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*Xiaoyu Wang, Chuyao Huang, Hui Huang & Fei Xu*

*Shandong Normal University*

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# The Development of Chinese Ecological Civilization Theory in the Ancient and Modern Times

Xiaoyu Wang<sup>a, #</sup>, Chuyao Huang<sup>σ, #</sup>, Hui Huang<sup>ρ</sup> & Fei Xu<sup>Ω, \*</sup>

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*Based on the sustainable development and the theory of ecological civilization, this paper probes into its initial thinking in ancient China and explores the ideological system of ecological tradition carried forward from past to present to find a new focal point for the current ecological civilization and economic development. According to the time and space sequence of the Agricultural Age, Pre-industrial Age, Post-industrial Age, and Information Age, this paper elaborates the succession and change of human attitude towards nature. It reveals the mean in environmental development.*

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**Corresponding author** : College of Geography and Environment, Shandong Normal University, Jinan, 250014, PR China.

**Co Author**  $\alpha$   $\sigma$ : College of Geography and Environment, Shandong Normal University, Jinan, 250014, PR China.

$\rho$ : School of Quality Education, Yibin Vocational & Technical College, Yibin, 644003, PR China.

$\#$  These authors contributed equally to this work.

## I. INTRODUCTION

China has a long history of 5,000 years, which provides us reference and inspiration to get rid of confusion and seek for new ideas when we encounter environmental problems. To better understand ancient approaches to ecological civilization, we can take a look at various classics and poetry. From Erh-Ya, The Book of Songs, to the rare books in the late Qing dynasty, all books sparkle with the dazzling ecological wisdom (Waley, 1960). Through data retrieval and

research, we found that ancient ecological civilization theory emphasizes the rules of natural evolution. In contrast, modern theory roots in Chinese wisdom in traditional culture. Therefore, the ecological civilization theory possesses a philosophical foundation and has been carried forward from ancient to modern times, allowing for a new focus and development path for the current construction of an ecological civilization.

## II. "THE WAY OF KNOWING NATURE, THE LAW OF FOLLOWING NATURE" – HUMAN REVERENCE FOR NATURE FROM THE PRIMITIVE PERIOD TO THE PRE-INDUSTRIAL AGE

In prehistoric times, human beings could only show their fear and surrender to nature through myths and totems. As the first cultural symbol of the human clan, these primitive curves express the ancestors' awe for nature, including some resistance. In the stories of Kua Fu Chased After the Sun and Nv Wa Repaired the Sky, our ancestors personified the image of God to express their admiration for the unknown natural forces such as the sky and the Earth, or the Sun and the Moon; additionally, the spirit of never giving up and fighting against the difficulties is showed in another category, such as Jingwei Filled the Sea and Yu Gong Removed Mountains. The Classic of Mountains and Seas is the earliest pre-Qin ancient book recorded; it advocates respect for nature and obedience to heaven. The beautiful description maximizes the leading power of god and nature by overshadowing the human beings (Birrell, 1999). With the increasing consolidation of the idea of the monarchy and the gods, humanity's awe and worship of nature have reached a new height. As a lens of the times reflecting the social

characteristics of Shang and Zhou Dynasties, The Book of Songs also shows people's awe and dependence on the earth. In Song of Shang • Mysterious Bird, the bird's coming to the world explains the tribe's origin fully reflects the primitive inhabitants' worship for the supernatural and unexplainable mysterious power. In the Zhou Dynasty, patrolling and sacrificial activities of mountains and rivers also emerged. The concept of "respecting the sky" reflected that nature is closely related to people's livelihood, where ecological thinking and humanistic core as well as the idea of adapting to surroundings are the original worship for the unknown force. For example, the classic saying: "The moving down of Mars in lunar July; the sewing of winter clothes in lunar September", describes the frequent temperature changes as time goes by.

The Book of Documents also says that one would choose to be accused of incompetence instead of slaughtering the innocent. There is a saying: "Nature has the virtue of cherishing life (Bernard, 1950)." The Analects of Confucius was the most influential classic about the value of humanistic thoughts in the Warring States Period of Ancient China. The ideological core of its propaganda is "benevolence" and "propriety," which serve as the benevolent administration of the country, the "moderation" in the humanistic thought, and the abiding by way of nature in the ecological environment protection (Ames and Rosemont, 1998). The thinking of "respecting nature and fearing fate" enlightens people that they should establish a harmonious and synchronous relationship with nature via developing and utilizing it rationally in moderation. The idea of "kindness and love for all creatures" helps people arouse people's awareness of cherishing life and being integrated into environment. Erh-Ya, the father of dictionaries, also illuminates the wisdom of our ancestors' simple cognition of the natural environment. Erh-Ya's description of baboons in Notes on Animals reflects the idea of species classification and evolution, which plays a positive role in protecting biodiversity. From this perspective, Erh-Ya's detailed and concise explanations of various ecology concepts and its

devotion to sky, earth, and nature can be seen clearly (Carr, 1979). By their simple worldview and preliminary exploration of the ecological value system, the ancients described the sky and the earth as the garden age created by the gods. Human beings should always follow the way of nature and strictly abide by the season.

The Annals of Lu Buwei (Lu Shi Chun Qiu) was the first comprehensive book compiled by a state organization in Chinese history (Nathan, 2001). It promotes naturalism in the philosophical sense by reflecting on human behavior. It also developed Lao Tzu's philosophy "Non-action" by legalizing the behaviors conforming to the ecological thoughts and restraining the public with the behaviors according to the way of nature. This book advocates that people should not cut down trees, burn the land, or overfish during the four seasons. Its ecological significance can still be evident in the sustainable development strategy formulated nowadays. As another masterpiece of Confucianism, The History of the Former Han Dynasty systematically collects and sorts out all kinds of articles written by predecessors, whose ideology "the idea of harmony between man and nature." advocates that man should follow the principles of nature and then carry out various constructions. For the first time, forestry officials, water officials, and garden officials were set up to manage trees, rivers, lakes, and mountains, which fully demonstrates the people's awe of nature (Dubs, 1938)

The idea of reverence for nature has not faded with passing time and advancing technology. The powerful gunpowder called "Sky Fire" at the turn of the Tang and Song Dynasties and coal mining technology as the breakthroughs in the Ming and Qing dynasties, the ruling class still requested that excessive excavation should avoid "damaging the dragon's veins." Even today, the primitive awe of nature can still be kept in the culture and living habits of some ethnic minorities.

In Tibetan customs, it is common for people to live in harmony with nature and animals. Tibetans respect nature and believe that all things are spiritual. The demand for resources exploiting and animals hunting should not go beyond the

most basic needs of life. The celestial burial in Tibetan areas, in which the human body serves as food for vultures after death, is objectively the most direct example of the natural cycle of all things. The construction of terraced fields of the Hani people in Yuanyang is a good example, which not only preserves the soil and water but also gains a good harvest. It still has high reference significance in the construction of ecological and environmental protection projects today.

Respect for nature has been the theme of ancient Chinese ecological thinking; from the bronze cauldron used for sacrifice in the Xia and Shang dynasties to the altar of Heaven and Earth prayed for favorable weather in the Ming and Qing dynasties; from the benevolence and inaction of Confucius and Mencius to the return to nature of Taigu School in Ming and Qing Dynasties. Our ancestors' authentic reverence for earth is also the initial respect for nature that we must learn as their later generations (Li, 1983).

### III. "NINE SUNS DROPPED BECAUSE OF THE BOW OF DEMIGOD." -- HUMAN'S SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION TO NATURE FROM AGRICULTURAL CIVILIZATION TO INDUSTRIAL AGE

While keeping reverence for nature, our ancestors also systematically explored and developed the natural environment. Let's return to the most primitive totem culture. If the stories such as "Nv Wa Repaired the Sky" and "Kua Fu Chased after the Sun" deliver people's awe for nature, the myths centered the human-nature relationship like "Hou Yi, The Sun Shooter" and "Chang' E flew to the Sky" show people's perseverance and resistance against the severe environmental phenomena. The legend known as "Yu, the Great Governs the Flood," which is endowed with mythic and political significance, can be viewed as the classical example reflecting human tampering and developing nature in ancient times. That story releases the people's will to change nature to the greatest extent, showing the ancestors' tenacity and determination against the natural environment. In the Zhou dynasty, Jichang, King Wen of Zhou, explained natural phenomena with

64 divinatory symbols, taking the first step in exploring nature. Qu Yuan followed this step closely as he posed questions in his book *Elegies of the South- Ask the Sky*, such as: "Why is the world scattered at random? Why are the rivers winding? Why doesn't the ocean overflow while rivers from the east flow into it? Who knows?" This constant questioning is demonstrative of the ancient people's eagerness for exploring the laws of nature.

In *The Book of Songs*, there are instructions for agriculture production, it calls for the ethical ideology that people should conform to nature and be proactive. In terms of micro policies, the Chinese government attaches more importance to agriculture than other industries. Moreover, institutionalizing agriculture proved that people at that time realized that agriculture was the cornerstone of development. People should proactively conform to the seasons and laws of nature, adapt to the pace of seasons to arrange farming and life, and not violate the natural laws and seasons. The farmers were required, on the one hand, to conform to nature and on the other hand to engage in production and intensive cultivation, which happens to coincide with the construction requirements of contemporary ecological agriculture.

By analyzing these ancient norms, we can also observe the importance of our ancestors attached great importance to ecological thinking. The *Qin Bamboo Sticks* in Hubei Province can correspond to this point: Chapter One is about the law of the land; Chapter Two is about the law of animal husbandry. The two chapters on the home page show the rulers' attitudes towards natural development and protection. In the Han Dynasty, the codes formulated were imitating the ideas of the rulers of the Qin law to develop naturally by local conditions. The Han people diverted water from the Yellow River to irrigate the Hetao Plain, and the Yellow River Irrigation Area in Ningxia has designated the name "South of the River beyond the Great Wall.

In the peak of the feudal dynasty in ancient China, revised by the ruling class, the Tang Law was more comprehensive than those of previous

dynasties. Through the analysis of Tang Law's strict management and strict punishment measures on urban environmental protection and pollution control, we can see that Tang law attaches great importance to natural development and destruction. The core of the Chinese classical legal system represented by The T'Ang Code, guided by Confucian feudal ethics and morality, highlights the combination of rites and laws (Johnson, 1997). The force of law was used as the backing to promote the norms of ritual, which was regarded as the spiritual pillar to strengthen the repressive effect of law. The two complemented each other, pushed the status of the Tang Dynasty ordinances to a new height, and also provided a blueprint for later generations to formulate laws and regulations in the relevant development environment. As for Su Shi's management of the West Lake dam in the Song Dynasty, it was also a legendary story. According to historical records, there were six wells in the West Lake to regulate the water potential. During the Tang Dynasty, specific officials would clear the river every year. However, from the late Tang Dynasty to the Qian's, the relevant facilities have been abandoned, resulting in siltation and impassibility (Liang, 2018). As an official in West Lake District, Su Shi actively managed the lake's siltation according to feng shui (the appropriate location of a house or place). After carefully observing the terrain and landforms around the West Lake, he did not excavate the mud blindly. Instead, he diverted the river into the lake and turned the sludge into a dike, which protected local people's water transportation and navigation from the impact of sea tides.

Strictly conforming to the approach of ecological protection of the time, Su Shi's project was economical and environmental, thereby preserving the original site of the West Lake and adapting the local condition perfectly. It was an extraordinary pioneering move! Even today, the project has great practical significance for some water pollution control projects. Take the Dianchi Lake treatment as an example, the government did not choose mechanical weeding and silting but a combination of biochemistry and mechanical weeding and soon achieved significant results (Xie, 2019).

Controlling locust plagues has also been an important issue in Chinese history. People in the Song Dynasty were able to describe the life cycle, mating habits, and feeding habits in detail. They invented methods to control locusts' plagues, such as fire attacks and food cutting. They also found parasites that could also kill locusts, which was an early prototype of biological control. Therefore, in terms of the rational development and transformation of the environment, our ancestors are wiser, and we should deepen our understanding of and utilize this powerful wisdom to solve the current environmental problems with more ecological methods.

#### IV "BALD SHU MOUNTAIN, ACCOMPLISHED EPANG PALACE" – HUMAN'S OVER-EXPLOITATION OF NATURE IN THE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTIVITY AND ECONOMY

Xunzi said: "Natural law is universal, equal for all." That is to say that the constantly evolving times are not subject to man's will. In ancient times, it was impossible to explore and develop the natural environment too much because they often explained the inexplicable natural phenomena with the power of gods and ghosts. However, after entering the Shang and Zhou dynasties, with the gradual consolidation of the slavery society, the productive forces have been developed to a certain extent. Ancient people had deeper thinking about the ecological environment and natural phenomena, while science and technology also are developed constantly.

Because of the improvement of technology and the ambitious feudal lords, the abusive development of the environment is inevitable. During the Warring States Period, Zhi Boyao dug a river and it caused flood to the enemy's city, which is the first case of using the water power to carry out a devastating blow to other countries. The ecological environment of the Yellow River, the mother river of the Chinese nation, is also deteriorating day by day because of human activities. During the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, the disturbance to the ecological environment of

the entire basin gradually increased under the intensification of human activities. In the middle of the Warring States period, due to frequent wars and sparse population in the lower Yellow River, the distance between the two banks was 21 kilometers wide. The river had a strong flood storage capacity, and its banks were not easy to burst. In the late Western Han Dynasty, the suspended river had already appeared which result from increased soil erosion in the middle reaches of the Yellow River since the Qin and Han dynasties. In 11 AD, the Yellow River burst again, and floods between the Yellow River and Huai River lasted for 60 years. However, during the Han Dynasty, the Yellow River ecosystem had not yet completely collapsed. There are three main reasons:

1. In 70 AD, under the leadership of Wang Jing, a comprehensive control was carried out on the overflowing river by fixing a new channel at the end of the Western Han Dynasty (i.e., digging the river channel to reduce the impact of the original blockage).
2. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, many nomads began to settle in the middle Yellow River; croplands turned to grazing land; secondary grasslands and shrubs replaced croplands, and soil erosion was relatively abated.
3. At that time, there were many branches in the lower Yellow River, which played the role of flood diversion, sand discharge, and flow regulation (for flood storage and regulation of natural rivers and lakes).

However, with the increase of population in the later ages, more and more regimes were active in the Central Plains, causing impact on the habitat of the Yellow River. The entire Yellow River ecosystem has been damaged at all levels by deforestation and the overuse of downstream tributaries. In the Song and Yuan Dynasties, the flood control dam system was not well maintained and tended to collapse while the nomadic peoples in Yellow River basin.

As Gama Tenzin wrote in the book *God Calls Me From a Distance*: "Where is a plume of a smoke swaying for repaying the land? Where is a trickle of a stream for changing our mind?" In the spirit

of a pilgrim, the author asks viscerally how great a threat man's saber-rattling has posed on friendly nature since the industrial revolution. If we don't hold back, then future generations will end up with a devastated earth from our hands. We don't want to repent or that "those people who sit in the back of the room have access to our ancestors only with a limited number of words and pictures."

In the 1950s and 1960s, many infrastructure projects sprang up rapidly under the demand for socialist modernization. The most well-known was large-scale steel-making. At that time, there was a slogan "To surpass Britain in 5 years, to surpass America in 10 years". Although with high aspirations, it ignored the national conditions and objective laws and did not last long. However, led by the "left-wing" thinking, in the second half of 1958, farmers across the country engaged in steel smelting and the "five small industries" trend. There were 600,000 simple iron and steel furnaces, more than 59,000 small furnaces and kilns, more than 4,000 small power stations, more than 9,000 small cement plants, as well as over 80,000 farm tool repairing plants. Industrial enterprises increased from 170,000 in 1957 to more than 600,000 in 1959. Simultaneously, the existing environmental protection rules and regulations have been criticized and rejected (Ran, 2019).

In the case of chaotic management and lack of pollution control measures, the waste gas, wastewater, and waste residue from the industrial production process was unbridled, and environmental pollution was rapidly increasing, which was the last dance of human mechanical power in front of nature, without knowing that it was about to get payback later (Yuan, 2010). We were all suffering from domestic natural disasters: the Yellow River dry-off, the Tangshan earthquake, the Yangtze River flood, ten environmental hazards abroad, etc. Where should we go, and which path should we choose when facing the counter force of nature?

## V. "TURN INWARD AND EXAMINE YOURSELF WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTIES IN LIFE." -- HUMAN'S REFLECTION AND MEASURES ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE POST-INDUSTRIAL AGE

In thousands of years of development, human society has experienced the processes of "reverence for nature," "exploration of nature," and "conquest of nature." Eventually, it turned out that conquering nature is impractical. As a result, human beings began to reflect the concept on the processes and started a new approach: reconnect with nature.

In the 1970s, the ultra-left trend of thought penetrated. The ideas of "socialism without pollution" and "socialism is superior to capitalism" were widely spreading in China. When attending the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, Premier Zhou believed environmental protection had become prominent. (Zhang, 2010). In 1973, the State Environmental Protection Office became the first national environmental protection department (secondary organization). In 1982, the State Environmental Protection Office was reorganized into the State Environmental Protection Bureau (under the Ministry of construction), and evolved to the State Environmental Protection Administration (ministry level) in 1998. From those series of institutional restructuring, we can see that the Chinese people, along with the government, were gradually attaching importance to environmental protection.

In addition to legislation, contemporary environmentalists also had come up with new ideas on dealing with ecological and environmental problems. Taking the locust disaster as the breakthrough point, before the 1960s, local governments directly sprayed insecticides in case of locust disaster. Although this method could kill locusts in a short time, it is disadvantageous in the long term in two aspects. Firstly, the insecticides would artificially select the locusts' genes, and the locusts with strong drug resistance would be preserved and propagated in large numbers, which would cause difficulties in the future work

of locust eradication. Secondly, the extensive use of chemicals would cause damage to the whole region, causing ecological disasters. The insect ecologists represented by Mr. Ma Shijun adopted the strategy of "Eradication of locusts with the combination of reform and treatment", which shows our scholars' whole-hearted devotion to more advanced technology and theory. In river regulation and river closure projects, engineers and ecologists worked together to build green projects, among which the most famous was the Three Gorges Dam. River Engineering used to be rough construction and "GDP-only" theory once dominated. For example, the Hoover Dam is known as the "diamond of the desert." It does play a vital role in water conservancy facilities and farmland irrigation in Nevada. However, after its completion, the Colorado River gradually dried up the lower reaches of the river, making the estuarine delta in Mexico a desert, causing environmental disasters. The construction of the Three Gorges project started after careful ecological investigation and cost-effective research. During the construction of the Three Gorges Dam, local flora and fauna that were susceptible to potential damage, such as *Adiantum Nelumbinis* and water cypress, were transplanted for protection. In terms of sludge disposal, the measure of "storing clear water and discharging muddy water" was implemented in the project of Three Gorges Reservoir. In the flood season with more sediment, it generally does not store water and directly discharges sediment. In the season with less slits, it keeps water for power generation and river transportation. Economic development integrates with ecological protection as far as possible.

China's environmental protection industry criticizes and inherits the previous experience. Taking China's three major water conservancy projects: Xiaolangdi, Gezhouba, and the Three Gorges project, as examples, after drawing on the construction experience of Dujiangyan and Beijing-Hangzhou Canal, the construction are also carried out in combination with the new ecological and environmental protection ideas. The design of the Fish Mouth and the Bottle Mouth of Dujiangyan Project achieves perfect

integration of flood diversion and regulation, which was adopted in the Three Gorges and other projects later. Also, the engineers noticed the dam alone was not sustainable to be conducive to the Yangtze River Basin's biodiversity. As a result, the engineers designed specific facilities for fish migration. This design played a positive role in protecting rare animals such as the Chinese sturgeons and the finless porpoises. It is a positive expression of contemporary eco-centrism. Coincidentally, in the process of the urban construction, ecological and environmental protection ideas are fully integrated. By local conditions, the city Jinan in Shandong Province takes spring water specialty to build a beautiful spring city and sets up abundant protection measures. These measures protect the spring water, and increase the ornamental value and promote the building of the city as well. Paying attention to urban microclimate regulation is also an innovation point of municipal development. Relying on lakes and pools, Hefei city in Anhui Province has built a complete Suburban Park system. While enhancing the city view, it has also fixed the dilemma of perennial dryness and the excessive PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels. Treating ecological problems with ecological methods should be the new focus of environmental protection nowadays. The original treatment plans didn't solve water pollution problem of the two major water systems in Shandong Province, mostly vanity projects scratching the surface. The water quality of the effluent sections in Shandong Province was unqualified all year round. In recent years, after ecocentrism has become a trend, the provincial department decided to adopt the method for a wetland construction with surface water and subsurface flow purification to treat the Haihe River Basin and the Huang-Huai River System. Soon, the efficacy of such ecological methods was apparent in reality. The quality of effluent water and the biodiversity were improved significantly (Zhang et al., 2014). The advanced ecological concept today is to attach importance to the construction of ecological civilization, not to awe of the gods, and to connect people and nature.

Besides the application, ideological guidance is also an indispensable part of the construction of

ecological civilization. China's environmental protection started in the 1970s. The first generation of CPC central leadership with Comrade Mao Zedong as the core noticed the importance of resource conservation and environmental protection and then put forward a series of efficient measures. In 1973, the First National Conference on Environmental Protection was held in Beijing. The conference deliberated and adopted the 32-word guidelines for environmental protection work and formulated the first comprehensive environmental regulation in China's history. The Several Provisions on the Protection and Improvement of the Environment (Trial Draft) was also the starting point of environmental protection legislation in New China (1949). At the same time, resource conservation and environmental protection became the part of the Constitution. In the beginning of reform and opening up, the second generation of CPC central leadership with Deng Xiaoping promoted environmental protection to a new height. During this period, related legislation became the most active part of legislation, and relevant environmental regulations were also transferred from trial drafts to special laws and regulations. During the terms of Chairman Jiang Zemin and Chairman Hu Jintao, the CPC Central Committee put forward the concept of sustainable development, which called for building a resource-conserving and environment-friendly society. We paid attention to the legislation for environmental protection and put forward building an ecological civilization for the first time (Qin, 2018). Since entering the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping has advocated that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets." We should vigorously build ecological civilization and highlight the landmark of green development on the road of economic construction. Xi Jinping once quoted Xunzi's words to King Hui of Wei in his speech, aiming to emphasize inheriting ancient thought of taking nature in a timely and appropriate manner and striving to achieve harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature. At the 2018 National Conference on Environmental Protection, Xi proposed six basic principles for promoting ecological progress in the new era. He did a report to the 19th National

Congress of the Communist Party of China and put forward a refreshed view on ecological progress, saying that the harmonious coexistence of man and nature has become an essential part of the basic strategy for upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. He devoted a part of his report to "strengthen the system's reform for ecological progress and build a beautiful China." The evolution of the Party's ecological thoughts is the epitome of environmental protection in contemporary China.

Under the guidance of President Xi Jinping's thoughts on environmental protection, never before in history has this thought been more emphasized than now. As a privilege, a one-vote veto on local officials and enterprises can be implemented as the environmental inspection policy. Those traditional industries featured with high energy consumption and severe pollution are shut down. Moreover, a special campaign targeting water and soil conservation in the Yellow River has been launched. A plethora of environmental projects, including the conservation of water and soil and the pollution control alongside the Yangtze River has been embarked on, the River Chief System has been established and the Yangtze River Protection Law of the People's Republic of China has been carried on since March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Concrete actions have been made to reduce energy consumption and environmental protection, and it is recognized by all that efforts to global environmental protection have been made. It conforms to the law of development that Chinese thought on ecological civilization has been carried forward from ancient to modern times. The thought that grows more mature and advanced has become an important symbol of a prosperous country.

We have approached issues from the perspective of development, completely removed the "GDP-only" approach, and let the philosophy of ecocentrism take root in people's minds, which is an important milestone in the human development history the same as the "heliocentric theory" replaced the "geocentric theory" (Li, 2021).

With the construction of environmental protection in full swing, we seem to understand the

principles of ecological civilization in the phrases of "non-action," "by the times of agriculture," and "white sand dike in the shade of green poplar." Similarly, we also need to pay attention to the practical problems of ecological construction; we should not limit superficial slogans and go against the objective laws to build ecological homes down-to-earth. The history of environmental destruction in the industrial civilization booming period teaches us that the evolutionary way for people is to reconnect with nature, not to conquer nature (Wang, 2021).

The idea mentioned by Mencius that "there will be much more aquatic products to eat if we don't use fine-mesh for fishing and there will be much more wood available if we cut trees at the right time" agrees with the proposal that tiny net should not be used in winter in Lake Chagan. The Fixed Fishing-Prohibiting Period Planning proposed recently is the best explanation of what is called doing farm work in the right season. The essence of environmental protection has never been disappeared in China's land and revives from the thousands of year's civilization. Artificial intelligence and ancient classics enhance each other's emerging strengths. After numerous changes, the wheel of history, going through the Agricultural Age, Industrial Revolution Age, and Information Age, finally gets on track. Human's attitude towards nature changes from conquering nature to getting harmonious with it. Trivial as it seems, it is a great leap that can turn the tide.

## VI. CONCLUSION: LUCID WATERS AND LUSH MOUNTAINS ARE INVALUABLE ASSETS; ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION CONSTRUCTION IS THE TOP PRIORITY

Not confine to books, contemporary environmentalists should make field investigations and seek the wisdom of the sages. After rejecting the whole theory of restoring the ancients and historical nihilism, we critically carry forward the historical thoughts and perspectives on ecology and develop an ecological theoretical system by obeying the laws of nature. To truly take the road of sustainable development, we realize that "Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable

historical nihilism, we critically carry forward the historical thoughts and perspectives on ecology and develop an ecological theoretical system by obeying the laws of nature. To truly take the road of sustainable development, we realize that "Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets." and put the construction of ecological civilization in the first place. The construction of ecological civilization should be integrated into all aspects and the whole development process including the economy, politic, culture and society to form a spatial pattern, industrial structure, mode of production, and lifestyle of protecting the environment. Reconnect with nature and cherish the resource-rich earth so that we can better apply Chinese wisdom to new domain.

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