



From Jane's Weibo article column: It is simple to be healthy and happy

浅谈《史记·论六家要旨》对现代生活的启发（七篇连载之二）

山水闲人 Jane_ 2021-09-23

顺应自然的阴阳家

Talking about the Inspiration of "Historical Records. On the Essentials of Six Schools" to Modern Life

Chapter 2

School of Yin-Yang Who Follows Nature

太史公评论六家学派的精要，有他的固定意义，先后顺序也是有他的道理。我们需要仔细体会，为什么六家要旨的第一家要从阴阳家开始说？所有六家学派的代表人物都是 2000 多年前鼎鼎有名的人物，每一个人都有很大的成就，每一个人都是通晓各种学问，然后各有不同的专长。这六家学派可以代表了诸子百家的所有学问，不但能够对国家和社会产生很大的影响力，而且跟我们人类社会生活有着千古不变的关系。太史公把他们的精要之处罗列出来做一个总论，旨在为世人指点迷津，为后世留下千古不变的真理。其用心良苦，实在应当让我们后人感激涕零，顶礼膜拜。

Tai Shigong's comment on "the essence of the six schools" has a particular meaning, and the sequence to talk about these schools has also been arranged for certain reasons. We need to understand carefully why the first of the six schools of thought begins with the school of Yin-Yang? The representatives of all the six schools were well-known figures more than 2,000 years ago. Each had great achievements, and each was proficient in various fields of knowledge, and had different specialties. These six schools can represent all the knowledge of the various schools of thought, which not only has great influence on the country and society, but also an eternal relationship with human society. Tai Shigong listed their essentials to make a general statement, aiming to point out their paradoxes and leave the eternal truth for future generations. It was well-intentioned work and should be a source of gratitude and a reason to pay homage.

第一家从阴阳家开始讲，是因为我们人类赖以生存的法则顺应自然，这是天道，不能违背。接下去是儒家，人类顺应自然能够生存的情况之下，就要讲究仁义道德，这

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是人文文化的重要性。第三个学派是勤劳俭朴的墨家，俭朴的生活态度是养家糊口，勤劳致富的根基。第四个学派是法家，经济发展了，生活富裕了，就可能产生腐败，就需要法家的法制健全和明确人们的责任担当和讲诚信。接下去，第五个学派是名家，经济，文明和法律发展到一定的阶段，就有人钻法律的空子，名不符实的情况越来越多，就需要正名求实的名家做派。最后太史公以道家收尾，因为诸子百家都出自道家，是中国文化的根源，最终人类还是回归一个“道”，就是合理地诠释了“天下同归而殊途”。

The first one started from the Yin-Yang school, because the law humans live by is to follow nature which is the way of heaven and earth and cannot be violated. Next is Confucianism. When human beings can survive in accordance with nature, they must pay attention to benevolence, righteousness, and morality. This is the importance of humanistic culture. The third school is the hardworking and frugal Mohists. A frugal attitude towards life is the foundation for supporting the family and getting rich through hard work. The fourth school is legalism. When the economy develops and life is rich, corruption may occur. Legalism needs a sound legal system and clarification of people's responsibilities and honesty. Next, the fifth school is the logicism school. When the economy, civilization and law have developed to a certain stage, some people will take advantage of the loopholes in the law. There are an increasing number of cases where the name does not match the truth. In the end, Tai Shigong ended with Taoism, because all schools of thought come from Taoism, which is the root of Chinese culture. In the end, human beings still return to one "Tao", which is a reasonable interpretation of "different routes toward the same goal".

这是我个人的见解，对于不对，有待各位聪明人自己去体会。下面我们继续读六家要旨的正文，太史公从阴阳家开始讲：

This is my personal opinion. Whether it is right is for people to use their own intelligence to decide. Now, let us continue to read the text of the main points of the six schools. Tai Shigong starts from the school of Yin-Yang:

尝窃观阴阳之术，大祥而众忌讳，使人拘而多所畏；然其序四时之大顺，不可失也。

I have studied the ways of Yin-Yang, which is auspicious but has many taboos, which can constrain and scare people; However, the seasonal order of nature must not be discarded.

太史公说，我曾经自己研究过阴阳家讲述的道理，有很多关于避凶趋吉的内容，人们就产生很多的禁忌和避讳，禁忌避讳太多了就会给人们的生活带来太多的约束，就会让人们感到畏惧害怕。但是阴阳学派讲述一年四季变化的自然规律，却是人们需要遵守而不能丢弃的。

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Tai Shigong said: I have studied the principles of the school of Yin-Yang. There is a lot of content about avoiding evil and seeking good fortune. People have a lot of taboos and avoidances. Too many constraints can cause fear. However, the Yin-Yang School teaches about the rule of nature that change throughout the year, which is important for living, and it is imperative that this be abided.

夫阴阳四时、八位、十二度、二十四节各有教令，顺之者昌，逆之者不死则亡，未必然也，故曰“使人拘而多畏”。夫春生夏长，秋收冬藏，此天道之大经也，弗顺则无以为天下纲纪，故曰“四时之大顺，不可失也”。

The School of Yin and Yang taught strict doctrines about four seasons, eight positions (trigrams), twelve months, and twenty-four solar calendars. They state that, those who follow them will prosper, and those who defy them will perish. Although this is not necessarily the case. That is why their doctrines may “make people feel constrained and afraid”. However, growth in spring, prospering in summer, harvests in autumn and stores in winter, this is the great scripture of the rule of nature, which is the rule of the universe for people to live by. So, it is to say that "the order of nature must not be discarded."

阴阳家这个学派，讲述的内容很多，包括阴阳五行的变化规律，一年四季的变化规律，易经八卦的法则，12个月份的变化规律（太阳历，太阴历），二十四个节气的变化规律。这些规律，在阴阳家学派的讲解里，是要求人们遵守这些自然规律。但是，要是说到“顺之者昌，逆之者不死则亡”，意思是，如果遵守这些规律，生活就会吉祥顺利；如果违反了这些规律，人们的生活就会发生危险甚至死亡。太史公说“未必然也”，事实上也不一定都是这样的，这样的吉凶预测不见得都是准确的。这样严格复杂的规矩和要求，就给人太多的禁忌和避讳，就有可能让人会产生畏惧。这一点是阴阳学派的问题。但是阴阳学派的精要之处，是强调天地自然的规律，一年四季的变化，春生夏长，秋收冬藏，是“天道的大经”，就是宇宙天地自然变化的大法则，这样的自然规律是不能违背的。遵循自然界的规律就是人类赖以生存在地球上共同应当遵循的规律和法则。所以说，人们应当遵循一年四季自然的变化规律，调整自己的生活和饮食，这样的生活方式是不能丢弃的。

The school of Yin-Yang School talks about a lot of knowledge, such as, the rule of Yin-Yang and five elements, the rules of the four seasons, the rule of I Ching and 8 trigrams, the rules of 12 months (solar calendar, lunar calendar), the twenty-four solar terms. These rules of nature, in the interpretation of the Yin-Yang School, require people to always abide. However, if it is to say that "those who follow the law will prosper, and those who go against it will die or perish", which means that if these rules are followed, life will be auspicious and smooth; if these rules are violated, people's lives will be in danger or they

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may even die. Tai Shigong said "Not necessarily", in fact it is not necessarily the case, and such predictions of good and bad are not certain. Such strict and complicated rules and requirements give people too many taboos and avoidances, which may make people fearful. This is a problem with the Yin-Yang School. However, the essence of the Yin-Yang School is to emphasize the natural laws of the universe, the changes of the four seasons, the growth of spring and the prospering of summer, the harvest of autumn and the storage of winter. These Laws shall not be violated. Obeying the laws of nature is the laws and rules that human beings should follow to survive on earth. Therefore, people should follow the natural changes of the four seasons and adjust their life and diet. This way of life shall not be discarded.

阴阳学派的代表人物是邹衍，是战国时期的齐国人。司马迁评价邹衍是战国时期“稷下诸子之首”，称“驺衍之术，迂大而闳辩”。邹衍的学说源于易经和道家，又在天文地理自然科学方面有进一步的发挥和更详细的讲解，他的学问是古今中外、天文地理无所不包，因此有“谈天衍”的美誉。班固《汉书·艺文志》论述了阴阳家的来历和社会地位：“阴阳家之流，盖出于羲和之官，敬顺昊天，历象日月星辰，敬授民时，此其所长也。”

The representative figure of Yin-Yang School is Zou Yan, a native of Qi during the Warring States Period. Sima Qian commented that Zou Yan was "the head of all the scholars among the Jixia group" in the Warring States Period, and "Zou Yan's way was unimaginable (unrealistic) grand knowledge and brilliant technique of debate". Zou Yan's theory originated from I Ching and Taoism, and he further developed and explained it in more detail in astronomy, geography and natural science. His knowledge is all-encompassing in ancient and modern times, astronomy and geography, so he has the reputation of the nickname "Heavenly Yan". Ban Gu described the origin and social status of the Yin-Yang school in "Hanshu·Yiwenzhi": "The representative figures of Yin-Yang school were originally officials who were in charge of astronomy/calendar. They respect heaven, describe the rule of natural phenomena involving the sun, moon and stars, and advise people with the timing and calendars. These are the strong capabilities of the Yin-Yang school."

不像孟子处处受到冷遇，邹衍在战国时期是非常受欢迎的。邹衍走到哪里都受到各国国君的亲自迎接和款待。他不仅在齐国受到尊重，到魏国的时候，梁惠王自己出来远接高迎，与他行宾主的礼节；到了赵国，平原君侧身陪行，亲自为他拂拭席位；到了燕国，燕昭王拿着扫帚清除道路为他作先导，还心甘情愿地坐在弟子的下位听他讲学。

Unlike Mencius, who received an unenthusiastic reception everywhere, Zou Yan was very popular during the Warring States Period. Wherever Zou Yan went, he was personally

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greeted and entertained by the monarchs of various countries. Not only was he respected in the state of Qi, but when he arrived in the state of Wei, King Hui of Liang came out to greet Zou Yan himself and performed the grandest etiquette as a host when he as a guest; when he arrived in Zhao State, Duke Pingyuan accompanied him and wiped the seats for him personally; when he arrived in Yan State, King Yan took a broom to clear the road in front of him, and was willing to sit beneath as one of his disciples to listen to his lectures.

阴阳五行是阴阳学派的主要内容。阴阳五行的概念，很多人不太清楚，特别是现代人，一听到阴阳五行，就会跟男女或者看相算命联系在一起，其实不然。《周易·系辞》：“一阴一阳之谓道”，《道德经》“万物负阴而抱阳，充气以为和”，宇宙自然界中每一个事物都是由阴阳两股力量组成的，天地之间从大到小的事物都分阴阳。比如太阳是阳，月亮是阴；天是阳，地是阴；白天是阳，夜晚是阴；动代表阳，静代表阴；男人是阳，女人是阴；好事是阳，坏事是阴；手背是阳，手心是阴；左手是阳，右手是阴；五脏六腑有阴阳之分，再小到我们生物课学习过的染色体，也是成对的阴阳，由两个部分组成，即“臂”，分为短臂和长臂。

Yin-Yang and Five Elements are the main contents of Yin-Yang School. The concept of Yin-Yang and Five Elements is not very clear to many people, especially in modern times. When they hear Yin-Yang and Five Elements, they will associate it with men and women or fortune-telling, but it is not the case.

Quoted from "I Ching. Xici": "One yin and one yang are called Tao",

"Tao Te Ching": "All things bear yin and embrace yang, harmonized with Qi/energy".

Everything in the universe and nature is composed of two forces of yin and yang. Everything from big to small in heaven and earth is divided into yin and yang. For example, the sun is yang and the moon is yin; the sky is yang and the earth is yin; daytime is yang and night is yin; movement represents yang and stillness represents yin; men are yang and women are yin; good things are yang and bad things are yin; the back of the hand is yang, the palm is yin; the left hand is yang, and the right hand is yin; the internal organs are divided into yin and yang, and even the chromosomes we learned in biology class are also pairs of yin and yang, which are composed of two parts, namely "arms". Divided into short arm and long arm.

五行就是“金、木、水、火、土”。与佛家的“四大”相似。在司马迁的时代，佛教还没有传入中国。佛教是在汉明帝时代从印度开始传入中国，然后到唐代达到鼎盛。我们中国传统文化是把物质世界分为五种元素，物质世界由这五种基本元素不断循环变化组成，“五行相生相克”。研究阴阳五行，就是研究天文地理历法，整个宇宙包罗万象的知识。

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The five elements are "gold, wood, water, fire, and earth". It is similar to the "Four elements" of Buddhism. At the time of Sima Qian, Buddhism had not yet been introduced to China. It was introduced from India during the dynasty Han under Emperor Ming, and reached its peak in the Tang Dynasty. Traditional Chinese culture divides the material world into five elements, and the material world is composed of these five basic elements that are constantly changing, "the five elements generate and restrain each other". To study Yin-Yang and Five Elements is to study astronomy, geography, calendar, and all-encompassing knowledge of the entire universe.

邹衍把阴阳五行的理论运用到社会的变动上，还创立了“五德始终说”，他提出王朝的兴替符合五行的更替，提出了“五德始终”的历史观。秦始皇统一六国后，根据邹衍“水德代周而行”的理论，以秦文公出猎获黑龙作为水德兴起的符瑞，进行了一系列符合水德要求的改革，以证明秦朝政权的合法性，成为“五德终始说”的第一个实践者。邹衍的五德终始说不仅在当时受到重视，而且对后世的学术和政治也产生了重大影响。后来的《吕氏春秋》、《淮南子》、《春秋繁露》这些著作都直接受到邹衍学说的影响。董仲舒将邹衍的阴阳五行学说与儒学相结合，开启了汉代儒学阴阳五行化的先河。

Zou Yan applied the theory of Yin-Yang and Five Elements to social changes, and also created the "Five Virtues Circle Theory". He proposed that the rise and fall of dynasties conformed to the replacement of the Five Elements and proposed the historical view of "Five Virtues Circle". After Qin Shihuang (the first Emperor of Qin) unified the six countries, according to Zou Yan's theory that "Water Virtue Acts on behalf of Zhou", taking Qin Wengong's hunting of the black dragon as the auspicious sign of the rise of Water Virtue, he carried out a series of reforms in line with the requirements to prove the integrity and legitimacy of the Qin Dynasty regime, which officially became the first practitioner of "Five Virtues Circle Theory". Zou Yan's theory of five virtues was not only valued at that time, but also had a significant impact on the academic and political studies of later generations. Later works such as "Lushi Chunqiu", "Huainanzi" and "Chunqiu Fanlu" were directly influenced by Zou Yan's theory. Dong Zhongshu combined Zou Yan's theory of Yin-Yang and Five Elements with Confucianism, which opened a precedent for the transformation of Yin-Yang and Five Elements in Confucianism in the Han Dynasty.

邹衍也是地理学家，他创立了“大九州”的说法。邹衍说：“儒者所谓中国者。于天下乃八十一分居其一分耳。中国名曰赤县神州。赤县神州内自有九州，禹之序九州是也，不得为州数。中国外如赤县神州者九，乃所谓九州也。于是有裨海环之，人民禽兽莫能相通者，如一区中者，乃为一州。如此者九，乃有大瀛海环其外，天地之际焉。”这一段比较好懂，就不用解释了，邹衍当时就讲述了地球上大洲大洋的理论，说中国所在之地是海洋中的一个大陆。这样一位博学的人，难怪在当时那么受欢迎。

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Zou Yan was also a great geographer, and he created the term "the Great 9 Continents". Zou Yan said: "The Confucians say China is only one part of the eighty-one divisions in the world. China is located in the continent called Chixian Shenzhou. The continent of Chixian Shenzhou has 9 divisions, which has been told by Da Yu. It cannot be counted as the number of states. There are other continents in the world outside China, which is collectively called the great 9 continents. Each continent is surrounded and separated by sea, so people and animals on the continents cannot commute. As located at the center of surrounding sea, it is therefore called a continent. Such Nine continents are surrounded by sea and ocean, this is how far our world is." This paragraph is relatively easy to understand, so there is no need to further explain it. Zou Yan proposed the theory that there are continents and oceans on the earth, saying that China is just located in a continent in the ocean. With such profound and unfathomable knowledge and theory which nobody had ever heard, it is no wonder that Zou Yan was so popular at the time.

我们现代人的生活，好像已经不受气候的影响了，夏天有空调，冬天有暖气。因为交通运输的发达，我们可以吃到世界各地的食品，还有一年四季的蔬菜水果。古人有云：“日出而作，日落而息”，就是说，天亮了，就起床工作，天黑了，就睡觉休息了。阴阳五行四时的法则，不光是以年来计算，一年 12 个月，分 6 阴和 6 阳，一天是 12 个时辰（一个时辰是 2 个小时），也是分 6 阴和 6 阳，这些都是顺应自然的规律。道家有“活子时”的说法，就是说修行的人到了一定的功夫和修为，就可以随时把一天当中任何一个时辰转成活子时，就是可以随时都在调养身心，不需要受四时之序的支配了。但是，这样的人并不多。我们平常普通的人，就没有这个本事了，还是需要顺应自然的规律才对身心有益。

Modern life seems to be unaffected by the climate, with air conditioning in summer and heating in winter. Because of the development of transportation, people can eat food from all over the world, as well as vegetables and fruits that are out of season.

The ancients said: "Work at sunrise and rest at sunset", that is to say, when it is dawn, you will get up and work, and when it is dark, you will sleep and rest. The law of Yin and Yang, five elements and four seasons is not only counted by years, but also by each month. There are 12 months in a year as divided into 6 yin and 6 yang, and there are 12 time divisions in a day (one time divisions is 2 hours), and it is also divided into 6 yin and 6 yang. It all follows the laws of nature. Taoism has a saying: "the flexible time regenerates life energy", which means that a practitioner can turn any hour of the day into the right time to regenerate life energy after reaching a certain level of skill and cultivation, that is to say, he can take care of his body and mind at any time without being influenced by the natural order of season changes. In reality, very few people can reach this level of practice. The layperson doesn't have the ability, and therefore still needs to follow the laws of nature to take care of themselves physically and mentally.

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但是，我们现代人，特别是都市人，很多都是白天和黑夜颠倒，白天睡懒觉，晚上深夜以后才睡觉。我们现在不分季节和地区的饮食和不分时间的生活方式到底有没有问题？这是我们现代人需要深思的。我们与古人都是一样的肉体，都是一样的基因结构，我们有什么本事可以翻天覆地，不需要遵循自然规律生活了？现代人一直认为我们的医学发达了，医疗条件更好了，好像寿命是增加了，其实按照古书里面的记载，例如《黄帝内经》里的说法，上古的人，平均寿命都在 100 岁以上，而且是无疾而终，就是说没有什么病，寿命到了，就自然死去。我们现在各种各样的疾病缠身，无疾而终的人的确是少数，很多人都死于病痛的折磨。

However, many modern people, especially in urban areas, have "reversed" day and night, sleep late during the day, and go to bed after midnight. Is there any problem with modern diet and lifestyle regardless of seasons and regions? This is what we modern people need to think about. We have the same body and the same genetic structures as the ancients. What ability do we have that can turn the world upside down and we don't need to live according to the laws of nature? Modern people tend to think that our medicine is developed and medical conditions are superior. It seems that life expectancy has increased. In fact, according to ancient records, such as the "Huangdi Neijing", the average life expectancy of ancient people could reach over 100, and they died peacefully without diseases, which means that, when the life span is up, they die of natural causes. In the modern world, there is still a variety of diseases, and the number of people who die without a disease is low, and many people are bedevilled by a variety of illnesses.

人类可以运用聪明才智改善生活条件，这并没有什么不对。但是，改变自然的愿望与顺应自然规律的生活并不矛盾。为什么我们现代人不愿意顺应自然规律生活？如果能够调节生活的节奏，减少熬夜，保证充足的睡眠，并且在饮食上保持节制，不吃反季节的食品。古人说：“靠山吃山，靠水吃水”，其实就是就地取材的意思。如果只吃附近生产的蔬菜水果和食品，就能够减少很多运输过程中的保鲜剂或者防腐剂的成分，这样的饮食自然会更加健康。

There is nothing wrong with the fact that human beings can use their ingenuity to improve their living conditions. However, the desire to change nature is not contrary to living in accordance with the laws of nature. Why are we modern people unwilling to live in accordance with these laws? If you can adjust the rhythm of life, reduce staying up late, ensure adequate sleep, and maintain abstinence in diet, do not eat out-of-season food. The ancients said: "Live in mountains by relying on mountains, and live by water by relying on water", which actually means to use local materials and eat local food. If you only eat vegetables, fruits and food produced nearby, you can reduce many preservatives and transportation process, and such a diet will naturally be healthier.

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古人有一句话：“天下本无事，庸人自扰之”。我们需要自己照顾自己的身体。顺应自然法则和规律生活，少一些疾病，少一些烦恼吧。正如太史公所说：“**四时之大顺，不可失也**”。

There is an ancient saying: "Life can be so easy, troubles are raised by fools themselves." We can take care of our bodies ourselves by simply following the laws of nature. Live a regular life, have less diseases and less troubles. As Tai Shigong said: "**the order of nature must not be discarded.**"