

A Tentative Analysis of the Aesthetics of Eco-civilization

Chen Wangheng*

Abstract: This paper explores four issues concerning aesthetics. First is the groundless concept of eco-aesthetics. In nature, aesthetics is the outcome of civilization and aesthetic appreciation is a process of human's self-affirmation. Fundamentally, ecology is the opposite of civilization. Ecology is beautiful only when it benefits humans and civilizations. The concept of ecological beauty is groundless and what exists can only be the beauty of eco-civilization. Second is the symbiosis of ecology and civilization, which is the very essence of eco-civilization beauty. Third is simplicity, which is the defining beauty of eco-civilization aesthetics and originates from agricultural civilizations. Such an aesthetic view was negated by industrial civilizations and later realized self-renewal through "negation of negation." Today, simplicity has become the defining beauty in the era of eco-civilizations. Frugality is the core of simplicity and it carries different connotations in different eras. In the era of agricultural civilizations, frugality was for wealth accumulation, while in the era of eco-civilizations frugality is for resource conservation. Fourth is the construction of eco-civilization aesthetics of which there are three noteworthy aspects; re-establishing the divinity of nature & advocating nature worship, re-humanizing and re-building trust in technology, and improving the quality of the "habitat for humanity." The community of eco-civilization is the biggest ever shared homeland featuring harmonious co-existence between humans and nature. The aesthetics of eco-civilization are the aesthetics of the human homeland. "Happy living and dwelling" is an eternal theme of human aesthetics. When it comes to the era of eco-civilizations, however, this theme should be added with a prefix, i.e. "eco-" to form a new concept — "happy eco-living and dwelling."

Keywords: eco-civilization; eco-aesthetics; eco-civilization aesthetics

* Chen Wangheng, professor, School of Urban Design, Wuhan University.

Ecology is a natural science originating in the mid-19th century. It has evolved from descriptive ecology and classic ecology to modern ecology. During the 20th century, ecology saw a significant breakthrough, expanding its scope from natural science to humanities. In 1922, American geologist Harland. H. Barrows first proposed the concept of “ecological anthropology, ” which was followed by the emergence of ecological philosophy and ecological ethics. By comparison, ecological aesthetics (eco-aesthetics) is a latecomer, which quickly gained extensive recognition among many aestheticians and artists, who wrote many relevant papers. Yet, there has been no shortage of doubt concerning its rationality and many scholars have taken a wait-and-see attitude, reluctant to make any comments. My essay “Eco-civilization Beauty: A New Form of Contemporary Aesthetics” published in *Guangming Daily* on July 15, 2015, made clear my objection to the so-called “ecological beauty”, calling for its replacement with “beauty of eco-civilization” and introduced the new concept of “eco-civilization aesthetics. ” Due to length limitation, that essay failed to thoroughly elaborate this view, which is now detailed here.

1. Beauty does not lie in ecology, but in civilization

Since the Paleolithic Period, often referred to as the “prehistoric age” by scholars, cultures were mainly identified as “stoneware” and “earthenware. ” The Neolithic Period witnessed the emergence of “jade ware. ” From stoneware through earthenware to jade ware, this cultural evolution is characterized by ever-enriched cultural associations with these utensils. Exquisite jade ware was used as a sacrifice and a signifier of its bearer’s important place in a clan. The prehistoric era is characterized by people’s endless efforts to differentiate themselves from nature, the

outcome of which was civilization. Throughout human history, beauty has been a primary value and a fruit of our civilizations.

In terms of eco-environment, there was no better period than the prehistoric. Yet, was the eco-environment appreciated by people of that time? The answer is of course not. In the eyes of prehistoric people, the primitive natural environment was mysterious and terrible and was anything but beautiful. For our primitive ancestors, beauty might exist in fruit-bearing trees and clear rivers as well as domesticated dogs and pigs. Such a sense of beauty was based on their efforts to transform things to become parts of their civilizations.

Western anthropologists generally consider the prehistoric era to be primitive and barbaric, and regard the formation of written language as the start of human civilizations. Such differentiation is in fact inaccurate, for civilization also existed in that barbaric era, just at a lower level. The prehistoric era had its own, unique civilization-based beauty.

The transition from the prehistoric era to the so-called era of civilization involved many changes, the most significant of which was the change in the human-nature relationship. During the prehistoric era, people had very limited capacities for understanding and remaking nature. Because of that, the beauty of nature was only captured through a narrow aspect and most aesthetic resources came from humans themselves. In the era of civilization, however, we saw significant progress in the understanding and remaking of nature. Essentially nature was humanized. According to one school of thought, the era of civilization humanized almost everything both in practice and in ideology. Thus, in the first phase of civilization, i.e. the era of agricultural civilizations, nature became the most important aesthetic object. In ancient Chinese literature and art, nature was the number one subject. There were numerous landscape poems and paintings, which may mislead people to

believe that nature itself is beautiful. In fact, what these poems and paintings depicted were all scenes of naturalized nature. This can be exemplified by a comment made by Guo Xi (a painting theorist of the Song Dynasty), “It is universally accepted that a landscape masterpiece must include elements worth traveling, appreciating, experiencing and living” (Shen, 1982, p. 65). Elements worth traveling, appreciating, experiencing and living were those that had already been humanized.

The natural beauty in industrial civilizations is essentially the same as that in agricultural civilizations. There are only some slight differences in their nature and manifestations. As is generally known, agricultural civilizations feature low productivity and limited understanding of nature. People’s scientific cognition was far weaker than their poetic imagination. In most cases, they explored and conformed to nature, instead of attempting to conquer and remake it. Nature was more agreeable, poetic and aesthetic.

When it came to the era of industrial civilizations, huge progress was made in the understanding of nature, and scientific understanding caught up with poetic imagination, and to some extent exceeded it. In real practice, the conquest and remaking of nature surpassed reliance on and utilization of nature. Against this background, nature in the eyes of people was cold, hostile and anti-aesthetic. Such a cold, hostile and anti-aesthetic impression was also the outcome of civilization, or rather, industrial civilization.

In the era of agricultural civilizations, the beauty of nature was more about harmony between man and nature. All the natural features, whether they were magnificent, elegant, masculine or feminine, were joyful, pleasant and vigorous. In the industrial age, however, natural beauty was mainly highlighted in the conflicts between man and nature which may have been “seemingly noble.”

The man-nature relationships in the era of eco-civilizations are different from that of the era of

industrial civilizations. This is because in practice, we cannot blindly conquer and remake nature but must show more respect and kindness to nature. However, respect and kindness were supposed to help build a benign man-nature relationship and secure more recognition and support for human survival and development. The natural beauty of the eco-civilization era is of course not so poetic as that of the agricultural era. That is because the eco-civilization era features cutting-edge scientific technology, which is hostile to poetic nature. Nevertheless, in the era of eco-civilization, the respect and kindness shown to nature is based on the inheritance and development of human civilizations. Essentially, this high-tech-driven respect and kindness now being shown to nature concerns civilization, rather than ecology.

Today, the unity of man and nature, or rather, the unity of civilization and ecology is heavily favored. Given this, the so-called natural beauty in the era of eco-civilization still belongs to the beauty of a humanized nature. Its eco-value, or “eco-beauty” is based on an ecology recognized by people, i.e. a humanized ecology.

2. The beauty of eco-civilization: Symbiosis between civilization and ecology

How can the beauty of eco-civilization be properly defined? This question concerns the nature of eco-civilization. Fundamentally, civilization is the outcome of human endeavors to understand, utilize and remake nature. Therefore, it is created by human.

As aforementioned, in the era of agricultural civilizations, people had very limited capacities for understanding, utilizing and remaking nature. Basically, nature was a mystery to them. Spiritually, people tended to worship nature in a superstitious manner and appreciate nature from a poetic and religious perspective. In the era of agricultural

civilizations, under-developed scientific technology resulted in a relatively lower capacity for remaking nature. Thus, there was no radical damage to the ecological balance and people could live in harmony with nature in primitive times.

One remarkable accomplishment made in the era of industrial civilizations was huge progress in understanding nature. Such an accomplishment was highly dependent on scientific development. People's improved understanding of nature basically disenchanted them with nature. Their worship of nature was still there, but only within the scope of its mighty force. Nature was no longer a totem or god and there was no need for people to have any faith in it. Such a basic understanding of the human-nature relationship would not have exerted much negative impact. What was truly damaging was the application of high-tech means to perform unprecedented prey and transformation, which has resulted in the deterioration of the ecological balance on earth. While it is true that the history of ecological damage goes back to the era of agriculture, the ecological damage then was partial, while now, in the era of industrial civilizations, it is full-scale. By virtue of high-tech means, "Man does not seem to learn by running into the earth's obvious limits" (Meadows, 1983, p.173).

The harmony and balance between man and nature was thus broken. People have indulged in their comforts and conveniences produced by industrial civilizations without even noticing the approach of a huge eco-catastrophe. In her book *Silent Spring* published in 1962, Rachel Carson shocked the entire world by exposing the unexpected fact that the vegetable and fruits on people's dining table should contain life-threatening pesticide residue. Back then, there was no such concept as environmental conservation. Just as the Chinese translator of Carson's book said in the foreword, "If you consult the newspapers or magazines published before the 1960s, you can hardly find any mention of 'environmental

conservation,' which means the concept of environmental conservation did not exist in social consciousness and scientific discussions at that time" (Carson, 1997, p.1).

To some extent, high technology helped industrial civilizations conquer and transform nature. Even so, such conquests and transformation, while benefiting people, did not bring any good to nature. Worse still, due to the excessive development of nature, a variety of species have gone extinct or are on the verge of extinction. Nature's original ecological balance, which ensured the benign development of numerous species, has been broken, making it virtually impossible for people to live in harmony with nature.

Such a situation cannot last long. To re-balance itself, nature will surely revenge against humanity in its own way. In some areas, human strengths seem to outperform the strength of nature, but overall, we cannot contend against nature. The outcome of our defiance of nature can only lead to our extinction. It is in such a context that eco-civilization came into being. In a sense, eco-civilization is human's inevitable move, or rather self-redemption in the face of nature's revenge.

By reviewing the human-nature relationship, scholars have come to realize that human's relationship with nature has experienced three phases; humans' submission to nature, the utilization of nature, and the conquest of nature. The three phases respectively correspond with the prehistoric era, agricultural civilizations, and industrial civilizations. Of the three phases, only the agricultural era enabled human-nature symbiosis. However, such a symbiosis remained at a low level and was evidently more conducive to humans. It made little contribution to nature. Nevertheless, agriculture at least did no wide-ranging damage to nature. The new civilization — eco-civilization — arguably marks a return to an agricultural civilization and is a negation of industrial civilization. Fundamentally, it is a new creation based



Ecological protection area

on all the achievements of human civilizations. Eco-civilization means a human-nature symbiosis and shared benefits for man and nature. However, such a symbiosis has its own characteristics. First, it is based on industrial civilizations and therefore is a high-level human-nature symbiosis. Second, such symbiosis is enabled by high-tech means, instead of manual labor such as agricultural production. Third, such symbiosis can generate high yields. It not only ensures human survival, but also creates more room for human development and thus brings about more benefits. It hugely benefits nature, as well. Through eco-civilization, the broken ecological balance is corrected and improved, which facilitates the healthy development of numerous species in nature.

Different civilizations foster different forms of beauty. As a new civilization, eco-civilization is sure to foster a new form of beauty. At present, the development of eco-civilization is at its earliest stage and its aesthetic form is hard to define. Still, one thing is already clear, namely, through both its beauty and its “matrix,” eco-civilization is the symbiosis of ecology and civilization.

The nature of symbiosis means any beauty that favors a single side should not be deemed eco-civilization beauty, which is a new form of artistic and social aesthetics, as well as environmental aesthetics.

The fact that eco-civilization beauty is based on the practice of eco-civilization does not mean its beauty is simply the outcome of such a practice. The development of any civilization proceeds both in practice and in ideology. Fundamentally, ideological construction is based on practice. However, ideology is not necessarily the outcome of practice, for it may be formed either before or after practice and exhibits a certain degree of independence. The key to aesthetic construction lies not in eco-civilization practice, but eco-civilization concept. Only when the concept of eco-civilization is introduced to appreciate and create beauty can the beauty of eco-civilization be fostered.

3. Simplicity—the defining beauty of eco-civilization

Being part of human cultures, aesthetics developed with mankind. It survives the passing of

time (synchronicity), because human life, including both physical life and cultural life, continues to survive. That explains why people today can appreciate what their ancestors thought beautiful in ancient times. On the other hand, it changes through time (diachronism) because human life keeps evolving through time, which may not be reflected that obviously in physical appearance but can be demonstrated clearly in cultural life. Therefore, what human ancestors thought beautiful may go beyond the understanding and acceptance of people today or may only be partially understood and accepted as they tend to interpret the past from a contemporary perspective. There is nothing wrong with such an interpretation. After all, as Nikolay Chernyshevskiy (1959) once said, “The beauty of each generation is and should be exclusively owned by that generation because it voices and explains that specific generation” (p.1).

Each era, be it agricultural or industrial, has its unique beauty and so does the eco-civilization era, which reflects the common pursuit of the public. For example, abundance and luxury respectively marked the pursuits and beauties of the agricultural and industrial eras while simplicity stands for the beauty of the eco-civilization era.

Agricultural civilizations were characterized by low productivity, which made it difficult to obtain sufficient living resources from nature and left the majority in cold and hunger. In such a context, food and clothing was what people strove for. Anything that seemed plump or could remind them of abundance was deemed beautiful. It was because of this extensive poverty that people cherished their limited fortune and unanimously condemned squandering. Frugality, which is the opposite of squandering, was therefore regarded as a virtue and was shared by the entire agricultural society of that time.

Frugality constitutes an important part of simplicity and manifests a simple and unadorned lifestyle. However, what is the bottom line of frugality?

The answer is to ensure survival, which is a basic requirement that must be met. Laozi, founder of Taoism, elaborated on simplicity and summarized “three key principles” to guide life, one of which was frugality (Chen, 1984, p.470). He also said that “Nothing overrides moderation when it comes to governing the public and managing resources” (Chen, 1984, p.465). Both frugality and moderation require people to live a plain life, which was called “simplicity” and “plainness” by Laozi (Chen, 1984, p.449). Given the low productivity of that time, life itself was already a blessing. Laozi made “simplicity” and “plainness” the root of the universe and the law of nature to be followed by everyone in all aspects of their daily lives. A simple life was regarded as beautiful.

In the industrial era, affluence-based luxury was much sought-after. Yet, luxury and affluence are two different notions not to be mixed, because affluence is compatible with frugality. After all, the rich may choose to live a simple life, which is conducive to themselves and society. By contrast, luxury is the opposite of frugality because luxury inevitably involves squandering of wealth and resources.

Evolving from industrial civilizations, eco-civilization features abundant wealth. Yet, it advocates a simple lifestyle. In this regard, it seems like an agricultural civilization, but they are essentially distinctive in many aspects. For example, people in the agricultural era had to live a simple life to accumulate wealth since material wealth was limited in the first place. By contrast, people in the ecological era prefer a simple life because it is necessary to minimize human demands from nature to maintain an ecological balance. People in the agricultural era valued material wealth more than resources because the latter meant nothing to them if they could not be transformed into wealth, while people in the ecological era value resources more than wealth because the former are closely related to nature and ecology and therefore are of greater significance.

In the ecological era, the notion of “lucid waters and lush mountains are valuable resources” is a common theme. It means natural resources can be transformed into wealth. However, these resources are limited and cannot afford to be excessively exploited. Otherwise, they will be quickly exhausted and may give a fatal blow to all mankind. Once the ecological balance is completely broken, doomsday will come, regardless of how much wealth we may own.

According to the concept of simplicity, it is reasonable for people to pursue wealth for their survival, but it is unacceptable to indulge in luxury. Resources are supposed to be utilized carefully to deliver win-win results for man and nature. On the one hand, this is conducive to ecological balance. On the other hand, it benefits everyone because only through resource conservation can sustainable development be achieved. When ecology is integrated with civilization, both will flower splendidly.

Simplicity is in nature a real, benign and beautiful lifestyle. Beauty should always be rooted in and reflected by truth and benevolence.

The very core of simplicity in the ecological era lies in resource conservation, which, however, does not necessarily mean “dullness” or “plainness.” It can be added with colorful and glittering coats or given diversified and ever-changing looks. Ideally, simple beauty is supposed to meet the aesthetic needs of most people and at the same time echo the call of individuals. The beauty of simplicity is open to change and innovation if a basic set of principles is adhered to; protect nature, maintain ecological balance, and create harmony between ecology and civilization.

4. Establishing a system of eco-civilization aesthetics

Eco-civilization is a great cause under construction. It absorbs what has proved to be the best in previous civilizations and discards the negative

parts. This is also executed in the development of one of its ideological forms, i.e. eco-civilization aesthetics.

The development of eco-civilization aesthetics concerns the following major aspects.

First, we should reconfirm the divinity of nature and re-build our worship of nature.

How nature and natural beauty is respected in certain cultures and aesthetic systems indicates the essence of the corresponding civilization. In retrospect, nature was well respected in the era of agriculture, when there were mainly three types of attitudes towards nature. First, nature was worshiped as the Almighty. Second, nature was harnessed for wealth-obtaining purposes, which were achieved via direct acquisition or simulation (i.e. creating an artificial nature). Crop cultivation and domestic poultry breeding fell exactly into the category of simulation. Third, nature appreciation was a popular way to enjoy enchanting scenery and views in the era of agricultural civilizations, when the aesthetic focus was gradually shifted from the people of the prehistoric age to the natural landscape. Under such circumstances, landscape poetry, pastoral poetry and landscape painting dominated the aesthetics of arts and literature in ancient China. As for the West, the Middle Ages featured an agricultural society whose arts and literature were characterized by pastoral poetry, as well as religious themes.

Entering the industrial era, the relationships between man and nature changed significantly, with nature being plundered by high-tech means to fulfill various human ambitions. This disenchanting people with nature and stopped them from worshipping nature. Besides, nature also kept counterattacking and retaliating by increasingly ferocious means, eventually causing people to realize that high technology is not the ultimate solution to human problems. Greek philosopher Protagoras once claimed, “Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not”

(Department of Philosophy, Peking University, 2007, p.154), which was no longer regarded as a maxim in the later stages of industrial civilizations. It is under such circumstances that the ecological era came to the rescue.

The eco-civilization era is to redefine the man-nature relationship, which to some extent requires restoration of nature's divinity and advocacy for nature worship. Seemingly a regression to the agricultural civilizations, such nature worship was essentially different in two aspects. First, the divinity of nature in the eco-civilization era refers to the mysteriousness and limitlessness of nature, instead of its godship. Admittedly, man is the wisest of all creatures and high technology in the industrial era has further disenchanted man with nature and thus improved human's understanding of nature. Even so, the more mankind knows about nature, the humbler they become, because they realize how infinite and mighty nature is. If the industrial civilization was to disenchant humans with nature, the eco-civilization is to re-enchant humans with it. Second, the divinity of nature is mainly interpreted in an ecological sense, for people of this era care about nature primarily for the sake of sustainable development, instead of wealth accumulation.

Consequently, natural beauty stands out in this new form of ecological aesthetics — eco-civilization aesthetics, whose keynote is set to be sublime with diversified forms. When expounding on sublime aesthetics, Kant also took natural beauty as an example and concluded two types of sublimities, one being mathematical and the other being dynamical. These can be completed by ecological sublime, which is rooted in the human awe of nature. In his work on the aesthetics of the natural environment, American scholar Arnold Berleant also stressed that the experience of sublime can grow from the limitlessness and mysteriousness of nature (Berleant, 2006, p.153).

Second, we should re-confirm the humanity of

science & technology and re-build public faith in it.

The industrial civilization has had no lack of criticisms since its very beginning and science & technology has taken the blame most of the time. In the middle stage of the industrial era, instrumental rationality was the primary target of critics, especially those of the Frankfurt School, who held that the hegemony of science & technology resulted in the loss of humanistic rationality. In the later stage of the industrial era, criticisms were directed to ecological deterioration. In fact, both criticisms aimed at the wrong targets. Technology itself is innocent and it is the wrong ideas that should have taken the blame.

Regarding the first type of criticism, there is nothing wrong with science & technology being rational. Science & technology is just a means to serve people. What does wrong is its dominance over people's lives, which is caused due to human greed for wealth and the consequent failure to properly address the relationship between technological rationality and humanistic rationality. The reason why science & technology is placed at such a supreme position is that it satisfies or caters to human greed for wealth, which further leads to the loss of humanist rationality and the alienation of human nature.

As for the second type of criticism, science & technology, high technology in particular, has indeed served as a major means for people to conquer and plunder nature, causing serious damage to the ecological environment. Nevertheless, high technology is just a tool and it is human philosophy that decides how to utilize it. This is not to say that high technology has nothing to do with the man and nature tensions or with ecological deterioration. Yet, high technology is still expected to play a significant role in the development of the eco-civilization.

Science & technology is a double-edged sword. Although its application brought damages to the natural environment in the industrial era, it has also helped humans create unprecedented wealth. From an

aesthetic perspective, the effect of high technology is mainly reflected in the following three aspects.

(1) It makes nature less mysterious and sublime. For one thing, our growing knowledge of nature enables us to protect ourselves from certain disasters; for another, advanced traffic vehicles and information technology make it easier for people to perform outdoor activities. Aldo Leopold (2006), the author of *A Sand County Almanac*, believed that “mechanized outings are at best a milk-and-water affair” (p.153).

(2) It creates a safe and comfort lifestyle, which renders exquisiteness the main aesthetic pursuit of this era.

(3) It downplays the theme of “nostalgia” and turns pastoral aesthetics from the agricultural era into a historic memory or a rare cultural luxury. After all, the rapid development of technology has virtually turned the world into a global village, where villagers are able to send video, graphic and audio information to anybody as they wish. The existing barrier of space vanishes and nostalgia (i.e. being homesick, friendship-sick and lovesick)—an inspiration of traditional aesthetics, is not even worth mentioning now.

It is not fair to hastily conclude these high technology-facilitated changes are “problems,” because they are the aesthetic byproducts of civilization progression. People today have already accepted such aesthetic byproducts while enjoying the convenience brought about by high technology.

In a sense, eco-civilization is a renaissance of the agricultural civilization. However, it is not a simple repetition but an improvement. To some extent, eco-civilization also stands as a criticism of the industrial civilization. It is not a simple negation of the latter, but a critical inheritance. Consequently, the aesthetic standard of eco-civilization features the essence of its two previous civilizations with innovations and developments of its own. Eco-civilization aesthetics can stand out from other existing aesthetics because its single standard is completed by diversified

aesthetic expressions. According to the single standard, the fundamental principle for ecological aesthetics to differentiate the beautiful and the ugly is the symbiosis of ecology and civilization. Diversified expressions foster inclusiveness, freedom and individuality for aesthetic phenomena. The concept of eco-civilization showcases the biggest human determination to protect nature and ensure benign development of humanities’ self-consciousness and freedom-pursuing nature.

Third, we should improve the style of our homeland.

All civilizations are respectively established by different people in their homeland, for which the achievement of a civilization is supposed to benefit that particular group. In turn, different homelands embody the nature and characteristics of different civilizations.

Based on a small-scale farming economy, the agricultural civilization was created primarily by farmers through their arduous work in the field and with other related natural objects. In the farmland, man and nature integrated into a harmonious whole. More specifically, humans then relied on, worshipped and loved nature and thus adopted a great deal of personified metaphors to describe nature and indicate the intimacy between them. For example, nature was often compared to human ancestors, mother, lover or brother. Thus, the defining aesthetic characteristic of the agricultural civilization was a “family-like” bond between man and nature, which was fully depicted by pastorals.

With the industrial civilization motivating most people to leave nature for the cities, the established family-like intimate bond gradually loosened. Being apart from the beautiful countryside featuring green mountains and lucid water, people moved to “concrete jungles.” However, they felt perplexed, rootless and alienated. To express their longings for nature and re-experience that familiar feeling of homeland intimacy in the agricultural era, they had to build a variety of

parks, private gardens, zoos and arboretums in cities.

The eco-civilization aims to re-build a brand-new homeland for humankind. Sharing common characteristics with the homeland of agricultural civilization, it can fully meet people's desire for man-nature harmony. However, the homeland of the ecological era will not be limited to a pure agricultural production context or environment. Instead, it will cover the entire globe and all the celestial phenomena or celestial bodies that have an impact on the earth. This homeland also possesses the advantages of the industrial civilization so that people can continue to live in cities and enjoy the urban convenience brought about by advanced technology. In fact, those cities will be even more pleasant to live in because they not only have more advanced technological support, but

also bear a far more improved ecological environment than that of the industrial era. People will come to an agreement that man and nature must share the same homeland for harmonious co-existence and mutual prosperity. Urban areas will become the largest-ever homeland in human history. As Holmes Rolston III (2005) once said, "As the very etymology of 'ecology' witnesses: the Earth is one's household" (p.26). In this sense, eco-civilization aesthetics should cover the largest-ever scope of homeland aesthetics in human history.

"Happy living and dwelling" is an eternal theme of human aesthetics. When it comes to the era of eco-civilization, however, this theme should be added with a prefix, i.e. "eco-" to form a new concept—"happy eco-living and dwelling."

(Translator: Wu Lingwei; Editor: Jia Fengrong)

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