THE SHIKONGREN ARCHIVE

VOL. III

Reading the Four Pillars

Bazi: the method, the cases, and the limits

Lü Wenyi

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18 essays · www.shikongren.com

How to read this volume

Eighteen essays on the chart itself: how a day master is judged, how the useful god is chosen, and where the reading stops being an argument and starts being a guess.

Four Pillars (*bazi*, 八字) is a time system before it is anything else. A birth moment is written as four pairs of a stem and a branch — year, month, day, hour — eight characters in all, and every later judgement is derived from those eight. The reading is not a list of lucky and unlucky traits. It is a model of how one moment sits inside the larger cycles around it.

These eighteen essays are about the model rather than about fortune-telling technique. The first block lays out the four systems a chart is built from — positioning, time, environment and counting. The second shows how the chart is actually counted, and what "strength" means when it is measured instead of guessed. The third takes the ten gods apart: what they name, how they are told apart, and where the standard correspondences break down. The last block is honest about failure — twins with the same chart, charts that give different fates, and a theory put to a test.

If you only read three: *The Logic of Bazi Reading*, *What the Ten Gods Mean*, and *Why Identical Charts Give Different Fates*.

About this book

This volume collects 18 essays first published at **shikongren.com**, a free public archive of Chinese metaphysics (yixue) maintained by Lü Wenyi. The archive runs to several hundred pieces in Chinese; the English shelf is a translation project, and each essay here was translated from a Chinese original that is still online.

The translation is faithful to the argument rather than to the sentence. Idiom was rebuilt, not carried over. Where an essay names living people in dispute, the translation generalises the name; where a passage was pure invective, it is compressed to the argument and a note says so. Course prices, phone numbers and enrolment notices — common in the Chinese originals — are omitted.

Everything in these pages is a position taken by the author and argued from cases. It is not presented as laboratory finding, and no reader is asked to accept it on authority. The useful test of any claim in this book is whether it describes something you can go and look at.

Free to download and pass on. Please keep the source and credit it; do not sell it. Each essay is also readable, with its Chinese original, at www.shikongren.com.

Compiled 2026 · 18 essays

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CHAPTER ONE

A Brief Word on the Underlying Logic of Bazi Reading

2023-12-09 · 1,198 words

> **Translator's note.** The gate into the Bazi material. Before any technique, Lü insists on the boundary: a birth chart can say *what kind* of thing will happen, never *how much*. Everything the trade promises beyond that — the size of a fortune, the height of a degree, the length of a life — he says outright cannot be delivered, and he uses his own students' refusal to take part in "duels" over those questions as the proof that the refusal is honest. Read this first; the eighteen essays that follow are all applications of this one boundary.

What is "underlying logic"?

Underlying logic is a way of thinking that starts from the nature of a thing and works out from there how its problems can be solved.

Its essence is finding the same within differences, and the unchanging within change. Only when you have grasped the underlying logic can you see a thing for what it is.

In one sentence: underlying logic is common sense. Only when you understand the underlying logic of something do you know what it can do, what it cannot do, and where its limits lie.

Take a car. A car moves because turning wheels generate friction against the road, and the road pushes back. That is its underlying logic, and it settles the matter: a car runs on roads. It does not fly and it does not sail. A ship, by the same token, moves because a screw propeller turns in water and generates

thrust. Its underlying logic confines it to water. You cannot drive it onto a road, and you certainly cannot fly it.

Or take gold. Gold is valuable because it is scarce and because it endures. If the earth were paved with gold, gold would be worth no more than dog shit.

So what is the underlying logic of bazi reading — meaning here bazi as a *time* system — and what can it calculate, and what can it not?

There are two basic pieces of underlying logic.

1. **People born under the same five-fold coincidence do not have the same fate.**
2. **People born under the same five-fold coincidence do not convert their fate-energy in the same direction.**

By "five-fold coincidence" I mean the same year, month, day and hour of birth — which is to say, the same four pillars — plus the same sex. A "six-fold coincidence" adds the same birthplace.

From these two pieces of logic we can derive the limits of bazi calculation:

1. **Bazi can make qualitative judgements, not quantitative ones.**
2. **The information in a bazi is not the same thing as the fact.**

Bazi reading is a technique. It has places where it applies and places where it does not. An ECG machine measures heart electrical activity; that is what it is for. Insist on using an ECG to diagnose diabetes or cirrhosis and you are being absurd.

Speaking from my own experience: I have never met a five-fold coincidence, but it takes only a little thought to see that five-fold coincidences must have different fates, and must differ substantially.

Try this. Check the well-known rich men of this country. Are any two of them born under exactly the same bazi? Each of those men's charts stands for

several hundred or several thousand people. If those hundreds or thousands were all as rich as the rich man, we would have heard of them, wouldn't we? And if that were how it worked, then all anyone would need is the birth time of a rich man's child, and a scheduled caesarean at that moment would produce another rich second generation. Wouldn't it?

The same test works on officials. You can look up the birth data of every eminent person you like. Are there five-fold coincidences among them? Behind each of those charts stand hundreds or thousands of people born under the same one. Where did they all go?

So: five-fold coincidences have different fates. That is underlying logic. It is common sense. It is fact.

To respect the fact is to respect yourself, and to respect others.

Lü-school bazi admits that bazi cannot calculate the level of wealth, cannot calculate the level of education, cannot calculate the size of an official misfortune or an injury, cannot calculate the length of a life. In short, it does not do quantitative things at all. Of all the bazi schools in China, only the Lü school dares to admit this. Only the Lü school admits that bazi is an ECG machine and not an all-purpose device. That is precisely what is most admirable about it.

Someone will say: “Just because the Lü school cannot calculate the level of wealth doesn't mean nobody can.” Yes — and if you put it that way, of course I can calculate it too. Without looking at the chart at all, by guessing, I might well be more accurate than you.

Someone else will say: “Lü-school readers want your height, the size of your backside, and how much flesh is on the soles of your feet before they will read you. People will laugh at that. How are you supposed to earn a living?”

Yes, you are right again. Science is not for earning a living. If earning a living is what you want, you need not study the Lü school at all — you need not study

even traditional bazi. Learn a bit of patter and you are fully equipped.

Many “yixue masters” in Taiwan run dedicated courses in exactly that patter. No bazi required. Learn the script and you can make a living.

But come back to it: if you have thoroughly understood Lü-school theory, and on top of that you have mastered the patter in live practice — can you really not make a living?

Lately, in various group chats, I keep seeing people say that Lü-school students dare not practise, and they drag this or that student off to “duel” with traditional bazi readers — over the level of wealth, over the level of education, over life and death, over how many brothers a man has, and even, heaven help us, over a person's occupation.

The underlying logic of Lü-school theory states plainly what can be judged and what cannot. Insist on dragging Lü-school students into judging things that are “no better than guessing,” and whose brain is the sick one?

Others have tried to drag Teacher Lü himself into traditional groups to duel with the masters. Teacher Lü has already offended the entire traditional yixue world. Heaven knows how many pits have been dug for him to fall into. Do you seriously imagine he will walk into them obligingly? If Teacher Lü's head were as waterlogged as yours, those hundred and eighty thousand students would have scattered long ago.

And as for whether Lü-school students dare to practise — is that really your worry? Must practice happen in front of you to count as practice? Is practice inside one's own circle mere talk?

Respect science. Respect fact. Respect logic. I hope every Lü-school student keeps the original intention, fears no weather, and walks on bravely. The wheel of history never turns backwards.

By Yuruyi

CHAPTER TWO

The Positioning System of a Bazi

2020-08-15 · 2,377 words

> **Translator's note.** The technical centre of the whole Bazi corpus. A chart, Lü says, carries two sets of ten gods: the ones you can see in the four pillars, which he calls the *clothing system*, and the ones hidden underneath, which he calls the *positioning ten gods* or the *body*. Reading the clothes is what the trade does, and it is why the trade needs the fictions of "special charts," "following structures" and "transforming structures" — every chart that does not fit gets reclassified instead of re-read. Two people born under four identical *wuwu* pillars, one small and clever in Hainan and one huge and dull in Henan, are the demonstration.

Every bazi is in fact made of two systems: the surface ten gods and the positioning ten gods. The surface ten gods can be pictured as a person's clothing. The positioning ten gods can be pictured as the person's body.

1. The positioning standard linking a bazi to the six relations



2. The positioning standard linking a bazi to the positioning ten gods



3. What the positioning ten gods are

The positioning ten gods are the stems and branches hidden beneath the visible stems and branches of a chart — the ones that carry the essential human attributes of year, month, day and hour.

Any bazi we look at is that person's clothing system. To see what a person is once the clothes are off, we judge by the positioning of the ten gods.

A male chart: **Jiashen, Yiwei, Jiayin, Xinwei** — this is the clothing system.

Wuzi, Yiwei, Jiachen (Xu), Bingshen — this is the body system.

Take the four *wuwu* charts below as an illustration.

(clothing)		(body)
(Ren) Wuwu (Wu)		Renwu
(Wu) Wuwu (Zi)		Wuzi
(day master) Wuwu (Zi)		Wuzi
(Geng) Wuwu (Yin)		Gengyin

Why does this idea hold? Because if a person is standing in front of us alive, it means he has already adapted to being roasted by four fires. He has adapted to bathing in fire every day. He has adapted to washing in fire rather than in water. He is a man whom fire cannot kill — and if fire cannot kill him, then whether he “follows” or “does not follow” is beside the point.

If the person is dead, it means he could not withstand the roasting of those four fires. Every bazi has people who die at birth, and every bazi has people who live to eighty. Tally the records of every maternity hospital in the country and you will find that in every single hour a child is born and then dies. That is to say: within any one bazi there is someone who dies at birth, someone who dies at one, someone who dies at two, someone who dies at three.

Suppose this were Lord Guan's chart. When would Lord Guan die? Lord Guan dies in the years that fear fire.

Reading fortunes from the clothing system does have a certain accuracy. Women generally wear skirts; women generally keep their hair long; women generally wear earrings. See a white coat and you can be fairly sure the wearer is one of four things: a doctor, a cook, a barber, or someone in mourning for an elder. But you cannot say that everyone in a white coat is certainly a doctor — that habit of judgement is simply wrong. The clothing system cannot deliver precision.

Stare only at the surface and your accuracy will be very low. Should you then stare only at the body system? No. The scientific method is to combine the two.

Do you know why you cannot read accurately? Because you have been judging a person's wealth and rank, marriage, children and health from their clothes and accessories, and the error rate of that method is enormous. Plenty of frauds are paupers whose clothes, watches, rings and cars are all famous brands. A woman's clothes may suggest a full figure; undressed, she may be an airfield. Does carrying an official seal make a man an official? He may be the office messenger.

It is precisely because traditional fate studies read only the clothing system and never the body system that it has invented “special charts,” “ordinary charts” and “following structures.” All of these are absurd.

There are no special charts. Of the people who write books and the people who read fortunes, eighty per cent of those who speak of “special charts” are charlatans. Why? Because the word *special* has a powerful effect on a client's psychology, and with it a man can become a top-level master without learning any theory at all.

First, psychologically, everyone believes himself special — the official, the labourer, the beggar, the childless, the healthy, the disabled.

Second, once the client accepts that he is special, the master has struck gold. Because the client is special, even a wrong reading lays a solid foundation for charging again. Because the client is special, the master can try a reading: hit, and the client thinks him formidable; miss, correct it, and the client still thinks him formidable. With the word *special* plus a little reading of faces, you can fleece clients without studying any predictive theory whatsoever.

Why do we study predictive theory? Because we genuinely want to understand why our fate is what it is, and how we can move toward the auspicious and away from the inauspicious. Researching fate and working as a reader is not only about handling clients and making a little money. Turning our fate for the better is the fundamental purpose. If you can understand your own fate, you can act, do business and earn according to your own situation; you need

not earn your money from clients' fees. Why can we not do that? Because our predictions cannot reach the precision of “tomorrow I will certainly make money.”

There is no special chart and no ordinary chart. Any chart can produce an emperor; any chart can produce a beggar. Charts are not good or bad. Take commodities: exchange value can be compared, use value cannot. You cannot say a screw is of small use and a car of great use. A thing of great value is not necessarily of great use at a particular time and place. Heaven gives each of us a use; a person who puts himself in the right position at the right time has a good fate. If you were the screw holding the portrait of the great leader above Tiananmen, would you know how glorious you were?

A bazi has no special charts. At most it has people wearing special clothes. It has no special people.

The positioning system of the ten gods is a matter of the first importance and must be memorised. Otherwise, the moment you meet what everyone calls a “special chart,” you will be unable to read it at all.

There was a typist at the Li Hongcheng company in Hainan whose bazi was four *wuwu*. Every master judged that in the *zi* year of 1996 this boy would suffer disaster himself or his parents would. The reasoning: *zi* and *wu* clash; water excites fire. In fact nothing whatsoever happened to him or his family in 1996. Every master was wrong — and having been wrong, they filed the chart under “special.” The boy was from the northeast, small and slight, a graduate of a technical secondary school in computing; both parents worked in offices. Some years later a master of the eight-mansion school and blind-school bazi in Henan supplied another four-*wuwu* chart. That man was his neighbour: tall, big-framed, thick-set, a little simple, a farmer who worked the land at home and could not even find a wife. Two identical charts, two utterly different outcomes — because in one the unfavorable god was active and in the other it was not. There are no special charts. A bazi is the coat worn by a

person's inner quality of fate. Do not be deceived by the coat; see through it to what the fate actually is.

Now the question of “following structures.” Whether the original chart follows strength or follows weakness is a secondary matter. A car fresh from the factory may genuinely have not one flaw in its paint. A car running on the motorway never does — even a small flying insect leaves its mark. No car is flawless when it leaves the plant. Once it enters the motorway of the luck cycle, and then the weather of the annual, monthly, daily and hourly cycles, flawlessness is beside the point. In other words: a following structure may exist in the original chart, but the moment the luck cycle begins, with its annual, monthly, daily and hourly variation, there is no following structure at all. A person does not live inside his original chart; a person lives inside his luck cycle and its years, months, days and hours. There is no need to research whether the original chart has a following structure.

“Transforming structures” are the same: there is no standard at all. How can you learn something with no standard? Different masters reach different conclusions on the same chart. We cannot say a thing without a standard is entirely wrong, but we can say it is highly arbitrary. Arbitrary things we cannot learn and cannot master. The best method is to abandon them.

Many habits of thought in traditional fate studies are wrong. Sink into the swamp of “special charts, ordinary charts, following structures, transforming structures” and you will never make a new breakthrough in predictive studies.

I did not once believe that bazi could read fate, because twins have different fates. Until I had thought through the “direction in which fate-energy is expressed,” I did not study fate theory at all. Later, having used that principle to solve the difference between five-fold and six-fold coincidences, I found that the “bazi model theory” predicted more simply and more accurately. That is how I came to it, step by step.

Before I studied feng shui, the first thing I studied was *Qimen Dunjia*. I borrowed a classmate's father's book in 1979. I did not go further with it, because in the course of study I found that Qimen has four great schools. First, at the stage of casting the chart, some “insert the intercalary month” and some do not — the question of how to handle leap months, since the lunar dates and the solar terms never quite line up, and in the end the Beginning of Summer wanders into winter, which is a complete inversion. Cast the chart for this very hour by the two methods and you may get two entirely different charts, and different charts give different readings. Then I found that within the intercalary school there are again the “flying palace” and “arranging palace” methods, and those two disagree as well. So I thought: if I were a murderer and went to consult four Qimen masters about which direction to flee so the police would not catch me, the four would tell me east, south, west and north — so which way do I run? Whom do I obey? It is very rare for four masters to agree. While the four of them argue, the client has already been ruined. That is why I did not go further with Qimen. I knew that no one could resolve the contradiction in casting the chart — not in the past, not now, not ever — because the theoretical system behind Qimen chart-casting cannot resolve it. So people who study Qimen have something wrong with their heads. On what basis do you claim your school is accurate and the other three are not? Nobody should take offence at this. What one should study is a predictive art whose theory has been consistent from antiquity to the present. Whichever school or art you study, if you can see where its defects lie and where its strengths lie, avoid the defects and use the strengths, you will still succeed in practice.

Having the ten gods in their proper positions matters greatly; the positioning ten gods help more than the surface ten gods. (Once a ten god loses its position its force diminishes — parents are constrained in their child's home; a rogue becomes obedient in a strange place.)

Only the body system is a person's fate. A doctor diagnosing a patient looks at the body, not the clothes.

Female chart: Renxu, Guichou, Jiawu, Guiyou

Water is the unfavorable god; this woman is short, and the *gui* water does good work. The positioning ten god beneath the hour stem *gui* water is *bing* fire, so she can also obtain the benefits that *bing* fire, the eating-and-wounding god, brings. Although *gui* water is the seal, her parents' situation should be analysed chiefly through the positioning ten gods. She should not wear high heels. A person's ability and bearing are what win people over, not appearance. Any change in the body signals what has happened to a person and what will happen.

Fat and thin are determined by the month stem.

Female chart: Dingsi, Renyin, Guichou, Renzi

This woman is plump; one may infer that during pregnancy her home and the ancestral grave had auspicious sand in the *ren, zi* and *gui* directions. Water is the unfavorable god. If she bears a child in a water year, the child will not do well. In a *jia* or *yi* year the child will be outstanding; in a *yihai* year, still not good. In a metal year, the child's first half of life is auspicious and the second half inauspicious. In a fire year: a *bing* year clashes away the unfavorable *ren* water — auspicious; a *ding* year combines with the unfavorable *ren* water — inauspicious. A child born in a year of the useful god is good; in a year of the unfavorable god, bad. The fact: the child was born in a *guiwei* year. In such a case the child will have problems; if the child turns out well, then the parents' marriage will meet serious obstruction. Separation resolves the marital disaster.

CHAPTER THREE

The Time System of Bazi Prediction

2020-09-13 · 2,930 words

> **Translator's note.** The working manual for reading a single year. Three mechanisms, in order: chaotic activation of a ten god, the storage vaults and what may enter them, and the eight ways a useful and an unfavourable god can interact across a year. The vault rules are the part worth slowing down for — Lü derives them from soil behaviour (mud, ore, frozen gravel, farmland) rather than from the classical tables, and says outright that the traditional rules fail in practice. Seven worked cases follow, with the actual outcome after each reading.

1. The problem of ten gods in chaotic motion

In annual-cycle prediction, when four or more stems and branches of the same element are activated, that element's ten god is treated as being in chaotic motion.

Chaotic motion is, by definition, inauspicious. Which *kind* of misfortune it is depends on what that ten god represents.

1. The wealth star in chaotic motion

(1) Loss of money.

(2) For a man, the wealth star stands for wife and lover. In chaotic motion, marriage and emotional life are unstable and damaged.

(3) For a small child, the wealth star means being reunited with family and getting the toy he has longed for. In chaotic motion, separation from family, loss of the beloved toy.

(4) At specific positions, illness of particular organs. (Note: any ten god can stand for illness.)

2. The officer-and-killer in chaotic motion

(1) Injury, illness, disaster.

(2) Deterioration of the job, removal from post, arrest.

3. The parallel-and-rob in chaotic motion

(1) Money taken from you.

(2) Disputes and trouble.

4. The owl-seal in chaotic motion

(1) Running into troublesome matters.

(2) Losing or selling a car; damage to the house, or selling it.

(3) The company does not fold, but moves premises.

5. The eating-and-wounding in chaotic motion

(1) Reckless investment fails, money is lost, costs cannot be recovered quickly.

(2) Inviting lawsuits and disputes.

(3) Disaster to children. Not necessarily injury or illness — it may be a long separation from them.

2. The storage vaults

1. *Chen* is the water vault. It can take in *ren, gui, hai, zi* (water) and also *chou, wei* (earth).
2. *Xu* is the fire vault. It can take in *bing, ding, si, wu* (fire) and also *chou, wei* (earth).
3. *Chou* is the metal vault. It can take in *geng, xin, shen, you* (metal).
4. *Wei* is the wood vault. It can take in *jia, yi, yin, mao* (wood).

Note: *chou* and *wei* earth do not take each other into storage, but each can enter the *chen* earth vault and the *xu* earth vault. *Chen* and *xu* do not take each other into storage, nor do they enter any other vault.

Wu and ji earth enter the *chen* and *xu* vaults; they cannot enter the *chou* and *wei* vaults.

Why is it read this way?

In plain terms: *chen* earth is thin mud; *xu* earth is ore and rock; *chou* earth is frozen ground and gravel; *wei* earth is good farmland. Traditional fate studies hold that *xu* earth does not generate metal. That does not match the facts and does not survive practice. All earth generates metal. The original meaning of *metal* was ice and snow; the extended meaning came later.

Chou is frozen ground and gravel; *wei* is good farmland. Consider: does *chou* earth not generate wood? In the northeast, before the thaw, grass has already pushed up through the ground. Winter wheat in Hebei and Shandong survives in frozen soil — a good example. *Wei*, good farmland, generates every kind of wood. Put frozen ground, gravel or farmland into thin mud and the mud's function remains. Put them on ore and rock and plants still grow — the rock's function remains, and the function of *xu* earth is reinforced. But mix frozen ground, gravel and farmland together and all their functions weaken. That is why these two do not take each other into storage. Whether something goes into storage depends on whether the vault's function survives; if the vault's function is gone, both have become waste and cannot enter. By the same token, thin mud and ore have nothing to do with each other — add mud to ore in a smelter and no iron comes out. So *chen* and *xu* do not take each other. Entering storage is a form of cooperation: earth entering an earth vault is earth cooperating with earth. If two earths cannot cooperate and cannot profit each other, they cannot enter each other's storage. In practice this method of reading storage holds up; the traditional method does not. Wood enters the

wei vault because *wei*'s function can still operate and the wood can profit. Metal is ice and snow, so it can enter *chou*, the vault of frozen ground and gravel. Water running into thin mud strengthens both — hence water enters the *chen* vault; a mudslide is the proof. Water flooding good farmland destroys the soil's function and the crops die. A mountain under permanent snow is like the metal-generating function of *xu* earth. Gravel and farmland both come from ore and rock, so *chou* and *wei* enter the *xu* vault. Fate prediction is prediction of the actual world, of every blade of grass and every tree in it. Abandon that kind of rational analysis of the actual world and every purely theoretical, taken-for-granted conclusion about storage is wrong.

3. The auspicious and inauspicious meaning of each mode of interaction

In annual-cycle prediction, looking at the time system alone:

1. The useful god clashes the unfavourable god: the useful god's auspicious meaning appears, and the unfavourable god's auspicious meaning also appears. The unfavourable god clashes the useful god: the useful god shows its inauspicious meaning, and the unfavourable god also shows its inauspicious meaning.

2. The useful god combines with the unfavourable god: both the useful god's auspicious meaning and the unfavourable god's inauspicious meaning appear, but the auspicious predominates. The unfavourable god combines with the useful god: both appear, but the inauspicious predominates.

3. The useful god punishes or harms the unfavourable god: both meanings appear, half auspicious and half not.

4. The unfavourable god enters storage, and the vault has no relation to the day master: the unfavourable god shows an

auspicious meaning.

(An unfavourable god in the original chart can only enter a vault belonging to the annual cycle; without the annual cycle, the ten gods in the chart cannot enter storage. For example, *chou* and *wei* earth, and *wu* and *ji* earth, in the chart enter storage only in a *chen* year or a *xu* year. If an unfavourable earth in the chart enters the annual vault and the vault has no relation to the day master, that unfavourable god shows an auspicious meaning.)

5. The useful god enters storage, and the vault has no relation to the day master: ordinary, a normal state.

6. The day master is in the vault: every ten god in the vault now has a relation with the day master inside it. The useful god shows its auspicious meaning, the unfavourable god its inauspicious meaning. If the ten gods in the vault have a generating relation among themselves, the final judgement follows the god at the endpoint.

7. Vault clashing vault: the active vault — including all the ten gods inside it — shows its full auspicious or inauspicious meaning. The passive vault, including all its ten gods, loses its meaning entirely.

8. When the passive vault is clashed, any ten god inside it that also appears in the chart shows its meaning too.

Note: generating and controlling apply only in relation to the day master. A useful god generating the day master is auspicious. A useful god controlling the day master means the officer-and-killer: seven auspicious, three inauspicious.

(That is the entire secret and the entire set of judgements for reading by the time system. Understand the four vaults, know that twenty of the sixty stem-branch pairs are vault years, and you can read twenty years accurately by vault

alone. Most inaccurate readings happen when a vault appears — traditional fate studies simply freeze when they meet one.)

Whether the day master has a relation to the vault:

1. The day master sits on the vault, or the vault punishes, clashes, combines with or harms the day branch — then the day master has a relation to the vault.

2. What ten gods may be in the vault:

A. The stems and branches of the element taken into storage. In the *wei* vault, for instance, a quantity of wood.

B. Ten gods that have a punishing, clashing, combining or harming relation with the vault. A clash is generally negligible.

Suppose the annual cycle is a *chen* year. If the chart contains *mao* wood (a harming relation), *shen* metal (combining), *you* metal (combining), *zi* water (combining, and also entering storage), *ren* water (entering storage), *gui* water (entering storage), *hai* water (entering storage), *chou* earth (entering storage), *wei* earth (entering storage), *wu* earth (entering storage) and *ji* earth (entering storage), all of these can enter the annual *chen* vault. If your day master happens to be *wu* or *ji* earth, or *ren* or *gui* water, then in the *chen* year you meet every ten god that has entered the vault: meet a useful god inside and something auspicious happens; meet an unfavourable god inside and something bad happens. Suppose the *mao* wood in the *chen* vault is a thug, the *shen* metal a villain, the *zi* water a bomb — go into that vault and you meet the thug's fists, the villain's extortion, the bomb's blast. Once we can read a bazi through its vaults, separating useful from unfavourable gods, the time system alone will read twenty of sixty years correctly. Traditional bazi does not know which ten god is active and which is passive, cannot separate the principal contradiction from the secondary one, and so its accuracy is very low. A clash may be treated as non-entry, but a clash still creates a relation —

a clash collapses at a touch. The *chen* earth vault is a house; once it becomes a house its own meaning is largely lost, and a house has no auspicious or inauspicious meaning in itself. Grasp these eight rules and the time system alone will read eighty per cent of people correctly. For people with a common destiny it reaches one hundred per cent. For the exceptionally brilliant and the exceptionally unlucky it cannot — those require the bazi model and the three systems. In other words: by the time system alone, no theory whatsoever reaches one hundred per cent.

Case one: male — Jiayin, Renshen, Jiachen, Xinwei

Luck cycle: Dingchou. Annual cycle: Wuxu.

1. In the *wuxu* year, under the *dingchou* cycle, the earth wealth star is in chaotic motion.

1. *Xu* punishes *chou* and punishes *wei* — a punishing and also a vault relation, so in the *wuxu* year the earth does not fully enter storage. *Xu* is also the fire vault, taking *ding* fire into storage.

1. *Xu* clashes the day branch *chen* earth, and *xu* carries *ding* fire to the day branch: there is information of incoming money. *Xu* clashing *chen* earth sets it in chaotic motion, so the chaotic-motion information exists — but the energy of the motion is reduced. Wealth star in chaotic motion: money comes and money goes.

1. *Xu* punishes *wei*; *xin* metal, at the gate, is the useful god and is activated, standing for something auspicious. When the officer-and-killer is the useful god it is also, for a man, more auspicious than not. The auspicious content is career progress, but under pressure.

Fact: that year he did take in money, and his career did develop.

Case two: male — Wuchen, Bingchen, Bingshen, Wuzi

Luck cycle: Jiwei. Annual cycle: Wuxu.

1. In the *wuxu* year under the *jiwei* cycle, earth is in chaotic motion — the eating-and-wounding in chaotic motion. That means reckless investment and foolish decisions.

1. Interaction: the annual *wu* takes its position at the year stem and at the hour stem. *Xu* earth can take *jiwei* earth into storage, but this year the earth does not enter storage, and the *bing* fire day master also enters storage. The day master entering storage is inauspicious: some source of income will be lost. This year, do not invest recklessly; keep operations conservative.

Case three: male — Bingyin, Gengzi, Renyin, Xinhai

Luck cycle: Guimao. Annual cycle: Wuxu.

1. In the *wuxu* year under *guimao*, the parallel-and-rob water is in chaotic motion.

1. Interaction: the annual *wu* combines away the luck-cycle *gui*, reducing the water's chaotic motion; *xu* earth combines with the day-branch *yin* wood (officer-and-killer combining with eating-and-wounding is auspicious, since the officer-and-killer is the useful god). The officer-and-killer stands for benefactors, the eating-and-wounding for career. Meeting a benefactor's help develops one's career.

The annual *xu* earth takes *bing* fire into storage, and *xu*, carrying wealth, enters a relation with the day-branch *yin* wood: auspicious information of incoming money.

Actual feedback: career developed with a benefactor's help, and money came in.

Case four: male — Gengxu, Bingxu, Xinsi, Jihai

Luck cycle: Xinmao. Annual cycle: Jiawu.

1. In the *jiawu* year under *xinmao*, there is no chaotic motion.

1. Interaction: *jia* clashes *geng* (wealth clashing parallel), which is not close to the day master; *jia* combines with *ji* (wealth combining with seal) — the wealth star at the gate, auspicious information of incoming money. *Wu* combines with *xu*, not close to the day master, but it activates the *bing* fire useful god, the officer-and-killer — auspicious. The officer-and-killer as useful god stands for meeting benefactors and career development.

If this person had been born in the *wuxu* hour, the earth would be close to chaotic motion:

1. In the *jiawu* year under *xinmao*, earth is close to chaotic motion.

1. The *bing* fire useful god, officer-and-killer, combines with the body (six auspicious, four inauspicious) — and for a man the officer-and-killer is bad.

1. The annual *wu* fire combines with *xu*, and *wu* earth, the unfavourable god, arrives at the gate: inauspicious.

Case five: male — Wushen, Jiazi, Yihai, Dingchou

Luck cycle: Jisi. Annual cycle: Wuxu.

1. In the *wuxu* year under *jisi*, the earth wealth star is in chaotic motion (check whether the moving wealth star is close to the day master). In fact it is not close.

1. Interaction: *wu* takes its position at the year stem and *shen* metal is also activated; *shen* metal first combines with the month-branch *zi* water, and its relation with the day branch is slight and of little significance. So the auspicious meaning carried by *shen* metal, the officer-and-killer, is small, and the danger it carries is also small. Because the annual *xu* earth takes *ding* and *si* fire into storage, ideals are hard to realise.

1. This year's wealth star in chaotic motion has little to do with the day master, so the loss is benign.

Fact: he spent money building a house at home. Projects away from home could not be completed; ideals were hard to realise.

Case six: male — Dingsi, Renzi, Renxu, Bingwu

Luck cycle: Wushen. Annual cycle: Wuxu.

1. In the *wuxu* annual under *wushen*, the earth officer-and-killer is close to chaotic motion. The fire wealth star is close to chaotic motion.

1. Interaction: the annual *wu* takes its position at the luck-cycle stem, activating *shen* metal. The annual *xu* takes *ding, si, bing, wu* fire into storage and, carrying the wealth star, returns to the day branch — auspicious information, incoming money. So this year the wealth star's chaotic motion does him little harm.

Fact: his income exceeded his expenditure.

Case seven: male — Jiayin, Dingchou, Jiaxu, Jiaxu (short in stature)

Luck cycles: Gengchen, Xinsi. Annual cycles: Bingxu, Dinghai, Wuzi.

First, the stature judgement. In the original chart wood is the unfavourable god. There is the month-stem *ding* fire draining it, and the hour-stem *jia* wood supporting the body; on paper the day master is balanced. In fact he grew up short, which means the hour-stem *jia* wood, an unfavourable god, did not perform its unfavourable function — auspicious. And the month-stem *ding* fire, the useful god, did perform its useful function — also auspicious. So being short is one of the conditions of an upper-grade fate.

Second, the time system.

1. In the *bingxu* year under *gengxu*, the earth wealth star is in chaotic motion. The unfavourable wealth star is also closely related to the day master, which makes it that year's greatest danger. Fact: he invested and spent money.

1. In the *dinghai* year under *xinsi* there is no chaotic motion. *Ding* fire, the eating-and-wounding, at the gate: incoming money. *Hai* water, the useful god, combining with *yin*: also auspicious.

Fact: that year income was relatively large.

1. In the *wuzi* year under *xinsi*, *zi* combining with *chou* activates the month-branch *ding* fire, the eating-and-wounding, so there is still wealth information. But the energy is far smaller than in the *dinghai* year, because in *dinghai* the *ding* fire eating-and-wounding stood directly at the gate, and its activating energy was greater.

1. In the *jiawu* and *yiwei* years under *xinsi*: in *jiawu*, wood is the unfavourable god, but *wu* fire, the useful god, combines to the day master's side, and there is still wealth information. In *yiwei*, the hour wood, parallel-and-rob, is the unfavourable god, and the wealth star is also unfavourable: information of loss.

Fact: in those two years there were disputes, lawsuits and loss of money.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Environmental System of Bazi Prediction

2020-09-16 · 756 words

> **Translator's note.** The shortest and most consequential of the three system essays. A bazi is not a clock: the same stems and branches encode time, direction *and* environment, which is why a chart can be read backwards from a living body, and why the question "the useful god arrived, so why did the bad thing happen?" has an answer. Lü's image is an equilateral triangle: know any two sides and the third follows.

The environmental system is very important, and it is more accurate than the time system. Of the three systems of bazi prediction, the time system is the least accurate — and yet traditional bazi predicts entirely by the time system.

(1) In the original chart, whether a stem is a useful god or an unfavourable god, if the corresponding body part has grown into a favourable form, then the direction that stem corresponds to in the person's prenatal feng shui must have auspicious sand and auspicious water.

(2) In the original chart, whether a stem is a useful god or an unfavourable god, if the corresponding body part has grown into an unfavourable form, then the direction that stem corresponds to in the person's prenatal feng shui must have inauspicious sand and inauspicious water.

(3) This refers chiefly to the ring in which the person is positioned in the feng shui. If the small configuration lies more than a

hundred metres out, the small configuration is what counts.

The pregnancy environment means the small configuration, because pregnancy lasts only ten months and sand or water several kilometres away cannot reach the foetus. In this it differs from the ancestral grave.

In the original chart, whether a stem is useful or unfavourable, so long as your body parts grew according to the useful god and not according to the demands of the unfavourable god, then that stem in the chart corresponds in prenatal feng shui to auspicious sand and water.

Suppose a stem is the useful god in the chart but the body part did not grow as the useful god requires; and suppose a stem is the unfavourable god in the chart and the body part did grow as the unfavourable god requires — then that stem corresponds in prenatal feng shui to inauspicious sand and water.

The stems and branches of a bazi stand for time, for direction and for environment all at once. Our ancestors' positioning of the bazi was in fact extremely accurate; it was later generations who insisted that a bazi was only a time, and that is what made accurate prediction impossible, and what made it impossible to reason back and forth between “time, space and person.” A person stands in front of us: we can draw the feng shui layout of his home and mark the sand and water in all twenty-four directions of his pregnancy environment. Conversely, if we have seen a family's feng shui layout and know the person's bazi, we can say which part of that person's body will have grown into what shape. Prediction is an equilateral triangle: know any two sides and the third can be derived.

(4) In annual-cycle prediction, if the useful god does not perform its useful function and the unfavourable god fully performs its unfavourable one, then that useful god's or that unfavourable god's stem must correspond, in the acquired feng shui of where the person lives or works that year, to inauspicious sand and water.

(5) In annual-cycle prediction, if the useful god performs its useful function and the unfavourable god does not perform its unfavourable one, then that stem must correspond, in the acquired feng shui of where the person lives or works that year, to auspicious sand and water.

From these few judgements it should be clear: every disaster in the time system of a bazi can be resolved. The so-called useful and unfavourable gods in the time system may both be illusory, because a useful god may not function at all. This is the root reason why, from antiquity to the present, so many fate scholars died without understanding "why nothing good happens when the useful god arrives, but bad things do; and nothing bad happens when the unfavourable god arrives, but good things do." They did not understand that a bazi is the unity of three things: the time system, the directional system and the environmental system. Unite the three in prediction, and at least in the qualitative direction of auspicious and inauspicious you can reach one hundred per cent accuracy.

CHAPTER FIVE

What the Number of Stems and Branches Has to Do With Real Life

2020-08-16 · 432 words

> **Translator's note.** A short demolition of the commonest party trick in Chinese fate reading: counting how many times an element appears in the chart and assigning that number to a fact about the person's family. Three *yin* means three mothers; five *piancai* means five fathers. Lü's objection is not mystical but demographic — identical charts cannot produce identical sibling counts, and the historical record contains men with hundreds of children.

Matching the number of stems and branches to real life is one of the commonest methods among people who practise fate prediction. See three seals in someone's chart and they will say the man has three mothers. See five indirect-wealth stems and they will say he has five fathers, and that his mother has four lovers. See five parallels-and-robs and they will say he has five siblings. This is an absurd way of reading.

Why is it absurd? First, must people born under the same bazi have the same number of siblings? It is not remotely possible. Second, a bazi has eight characters. Count even the hidden stems in the branches and the maximum number of any one element is twelve — four *guihai* charts, for instance. Never mind that some emperors of antiquity had dozens of children: Li Longji of the Tang had fifty-nine, the Kangxi emperor fifty-five, and in modern times Yuan Shikai had thirty-two. Go and look at the polygamous countries of the Middle East, or at Indonesia and Malaysia, where wealthy households with a dozen, twenty, thirty siblings are everywhere. The *Guinness Book of Records* lists the most prolific man in human history as Ismail of Morocco, whose fertility is

breathtaking: five hundred and twenty-five sons and three hundred and forty-two daughters. Faced with that, can counting numbers tell you how many siblings a person has? All that counting is a joke, and it does not match objective reality at all.

Used now and then, with the actual situation in view, counting has some use. People born in the fifties and sixties mostly had around five siblings. Children born in cities after the late eighties were mostly only children, and those with two or three siblings mostly came from the countryside, because of the state's birth planning. Now the two-child policy has been relaxed. But to predict by counting alone, divorced from history and divorced from region, is genuinely absurd.

Studying the counting method wastes time and energy and is still inaccurate. People should give it up. Rather than study something that can never be accurate, spend the energy on things that can make prediction accurate.

CHAPTER SIX

How to Judge the Strength and Weakness of Stems and Branches

2020-08-04 · 697 words

> **Translator's note.** Eight lines that replace the whole apparatus of classical strength assessment. Traditional bazi asks whether an element is "strong," and gives the same answer for everyone born under that chart. Lü asks a narrower question — has *this person* actualised the energy of that stem, which his body will show — and reads strength only from immediate neighbours. The gate concept survives; the notion that a chart has one fixed strength does not.

Strength and weakness in a bazi does need to be discussed. But the method of judging and applying it here is, and should be, utterly different from that of traditional fate studies.

The traditional concept of the "gate" is entirely correct. As the old formula has it: *to know who will be rich, look for the wealth star reaching the gate.* The gate means the day stem's immediate neighbours left and right, plus the day branch. If the month stem, hour stem or day branch controls the day master, the year stem and year branch will find it very hard to rescue him — the king of Qin had a million men, but when Jing Ke came at him with a dagger, what use were a million men? None at all. Kidnap a man and no matter how many police surround him, they can hardly help.

The purpose of judging strength is to see whether a given stem or branch has actualised a certain energy in your fate.

Traditional fate studies hold that if *jia* wood is strong in one chart, then *jia* wood is strong in every chart identical to it.

Our theory holds that although the position of *jia* wood is the same in identical charts, the body part that *jia* wood stands for need not have grown into the same features in different people born under that chart. Bodily features are the real evidence of whether this particular person has actualised the energy of *jia* wood. It is not that *jia* wood being strong means everyone born under that chart has actualised it. Some have; some have not.

Judging strength matters greatly, but our method of judging and applying it is completely different from the traditional one. We do not judge strength in order to select a useful god. We judge it in order to judge how the stems' energy has been actualised in one particular person.

1. **The strength of the year stem is judged chiefly by how the month stem and the year branch act on it.**
2. **The strength of the month stem is judged chiefly by how the year stem and the day stem act on it.**
3. **The strength of the day master is judged chiefly by how the month stem and the hour stem act on it, with the day branch as reference.**
4. **The strength of the hour stem is judged chiefly by how the day stem and the hour branch act on it.**
5. **The strength of the year branch is judged chiefly by how the year stem and the month branch act on it.**
6. **The strength of the month branch is judged chiefly by how the year branch and the day branch act on it.**
7. **The strength of the day branch is judged chiefly by how the month branch and the hour branch act on it.**

8. **The strength of the hour branch is judged chiefly by how the hour stem and the day branch act on it.**

Notes:

(1) Owl-seal and parallel-and-rob generate and support; they make a stem or branch strong.

(2) Officer-and-killer controls; wealth, eating-and-wounding drain and exhaust. These make a stem or branch weak.

Example: male — Jiayin, Renshen, Yisi, Yiyou

Year stem *jia* wood: strong. Month stem *ren* water: weak. Day stem *yi* wood: strong. Hour stem *yi* wood: balanced.

Year branch *yin* wood: balanced. Month branch *shen* metal: weak. Day branch *si* fire: weak. Hour branch *you* metal: weak.

Once you can combine the judgement of stem and branch strength with the system that locates body parts, you have the theoretical basis for distinguishing between people born under the same chart — and you are basically ready to read bazi.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The “Bazi Model” Really Means a Functional-Feature Model

2018-01-28 · 884 words

> **Translator's note.** The single most useful metaphor in the collection. A bazi is not a destiny but a mould: it specifies what functions a person can perform, and the body — the outer form that the mould actually produced — tells you how much of that specification was met. Two televisions have identical electronics and one is seven inches and the other seventy; the same function, opposite failures. This is also why the prenatal environment and the ancestral grave, not the birth time, are said to decide the *quality* of a fate.



We have said repeatedly that the feng shui of the mother's home during pregnancy, together with the ancestral grave, decides the quality of a person's fate; the birth time — the bazi — merely reflects the *type* of functional features that fate will have. That is to say, every bazi is only the mould for a product of

a certain functional type, and everyone born under the same bazi is a product out of the same mould. The same bazi only means that these products *ought* to have the same functional features. But since each person born under that bazi has a different birth environment — exactly as every product with television function differs enormously in outward form — people born under the same bazi likewise differ enormously in outward form. And because of that difference in form, their use value, range of use, service life and actual effect differ enormously too, just as with televisions. A seven-inch set is invisible from a distance; a seventy-inch set is unbearable at close range.

People are the same. Because people born under the same bazi differ enormously in form, their fates differ enormously. This is intelligible in theory as well. We have said that human beings live inside a four-dimensional system made of the three-dimensional physical space plus time. At any one moment, people are born at millions and millions of points in three-dimensional space. But because the matter surrounding each of those points differs enormously in nature and energy, the bodily features of the people born at those millions of points differ enormously, and so do their fate features. Therefore the bazi, which is only time, cannot by itself accurately determine the functional features of a product or a person's fate. Only by combining it with the product's own outward features can one accurately judge that product — with a television, only by its size can one judge whether it works best far away or close up — or that person's fate features. And more than that: as time passes, the material composition and energy around the point in three-dimensional space where a person was born and lives are themselves constantly changing; a person may even leave the point of birth and go to live at another point. Without combining the person's bodily changes, it is impossible to judge any individual's fortune by the bazi alone. That is why, through the bazi model theory, we can judge a person's fate features accurately. It is like televisions: whichever model best suits the social environment is the one most people chase. In the same way, among people born under one bazi, only the one

whose bodily features have grown exactly as the environment required by that bazi would have them will receive more support and help from others — and only that one will have great wealth and high rank.



People born under the same bazi may have completely different bodily features, differing enormously. Only the person whose bodily features match exactly the auspicious outer form that the bazi prescribes can fully actualise that bazi's functional characteristics. Only such a person, having fully actualised them, can have great wealth, high rank, long life and good fortune. Those who cannot fully actualise their particular auspicious features can only have poverty, meanness, early death and misfortune.

So the “bazi model” in the Lü Wen-yi bazi model theory means, in substance, the *functional model* of the bazi; prediction consists in assessing, through outward features, whether this person has fully actualised the functional

features that the bazi prescribes. Once you understand this, it is equally correct to regard the bazi as a concrete mould with geometric dimensions. And when you regard each bazi as a mould for a particular set of functional features, you will understand what a bazi means far more simply, and you will judge every aspect of every person's fortune far more accurately — because if the bazi is a mould and the person is a product, is it not obvious to anyone whether the product matches the mould? The closer the product is to the mould, the higher its quality; the further from the mould, the lower. And is high product quality not a good fate, and low quality a bad one? Using the bazi model theory, fate prediction becomes as simple and accurate as taking a photograph of one kind of flower to the flower market and comparing it with every flower there. Which one is identical to the photograph, which one is nothing like it — is that not the simplest thing in the world? I am confident that the Lü Wen-yi bazi model theory will help you stand out in the world of yixue and outshine the crowd.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Bazi Model in Use: A Worked Example

2018-01-26 · 1,140 words

> **Translator's note.** A single case, told minute by minute, that shows the model doing what the theory claims. A colleague's sudden pain in the left lower back is read as an activated *bing* fire; the chain that follows predicts money arriving, and it names the day as the day the pain stops. The reading is given in the article as it was sent, before the event, which is the point.

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The bazi model theory is a theory of bazi reading built on the relation between time, space and person. We all know that **the ten heavenly stems and twelve earthly branches stand for time, for direction, for the things located in those directions, and for the parts, organs and functions of the human body.** People born under the same bazi share a birth time, but the environments around them before and after birth need not be the

same, and their living environments after birth certainly cannot be. So for any one bazi, all the stems and branches are identical for everyone born under it, and the luck cycles and annual cycles are identical too — yet the things located in the directions corresponding to each of those stems are not identical. That difference in the things at the same stem's direction manifests, through energy, in the bodily part, organ or function that the same stem also stands for. This is the necessary coupling of space, time and person. Those differences then show up, through the meaning of the stems, in the events of a person's life and fate. Therefore, by examining one bazi together with the particular person who bears it, we can judge the fate differences among all people born under that bazi with complete accuracy, and judge when any person will meet which auspicious or inauspicious event. Even twins — five-fold coincidences — differ greatly in fate, because after birth the things at each stem's direction in their living environment (directions taken from each individual as the centre point) are not the same. That is how the dialectic of time, environmental things and person determines the difference in fate. **If bazi reading stares only at the time-nature of the stems and branches and ignores their directional nature, the nature of the things located in those directions, and the bodily part, organ and function they stand for, then bazi reading is a game with time, not a predictive art, and it can never truly read the fate of a person living in space and time.** So: **bazi reading is not a time-based predictive art, but a predictive art of time, space and person as one.** The kind that speaks only of the time-nature of the bazi, never of its spatial or bodily nature, is in fact only a game of group-fate prediction.

When we read a bazi as the unity of time, space and person, judging the fate differences among people born under the same chart becomes as easy as turning the palm, and exact beyond comparison. We can rank people born under one bazi by the degree of good or ill in their official careers, wealth, emotions, lifespan and so on. And when we adjust feng shui to change a

person's fate, we can adjust one particular aspect of one particular person's fate with great precision, and obtain results that verify on schedule.

On 7 September 2010 at 9:10 in the morning, Teacher Yang sent a message: "I woke up with terrible pain in my left lower back — how do you read that? My month pillar is *jihai*, my day pillar *bingyin*." Teacher Yang had himself studied yixue deeply and wanted to test my bazi model theory. I replied: "Terrible pain in the left lower back: the bodily part corresponds to the stem *bing*. Terrible pain means *bing* fire is activated. *Bing* fire activated brings the day branch *yin* wood into motion, and the day branch is the seal. The seal activated means a happy event involving documents and seals — auspicious because *yin* is the useful god; if it were the unfavourable god it would be inauspicious. *Yin* and *hai* combine, so when *yin* moves *hai* moves too. *Hai* water, the month branch, is the officer-and-killer. The *yin* wood seal combines and holds the officer-and-killer *hai* water beneath the day master *bing* fire: killer and seal generate each other and then generate the body. The officer-and-killer *hai* water is the useful god, so there is a happy event of a benefactor's help. And when *hai* water is activated, the month stem *ji* earth is activated too. *Ji* earth activated is the eating-and-wounding activated. The eating-and-wounding is the source of wealth. The eating-and-wounding activated at the month stem, at the gate of the house, means money coming in, and a good deal of it. The timing will be the moment the back pain disappears."

An hour later Teacher Yang wrote: "One piece of information did come. My superior told me to go back to Lanzhou to process a property certificate. It has not been possible for years, and now it can be done — but that is a matter of spending money, not receiving it." I replied: "The property certificate is the document-and-seal matter, which is already verified; the superior is the benefactor notifying you, already verified. The money coming in will also verify. Wait a while."

Then at 8:24 on the evening of 13 September, Teacher Yang wrote suddenly: "The pain in my back has just stopped today, and I was wondering why — this afternoon a disciple of mine offered a hundred thousand yuan to help me buy a house."

Why did I say money would arrive when the pain stopped? Because the terrible pain in the left lower back was the day master *bing* activated, and *bing* moving had set the eating-and-wounding *ji* moving. Only when *bing* fire comes to rest can *bing* fire obtain the wealth of *ji* earth, the eating-and-wounding. When *bing* fire rests — when the back stops hurting — the money comes. And the amount is relatively large because the pain was terrible; had the pain been slight, the money would have been small. That is a reflection of the quantity of energy. This is an example of prediction using the relation between time and the functional state of a bodily part, and it is a very small application of the bazi model theory. I hope friends in yixue will take something from it.

The bazi model theory solves once and for all the age-old problem of predicting the differing fates of people born under the same bazi. It pulls bazi reading out of a purely temporal theoretical system and into the actual world in which a person lives in space and time — and so places bazi reading on the platform of "time, space and person."

CHAPTER NINE

The Most Scientific Way to Determine the Useful and Unfavourable Gods

2020-08-02 · 3,194 words

> **Translator's note.** The most consequential methodological essay in the Bazi corpus, and the one that departs furthest from the classical tradition. The useful god is not found by season, root or support; it is found by **arithmetic**. An element appearing once or twice is useful; three or more is harmful; the threshold rises by one at each finer time scale. Two identical stems count as 1.6. On this basis Lü dismantles *wangshuai* judgement, seasonal adjustment, following structures, "joyous gods" — and the idea that a person's own chart has a strength at all.

Different schools of bazi judge the useful and unfavourable gods differently. Theories for selecting the useful god proliferate, and there is no unified standard.

I hold that there is only one standard for judging useful and unfavourable gods: the element that acts beneficially on me is the useful god; the element that acts harmfully on me is the unfavourable god. What matters is the magnitude of that element's force.

How do we know which element acts beneficially and which harmfully? There is a logical relation here. A four-pillar chart has only eight positions, but in terms of the five elements there are only five. If a person's fate were very good, those five elements should be distributed evenly across the eight positions — 1.6 positions each — and that would be the most balanced chart. But we find that the five elements are not evenly distributed in any chart, which creates

the problem that “when one element is too many, the others are too few.” If fire is excessive, the others are scarce, or even absent. A missing element causes imbalance, and too little of an element is no good either. It is like going to war: a rifle without bullets, or bullets without a rifle, are equally useless — neither protects you nor kills the enemy.

1. Judging useful and unfavourable gods in the original chart

(1) In the original chart, when the number of stems and branches of any one element is one or two, that element is the useful god. When the number reaches three or more, that element is the unfavourable god.

(2) An element absent from the original chart is a useful god — but if it never appears, it is of no use.

First question. When an element appears twice, it occupies only 0.4 of someone else's position. When it appears three times, it occupies 1.4 of someone else's positions, and it begins to harm others' interests. So the distinction between useful and unfavourable is very simple, and you will find that gods divided this way are extremely accurate in practice.

The traditional method — distinguishing by “obtaining the season” (metal born in a metal month), “obtaining the ground” (metal sitting on earth), “obtaining the force” (parallel-and-rob supporting the body) — does not survive logical scrutiny. That theoretical system rests on thinking like “*jia* wood is a towering tree, *yi* wood is a flower, *bing* fire is the sun.” But a bazi cannot be read by that system. What matters is how much of the primordial life-force a person actually obtained, and in what direction that energy was finally expressed. Eat a bowl of rice: one person uses its energy to study, one to play games on his phone, one to carry bricks at a building site for a hundred yuan, and one, with nothing better to do, to tease a cobra — which bites his

finger, and the finger is amputated at the hospital. The traditional division of useful and unfavourable gods is essentially meaningless. When the common people rise with hoes and spears in rebellion, does the emperor's authority help? It does not. That is to say: once our numbers reach a certain level, whether or not I obtain the season, whether or not I obtain the ground, whether or not I obtain the force, I can make myself king under heaven. When Chao Gai and six others first robbed the birthday gifts, the court pursued them and they had no choice but to go up Liangshan, because their force was too small to resist. Once the hundred and eight heroes had gathered on Liangshan, did they still fear the court? They beat the court's armies again and again. Another way to see it: not every member of the Politburo Standing Committee obtained the season and the ground, but each of them occupies a seat, and each has a vote. If the general secretary wants a policy passed and six members will not raise their hands, it does not pass. Which shows that *number* is a heaven-granted advantage in a chart.

As for strength and weakness — what meaning do you think it has for your own original chart? Strong, you live to eighty; weak, you live to eighty. Strong, it is still you; weak, it is still you. Do you think judging strength is still necessary? Judging strength makes sense only when two different charts are compared. If you are the only person in the world, on what basis do you judge whether you are rich or poor? Alone, with one cent, you could say you are the richest man alive; with a trillion, you could call yourself a pauper. Number, and therefore strength, has meaning only in comparison with others. Have you not noticed what a humorous body of thought traditional fate studies is? Faced with a single chart, it talks about strong and weak — what use is your strength or weakness? Strong, this person is alive; weak, this person is alive. Strong, this person is dead; weak, this person is dead. Doing strength and weakness inside one's own chart is a joke. And using strength and weakness to find the useful god is a bigger joke. That is my view; you may treat it as heresy and ignore it.

Personally I hold that strength and weakness should be discussed — but not by comparing the chart with itself. So long as the person is alive, strength need not be discussed.

Someone may say that when reading annual cycles you need to look at strength. If strength or weakness is needed only when reading annual cycles, to judge the auspicious or inauspicious outcome, then what use is looking at it in the original chart? Why not look directly at the annual cycle's strength? That is our logical inference. Many habits of thought in traditional fate studies form a closed system that explains itself.

So, is there any use in looking at strength?

There is. Precisely because traditional fate studies talk about strength endlessly, it has a concept of "the useful god changing" — last year fire was the useful god, this year earth is, next year wood is. If the useful god changes like that, why look for one in the original chart at all? And if the original chart needs no useful god, what use is analysing its strength? Many statements in traditional fate studies contradict themselves.

I came out of traditional fate studies myself. At first I too believed in "seasonal adjustment" — add a little fire in winter, a little water in summer. Give a polar bear a little warming and it dies of the adjustment; give a tropical fish a little ice and it dies too. For anyone born under any bazi, so long as the person is alive and not dead, it proves he has already adapted to the state in which metal, wood, water, fire and earth exist in his chart.

In fate prediction there is a "principle of fate adaptation." Leave that principle out and accuracy becomes very difficult.

Second question: an element absent from the original chart is a useful god, but if it never appears it is of no use.

An element absent from the chart may well appear in the luck cycle. If it does not appear in the luck cycle it will appear in the annual, monthly, daily or

hourly cycle. This is why a person with no officer star in his chart can become a great official, and a person with no wealth star can make a great fortune. From this you should understand that what is absent from the chart does not mean it will be absent from the person's life.

Which brings up another term: what people call the “following structure.”

The theory of following structures is also wrong. The original chart follows, but the luck cycle will not let it follow; the luck cycle follows, but the annual cycle will not; the annual follows, the month will not; the month follows, the day will not; the day follows, the hour will not. Take a person's life at thirty-six thousand days: for a chart that is supposed to be a following structure, the days on which it genuinely follows do not add up to five hundred. Do you still think your chart's following structure matters? It has no meaning whatsoever.

When we read a fate we are not reading the original chart, and not really the luck cycle either; we are reading the annual cycle, or the month, or the day. Most prediction is done by year, because most matters cannot be settled in a few days. Something settled within a day is read by day; something that takes years or decades needs the luck cycle; something settled within a year or two is read by year; something settled within one year can be read by month — a farmer reading a year's harvest, for instance.

Reading the original chart gives only an image. Setting aside everything else: on the time system alone, truly predicting a person's fate requires the luck cycle, and before a luck cycle has ended — even if only half a year remains — you cannot say you read it correctly. Only when the cycle is over can you say whether you were right or wrong. The lid goes on the coffin. Some people commit suicide or go bankrupt two months before the cycle ends. The same with annual cycles: only when the year is over can you judge. Before the luck cycle or the year is over, every judgement may be wrong. A person does not live by his original chart; a person lives day by day.

So the so-called following structure, whether following strength or following weakness, has no substantive meaning at all. Take a car: today you see a flat tyre, tomorrow a new tyre is fitted and it drives to Beijing as usual. Did it "follow"? This theory arose because its authors did not know what the stems and branches are, did not understand what a bazi essentially is. It is judging whether a person is ill, has a cold, has cancer, is a man, is a woman, is a doctor, is a graduate student, is rich, is a pauper — by the colour of his clothes and the length of his hair. It judges essence from the outer system, and so its uncertainty is enormous.

There are also "joyous gods" and "enemy gods." Turn it around: suppose earth is the useful god and metal is the unfavourable god. I tell you, when earth arrives nothing good happens either — earth generates metal. The useful god arrives and does harm by helping. Do friends not sometimes help you into disaster? If your good friend had not lent you a million last year, you would not have lost it, would not have been trapped in the stock market and reduced to poverty, would not have become his enemy, would not have killed anyone, would not have jumped from a building. Precisely because a good friend lent you a million, you were ruined. That friend is the earth: outwardly kind to you, in reality bringing you the catastrophic force of metal. Do you still think a joyous god is useful? Very often the useful god arrives and instead of bringing good brings disaster, because the useful god has gone to help the unfavourable one. This holds even if you have classified useful and unfavourable correctly. To a child, the parents are the useful god; if the parents do not spoil the child, the child will not develop into someone who hits and curses people and ends up killing.

The method of judging useful and unfavourable gods is in fact very simple: judge by quantity. The same applies in the body. If you lack zinc and someone feeds you more zinc than food, you will soon die. Our method accords both with the logic of human affairs and with scientific principle. Balance must be maintained for anything to be normal.

Much of traditional fate studies does not accord with objective reality and does not survive the test of practice.

The legendary bazi of Guan Yu is **Bingwu, Bingwu, Bingwu, Bingwu.** (Note: four *bingwu* pillars cannot in fact occur; four *wuwu* pillars can. The example is for illustration.) How do we select the useful god?

Every stem and branch in that chart is an unfavourable god. But as we have said, being an unfavourable god is not in itself frightening; what matters is whether those unfavourable gods are active. Surround yourself with thugs, but if none of them harms you, you will be fine. Surround yourself with useful gods, but if none of them helps you, you will not be much better off.

A chart with only one element, such as **Guihai, Guihai, Guihai, Guihai** — this is not a "special chart" either. The *Ditian Sui* has a whole passage on how to read such a fate. I tell you: when Ren Tieqiao wrote that book he was guessing. He had never met a person with four fires; he imagined how such a chart ought to be read, and in fact he could not read it. Setting aside whether Guan Yu's bazi really was four *bingwu*: even if it was, could it be that on that day, in that hour, Guan Yu was the only person born in the whole world? Absolutely not. A donkey would have dropped a foal or two; a fly or a mosquito would have hatched a few. Why were they not Guan Yu? Which is to say: among the people born in that hour, some actualised the energy of certain stems and branches in the chart, and some did not.

How do we judge whether the energy of a stem or branch has been actualised? By the person's bodily features. And the direction in which fate-energy is expressed need not be the same even for people born under one chart. When we say two faces are alike we mean roughly alike. There are no two identical leaves in the world, let alone two identical people. That is the basic idea of the bazi model: see which stem and which branch have functioned, and which have not.

2. Judging useful and unfavourable gods during a luck cycle

Once the luck cycle begins, when the number of stems and branches of the same element is four or more, that element is treated as the unfavourable god. In judging, two identical stems, or two identical branches, count as 1.6.

3. Judging during an annual cycle

Once the annual cycle begins, when the number of stems and branches of the same element is four or more, that element is treated as the unfavourable god. In judging, two identical stems, or two identical branches, count as 1.6.

In the original chart or once the annual cycle begins, if two *jia* woods appear, treat the two as 1.6 *jia* woods. The same for every other stem and branch: two *yin* woods count as 1.6 *yin* woods, two *chen* earths as 1.6 *chen* earths.

Suppose the chart contains "Jiayin, Yimao." The danger it brings you is many times greater than that of "two *jia* woods, one *mao* wood, one *yin* wood." On the surface, wood is the unfavourable god in both. But the difference in outcome is enormous: the combination "Jiayin, Yimao" brings you **absolute risk**; the combination "*jia, jia, yin, mao*" brings you **walking along the edge of risk**. "Standing by the river, in danger of falling in" and "already in the river" differ enormously. "At risk of being arrested" and "already arrested" differ enormously. "At risk of being cheated out of thirty million" and "already cheated out of three million" differ enormously.

So counting is a surface matter; when counting we must look at how strong the force of a given stem actually is. Why is the force of identical stems smaller? If a chart has two *jia* woods, it is like occupying two seats in a library and running back and forth between them: you inconvenience others, but the

seat you have left empty someone else can sit in. If two people sit in those two seats, nobody else can. A person may occupy several positions, but in fact he can only occupy one; the others are half occupied at most. Put it another way: you are the greatest martial artist under heaven, the Fire-Water Evil God. If you fight in Guangzhou I may fear you, but in Beijing I do not — unless you come to Beijing. The Fire-Water Evil God has influence over Beijing, but while he is not there the Beijing martial world does not much fear him.

The number of a given element is a surface phenomenon, but in substance a large number means large energy. Our standard for judging useful and unfavourable gods is the size of a thing's power, and its power depends on how many it is. Countless ants can strip an elephant to the bone.

[Editor's note: the original text here contains a lengthy curse against plagiarists of the author's work. It has been omitted; the substance of the preceding argument is unaffected.]

The method for judging useful and unfavourable gods cannot be the traditional one of obtaining the season, the ground and the time. What does it matter how well a single ant obtains the season, the ground and the time? That is not a rational view but a purely philosophical one. Philosophical thought is not the same as applied technique. You cannot build an atomic bomb without Einstein's theory, but Einstein could not build an atomic bomb. A philosophy alone does not become a technique.

4. Judging during a monthly cycle

Once the monthly cycle begins, when the number of stems and branches of the same element is five or more, that element is treated as the unfavourable god. In judging, two identical stems, or two identical branches, count as 1.6.

5. Judging during a daily cycle

Once the daily cycle begins, when the number of stems and branches of the same element is six or more, that element is treated as the unfavourable god. In judging, two identical stems, or two identical branches, count as 1.6.

6. Judging during an hourly cycle

Once the hourly cycle begins, when the number of stems and branches of the same element is seven or more, that element is treated as the unfavourable god. In judging, two identical stems, or two identical branches, count as 1.6.

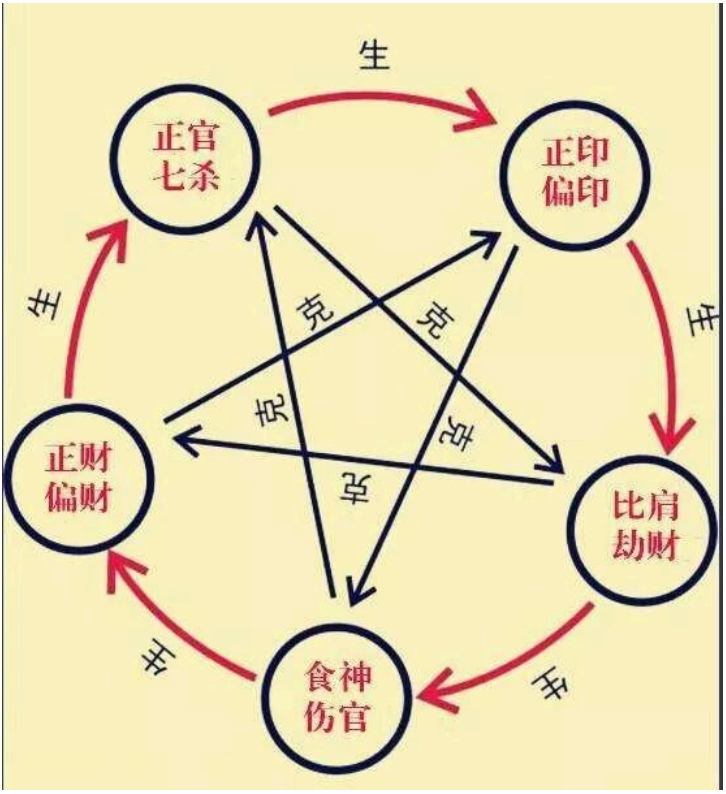
CHAPTER TEN

What the Ten Gods Stand For

2020-02-27 · 1,206 words

> **Translator's note.** A reference page, and the one to keep open while reading the rest. Two departures from convention: the ten gods are not split into "direct" and "indirect" versions (you cannot tell which yuan of your income was direct wealth and which indirect), but the parallel and the rob *are* split. Then the same five gods are re-read for each kind of question — wealth, career, illness, lawsuits, prison, marriage — because a ten god means nothing until you know what is being asked.

Every ten god has a fundamental meaning. But many who write bazi books, in order to show off and mystify, make the meanings extremely complicated, so that students cannot grasp the essence. Assign ten thousand meanings to the ten gods and there is no way to choose among them when reading.



1. Not dividing the ten gods into direct and indirect is the foundation of fate studies

In our system: (1) the ten gods are not divided into direct and indirect. (2) The parallel and the rob must be discussed separately. In the branches there is no parallel: a branch of the same element as the day master is treated only as rob.

In real life direct wealth and indirect wealth cannot in fact be separated. Do you know which of the money you earned was direct wealth and which was indirect? What matters is whether you have wealth at all. For a man the wealth star is the wife; what matters is whether he has a wife. For the officer-and-killer, what matters is whether you hold real power. For the seal, what

matters is whether you have the culture and cultivation the seal stands for — not a piece of paper. Of China's top scientists, very few graduated from Tsinghua or Peking University. As for the seal, many stepmothers are better than real mothers. In real life many people's stepfather is their mother's lover, and the mother's lover is generally superior to the real father: the real father cannot buy you a flat in Beijing, the stepfather puts down several million for the deposit. The ancient division of the ten gods into direct and indirect rests on a theory of ethics, not on fact.

2. The essential meaning of each ten god

Officer-and-killer. To a government official it means power. To a non-official it means career. To any person it means superiors, benefactors, petty people — and disaster. To a woman it means the husband. To a team it means the establishment of rules and institutions.

Wealth star. Money. Ability. Reasons of every kind. To a man, wife and lover.

Eating-and-wounding. The source of wealth. Ideals and goals. Intelligence. Children. Assistants and subordinates (when the hour-stem eating-and-wounding is the useful god and functions, one obtains strong support from subordinates).

Parallel-and-rob. The parallel means oneself. The rob means siblings and friends; in matters of money it means loss and drain; in danger it means a friend who takes the blow for you; it means disputes; it means a wife taken from you; in career prediction the rob means resistance and obstruction.

Owl-seal. Matters and affairs. To a leader it means the right to sign. To an ordinary person it means career. Among the six relations it means the mother. It means a diploma, or cultural level, or cultivation.

Note: a diploma and a cultural level are not always the same thing. Some people have modest diplomas and a high cultural level, so “cultural level” is the safer term when judging. If you must read the diploma, read only the *initial* diploma, because officials at county level and above, and the heads of listed companies and some other enterprises, though their cultural level may be modest, have all bought or been given refresher qualifications at master's or doctoral level. Reading diplomas has real meaning only for people who studied honestly.

3. Different questions, different meanings for the same ten god

When reading wealth:

- Officer-and-killer: drains wealth
- Owl-seal: matters and affairs
- Wealth star: money
- Eating-and-wounding: the source of wealth
- Parallel-and-rob: loss of wealth

When reading official career:

- Officer-and-killer: office
- Owl-seal: the official seal, authority
- Wealth star: the foundation of office
- Eating-and-wounding, when blocked: ideals
- Parallel-and-rob: obstruction and contention

When reading injury, illness and disaster:

- Officer-and-killer: illness, injury, disaster
- Owl-seal: rescue, the doctor

- Wealth star: the symptoms
- Eating-and-wounding: medicine
- Parallel-and-rob: health

When reading lawsuits and disputes:

- Officer-and-killer: the other party's business
- Owl-seal: the pleadings, the dispute itself
- Wealth (money): the reason
- Eating-and-wounding: one's own business
- Parallel-and-rob: accomplices and helpers

When reading imprisonment:

- Officer-and-killer: the prison
- Owl-seal: the crime
- Wealth (money): the matter at issue
- Eating-and-wounding: the lawyer
- Parallel-and-rob: accomplices and helpers

When reading romance and affairs:

- Officer-and-killer: the husband or lover (for a woman reading marriage); the woman's family (for a man reading marriage)
- Owl-seal: the man's family; one's own family's money as one's strength; the partner or lover (for a man reading marriage)
- Eating-and-wounding: relatives and friends; one's own strength
- Parallel-and-rob: one's own family; relatives and friends

4. Why the same unfavourable god means different things according to direction, feng shui and bodily features

For people born under one bazi, the useful and unfavourable gods are indistinguishable on the time system. But when those people move in different directions, the inauspicious (or auspicious) meaning of an unfavourable (or useful) stem that looks identical on the time system differs enormously — because **the energy of direction is greater than the energy of time.** So if a person's chart has "*jia* wood as the unfavourable god" and a *jia* year comes, the time system guarantees a disaster belonging to the *jia* unfavourable god. But if that person goes to work in a fire direction and does not return to the origin point for a year, then not only does the disaster not occur — he obtains good things of the *jia* kind. And if instead he goes to work for a year in the *jia* direction, the direction of the unfavourable god, then the danger certainly does occur.

By the same token, because **the energy of feng shui is greater than the energy of direction**, if a person with *jia* as unfavourable god has strong auspicious sand in the *jia* direction of his living environment, then in a *jia* year he too is greatly fortunate and nothing bad happens — even if he travels to the *jia* direction of the unfavourable god, nothing bad of that kind occurs.

And likewise, a person's bodily features stand for the sand-and-water properties of the corresponding position in his feng shui. If the body part that the *jia* unfavourable god stands for — the chest — has happened to grow into the state of the *useful* god rather than the state of the *jia* unfavourable god, then in a *jia* year he is likewise greatly fortunate and no disaster occurs.

Remember this: everything predicted on the time system is only **information**, only a **signal**. Whether that signal becomes a fact is decided entirely by the person's **direction of movement and feng shui environment.**

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Telling the Ten Gods Apart in a Person's Bazi

2021-05-03 · 1,793 words

> **Translator's note.** The position table that makes the previous essay usable. Each of the eight slots in a chart has a fixed occupant — father, mother, sibling, spouse, child, social standing — and whatever stem sits there wears that occupant's costume. A chart with no wealth star in the visible pillars can still belong to a billionaire, because the wealth star may be sitting, invisible, under the year stem. Two analogies carry the argument: seats in a lecture theatre, and a show of hands.

Telling the ten gods apart has two sides: the surface ten gods and the positioning ten gods. The surface ten gods are what we see in the written-out chart. The positioning ten gods are hidden beneath them, determined by position. The year stem, for instance, is the father's position, and the father is defined as the wealth star; so whatever the year stem appears to be — seal, parallel, officer — its positioning ten god is the wealth star. The year branch stands for the mother, so whatever it appears to be — officer, eating-and-wounding, parallel — its positioning ten god is the owl-seal. Whatever the month stem appears to be, its positioning ten god is the parallel. The month branch is the lover's position and stands for the lover: to a man, whatever it appears to be, its positioning ten god is the wealth star; to a woman, the officer-and-killer. To a man the day branch stands for the spouse, so whatever it appears to be, its positioning ten god is the wealth star; to a woman, the officer-and-killer, because the husband *is* the officer-and-killer. The hour stem stands for children — it is the children's position — and the eating-and-

wounding stands for children; so even if the hour stem appears to be an owl-seal or an officer, that is only the surface: its positioning ten god is the eating-and-wounding. The hour branch stands for social standing, for your name and reputation; man or woman, its positioning ten god is the officer-and-killer.

Telling useful from unfavourable

In our system the standard for judging useful and unfavourable gods accords completely with objective fact. We do not, like traditional bazi, specialise in fine-sounding argument that reads beautifully on paper and has nothing to do with the way life actually works. Reading a fate is reading a person's life. If the logic of your reading is nothing like the logic of life, then either life is wrong or the reading is wrong — and it is certainly the reading.

So the standard is very simple: it is an election. What is an election? Numbers. A chart has eight seats and there are five elements. For the five elements to be balanced, no element may occupy more than 1.6 seats. If an element takes two seats, the others each lose half a seat; if it takes three, the others may have nowhere to sit. In other words, across eight seats, no element should exceed 1.6 — and anything past two characters is a bad character in your chart. Why? Because it is grabbing seats.

It is like this classroom. There are no spare seats: eighty-three of us, eighty-three seats. Then one man walks in and takes five. Do the others still have seats? They do not. So is the man who took five seats a good man or a bad one? Do you still need to ask whether he “obtained the season, the ground, the support, the force”? That is nonsense. If he can hold five seats, do you imagine he has no power? Would a man without power dare to seize five? The very fact that he holds five proves he has energy — a man without energy cannot hold five. And since he holds five, he is powerful, and therefore he is the bad one: to the elements left without seats, he is the bad one.

Do you, as a single person, actually need five woods? Do you not need metal, fire, water, earth? You need all of them. Only with all five are you a complete person. Now one element has seized every seat and the others are absent — you are incomplete. So for you, the stems and branches that seized the other elements' seats are the unfavourable gods. And you can see this plainly in any vote: the ordinary people have no particular power, but there are many of them raising hands, and the one with the most hands goes up. Which is to say: look at whom these people raise their hands for. Of the eight seats in a bazi, the seven neighbours decide whether the day stem is auspicious — they vote you in or they vote you out. Do you think a man who has seized the seats wants to hand you power? You are a day master of earth; why would five woods be willing to obey you? They will not obey one *wu* earth. Whatever you want to say or do, all five raise their hands against it. Are they your useful gods or your unfavourable ones? Think, and you will know.

Every theory of bazi prediction comes from life. Our theoretical technique matches exactly the relations and logic of life between people. So although our theory of useful and unfavourable gods looks very simple, and looks as though it could not be accurate, twenty years of practice have proved it a hundred per cent precise. In the original chart, any element whose stems and branches exceed two — that is, reach three or four — is an unfavourable god; one, or two, or none, is a useful god. That is in the original chart.

Once the luck cycle begins, three may also be treated as unfavourable, because many people cannot keep the distinction: they say that if three is unfavourable in the original chart, why does three remain unchanged in the luck cycle? So we changed it: in the luck cycle or the annual cycle, an element becomes unfavourable when its stems and branches reach four. If the chart has two and the luck cycle adds one, three is still unfavourable; if the original chart has three and the luck cycle adds no wood, then those three are *not* called unfavourable during that cycle. If the original chart has three woods and the

luck cycle has none, then throughout the ten years of that woodless cycle the three woods in the chart are useful gods. Keep this distinction clear.

In the annual cycle: if the original chart has two, the luck cycle one and the annual cycle one, that element has become an unfavourable element. Pay particular attention to this.

So in studying our theory you must be clear about the ten gods in a bazi: what the surface ten gods are, what the positioning ten gods are, and where the positioning ten gods sit. A person may have no wealth star anywhere in the chart and never meet a wealth star in any luck cycle, and still be a billionaire. Many ask how a man can be rich without a wealth star. I ask how you can tell from a man's clothes whether he is alive or dead. Do you imagine that everyone wearing clothes is alive and everyone without them is dead? Have you not noticed that at night most people are wearing nothing, and are still very much alive? So if you read only the surface ten gods, announce that “this chart has no wealth star,” and tell the man his finances are poor, you have shown that you do not understand bazi prediction at all — because there is a *positioning* wealth star.

Take a chart with no wealth star where the person himself is *wu* earth. Beneath *wu* earth the positioning wealth star is *zi* water. Suppose this person works his whole life in the *zi* direction: he is from Guangzhou and works his whole life in Beijing. Do you think he is poor? He never once meets a *renzi* or *guihai* luck cycle, and he can still make a great fortune. Add strong auspicious sand in the *zi* direction at his home and he may well be enormously rich.

So if you judge a person's prospects purely by the absence of some surface ten god, you will not read accurately at all. The surface ten gods are the clothes a person wears; the positioning ten gods are his body. To judge whether a body is genuinely healthy, you cannot tell from the clothes — you have to undress and examine it. In a hospital, seeing a man in a hospital gown, can you say he is not ill? A man in a hospital gown certainly is ill; no need to undress him.

But if a woman disguises herself as a man to get in, the clothes will not show it and you must undress her to find out.

So where the surface ten gods suffice, there is no need to look at the positioning ones. Where the surface ten gods cannot show the direction of a fate — where you cannot see promotion or wealth in them — then look at the positioning ten gods. If the positioning ten gods are excellent, and the person moves in the right direction, and his feng shui fully supports the positioning ten gods, then his wealth and rank will be far greater than that of a man with the surface ten god. This is why you cannot take a bazi alone and say whether the man will be rich or promoted. You may object that people born under the same bazi have the same positioning ten gods. They do. But why do we look at them? To see where the person moves. In which direction of his ancestral grave does this man work and live? In which direction does he go to work every day? Is the direction of the positioning ten god at his ancestral grave auspicious or not? Through time, direction and environment we can divide the fates of people born under one bazi with complete accuracy.

Everyone must have some grasp of our bazi theory, because the positioning ten gods are indispensable when applying the 290 configurations — and in resolving major illnesses such as liver or lung cancer, or major disasters such as imprisonment, the positioning ten gods may matter far more than the surface ones. So learn the basics. Whether you can read a fate is beside the point; understand what I have said about the nature of time and direction, and about the auspicious and inauspicious qualities of sand and water in the twenty-four mountain directions of the eight palaces, and you will study the 290 configurations without obstruction.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Parallel and the Rob Are Essentially Different

2020-09-26 · 731 words

> **Translator's note.** A short but load-bearing distinction. The trade lumps "parallel" and "rob" together as one ten god; Lü separates them on the narrowest possible ground: the parallel is *you*, repeated, and the rob is everyone else of your element. Four *jia* woods in a chart are one man with four houses, which is why his readings differ from another man's under the same chart. There is also an unusually candid passage on why the teacher uses invented charts in class.

Why separate the parallel from the rob?

Because, to be exact, the parallel is oneself, and the rob is siblings and friends. If your day master is *jia* wood, then even four *jia* woods in the stems are all you. You may object: is not the day master me? How are the other *jia* woods also me? The *jia* in the year pillar is not you, but it is your house. You have four houses and four wives; you can sleep here one night and there the next. If someone attacks the day pillar you can run to the year pillar; if someone attacks the year pillar you can run to the day pillar. So those four *jia* woods are you. In the branches, the ten stems have no parallel — whatever is there is rob. Let us write out a chart:

Jiawu, Jiaxu, Jiazi, Jiashen

I have said that in my lectures, apart from using your own charts, I never prepare a chart in advance. Someone says: Teacher Lü, the charts you use in class are made up — how can they be accurate? I tell you, my charts are made

up; but I also tell you a principle. Understand the principle, then take your own chart and your friends' charts and see whether it works. That is the point. I could take the chart written above and tell you the whole of *Journey to the West* from it; I could take a chart and tell you the whole life of Liu Bei, and every reading would come out accurate. What use is that? What matters is that you learn the principle, then read your own fate, your family's, your friends', the people you know and understand — and see whether it comes out right by that principle. That is the foundation. It is not about whether the chart I wrote on the board is a real one and whether my reading of it is accurate. My accuracy is no use: however accurate I am, it is I who am accurate, which does not make you accurate. Your accuracy is the foundation. You came to study so that *you* would be accurate, not so that I would be. Hence the invented charts.

Apart from the day master *jia*, every other *jia* is a parallel. There is an advantage in that: if someone comes to the day pillar, this house, to attack him, how many other places does he have to run to? This is what we call the cunning hare with four burrows — four places to run back and forth among, which makes him very hard to find. But that is when bad things are looking for him. When good things are looking for him, are they not equally hard to find? Every advantage carries a disadvantage; that is the rule of this world, and everything runs in both directions. Which is to say: it is the same as the self sitting on eating-and-wounding, on wealth, on seal, on officer-and-killer. Those three *jia* woods in the year, month and hour are all him — except that he may spend three hundred days a year living at the day pillar and the rest of the time somewhere else. Or you may say that the day master is himself and the other *jia* woods are his shadows. Understand? It can be understood entirely that way.

So when the day master *jia* wood grabs money, all the other *jia* woods can spend it. That is the parallel, and in prediction the parallel deserves particular attention. If the year pillar is *Jiayin*, then the *yin* wood is called rob, not

parallel. *Mao* wood is also rob when it appears, and *yi* wood is rob as well. Only one's own repetition is called parallel. This point is very important; in later prediction you will find that it raises your accuracy substantially.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Locating Body Parts in a Bazi

2020-08-21 · 1,848 words

> **Translator's note.** The body map. If a bazi is a mould and a person is the product, this is the page that tells you how to inspect the product: which pillar governs which region, which stem the left side and which the right, and a long inventory down to individual fingers. Only nine features are needed to read a whole life; the rest come into play at the finer time scales. The closing argument — that cosmetic surgery changes a fate — follows directly, and is the most testable claim in the corpus.

To judge which direction the fate-energy of people born under the same bazi has been expressed in — wealth, office, study, marriage, children — we need the positioning of body features against the chart.

In practice, this positioning has proved fairly accurate.

1. Platform positioning

- Year pillar: the head
- Month pillar: the chest, back and upper limbs
- Day pillar: the abdomen, waist and buttocks
- Hour pillar: the legs



2. The correction system

(1)

- Heavenly stems: the left side of the body
- Earthly branches: the right side of the body
- Heavenly stems: the front of the body
- Earthly branches: the back of the body

(2)

- Year stem: the crown; year branch: the jaw
- Month stem: the chest; month branch: the back

- Day stem: the upper abdomen; day branch: the waist
- Hour stem: the thigh; hour branch: the calf
- Hour stem: the arch of the foot; hour branch: the sole
- Day stem: the lower abdomen; day branch: the buttocks
- Year stem: the front of the face; year branch: the back of the skull

(3)

- Year pillar: the forehead; month pillar: eyes and ears
- Day pillar: the nose; hour pillar: the mouth
- Year stem: left forehead; year branch: right forehead
- Month stem: the eyebrows; month branch: the eyes
- Month stem: the eyes; month branch: the ears
- Day stem: the nose; day branch: the cheeks
- Month stem: left eyebrow; month branch: right eyebrow
- Hour stem: the mouth; hour branch: the chin
- Month stem: left ear; month branch: right ear
- Month stem: left eye; month branch: right eye

(4)

- Year pillar: the neck; month pillar: the upper limbs
- Day pillar: chest and back; hour pillar: the centre of the chest and both flanks
- Month stem: left upper limb; month branch: right upper limb
- Day stem: left pectoral (breast); day branch: right pectoral (breast)
- Month stem: left shoulder; month branch: right shoulder
- Day stem: left shoulder blade; day branch: right shoulder blade
- Hour stem: the centre of the chest; hour branch: both flanks
- Hour stem: left flank; hour branch: right flank

(5)

- Year pillar: upper abdomen; month pillar: navel and *mingmen*
- Day pillar: lower abdomen and buttocks; hour pillar: genitals and anus
- Year stem: left upper abdomen; year branch: right upper abdomen
- Month stem: the navel; month branch: the *mingmen* (the small of the back opposite the navel)
- Month stem: lower abdomen; month branch: buttocks
- Day stem: left lower abdomen; day branch: right lower abdomen
- Day stem: left buttock; day branch: right buttock
- Hour stem: genitals; hour branch: anus

(6)

- Year pillar: the thigh; month pillar: the knee
- Day pillar: the calf; hour pillar: the foot, including the ankle joint
- Year stem: left thigh; year branch: right thigh
- Year stem: front of the thigh; year branch: back of the thigh
- Month stem: the kneecap; month branch: the popliteal fossa, behind the knee
- Month stem: left knee; month branch: right knee
- Day stem: left calf; day branch: right calf
- Day stem: front of the calf; day branch: back of the calf
- Hour stem: the ankle joint; hour branch: the foot
- Hour stem: the arch; hour branch: the sole
- Hour stem: left foot; hour branch: right foot

(7)

- Year pillar: the shoulder; month pillar: the upper arm
- Day pillar: the forearm; hour pillar: the hand

- Year stem: left shoulder; year branch: right shoulder
- Year stem: front of the shoulder socket; month branch: back of the shoulder socket
- Month stem: left upper arm; month branch: right upper arm
- Month stem: outer upper arm; month branch: inner upper arm
- Day stem: left forearm; day branch: right forearm
- Day stem: outer forearm; day branch: inner forearm
- Hour stem: left hand; hour branch: right hand
- Hour stem: back of the hand; hour branch: palm
- Hour stem: the palm; hour branch: the fingers
- Hour stem: left fingers; hour branch: right fingers
- Hour stem: outer fingers; hour branch: inner fingers

To make this easy to remember, I have gathered the above into a table for students.

Year stem: left forehead, front of the face, left rear skull, front of the neck, left front of the neck, right back of the neck, left shoulder, front of the shoulder socket, left front of the shoulder socket, left back of the shoulder socket, upper abdomen, left thigh, front of the left thigh, back of the left thigh, front of the thigh, side of the wrist joint, left wrist joint, back of the left wrist joint, front of the left ankle, back of the left ankle, outer left ankle, inner left ankle, outer left ankle.

Year branch: jaw, back of the skull, back of the neck, back of the lower spine, right thigh, right wrist, left forehead, back of the skull, right side of the skull, back of the neck, front of the neck, right back of the neck, right shoulder, back of the shoulder socket, right front of the shoulder socket, right back of the shoulder socket, back of the abdomen, back at the heart, right thigh, front of the right thigh, back of the thigh, inner side of the wrist joint,

right wrist joint, back of the right wrist joint, inner right wrist joint, back of the ankle, right ankle joint, front of the right ankle joint.

Month stem: eyebrows, outer ear, left arm, navel, knee, brow and eye, front of the chest and neck, left eyebrow, left eye, left ear, left arm, left upper arm, left back, navel, left waist, left front of the waist, left back of the waist, right knee, right kneecap, left popliteal fossa.

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Month branch: eyes, inner ear, right arm, *mingmen*, popliteal fossa, ear, back of the neck, right eyebrow, right eye, right ear, right arm, right upper arm, right back, *mingmen*, right waist, right front of the waist, right back of the waist, right knee, right kneecap, right popliteal fossa.

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Day stem: height, weight, complexion, nose, chest (breast), belly, calf, left calf, weight, complexion, nose, left cheekbone, left chest (breast), left shoulder blade, left forearm, belly, left calf, left buttock (lower back).

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Day branch: body colour, cheekbone, shoulder blade and back, buttocks, right calf, right forearm, right cheekbone, right chest (breast), right shoulder blade, right forearm, lower back, right buttock, right calf (buttock).

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Hour stem: mouth, the hollow of the chest, genitals, left foot, arch, left hand, mouth, lips, upper teeth, hollow of the chest, left flank, lower left back, genitals, left foot, left sole, left lower limb, arch.

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Hour branch: teeth, ribs, anus, right foot, sole, right hand, cheek, lower teeth, right flank, lower right back, anus, right foot, right arch, right sole.

(Left, right, front, back, inner and outer are assigned by the student.)

Every stem and branch in a bazi stands for several, even a dozen, body parts. When predicting the auspicious and inauspicious course of a whole life, only nine features are examined: **height, crown, jaw, chest (breast), back, abdomen, waist and buttocks, arch, sole.** All the other body parts a stem or branch stands for are used in reading specific events in annual, monthly and daily cycles. The relation between the annual cycle and the monthly and daily cycles is the relation between a large region of the body and the smaller regions it contains, and those in turn and the smaller still. Seeing this great inventory of parts, you may think the positioning cannot be applied in practice. In fact it is very simple to apply.

Even twin sisters, whose skull shapes are much alike — if the elder has had jaw surgery and the younger has not, their fates will diverge. By the same token, **double-eyelid surgery, dyeing the hair, breast enlargement and buttock enhancement also change a person's fate.**

Cosmetic surgery can change fate. What matters is getting it right: kill an unfavourable god by surgery and the fate moves in a good direction; kill a useful god and it moves in a bad one. Which it is depends on the ten god occupying that part. In real life, after cosmetic surgery some people die, some divorce, some go bankrupt, some fall ill — and the bazi model theory accounts for this better than anything else.

The positioning system is the golden key to the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences, and it matters a great deal.

In my own readings I have judged that a certain man must either have had a tooth out or be constantly knocking his teeth; I have judged another man to have a hernia. Both came from the positioning system, not from the ten gods.

If reading a fate covered only what is common, there would be no need to study this system at all. Every theory of bazi prediction except mine studies the commonality of fate; nobody studies its individuality. They try, but their theory is not built on a platform from which individuality can be solved. I do

not say my theory is the best, but at least it can be said to be closer to the truth.

Through these three levels of division, the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences can be fully separated. The day branch, for instance, is the spouse's position and its location is the buttocks. If your day branch is the useful god, and your day branch is weak, and your buttocks have grown large and heavy, then your wife is either ugly or a painted pillow good only to look at. From the size of a man's buttocks we can rank the quality of the wives of all fifteen hundred men born under one bazi. The hour pillar is the children's position; likewise, from the feet we can judge the children of each person born under one chart, and judge whether a person's fate-energy has been expressed in his children. All of this holds in theory and stands up to practice.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Twins, Height and the Exam Score

2020-05-07 · 570 words

> **Translator's note.** One chart, two twins, one exam, and a prediction made before the results: the shorter brother will score higher. The mechanism is stated so plainly it can be checked — the month stem *geng* metal is an unfavourable god, and if it genuinely supports the day master the boy grows tall and his fate platform drops; the hour stem *ren* water is the useful god, and the more it drains the day master the shorter he grows and the better he does. Height is the base platform, and everything else in this system is read off it.

Male: Xinsi, Gengyin, Gengxu, Renwu (twins)

Luck cycle: Wuzi, from 2015. Annual cycle: Jihai.

The problem of predicting the differing fates of twins has, in three thousand years, been solved thoroughly by no school of bazi except the Lü Wen-yi bazi model theory.

Analysis of this chart:

Geng is the day master, and the day master is height. If the day master *geng* genuinely receives the support of the month stem *geng*, and if the hour stem *ren* water does not genuinely perform its draining function, then a person born under this chart must be tall — at least 1.75 metres — because in the original chart metal is the unfavourable god; the day master *geng* metal can grow tall only because the unfavourable month stem *geng* supports it. Therefore a tall person born under this chart has, overall, a lower fate level than a short one.

If the month stem *geng* does not genuinely support the day stem *geng*, and *ren* water fully drains the day stem *geng*, then the *geng* day master will be short. Because the month stem *geng* is the unfavourable god, and an unfavourable god does not help the day master *geng*, while the hour stem *ren* water is the useful god and throws all its strength into helping the day stem *geng* — therefore, among people born under this chart, the short ones have a better overall fate platform than the tall ones.

At the university entrance examination: the hour stem *ren* water is the eating-and-wounding, and only the person under this chart in whom *ren* water functions more will do well in the examination. So it follows that **of the twins, the shorter one will score better than the taller one.**

The facts: the elder brother is 1.72 metres and 70 kilograms; the younger is 1.80 metres and 78 kilograms. In the 2019 entrance examination the elder scored 530 and the younger 460.

Objectively: among all boys in the country born under this chart, in this year's entrance examination, the shorter scored better and the taller scored worse. Because height is the base platform of the differing fates of people born under the same bazi; on that platform, because each person's various body features differ, the same stem or branch in the same chart does good or harm to each person with different strength — and so the great divergence of fates among people born under one chart comes about.

Study bazi and you will see: any school of bazi that cannot face the problem of predicting the differing fates of people born under the same chart and of the same sex, and cannot solve it completely, is congenitally disabled, and does not possess the objective truth needed to guide a human life.

Lü Wen-yi, at the Foyin Temple, 23 June 2019

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Why Do People Born Under the Same Bazi Have Different Fates?

2017-10-16 · 1,645 words

Translator's note. The founding paper of the whole system, dated 2003. Its argument is a pincer: any theory that cannot explain why the fifteen hundred people born in the same two-hour window have different fates is useless, and any theory that solves it by asking the client for his family background, education or ambitions has refuted itself. Lü's answer is the *direction* in which a fixed quantity of hidden energy is spent — five flowers, one hundred units of water — and the conclusion is deliberately modest: the method reads a surface, never a point.



The greatest unsolved puzzle in Chinese bazi prediction is the differing fates of "five-fold coincidences." Unless a student of bazi can solve it, accurate prediction is practically a fantasy. By the state family-planning statistics for 1998 — and the Beijing maternity hospital alone delivered more than ten thousand babies in 2003, an average of thirteen per two-hour period — about three thousand children are born in China in each two-hour period. Halving that for sex gives nearly fifteen hundred five-fold coincidences. It is certain that not all of those fifteen hundred become provincial governors because one of them did. And if the rest did not, then without a solution to the problem of their differing fates, accurate prediction by traditional bazi theory is absolutely impossible; any occasional hit is coincidence, not necessity.



On the question of the differing fates of five-fold coincidences, a Mr Li of Shandong has given, across the ages, the most comprehensive explanation. In a chapter titled "Four Differences Among Identical Bazi" in his book on Chinese bazi prediction, Mr Li explains that five-fold coincidences differ first because their family status and circumstances differ, second

because their education differs, third because the height of their ambitions differs, and fourth because their feng shui environments differ.



Mr Li's explanation may be the most comprehensive ever offered, but a closer look shows it to be pure nonsense. Why? Because on his account: first, without asking the client about his family's status we cannot predict at all; second, without asking about his education we cannot predict; third, without asking how high his ambitions run we cannot predict; fourth, without seeing his feng shui we certainly cannot predict. If we do not consult on those four conditions, we can never predict the fate of those fifteen hundred people by traditional Chinese bazi theory. But if we do consult on them, as Mr Li says we must — then what becomes of his own claim that “from the bazi alone one can accurately judge the client's family background, the level of his diploma, the degree of his wealth and rank and the length of his life, and the feng shui of his birthplace (what Mr Li calls bazi feng shui)”? Is that not contradicting

himself and slapping his own face? Is that not publicly admitting that his bazi theory is invented nonsense? **So: whether a theory can solve the puzzle of five-fold coincidences is the only theoretical standard for judging whether a bazi theory is correct.**

Taking what is correct from earlier theory, joining it to the logic of ordinary human affairs, and analysing bazi theory with dialectical materialism, we have solved the puzzle completely. This is an original article by Lü Wen-yi.

We hold that the differing fates of people of the same sex born in the same year, month, day and hour are decided entirely by each person's ancestral grave and the feng shui of the home during pregnancy (and as for family background, education and personal ambition, these too are ultimately decided by the yin dwelling and the yang dwelling). Why? We already know that the ancestral grave and the pregnancy home decide the *quality* of a fate, and that the new ancestral grave and the home after birth only cause fluctuations in the degree of that quality. **Here we set aside the causes of the difference and ask only how prediction should handle it.**

Before that, two ideas must be clear: “a person's fate-energy” and “the direction in which fate-energy is expressed.” Fate-energy is the energy contained in the person himself — hidden energy, not manifest energy. Different substances contain different hidden energy (a kilogram of coal and a kilogram of uranium differ in hidden energy by a factor of many billions, while their manifest energy is the same: one kilogram). In the same way, different people contain absolutely different hidden energy. The more auspicious hidden energy, and the greater, the better the fate, the greater the wealth and rank, the longer the life; and where auspicious hidden energy is scant, there is only poverty, meanness, early death, childlessness and misfortune. Every substance contains a fixed quantity of hidden energy, not an unlimited one. And precisely because each person's hidden energy is a fixed value, the

question arises of how that energy is allocated among the different aspects of a fate. That is the question of the direction in which fate-energy is expressed.

Everyone has five auspicious needs: wealth, office (career), marriage, children, and lifespan. Picture these five as five pots of flowers. Suppose someone's hidden fate-energy is one hundred units of water. Spread the hundred evenly and each pot gets twenty. Allocate fifty to the office pot, thirty to wealth, ten to children and ten to lifespan, and the marriage pot must parch. From that allocation we can say: great office, much wealth, ordinary children, ordinary lifespan, disastrous marriage. In real life there is absolutely no one with the greatest office, the most wealth, the most and best children, the longest life and the best marriage. Most people have a mix of good and bad among the five needs. Even if five-fold coincidences had the same quantity of hidden energy, they would differ in fate because the energy is expressed in different directions — and in fact, five-fold coincidences also differ in the quantity of hidden energy, because their feng shui environments differ. **Understand these two ideas and you understand the real inner reason why five-fold coincidences have different fates. And having understood the direction of expression, friends in yixue will also understand how much truth there is in the advertising of those masters who claim to "read from the bazi alone, and tell you on such-and-such a day of such-and-such a month in such-and-such a year exactly what will happen; read from the bazi alone, and tell you how great your office will be, how rich you will be, how high your diploma, whether your first child is a boy or a girl, and where you rank among your siblings."**

The cause of the difference has been found. How is it to be applied in practice?

In prediction, only by correctly applying the direction of expression can the reading be accurate. Using dialectical materialism joined to the logic of

ordinary affairs, the Lü-school bazi theory has solved the age-old puzzle of "same bazi, different fate." Its "ten gods by mode of interaction" method accurately determines the basic auspicious or inauspicious information in six areas for a given chart in a given year: wealth, office, injury and illness, marriage, lawsuits, and imprisonment. Then, by the principle of the direction of expression, it makes an accurate judgement about each area. For example:

Male: Bingwu, Gengyin, Wushen, Jiayin

Luck cycle: Jiawu. Annual cycle: Jiashen (2004).

In the *jiashen* year under the *jiawu* cycle, the officer-and-killer is in chaotic motion, which is inauspicious; the eating-and-wounding clashes the officer-and-killer, which is auspicious; the annual eating-and-wounding *shen* metal takes its position at the day branch, which means wealth. From the method of modes of interaction, the basic information for this chart in the *jiashen* year is: there will be lawsuits and disputes, there will be injury or illness, money can come in, there is marriage information (or a lover appears), career is unfavourable, there is information of imprisonment. But we know that so many signals will not all necessarily happen to one person, and that not everyone born under this chart will have the same things happen. This is only basic information. To predict correctly for everyone born under the chart, the basic information must be integrated by the principle of the direction of expression. Integrated, we reach this conclusion: "In the *jiashen* year under the *jiawu* cycle there should be lawsuits and disputes, and injury or illness; money can be made, but career development will not go smoothly; there is marriage information or a lover appears. If there are no lawsuits and no injury or illness, then there will certainly be loss of money, and no marriage or lover. If there are lawsuits or injury, then money will certainly be made, marriage or a lover will certainly appear, and the career will develop smoothly."

Friends in yixue may feel this integrated conclusion is unsatisfying — not quite the clean strike they wanted. But it is objectively in accord with reality,

and objectively in accord with the situation of all five-fold coincidences. If the client supplies the *direction* of his question when he comes, then the conclusion of the mode-of-interaction method can be used directly; if he does not, only the integrated conclusion will do. Because those born under the chart certainly do not all have lawsuits, do not all have injury, do not all make money, do not all acquire lovers, do not all make exactly a hundred thousand, do not all have gallbladder surgery. **So prediction by bazi can reach a directional surface, and can never reach a precise point.** Friends who do not believe this theory are destined to fall flat on their faces on the yixue road, and to be cheated very badly indeed.

The theory of the differing fates of five-fold coincidences is the most fundamental standard for judging whether a bazi predictive theory is scientific and usable.

Shandong, Zaozhuang, May 2003

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

What Is the Only Standard for Testing a Bazi Theory?

2020-04-21 · 1,311 words

> **Translator's note.** A scorecard. Three older explanations of the identical-chart problem are taken up in turn and dismissed — the "seasonal adjustment" story via a famous Qing anecdote about a minister and a blacksmith born in the same hour, Shao Weihua's rule about elder and younger twins, and Li Hanchen's four differences. Then the sharper move: the accuracy claimed by the trade is decomposed into theory, cold reading, and betting on the odds. The standard proposed is brutal and simple: rank ten thousand people born under one chart.

Whatever the school, only accuracy can prove a theory scientific. A predictive theory that has been handed down for centuries or a thousand years is worthless if it is not accurate, or only slightly accurate.

The only standard for testing a bazi theory: can it distinguish the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences?

A five-fold coincidence means born in the same year, month, day and hour, and of the same sex. A six-fold coincidence adds the same parents. Five-fold and six-fold coincidences exist objectively and cannot be avoided.

Several theories for distinguishing their fates have appeared over the centuries:

1. The theory of seasonal adjustment of the useful god.

Shi Yizhi, a Qing grand secretary, had a father who was thoroughly versed in Ziping fortune-telling. In the *xinyou* year of Kangxi (1681) the father took the

whole family to the capital. Midway, their boat stopped at a wharf, and Yizhi was born there. The father cast the bazi and concluded that the boy would certainly enjoy great wealth and rank. That day the river wind was strong and the boat could not proceed. The father went ashore for a walk and happened on a blacksmith's household where a boy had also just been born. He asked the birth hour; it was exactly the same as Yizhi's. The father quietly noted the address.

More than twenty years later Yizhi had risen to imperial commissioner. His father, retired, passed through the place where Yizhi was born and found that the boy born in the same hour was at home swinging a hammer at the forge. The old man was overcome. He could not sleep all night, turning it over, and then it came to him. He said to himself: “This chart has rather too much fire and lacks the water that would control it. The one born on the boat had the river water to check the fire. The one born beside the forge had fire added to fire, with nothing to adjust it. So the blacksmith's son's poverty and meanness were fated too.”

This reading sounds reasonable. But sit down and think about it. The chart needs water — but is there not a great deal of water in a river? Can too much water not drown a man? Thirsty as you are, hold your head under the pond and you drown. And a man dying of thirst in the desert: will one drop save him?

Which brings in the question of *quantity*. Even if you select the useful god correctly, you need to know how much of it. Without quantity, the useful god can arrive and still bring disaster: if water is the useful god in your chart, in a *renzi* luck cycle with a *renzi* annual cycle — cycle and year coinciding — you still meet disaster. It is like taking cold medicine. Take two bowls of it as your meal and the cold is cured and the man is dead. Take a tiny bit and the cold is not cured at all. This is what the ancients and every present school have never understood. Dig into some of the old theories and they are absurd.

2. Shao Weihua's rule: of twins born to one mother, on a yang day in a yang hour the elder prevails over the younger; on a yin day in a yin hour the younger prevails over the elder.

This explanation of twins is also absurd and does not survive practice at all.

3. Li Hanchen's explanation of the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences:

(1) Different family origins. (2) Different ambitions. (3) Different feng shui environments. (4) Different education.

Li Hanchen's explanation looks very reasonable on the surface — except that Li Hanchen also said that from one bazi he could tell: (1) the family circumstances; (2) what your ambitions are; (3) what the feng shui of your home is; (4) what your education is.

His theory contradicts itself front and back, and many students across the country have been taken in by it.

Well, then: can feng shui itself separate the fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences? It can. The problem is that if fifteen hundred people born under the same chart came to you from all over the country, would you have time to inspect all their ancestral graves and homes? They came to have their fortunes read, not to have their feng shui inspected. If you are so capable, then reason backwards and tell me what my home's feng shui is. And if seeing the feng shui tells you the person's fate, what need is there to read the bazi at all? It would be superfluous.

From antiquity to the present, no one and no theory has genuinely explained the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences. Every bazi theory in history hovers between accuracy and inaccuracy: each has some accuracy, none attains precision. We do not ask you to predict how many white hairs a man has. Even for a basic qualitative judgement of auspicious and

inauspicious, the accuracy of traditional theory is only twenty to thirty per cent.

Some believe their own accuracy is sixty to seventy per cent. In fact that figure rests on:

(1) twenty to thirty per cent derived from theory; (2) twenty to thirty per cent from reading faces; (3) ten to twenty per cent from betting on the odds.

So with cold reading and a bet on the odds, and no predictive theory at all, a man can get fifty to sixty per cent right — and if he is clever, seventy to eighty. See a man in filthy clothes collecting scrap, and you can tell him: your life has been full of reversals, you are a man of hardship, and up to now you have not been rich. Do you need his bazi for that? Add a bet on the odds: say he ought to have a son. If he has none, no harm; if he does, you were right. Your accuracy goes up again. Chat with him and find he is thoughtful and has strong opinions, and you can add that his marriage is bad — because a thoughtful, opinionated, stubborn man generally will not defer to anyone, and unless his wife is entirely without opinions she will quarrel with him.

The accuracy of the old hands comes not from correct theory but from **cold reading**, **knowledge of social life**, and **psychological analysis**.

Take predicting the year a man marries. You certainly would not predict that he married at one year old. You may say your prediction of marriage at twenty-four came by inference — so why did you not infer marriage at one? Because people marry in that age range. Give yourself a bazi and dare to tell a ninety-five-year-old man that he married last year.

Therefore: **the only way to test whether a bazi theoretical system possesses truth is whether it can precisely distinguish the differing fates of five-fold and six-fold coincidences.**

With the Lü Wen-yi natural-science bazi system, even if **ten thousand five-fold coincidences from all over the world** stood before us at once, we

could rank all ten thousand in order from one to ten thousand across wealth, career, office, marriage, children, lifespan, health, safety and lawsuits. **That is a bazi theory that genuinely possesses truth.**

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

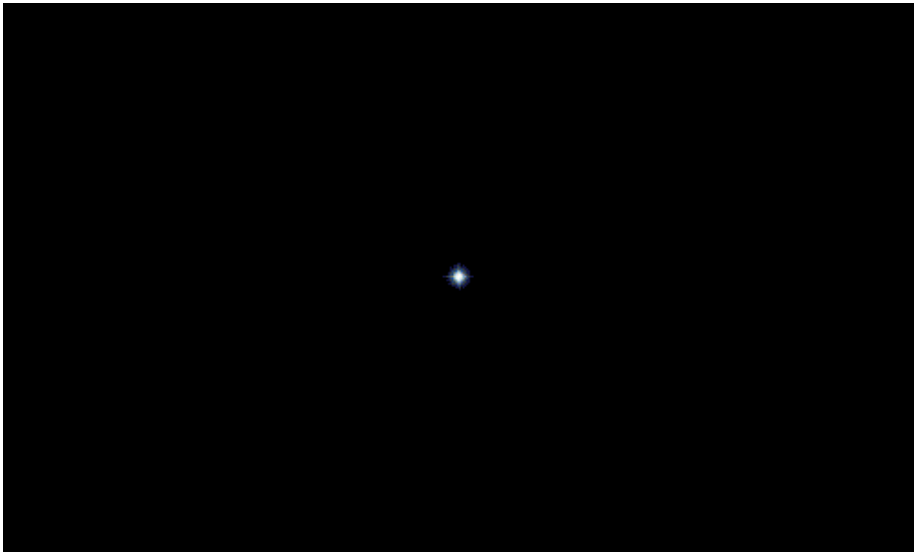
Feng Shui and Bazi: Which One Decides Fate?

2017-10-19 · 1,951 words

> **Translator's note.** The essay that fixes the division of labour between the two arts, written in 2001. Birth time decides the *type* of a fate; environment decides its *quality*. The argument from astronomy is disarming — every planet in the solar system was born at the same moment, and only one of them has life — and the conclusion cuts both ways against practitioners: a bazi cannot be used to adjust feng shui any more than an X-ray machine can be used to cure a disease.

Long-press the QR code to follow the account.

There are many essays from antiquity on the relation between feng shui and bazi, but their views come down to two: that the bazi decides fate, and that feng shui decides fate. Both are one-sided, because their authors are either in love with the bazi or infatuated with feng shui. In “Eight Principles of Fate Prediction” in *Dili Qiuzhen* no. 5 I already wrote that “the bazi decides the type of a person's fate” and “feng shui decides the quality of a person's fate.” But since that piece was about principles of prediction, it could not fully argue why the bazi decides the type. This essay fills the gap.



So far as we know, no living creature has been found on any planet in the solar system other than earth. Why not? Were those planets not all produced at the same moment — the big bang theory holds that they were? If they were all produced at that same moment, why is there life only on earth, and none on the moon, Venus or Jupiter? Scientists say: because only earth has an environment fit for life. Which shows plainly that the common moment of their production — time — is not the essential cause of life on earth. The essential cause is that earth has an environment fit for life. By the same logic, the fate of people born in the same moment is not decided by the birth time, the bazi, but by the birth environment: the ancestral grave and the home before and after birth.

On this very point, even the masters who hold that the bazi decides fate explain away their own failures by saying “the bazi is the same but the environment differs, so the fates diverge greatly.” That, plainly, is the bazi art's helpless, self-mocking excuse for its own inaccuracy. It shows that even the defenders of the “bazi decides fate” doctrine cannot make it consistent.

And if we look at the essence of the two, it can only be this: **only when there is an ancestral grave configuration and energy capable of producing an official of division or provincial-ministerial rank does a person with a bazi marked for such rank get born; only when there is an ancestral grave with the configuration and energy of a short life does a person with a bazi marked for a short life get born.** It absolutely cannot be the reverse — that because a person with a provincial-rank bazi was born, an ancestral grave of provincial-rank configuration and energy then appeared; still less that because a short-lived bazi was born, a short-lived grave appeared. That is putting the cart before the horse to the point of raving. To put it plainly, **the bazi is only a representative symbol of the ancestral grave and the parents' home before the person's birth — a symbol and nothing more.**

It is like the ordinary rule that women wear floral skirts and men go about shirtless in shorts. Floral skirts and shorts are only a rough surface symbol for distinguishing men from women — it is not that everyone in a floral skirt is a woman, nor that everyone shirtless in shorts is a man. Understand that, and the principled error of the “bazi decides fate” doctrine needs no further comment: it treats everyone in a floral skirt (everyone of the same sex born in the same hour) as a woman, and everyone in shorts as a man.

In analysing the essential relation between bazi and fate this way, I am not denying the predictive function of the bazi. I am injecting a sobering dose into a yixue world where “bazi prodigies” keep sprouting and, to enrich themselves, boast extravagantly about bazi prediction — one master in Shandong claims he can predict the moment of a person's death to the minute — ruining the future of yixue in the process.

To sum up: a person's fate is decided by environmental feng shui — the ancestral grave and home before and after birth. The bazi, a time factor, is only a representative symbol of the auspiciousness or otherwise of that

prenatal feng shui. By observing and analysing that symbol one can predict a person's fate; that is not in dispute. But it is absolutely certain that the accuracy of such prediction is limited — because the bazi reflects only the feng shui before birth, and knows nothing of the changes in feng shui after birth. This "knowing the root but not the changes" accords neither with yixue principle nor with the eternal truth that things move and change.

At this point a bazi scholar may object: are not the luck cycle and the annual cycle changes? Yes, quite right. But those changes are exactly the same for everyone of the same sex born in the same hour. Are the changes in their ancestral graves and homes after birth also exactly the same as the luck and annual cycles? Absolutely not. Even twins of the same sex born in the same hour certainly do not have identical changes in their housing, and once grown to adulthood the changes cannot possibly be the same.

A further point: using bazi theory to adjust feng shui and avert disaster is even more absurd. The changing "heavenly timing" factor of the luck cycle and annual cycle does not act on a person directly; it acts indirectly, through the feng shui configuration before and after birth. For people whose chart and cycles are identical, if the direction in which their fate-energy is expressed is the same, then the essential nature of what happens in each annual and monthly period is absolutely the same (though what happens in each day and hour need not be, because the day and hour are too short a span to change a fate) — but the *degree* of good or bad is never the same. Using bazi theory to adjust feng shui is therefore absurd; if it occasionally works, it is a blind cat finding a dead mouse. The bazi is only a symbol for prediction, a floral skirt or a pair of shorts for telling men from women. With it you may make a general prediction of fate — the direction of a life, or of a year — but you absolutely cannot use it to judge absolute fate, the degree of wealth, rank, good or ill fortune, or length of life; and still less can you use it to adjust feng shui. Adjust feng shui by that symbol and you are giving a woman in shorts a sex change to become a man, and a man in a floral skirt (in Africa men wear skirts

commonly) a sex change to become a woman; the result is neither male nor female, neither fish nor fowl — the opposite of what was wanted, and endlessly harmful. The bazi as a time factor is like the X-ray machine in a hospital: it can examine the health of the organs inside the body, but you absolutely cannot use an X-ray machine to cure disease. Adjusting feng shui by bazi theory is the same. Nor can the hexagram-and-line theory be used to adjust feng shui; even where an adjustment is made, it should be removed as soon as the event is over, and the long-term layout done by feng shui theory proper.

It should now be clear: “the bazi decides the type of a person's fate” means, in substance, “the feng shui environment before birth decides the type of a person's fate.” Understand that and you understand why people born under the same bazi have different fates, sometimes opposite ones. Because although the bazi is the same:

First: the ancestral grave and home feng shui of people born under one bazi, though broadly similar in configuration, differ utterly in the *degree* of auspicious or inauspicious energy. That degree decides the level of the quality of the fate, and that difference produces the divergence.

Second: even with the same configuration and the same quantity of energy, people born under one bazi differ because their birth order differs, and therefore the prenatal five-element qi they receive differs. On the effect of birth order, the American geneticist's article published in *World Knowledge* in 2002 confirmed it: birth order greatly affects a person's fate (here meaning only lifespan and health). In feng shui practice, in bazi practice, and in daily life there are quantities of direct examples proving that people born under the same bazi differ greatly in fate, sometimes oppositely. For twins of the same sex with vastly different fates, traditional bazi is helpless (the Lü-school bazi model theory solves five-fold coincidences perfectly), while feng shui solves it a hundred per cent.

Third: even with the same prenatal configuration, energy and birth order, people born under one bazi often diverge greatly because the changes in their feng shui after birth differ.

Fourth: even with all of the above identical, people of the same sex born under one bazi still diverge because the direction in which their fate-energy is expressed differs — one loves money, one loves office, one loves affairs, one loves idleness, one loves busyness. And if the direction of expression were the same for all of them, their fates would not differ at all.

In one sentence: feng shui decides a person's fate.

If you still have doubts, ask the bazi masters one last question: among babies of the same sex born in the same hour in the same hospital, why do some survive and grow up healthy while others are born disabled, and some die at birth? If it is not for one of these four reasons, how do you explain it?

Let me state clearly: I am not denying bazi prediction. I hold that its predictive function is limited and relative — coarse, directional — and by no means as miraculous as the masters boast, able to predict anything, down to the finest detail. Because to this day not one bazi master can genuinely state, flatly and certainly, in which year, month, day and hour you will catch a cold, and distinguish whether it is a cold from excess heat, a common chill, a gastric cold or a viral one; nor can any state in which year, month, day and hour, while you are cooking, several drops of oil at such and such a temperature will spatter the back of your hand at such and such a spot, and what the burn will come to. Among the nationally famous bazi masters I have met in recent years, very few can even give an accurate qualitative judgement of the four directions — wealth, office, injury, illness — for every single year of a life, let alone to the hour or the minute. As for what their advertisements say, I need not tell you. And if you still do not believe me, spend a few hundred or a few thousand yuan and have one of them read you; compare what you get with what the advertisement claims, and you will know whether what I say is true.

Hequ, Shanxi, April 2001

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Two Reasons a Correct Reading Gets Rejected

2017-11-10 · 1,889 words

> **Translator's note.** Perhaps the most practical essay in the Bazi corpus, and the one that explains a paradox every reader knows: a reading that is theoretically correct is denied by the client, while a reading that is obviously wrong is accepted. The cause is vocabulary. Nine terms are defined here — what "making money" actually means, what counts as "loss," what "imprisonment" covers — so that reader and client are talking about the same thing. The anecdote about the woman master who promised a prefectural bureau chief a promotion to county magistrate is worth the whole essay.

Long-press the QR code to follow.

Chinese bazi has a long history and, through reform and correction, has developed a fairly complete body of predictive theory; its accuracy has reached a certain height. Yet in practice many students report a strange phenomenon: **the theory is right, the derivation is sound, the prediction is accurate — and the client says it is wrong. The theory is wrong, the derivation is wrong, the reader himself feels it is inaccurate — and the client says it is right.** The masters cannot understand this.

Survey the whole of fate theory and you find that every predictive art is concerned only with the precision of technique, and every master polishes only technique. Almost nobody examines the most basic thing of all: the intension and extension of the **terms**. Still less does anyone examine, from the core nature of prediction, what those terms essentially mean as predictive

information. Fail to understand that, and it damages not only our thinking about theory but directly obstructs communication between reader and client.

So, and in thanks for more than ten years of support, I will set out in full what these terms essentially mean in fate studies. Once you understand it — whether you use the Lü-school bazi or traditional bazi — your accuracy will rise substantially.

1. Making money. In fate studies this means, within a given period, **income exceeding expenditure.** It includes borrowing money and collecting old debts: so long as less goes out than comes in, that is information of making money. Ordinary people do not think borrowing or collecting old debts counts as making money; they think only profit, winnings and gifts do. And they do not know the principle that within a period, income greater than expenditure *is* making money. In fact even the top masters at home and abroad do not understand this. Their books and courses play guerrilla warfare with students, exploiting precisely this divergence in what a term means. So any master who writes or teaches without first making clear the essential meaning of these terms is open to the charge of deception; any reader who predicts without first making clear what a term means is open to the same charge. Make it clear before you give the result, and if your theory is right you will be a hundred per cent accurate; if your theory is wrong, you will not.

2. Losing money. In fate studies this means, within a given period, **expenditure exceeding income.** It includes *benign loss* — lending money to others, buying a house or land, buying a car, investing, marriage expenses, schooling, money earned but not collected because the debtor wrote an IOU, donations, business investment — and *malignant loss*: fire, flood, burial, injury or illness expenses, theft, fraud, economic loss of animals or crops, compensation paid to others. So long as more money goes out than comes in within the period, that is information of loss. But ordinary people do not count benign loss as loss; they count only malignant loss. And they certainly

do not understand that real loss means expenditure exceeding income. That gap is exactly what gives masters and readers their chance to deceive. When they misread information of making money as loss, the student or client says: “Quite right, I lost a chicken last year, and three apple trees died” — while his income for the year was thirty thousand yuan. What do you make of such a reading? Objectively, that is “he suffered a loss last year,” not “he lost money.” Read it as loss and every major enterprise, every big boss, every great merchant is losing money every year and never makes any, because who among those who do big things is not extorted from, or forced to spend tens of thousands, millions, even tens of millions, every month and every year? Is that not the same as the ordinary man's chicken and three trees? Real loss in fate studies means expenditure exceeding income. “Losing money” and “having suffered a loss” are essentially different. Masters must stop using the latter to deceive people.

3. Promotion. In fate studies this means **advancement in post and development in career.** It includes promotion in professional title, career development, a student's progress, success in examinations, winning awards, taking up a post, entering work, expansion of the scope of one's authority, a transfer without change of rank from a small or poor unit in a small place to a big or good unit in a big place, from countryside to city; a change of post for a career man whose life is otherwise unremarkable; ordinary progress at work — a driver trading an old car for a good one, a teacher moved from teaching to logistics, a teacher moved from a lower grade or a minor subject to a higher grade or a main subject, a teacher moving from being undervalued to being valued. Anything the ordinary public recognises as “getting better” in work or career is information of promotion.

4. Demotion. In fate studies this means **decline in post, setback in career.** It includes failing to obtain a title, failing an examination, falling behind in study, a transfer without change of rank from a big or good unit in a big place to a small or bad unit in a small place, leaving or being removed

from a post, going from being valued to being ignored, transfer from city to countryside without change of rank, a career man moving from a good position to a poor one, criticism by a superior and regression at work. Anything the public recognises as "getting worse" in work is information of demotion.

5. Injury, illness and disaster. In fate studies this means **bodily injury and illness, and psychological injury and illness.** Most masters and most ordinary people think only bodily injury and illness count. But the information includes psychological trauma. The clearest proof: mental illness *is* injury and illness. If a child develops cancer, the psychological blow to the parents is also information of injury and illness in the parents' charts. Any scar left on the body, whatever its size, and any remembered grief, is information of injury and illness. An ordinary cold is not; but a cold that drags on and will not clear, or that brings on other illness, is. The sudden relapse or worsening of a chronic disease that has long resisted treatment is also information of injury and illness. For example, a man with chronic bronchitis that did not suddenly worsen in the previous period had, in that period, no information of injury and illness; if it suddenly worsens in the next period, then that period contains the information. Because in fate studies we can only determine *that* there is such information, and cannot quantify how great it is, we very often read correctly and are told we are wrong. That happens because the essential meaning of the term was never explained before the result was given.

6. Lawsuits and disputes. In fate studies this means litigation, quarrels and rows, blows and brawls, being attacked by others' rumours, being criticised and censured by a superior, being exposed by the media.

7. Imprisonment. In fate studies this means being sentenced, arrested, detained, held hostage, bedridden by paralysis, under residential surveillance, released on bail pending trial, staying at home for a long time voluntarily or

involuntarily without going out of the gate (which is also one method of averting disaster), and so on. Most masters and clients think imprisonment means only arrest, sentence or detention. But the information also covers the voluntary or involuntary loss of physical freedom, and the voluntary or involuntary loss of psychological freedom — a criminal who flees to escape punishment may still be physically free, but psychologically he has already lost his freedom. That is why, from a fugitive's chart, we can accurately determine when he committed the crime: from that moment his mind lost its freedom. In adolescence and old age it also means being closed in on oneself and not communicating with others. So before giving the result you must make clear what imprisonment essentially means, or you will have the situation where you read correctly and the client says you did not.

8. Information of marriage. In fate studies this means marriage, cohabitation, the appearance of a lover, a marital relation suddenly improving from bad, or reunion and cohabitation after a long separation. In adolescence or old age it also means obtaining a beloved pet or toy.

9. Information of marital disaster. In fate studies this means divorce, separation, long separation for work or other reasons, breaking up with a lover, a marital relation suddenly deteriorating from good, or the death of a spouse. In adolescence or old age it also means losing a beloved pet or toy.

Beyond all this there is one further and especially important reason for inaccuracy: the failure to join predictive theory tightly to the actual circumstances of the matter the client is asking about. Not knowing the human and practical logic of the matter, the reader may be theoretically accurate and still say the wrong thing.

A friend of mine took a woman master from Hebei, now practising professionally in Beijing, to Lüliang in Shanxi to read the official fortune of a bureau chief in a prefectural unit. The master determined that the leader would be promoted next year. The leader asked: promoted to what? The

master said: to county magistrate. The leader said nothing more, and my friend was half dead with rage. Why? Because a bureau chief in a prefectural unit is, in the ladder of promotion, at least three grades above a county magistrate — a county party secretary who moves back to a prefectural bureau generally gets only a deputy bureau post. Not knowing how the official system works made the reading a total failure.

From which we should understand: however high and accurate your technique, if you do not understand the logic of human affairs in real life, your reading will not only fail to win the client's acceptance but may produce an absurdity like this one.

In study, in research, in practice — never follow blindly the masters' advertising and classroom talk, delivered off the top of their heads. Have some thoughts of your own. Ask a few more whys. Ask whether the human logic of real life matches the masters' boasting. If you do not think for yourself, being taken in is only a matter of time. And once you understand the essential meaning of these terms, the answers to “what kind of bazi theory is scientific and survives practice” and “whether a school that never studies basic theory can survive practice” become self-evident.