

# “Beauty” of “Beautiful China” from the Perspective of Ecological Civilization

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## ABSTRACT

The new concept of “Beautiful China” was firstly proposed in the report to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the concept of “Beautiful China” was further elaborated and the word “Beauty” was written into the objective of the construction of socialist modernization for our country. As the Party and government placed the development of an ecological civilization into the important agenda, “Beautiful China” was born as the whole-new development concept at the right moment. “Beautiful China” specifically and vividly expresses the objective of our government in development of an ecological civilization and shows the brand-new outlook of the future development of Chinese economic society. Socialism with Chinese characteristics does not only lie in economic development, advanced culture and social harmony, but also lies in the beautiful China with good ecological environment and harmonious coexistence of people, society and the nature.

**Keywords:** *Beautiful China, ecological civilization, green development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ecological civilization is the advanced form of human social civilization. It is not purely an issue of energy reduction and environmental protection, but also integrates ecological civilization into all aspects and the full process in political, economic and cultural advancement. Beautiful China is the sum of the beauty of era, the beauty of society, the beauty of life, the beauty of people and the beauty of environment and it is reflected in various dimensions such as politics, economy, culture, society and ecology. From the perspective of ecological civilization, beautiful China is a dynamic concept which integrates the beauty of nature, the beauty of idea, the beauty of harmony and the beauty of sustainable prosperity.

## 2. BEAUTY OF THE NATURE: THE KEY OF BEAUTIFUL CHINA

The beauty of the nature reveals human’s cognitive feeling of the nature from the perspective of the relationship between humankind and the nature. The beauty of the nature refers to a good natural environment which is the premise and basis for building beautiful China. Natural environment is the sum of natural

elements such as climate, air, water and land, and it is the collective name of the natural resources and natural conditions required for humans to survive and develop. It includes certain ecological environment, biological environment and underground resource environment. Humankind is an outcome of the nature. All human activities are dominated by the nature, and human survival and development are directly or indirectly affected by natural environment. In order to acquire more resources, America unceasingly developed from eastern coastal to western inland in the early stage. The middle prairie was mainly reclaimed as farmland and it caused serious land degradation and desertification. In addition, the frequency and scale of the sand-dust storm in the west area were continuously expanding due to droughts and storms. About 300,000 refugees fled their homes from 1935 to 1939. London smog incidents caused thousands of casualties. Chinese economy is developing rapidly after the reform and opening up, and the GDP ranks second in the world. In 2019, China’s GDP per capita exceeded USD 10,000 for the first time. However, Chinese ecological environment is not optimistic. Water shortage, serious water pollution, overall poor air quality, serious soil pollution as well as fog and haze weather due to air pollution, potable water safety problem due to water pollution and solid pollution due to living consumption

all cause huge burden for the natural environment, and human survival and development are seriously affected [1].

Good ecological environment and beautiful mountains and plains are the foundation for sustainable development for the Chinese nation. The beauty of the nature requires that the ecological environment shall have graceful and livable natural features, as President Xi says “letting residents see mountains and water”. Uncoordinated economic development mode and environmentally unfriendly human lifestyle are two main reasons for the ecological environment problem. In order to properly handle the relationship between economic development and natural environment, the old approach that pollution goes first and treatment is carried out later or pollution and treatment are synchronous cannot be taken. On the contrary, the human behaviors and economic activities shall be limited into the capacity scope within which the ecological environment can reserve the sufficient space and time for recuperation. The natural resources such as air, water, soil and blue sky are used unconsciously and they cannot be recovered after lost. Any harm to the nature will eventually hurt humankind. If people merely focus on the immediate demands of life and development and seize resources without any restraint, they will not only destroy the natural environment, but also harm the foundation of national survival and development. Beautiful China shall possess rich natural resources, diverse biological species, good ecological environment and livable living space, and it is the peaceful and beautiful homeland with clear mountain, blue sky, green land and clean water.

### **3. BEAUTY OF IDEA: SOURCE OF THOUGHT ON BEAUTIFUL CHINA**

The idea is the aggregation of people’s knowledge on things in social practices. The idea guides human social practice activities and scientific idea helps to improve the level of social practices. The beauty of idea in academic community, society and country is the source of thought for building beautiful China. The beauty of idea for beautiful China from the perspective of ecological civilization is reflected in the following three levels: At first, academic ideas and scientific research show a beauty of prosperity of free exchange. All things in the world are changing and developing, so is beautiful China. It is an eternal topic “what is beautiful China and how beautiful China is built”. It requires contemporary and future generations of theorists and technologists to continuously make in-depth explorations and researches [2]. In the 1980s and 1990s, many experts and scholars began to think about the right relationship between human and nature as regards the conflicts among human, society and nature during economic and social development. In the academic community, it transformed from “advocating environmental protection” to “seeking

a new development mode”. In the 21th century, green is considered as the basis for development. The academic ideas become the wisdom treasure for building the beautiful China, and the in-depth scientific research offers the theoretical guidance for realizing the beautiful China.

Secondly, the beauty of atmosphere advocating ecological ethics is formed in the society. “Beautiful China” is the target that people jointly participate in, jointly build and fight for. Building beautiful China shall be transformed into the self-consciousness of all people. It is the guarantee for realizing beautiful China to change the traditional ideas, production mode and lifestyle. The ecological ethics of kindly treating the nature, protecting the environment, respecting life and guaranteeing ecological justice shall be advocated, and the good lifestyles such as energy conservation, water conservation and low-carbon consumption shall be gradually fostered. Under the guidance of correct ecological outlook, the awareness of conservation, environmental protection and ecology shall be enhanced and the ecological ethics and codes of conduct shall be fostered. Meanwhile, the production of ecological products, consumption of green products and product recycling shall become the new fashion for the social life.

Finally, the national green development strategies tend towards maturity. Ecological civilization is not only the advanced form of the harmony between humankind and the nature, but also the national development idea and development means. Resources, energy and environment are closely related with people’s lives and the national development. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core and the guidance of Comrade Xi Jinping’s thought on ecological civilization, historic achievements have been realized in the development of beautiful China. Especially after the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping’s thought on ecological civilization is continuously enriched and developed. The green development idea that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets provides scientific guidance for the development of ecological civilization and beautiful China in the new era [3].

The beauty of idea in academic community, society and country complements and enhances each other, and jointly constitutes the source of thought on beautiful China.

### **4. BEAUTY OF SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY: DEVELOPMENT DEMAND FOR BEAUTIFUL CHINA**

It is a major problem concerning the future of our country to realize what kind of development and how to develop. The proposal of building beautiful China gives

a good answer to this key problem. Beautiful China is developing and it is the development with sustainable prosperity.

At first, the beauty of sustainable prosperity for beautiful China is manifested that people have rich natural resources to maintain the survival and development. Humankind is born in natural environment, and the natural environment offers the material support for humankind. Since the modern industrial revolution, human knowledge have been unceasingly enriched, the technologies have been rapidly developing, the level of productivity has been greatly promoting, and humans have been beginning to overstep the nature and override natural rules. The relationship between humankind and the nature in this period is sharply deteriorated, followed by the environmental pollution, ecological deterioration, shortage of energy and resources and other similar problems. For human survival and development, the deterioration of resources in biosphere must be prevented, and their utilization must be sustainable. That is to say, humankind may not only focus on the current value orientation and get satisfied with the current natural and humanized achievements, but also focus on the future of the ecological system, and maintain or improve the integrity of the earth life support system. For maintaining the biosphere as well as the economic and social progress for current and future generations, more alternatives shall be offered for the future [4]. Natural resources are not inexhaustible and the self-cleaning capacity of the natural environment is also limited, so China's construction and development may not challenge the limit of the nature, and the development shall be based on the premise of the bearing capacity of the natural environment and more natural resources shall be reserved for the development of future generations.

Secondly, the beauty of sustainable prosperity in beautiful China is manifested that people have wide living space and diverse material and cultural products. In the primitive society with gathering and hunting and the agricultural society with slash-and-burn cultivation, although humankind showed a certain subjective initiative in nature, the role of "harmonious relationship" was also played on the basis of "good timing and geographical convenience". Therefore, the relationship between human and nature in the primitive society and agricultural society was relatively harmonious, the ecological system was comparatively harmonious and the natural resources were rich and diverse. However, due to low productivity, humankind had no demands other than food, clothing, shelter, transportation and simple production, living, entertainment and defense tools. Human living space was extremely small, and the material and cultural products human enjoyed were extremely few. It is not beautiful China if people have good ecology, rich natural resources but scarce material and cultural products.

Beautiful China shall be the beauty of sustainable material prosperity on the basis of eternal guarantee of natural resources. We shall firmly establish the idea of prioritizing ecological civilization, maintain green development, comprehensively take ecological protection and economic development into account, let people share the beauty of nature and beauty of life in green hills and clear waters, and guarantee the growth of social economy and the continuous happiness for people [5].

## **5. BEAUTY OF HARMONY: ROOT OF VALUE ON BEAUTIFUL CHINA**

Ecological civilization is the sum of the material and spiritual achievements acquired by humankind by following the objective law of harmonious development among human, nature and society. The theory of beautiful China from the perspective of ecological civilization aims to realize the value pursuit of harmonious coexistence between humankind and nature, humankind and humankind, and humankind and society.

At first, the harmony in the relationship between human and nature is the remarkable mark of the beautiful China. The relationship between human and nature shows an evolution path of worshiping nature, adapting to nature and conquering nature from the primitive society, agricultural society and industrial society. These three forms are not harmonious relationships between human and nature. The harmonious coexistence between humankind and the nature does not mean that one party prevails over the other party, but both parties supplement each other, jointly develop and coexist. "Humankind and the nature are a life community [6]. Humankind must respect the nature, follow the nature and protect the nature". This is the most fundamental ecological idea to build beautiful China. Respecting and following the nature are the basis for guaranteeing the human survival, while protecting the nature is the inevitable path for humans to realize sustainable development. The harmonious coexistence between humankind and nature means that humankind and nature are both fully respected and developed to show the beautiful scenery of blue sky, green land and clean water. The correct value of respecting nature, conforming to nature and protecting nature shall be established, the nature shall be made use of and transformed on the basis of respecting the nature and protecting the nature so as to realize the harmonious development of humankind and the nature.

Secondly, the harmonious relationship among people is the core idea of beautiful China. The relationship among people directly determines the relationship between humankind and the nature and determines the direction of social development. The harmonious relationship among people is mainly manifested that the status among people is equal, i.e. humankind gets along equally. Humankind equality includes "intra-generational

equality” and “inter-generation equality”. The former shows the overall interests, while the later shows the future social interests. Building beautiful China does not sacrifice the interests of some people to benefit the others, and it cannot sacrifice the interests of the future generations for the development of the current generation. People in the same and different generations who equally and fairly possess the rights over resources and fulfill the obligations of environmental protection are the harmonious relationship among people.

Finally, the harmony between humankind and society is the ideal image of beautiful China. Humankind and society are linked together. Humankind is always the humankind in the social relationship, and the society is always the human society. In fact, the comprehensive development and social relationship of humankind interact benignly and they are the precondition of each other. We shall take the people-oriented principle, lay emphasis on personal creativity, maximize personal potential, unceasingly perfect and improve the social system, continuously adjust the social structure and make harmonious social relationship offer conditions for human comprehensive development, while the human comprehensive development further pushes ahead the economic and social development and finally realizes the comprehensive development of human and society. The harmony between humankind and society from the perspective of beautiful China shall make people achieve comprehensive development in the society, and all people in the whole society can do whatever they can to realize whatever they want.

## 6. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that ecological civilization and beautiful China are closely related. Beautiful China is necessarily a country with ecological civilization, while China with ecological civilization also will be a beautiful country. Building “Beautiful China” creatively integrates the development of ecological civilization into various aspects in development and construction of our country, pushes ahead the harmonious development of the society and guarantees the fundamental interests of people.

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