng Shui does not address humans' life destiny. It is more focused on surrounding arrangement design. On the other hand, humans' life destiny is a huge concern for Traditional Feng Shui, because it believes that each person has a distinctive Qi flow and five elements. Therefore, before applying Traditional Feng Shui, it is necessary to ask some personal information of the client, such as the dates of birth of

family members, their job types, or relationships.

Both modernists and traditionalists believe that each object has its own Qi flow and is connected to each other, and human beings are also part of this connection. If we do not consider the different Qi flow from each person, then we might not be able to find the balance between “universe, earth, and human.”

### **5.3 BAGUA**

Both of the Bagua have the concept of the eight trigrams that create the pattern of Yin and Yang. The content in traditional Bagua is very complicated, and the influence of it on people will change based on different locations, orientations, or whom they are with. The content for Modern Bagua is very straightforward: nine life areas correspond to eight trigrams plus a center area, and each one has its own five elements, color, number, and influence. Another difference is that the orientation of traditional Bagua will never change. The bottom of Bagua, which is a Ken trigram, always points to the north, whereas the Modern Bagua will be rotated by following the main entry of the house. As Figure 5.3-1 shows, the Gen, Kan, and Qian are always aligned with the front door,

which means the Kan trigram is not always pointing north.<sup>71</sup>

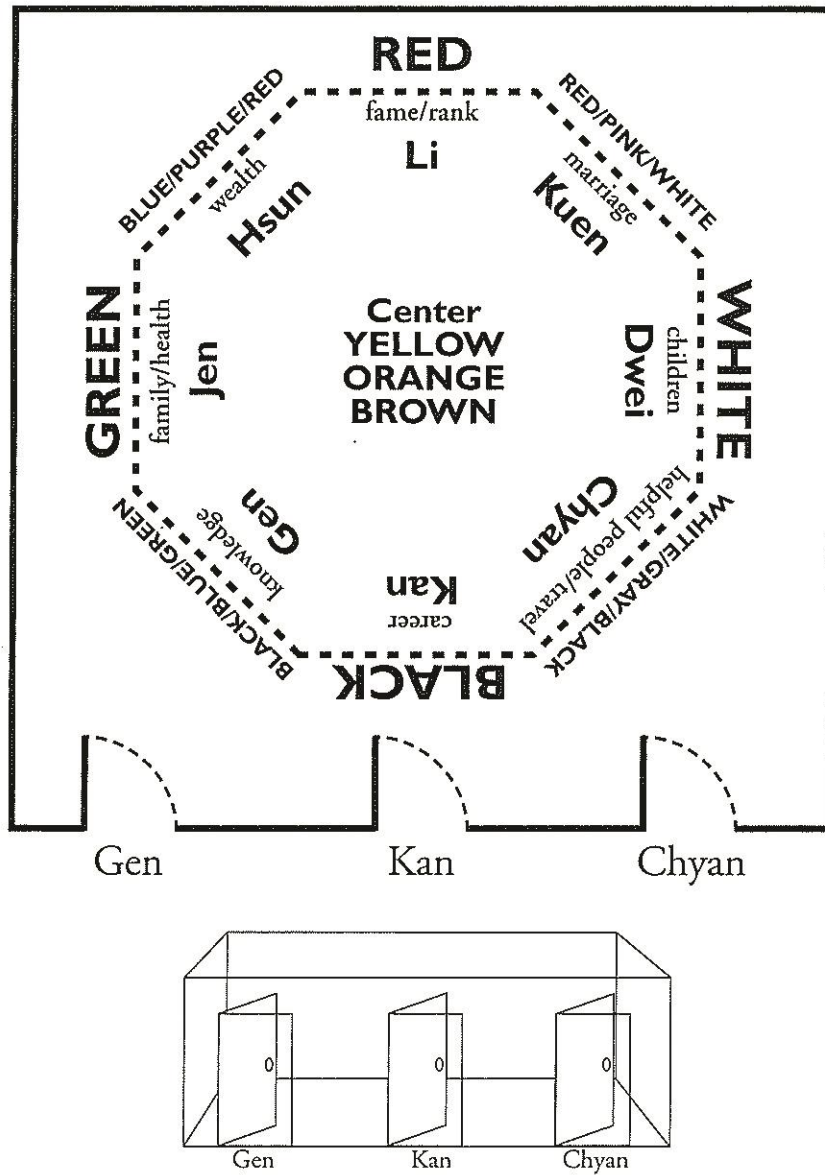


Figure 5.3.-1: Modern Bagua and the front door

<sup>71</sup> (Rossbach and Lin 1998)

## **5.4 LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

Landscape design for both Feng Shui principles has a lot of similar places. For example, the distance between the house and the trees should not be too close. The shape of the fountain should be circular. The main different is that Traditional Feng Shui has to consider five elements for location and objects based on Bagua.

## **5.5 ORIENTATION**

The house's orientation will not have an impact in Modern Feng Shui. The Modern Bagua will always align with the front door, so no matter how the house is oriented, the Modern Bagua will rotate by following the front door (Figures 5.5-1 and 5.5-2).

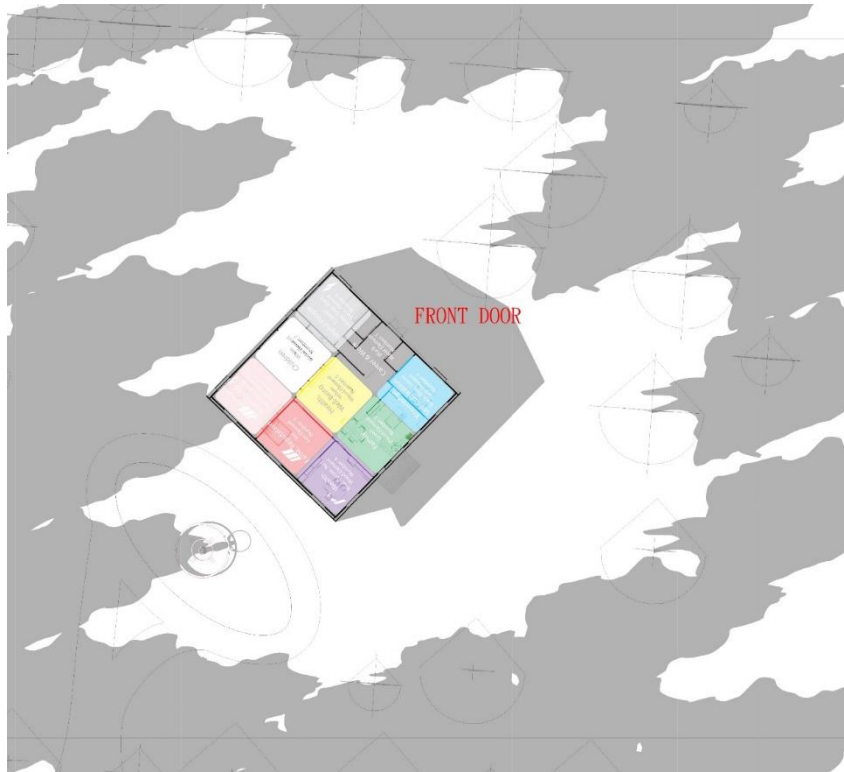


Figure 5.5-1: Modern Feng Shui—northeast orientation



Figure 5.5-2: Modern Feng Shui—northwest orientation

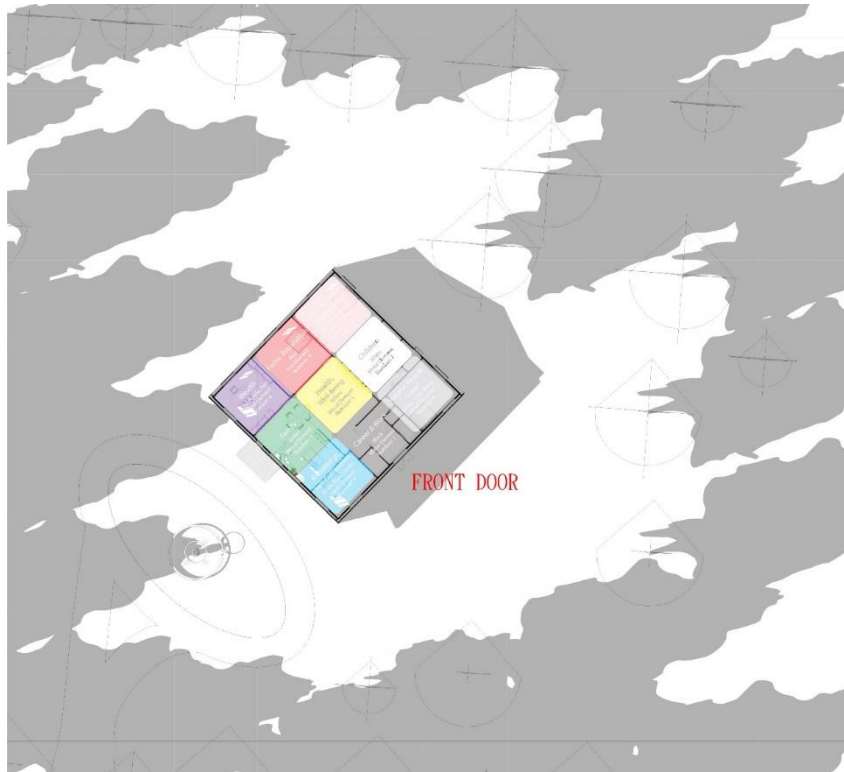


Figure 5.5-3: Modern Feng Shui—southeast orientation

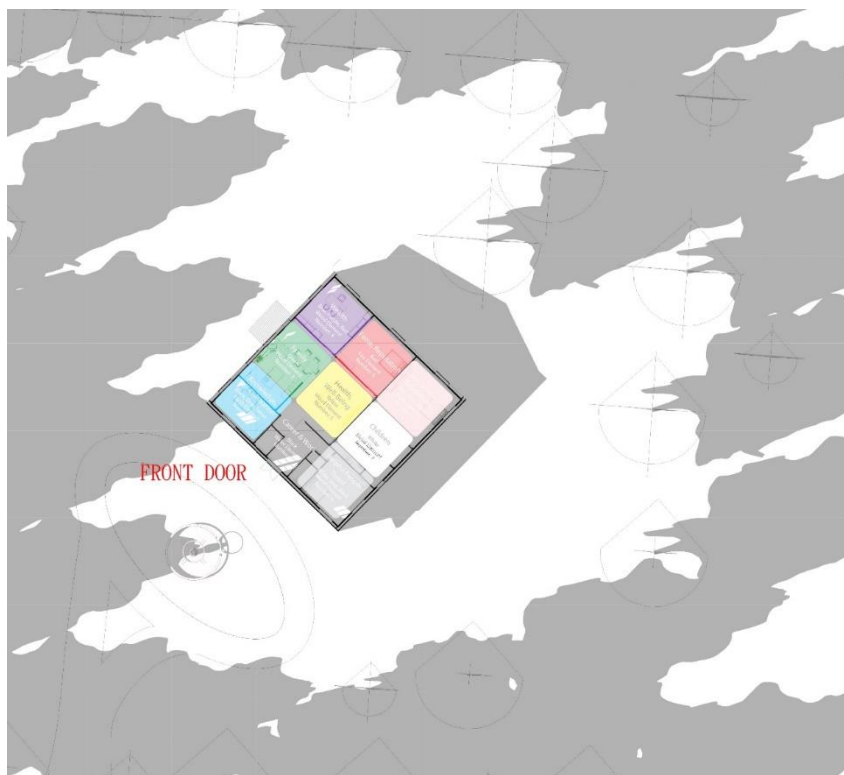


Figure 5.5-4: Modern Feng Shui—southwest orientation



In the Traditional Feng Shui principles, each orientation will have a different layout via eight house arrangements. For instance, the front door facing south is the Li house arrangement, and the front door facing north is the Kan house arrangement.

The concept that “orientation does not change the Modern Feng Shui layout” is behind the primary argument that Modern Feng Shui might lose the core value of Feng Shui itself. As mentioned, finding the balance between all the objects is the main purpose of Feng Shui, so when we change the orientation of the house, the Qi flow should also change. Therefore, the space is good for the master bedroom, but it might not be a good place after changing the orientation.

## **5.6 Life areas**

Both of the Feng Shui principles have nine different life areas. For Modern Feng Shui, each life area corresponds to specific benefits or functions for people. The dui area, for instance, is related to children. The way to increase luck for children is to add a cure or use the right color for the dui area. Therefore, Modern Bagua is not really related to the interior layout.

For Traditional Feng Shui, there are eight different life area arrangements depending on house orientation. Nine life areas correspond to the characteristics of Qi flow, and each life area will have a certain influence on people. For instance, Sheng Qi is good for young couples but might not be good for retired people. Therefore, life area

arrangements have a significant impact on interior layout, because it will create a bad Qi flow if we put the space in an inappropriate life area.

Due to these two different approaches, it might cause some conflict if the same design layout is used for two Feng Shui principles. As Figure 5.6-1 shows, if we superimpose the Gen house life area arrangement to replace the Modern Bagua in the same design layout, we locate the elder bedroom in the Liu Sha area, which is not an appropriate place for elderly people.

We do not have enough research or data to prove it will have a good or bad impact based on the information from the life areas. However, it is very important for people who believe Feng Shui or want to apply Feng Shui to be aware that there is conflict between the two Feng Shui principles.

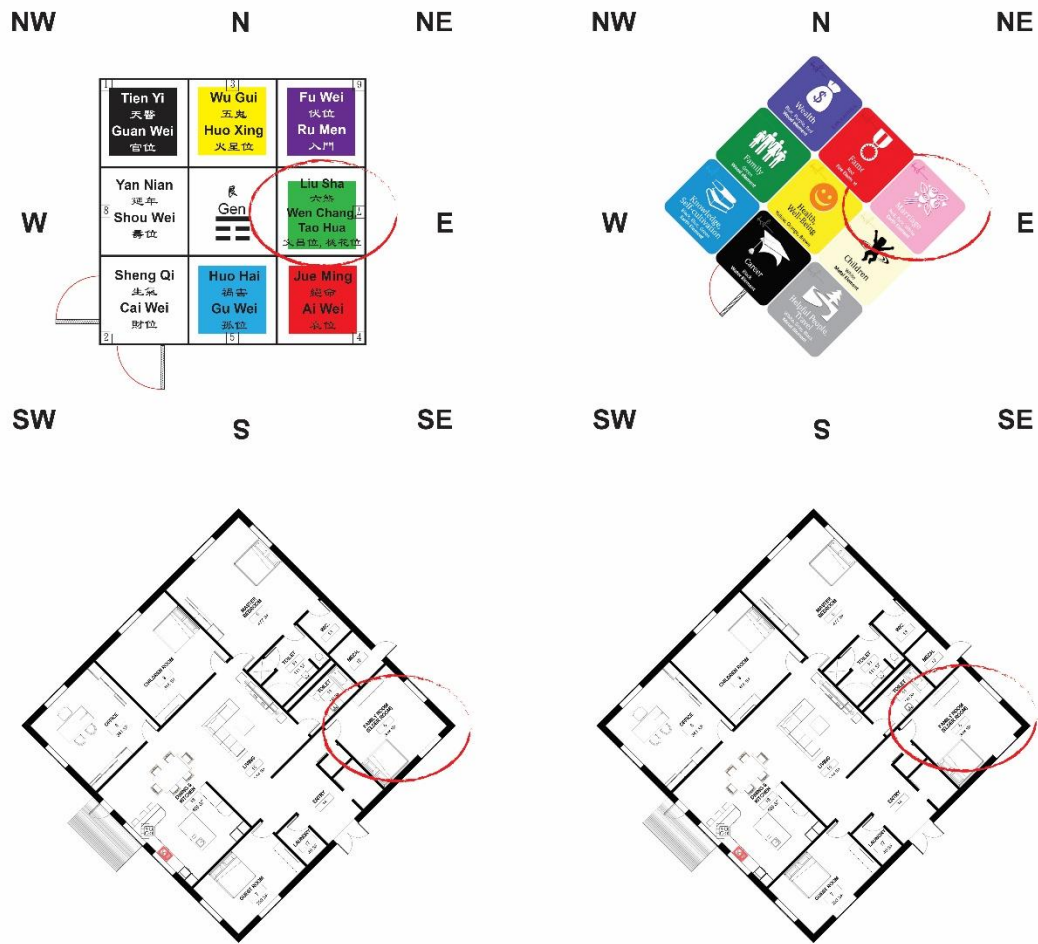


Figure 5.6-1: There is conflict in using the same design layout with two different Feng Shui principles.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Cultural diversity is a common result of globalization. “Culture mix” products are developed under such a situation. For instance, California roll is a classic example of a

mix of Japanese sushi and an American favorite fruit: avocado. However, there is a risk that “culture mix” products might lose their basic value or concept. Sometimes there can be a huge benefit if the product or its application does not contain the same concept as the original. Modern Feng Shui is a typical cultural mix product made by Western culture. It is very important for people who want to apply Feng Shui principles to recognize how traditional and Modern Feng Shui are very different.

The core value of Feng Shui is finding the balance between the “universe,” “earth,” and “human.” Because of the change of the Qi flow, it always happens and never stops, so managing the Qi flow is the way to find the balance. Feng Shui is the guidebook to help us to understand how the Qi flow relates to each other. I-Ching, Bagua, Yin Yang, Tai Chi, life destiny, life area, and five elements are the key to controlling the Qi flow around us. As Dr. Zeng Shih Ching writes, “everything related to each other, just like Yin and Yang.” We should therefore always consider all the elements together.<sup>72</sup> In using Traditional Feng Shui principles, we not only need to consider the location, surrounding, and orientation of the house (universe and earth’s Qi flow), but we also need to know the owner’s life destiny, so we can have a full understanding of the Qi flow and its influences.

The comparisons in this paper show that Modern Feng Shui principles are easier for people to apply, but the process of simplification might not consider some key objects, such as humans' life destiny. Therefore, people might not be able to fully

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<sup>72</sup> (Zeng 2009)

understand how the Qi flow impacts the owner.

As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, the aim of this paper is not to decide which Feng Shui principle is best. It is more concerned with a comparison of the different methods for applying Feng Shui. Somehow, we might or might not be able to find the balance if we can understand how everything works together, or even worse if we design the interior layout in inappropriate life areas.

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