

Construction of Rural Ecological Livability from the Perspective of Ecological Philosophy*

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Abstract—The strategy of Rural Revitalization proposed by Xi Jinping is based on the core concepts of Chinese and Western ecological philosophy and it is the development and important practice of Marx's ecological philosophy. It is also an important strategic guide for the realization of China's construction of new rural area and an important basis for the implementation of rural ecological livability construction. Since the rural livability construction faces a series of challenges, it is essential to raise the ecological consciousness of rural residents, give full play to the supporting role of scientific and technological collaborative innovation, and learn successful experience from foreign countries. In this process, we should always adhere to the concept of harmonious ecological development, stick to Xi Jinping's new ecological ethics and values in the new era, so as to create conditions to ensure the implementation of ecological livability construction, and achieve the Rural Revitalization and revitalizing the grand nation.

Keywords: *ecological philosophy, Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization, rural ecological livability*

I. INTRODUCTION

The construction of ecological civilization has been integrated into the overall layout of China's national development with Chinese characteristics. In 2013, general secretary Xi Jinping put forward the concept of "building a beautiful countryside". In 2015, he proposed the integration of ecological civilization into all aspects and processes of economic and social development. The government's reports on the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out the implementation of the strategy of rural revitalization, especially that of the ecological revitalization which is the inherent requirement of rural revitalization. The implementation of Rural Revitalization Strategy must adhere to ecological priority, green development, because a good ecological environment is the most inclusive welfare of the people's livelihood, is the precious wealth and the greatest advantage of rural development [1].

The strategy of Rural Revitalization proposed by general secretary Xi Jinping is based on the core concepts of Chinese

and western ecological philosophy, and is the development and important practice of Marx's ecological philosophy. To deal with the series of challenges faced by the rural ecological livability construction, we must improve the ecological consciousness of the rural residents, give full play to the supporting role of scientific and technological innovation, learn from the successful experience abroad, and always adhere to the harmonious ecological view of ecological philosophy, stick closely to the ecological ethics and values of Xi Jinping in the new era, and create conditions for the comprehensive revitalization of the rural areas and the whole nation.

II. ECOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY

A. *Man and nature in ecological philosophy of China*

As a new branch of science in the 20th century, ecological philosophy is established with the deterioration of the earth's ecological environment and the consideration of the root cause and influence of the earth's ecological crisis, and developed with the global practice of re-establishing the ecological environment. Ecological philosophy is to investigate and study the whole ecosystem including human society and natural environment as well as their mutual relations and laws. It is a philosophical theory about the whole ecological field, which provides people with the guidance of the world outlook and methodology of ecological philosophy to study ecological problems. Ecological philosophy is a relatively independent philosophy which takes the ecosystem as the object, the relationship between human and human, the relationship between human and environment as the basic concern, and is constructed through rational reflection. The relationship between man and nature is the most basic object of ecological philosophy and the most basic problem it studies.

Since ancient times, China has being advocated the harmonious relationship between man and nature, the concept of "the unity of heaven-earth-man" put forward by Confucianism, the ecological philosophy of the same origin of everything in the world and man in Taoism, the origin of Chinese Buddhism and its concern for ecological composition. The Confucian view of heaven-earth-man is a holistic view of life. It regards the universe as a super life body, in which man is an inseparable and independent part.

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Man is the most intelligent and the most precious of all things in the universe. The greatness and dignity of human beings are not reflected in the insult and conquest of all things in the universe, but in his conscious consideration of the whole nature. Confucianism is good at assisting the universe and mending the universe and human is playing the role of "the heart of heaven and earth". The core problem of Taoism is that Tao is in everything, as Tao Te Ching says that "Tao gives birth to one, one to two, two to three, and three to everything" [2]. Human beings should not be arrogant, take themselves as the center, and regard nature as the object of conquest and domination. On the contrary, they think that human beings have no unique value once they leave the heaven and the earth. Taoism believes that the natural state is the true state of things, so people should follow the process of natural state, not force nature to change, and advocate for minimal interference on nature. Buddhism believes that everything in the world is born from the gathering of karma and disappears from the separation of karma. Nature, human beings and society are inseparable from each other, but closely related, thus, damage to nature means damage to human beings themselves, so human beings have the responsibility to protect ecological balance.

The contemporary western ecological philosophy, ecological ethics and world outlook suggest to reexamine the relationship between man and nature, change the traditional Western anthropocentrism, change all the narrow anthropocentrism centering on the interests and values of human beings, evaluating and arranging the whole world on the basis of human beings' fundamental scale, and oppose Modern anthropocentrism which protect the natural existence just for human existence and for the long-term development of human beings. Leopold's earth ethics advocated for the first time that human beings should establish a partnership model with nature in order to replace the traditional model of taking nature as the object of conquest and domination since ancient Greek times, which has a long and profound significance for human beings to overcome the global ecological crisis. Capra's Green Politics: the hope of the world put forward an ecological world view. On the issue of the relationship between man and nature, he advocated that people establish the ecological principle in the interaction between man and nature, and that economic activities should be put into the organic connection of the ecosystem. In his Ecological philosophy, Sachsse stressed that we should pay attention to nature and technology and that we should make the relationship between nature and human harmonious and unified, so he asked people to understand the relationship between technology and human.

B. Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization

Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization is based on the practice of environmental protection and economic sustainable development. It embodies the traditional Chinese ecological philosophy connotation, absorbs the core idea of contemporary western ecological philosophy and combines and develops Marx's ecological view. Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization guides China in dealing with the dialectical relationship between economic development and

environmental protection, and helps to put forward the development strategy of "five revitalization" in rural areas, namely, industrial revitalization, talent revitalization, cultural revitalization, ecological revitalization and organizational revitalization, among which ecological revitalization is the internal requirement of rural revitalization, and the protection and management of rural ecological environment is the foundation and support of rural comprehensive revitalization.

Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization is the embodiment of the inheritance and innovation of Marx's ecological philosophy. It is the combination of Marx's theory of ecological civilization and the practice of ecological civilization in China. Marxist ecological philosophy attaches great importance to the role of human practice on nature, and recognizes the humanized natural philosophy based on the premise of free nature. It holds that nature includes not only free nature, but also "humanized" nature through human practice. Human beings transform nature through practice, so that the free nature becomes humanized nature, and practice connects human and nature [3]. Based on the understanding of Marx's ecological philosophy, Xi Jinping put forward the important argument that "man and nature belong to community of shared life", "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets", "protecting the ecological environment like protecting the eyes, treating the ecological environment as it were life", and "protecting the ecological environment means protecting the productive forces, improving the ecological environment, and developing production" [4]. The theory of "two mountains" and the theory of ecological environment productivity are the development of Marxist ecological philosophy and the methodology guiding the work on contradiction between economic development and ecological protection in the construction of Rural Revitalization.

Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization was accumulated in the long term practice. The guiding ideology of building an ecological livable rural area was put into practice in the Rural Revitalization and further enriches Xi Jinping's ecological thought. Xi Jinping's exposition on rural ecological revitalization is rich in content, including: returning farmland to forests, implementing rotation to make nature full of life; strengthening the pollution control of agricultural non-point sources; promoting the development of agriculture and rural areas and the green transformation of farmers, taking the road of green development in rural areas, improving the rural living environment, with the purpose of reproducing the green hills and green waters [5]. To comprehensively implement the spirit of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party, the whole country conscientiously carries out Xi Jinping's important instructions on building ecological and livable beautiful rural areas.

III. RURAL ECOLOGICAL LIVABILITY CONSTRUCTION IN CHINA

Rural ecological revitalization is an important part of the implementation of Rural Revitalization in China, and it is the basic premise and material guarantee for the realization of

the comprehensive rural revitalization. Rural livability is also a major concern of all countries in the world since ecological livability is an international topic. Although different cultural groups have different understandings of the concept, they all believe that livability is a comprehensive concept with rich contents, including sustainability, quality of life, environmental quality and ecological construction of healthy communities, with quality of life at the center of this concept [6]. People and places are two aspects of the concept of livability, that is, how to create a harmonious relationship between people and nature is the essence of livability. Our country's rural ecological livability construction aims at people's well-being, and is committed to the building of harmonious relationship between life, production and natural environment.

A. Achievements and challenges of rural ecological livability construction

Guided by Xi Jinping's idea of ecological civilization, with the joint efforts of local governments and local residents, remarkable achievements have been made in rural livability construction. The rural environment has been significantly improved, the income of farmers has increased substantially, and the agricultural industrial system has been gradually established. This has laid a solid foundation for promoting the healthy, green and sustainable development of rural economy. In Zhejiang Province, the project of "demonstration of thousands of villages and renovation of thousands of villages" has been carried out, and the rural ecological construction has been in the forefront of the country, which also provides practical experience for the construction of beautiful villages in China. In the past ten years, with the construction of village environment as the core, Tianjin has made great efforts in improving the appearance of the village, and put forward the "six standards" (road hardening, street lighting, energy cleaning, harmless waste water treatment, village greening and beautification, and healthy life) as the main content of the construction of the rural environment, which has greatly improved the ecological environment. Under the call of Rural Revitalization Strategy, all regions actively carry out ecological rural livability construction and scientific and technological research. In order to promote urban and rural livability construction, the Pearl River Delta region has opened up the design and construction of greenway network. Through the establishment of systematic connection between traffic design, spatial design, pollution control and ecological livable environment [7], and through the collaborative research of multiple departments and disciplines, it has greatly optimized human living environment.

Although the ecological livable environment in rural areas in China has been significantly improved, there are still a series of obstacles, such as urban-rural gap, rural economic backwardness and environmental pollution caused by the long-term development mode of rural supporting cities. Therefore, in the process of urban-rural integration, the construction of rural livable environment still faces a series of challenges. For example, the cultivated land resources are reduced; the soil quality is poor, and the impact of industrial

waste and solid waste stacked and discharged at will cause serious soil pollution; the shortage of water resources and water pollution are very prominent; the agricultural non-point source pollution is serious; the agricultural inputs such as chemical fertilizer, pesticide and agricultural film are excessive; the livestock and poultry breeding industry bring serious rural pollution; and the rural domestic waste and sewage are still not effectively treated; industrial pollution, urban pollution transfer to the rural areas cause rural environmental problems [8]. All of those challenges need urgent policy and science and technology to solve, because they are essential for the livability construction of our rural areas.

B. Countermeasures for the construction of rural ecological livability

At present, the construction of livable environment in rural areas of China is still faced with prominent problems and great challenges. How to deal with those problems, it is suggested that the following work should be done:

1) Adhering to the guidance of ecological civilization theory and improving the awareness of ecological protection

In the construction of rural ecological livability in China, the new force of rural residents should be encouraged and carried out step by step under the guidance of national macro-control. Since this century, with the implementation of the national sustainable development policy, people's ecological values have been improved, and the awareness of ecological protection of rural environment has been strengthened. In the face of the difficulties faced by the construction of rural ecological livability, it is still necessary to strengthen the residents' understanding of the ecological morality, and take the overall interests of the ecosystem as the highest value, not just the value of human beings themselves. Therefore, maintaining and protecting the integrity, harmony, stability, balance and sustainability of the ecosystem is the methodology guiding rural life and production, and an ethical response to the environmental crisis. Xi Jinping's thought of ecological civilization is an important theory that inherits the ecological philosophy of China and the West and develops the Marxist ecological thought. It is the guiding ideology of the practice of rural ecological construction in China. Therefore, adhering to the guidance of ecological civilization is an important guarantee for the construction of rural livable environment.

We should adhere to the guidance and strengthen the study of Xi Jinping's ecological civilization, respond positively to the strategy of rural revitalization, and handle the relationship between "five revitalization". We should insist on the revitalization of rural organizations, which provides organizational guarantee for ecological revitalization and rural livability construction; we should improve the recognition and sense of belonging of rural residents to the living environment through the development of rural ecological culture construction, so that the rural residents could spontaneously reduce environmental pollution and actively take measures conducive to ecological

construction. We should enhance individual awareness for the creation of ecological livable environment and put it into the practice of livable environment construction.

We should also give full play to the role of local colleges and universities, encourage teachers and students to go deep into the rural areas, publicize the spirit of ecological civilization, demonstrate the scientific methods of ecological environment protection, so as to strengthen the awareness of rural residents on the sources of ecological environment pollution, establish the concept of environmental protection and put it into practice. At present, the problems faced by the construction of livable environment in rural areas need to cultivate ecological morality education team and build rural communities with demonstration effect for the purpose of serving the construction of rural livable environment.

2) Science and technology collaborative innovation should be made to support rural ecological livability construction

We should carry out the spirit of the report of the 19th National Congress, give full play to the support and leading role of scientific and technological innovation in the construction of a modern economic system, and actively respond to the strategy of rural revitalization. Years of practice experience in China has proved that relying on scientific and technological innovation is the fundamental way to achieve rural revitalization, and also the main support for the construction of rural ecological livability. We should actively respond to the strategy of Rural Revitalization and carry out ecological science and technology research according to the local planning. For how to play the role of government policy, system and capital guidance, how to play the collaborative role of government, university, institutes and enterprise, how to establish cooperative mechanism, and how to develop sustainable development in the long term, we need to cultivate a scientific and technological innovation team and formulate an organization of advisers for the government on science and technology policy for the purpose of building a livable environment in rural areas.

The collaborative innovation of science and technology provides impetus for the construction of livable rural environment. Scientific and technological force is the backbone of promoting the construction of rural ecological environment. Only by relying on scientific and technological cooperation and innovation can we solve the problems of rural space greening and atmospheric environment management, water environment improvement, soil restoration and other urgent problems faced by the ecological livable environment in rural areas. The construction of livable environment in rural areas needs the support of science and technology, the collaborative innovation of multi-disciplinary research, the creation of a collaborative innovation mode suitable for local areas, and the role of local colleges and universities in supporting science and technology.

3) Learning from the experience of foreign rural livability construction

We should realize the strategic support for technological innovation to revitalize the ecosystem, rely on the International Technology Alliance and cooperation along the "Belt & Road", give full play of the advantages of regional science and technology innovation, and promote the scientific and technological cooperation and innovation cooperation among nations, so as to help realize the construction of ecological and livable environment in rural areas.

Rural livable environment is the task that all countries in the world are trying to accomplish. There are not only developed countries such as UK, USA, Japan and other European countries that have gained decades of experience, but also countries such as India, that of Southeast Asia, Africa and South America that are in the initial stage. China's rural livability construction can draw on the successful experience of the world, such as the experience of developing small towns and villages along the metropolitan area in the UK, the treatment method of dealing with the urban-rural green space in the developed countries of EU, the 3R (namely, reduce, reuse and recycle) manufacturing concept of waste classification and resource saving in Japan. China can also learn from Southeast Asia and South America to make full use of local natural resources, such as plant straw reuse and microbial wastewater treatment and other environmental protection measures to harmonize the relationship between production and life.

Based on the analysis of the relevant literature of livable environment construction in foreign countries, foreign experience has obvious local characteristics. Therefore, the construction of livable environment in rural areas of China should be adapted to local conditions, and find a suitable development mode according to local characteristics with reference to the successful experience in the world.

IV. CONCLUSION

From proposing environmental protection to building a beautiful new China, to rural ecological rejuvenation, the concept of sustainable development has penetrated into all fields of social construction. All sectors of China actively respond to the strategy of rural revitalization, adhere to the rural ecological rejuvenation and rural livability construction, and prepare the material basis for long-term development of the overall rural revitalization and the great revitalization of China. Although China's rural ecological livability construction has accumulated valuable experience, it still faces arduous challenges. For the challenges in reality, we must first strengthen the learning and understanding of Chinese and western ecological philosophy, ethics and Xi Jinping's ecological civilization theory, so as to provide theoretical guidance and direction for the rural ecological revitalization and rural livability construction. To advocate ecological holism and alleviate and eliminate human crisis, human beings, as the brewing and responsible person of the earth ecological crisis, must jump out of the limitation of self-center, think about problems from the overall interests of

the ecosystem, and restrict our lives and development with such thinking. Then, in the context of internationalization, we should strengthen international cooperation in science and technology in the field of ecological science and environment, and accelerate the collaborative innovation of science and technology among scientific research institutes and regions in China, so as to provide local proper programs for the construction of rural ecological livability. In a word, we should deal with the relationship between economic construction and environmental protection, the task of urban-rural coordinated development and urban-rural co-creation of an ecological and livable environment. We should take the overall interests of the ecosystem as the highest value, and take whether it is conducive to maintaining and protecting the integrity, harmony, stability, balance and sustainability of the ecosystem as standards to measure human life style, scientific and technological progress, economic growth and social development.

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