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Ecological Landscapism on the Horizon: Introducing Wilderness into Human Landscape

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The construction of the contemporary human landscape have basically followed the ‘gardenisation’ paradigm, an ubiquitous approach which seeks to manipulate the environment from the perspective of a man-made order. Garden cities, garden towns, garden communities became universal concepts and slogans for different governments across continents, aiming to build utopias on various scales. Unlike the ‘Hortus Conclusus’, the enclosed gardens derived neither from the Old Testament nor the ‘Chahar Bagh’, the four-fold gardens developed from the Qur’an; contemporary gardens shifted more into the form of parks, the public and open spaces which have not been enclosed with walls or hedges. However, this revolution has not redefined the ontological meaning of garden. Gardens are still the daily living environment built by human hands. The landscape of nature, for instance, vegetation, water, earth, has been generally considered as the major characteristic of gardens. The so called ‘nature’ in the gardenised landscape is not nature itself but, precisely speaking, the quasi-nature that has been aesthetically processed by human principles. It belongs to the realm of the artificial world. In the era of ecological civilisation, this gardenisation paradigm was challenged rethinking of the relationship between human beings and under in the context of an ecological understanding. Is there an opportunity for human landscape to associate with the first nature? Is there a possibility to introduce wilderness into our gardenised living environment? These are the major questions of our present investigation.

1. Rejection of Wilderness

People’s attitude towards nature depends on the way in which they make their living. As a result of the knowledge accumulated by humanity in the course of its development – more than any other species on earth – mankind has not only taken resources lavishly from nature but, at the same time, attached

human significance to the subdivisions of nature, and made them an object for aesthetic activity – that is, transformed nature into landscape. Landscape is the ideology of aesthetic perception or cognition of nature. It varies spontaneously with changes of human beings' niche in the ecosystem and, moreover, is affected by the sociocultural structures that people created.

In China, the ideology of landscape was significantly shaped by four ancient systems of thought.

(1) The ideas of *Junzi* can simply be interpreted as the gentleman or the gentlemanly. Confucianism and Taoism both stand in a tradition of humanising the natural landscape. They attached the compositions of nature, for instance, water, pine and cypress, to the moral features of the gentleman. For example, Confucius (B.C. 551–479) himself said that, 'only when the cold season comes is the point brought home that the pine and the cypress are the last to lose their leaves.'¹ Lao zi (about B.C. 571–471) also has similar expression, 'Highest good is like water. Because water excels in benefiting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be, it comes close to the way.'²

(2) The idea of the hermit – being a hermit is not about how individuals choose a certain way of living, but stands for a traditional culture on the national level in ancient China. People who armed themselves with extraordinary life wisdom often tired of the mundane world. They retreated to the natural environment, became hermits to implement their life philosophy. Nevertheless, there is also another kind of hermit, the utilitarian hermit, who utilised the title of hermit to earn reputations (because hermits were generally considered as wise people and were often recommended to official positions) in order to gain employment by the government. Actually, these people wanted their names to be spread rather than to be isolated from society. So they chose a natural environment where they could attract many visitors and remain connected to the outside world.

(3) The ideas of Zen: Junior Zenists meditate in mountains to look for their own enlightenment because the nature of Zen and the nature of Nature are regarded as homogeneous. However, Zen is not a door of self-salvation. On an upper level, it has an obligation to society. In one of the Zen stories, a student asked his master, 'What's the meaning of being a monk?' The master answered with a metaphor: 'rain fell in spring, then thousands of mountains turned into green.' To 'turn mountains into green' means that the higher

1 Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. D. C. Lau (London, 1979), 100.

2 Lao Zi, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. D. C. Lau (London, 1963), 64.

pursuit of a Zenist is to enlighten ordinary people and, therefore, requires that the student go back into society.

(4) The ideas of pastoral life: for thousands of years, agriculture has been magnified as the foundation of ancient China by the whole nation, emperors and governors, scholars and peasants. Pastoral poetry, which was founded by the great poet Tao Yuanming (A.D. 365–427) in the fifth century and flourished throughout the Middle Age, introduced rural landscape into the realm of aesthetics. Cottage, orchard, crop field, indeed the whole scenery and life-style of countryside became something worth appreciating and praising.

These four ancient thoughts collaboratively expressed the bias for a humanised nature. They are essentially anthems of humanity and civilisation, in which the wilderness plays no part. Those thoughts influenced significantly on the environmental preference for dwelling in and responding to the aesthetics of landscape. Chinese geomancy, that is, Feng Shui studies, all indicate that the wilderness is neither practically nor aesthetically suitable for living. One famous book of Feng Shui studies, *Yang Zhai Zuo Yao* (*Synopsis of Housing*) written in the nineteenth century claimed that wilderness without people living there was thick with Yin Chi, so the house located in the middle of wilderness was generally regarded as a haunted place. The wilderness has been similarly exiled in Chinese landscape paintings. The eleventh century eminent painter and theorist, Guo Xi (about A.D. 1000–1090) said that as the object of a painting, the landscape should better be ‘walk-able’ and ‘view-able’, furthermore, best be ‘stroll-able’ and ‘live-able’.³ From the eyes of painters, the artistic value of landscape lies in its being a humanised place, rather than an untouched one.

All these proofs indicate the most desired environment in eastern culture is the garden. Although numerous writers and artists in the past praised trees and flowers, hills and brooks again and again, they were subconsciously appreciating the domesticated nature that had been manipulated by man’s force.

Western culture has the same tradition of rejecting wilderness. In the *Old Testament*, wilderness has been described as a land full of thorns, a cursed place where Adam and Eve found themselves after they were expelled from the Garden of Eden. In the Middle Ages, gardens were designed as lattice-like layouts, in which water and vegetation were organised in the shape of a cross. As in the words of the *Song of Songs*, ‘A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.’ People appreciate the gardens through the glasses of Christian culture,⁴ and since the Renaissance, when landscape was

3 Guo Si and Yang Bo, *Linquangaozhi* (Beijing, 2010), 19.

4 Christopher Thacker, *The History of Gardens*, (London, 1979), 83.

finally introduced as the object of aesthetic appreciation by landscape paintings and, later, according to the notions of the picturesque, wilderness was still cast away from the door of civilisation. In the eighteenth century, when Daniel Defoe travelled through the Lake District in England, he thought that the landscape was barren and wild, and found nothing aesthetically pleasing but only a terrifyingly inhospitable environment where local people believed it a place haunted by ghosts and goblins.

The American moral philosopher Joseph R. Des Jardins writes: 'The wilderness is often taken to refer to a wild or untamed area', it is 'cruel, harsh and perilous', 'a threat to human survival'.⁵ This viewpoint can be supported by scientific approaches. Starting from a combination of biological and psychological perspectives, the 'Biophilia Hypothesis', which was introduced by a social psychologist Erich Fromm, and was popularised by a biologist Edward O. Wilson, suggests that in the millions of years of mankind's evolution we maintained a close relationship with the natural environment. The outcome is a common preference for natural things; but not all natural things are welcome. The 'Savannah Theory', which was proposed by the ecologist Gordon Orians, proved that this common preference did not include the wild landscape. Orians claimed that searching for suitable habitat was embedded deeply inside humanity's behavioural choice mechanisms. Consequently, people would instinctively find pleasure in the domesticated landscape, rather than the barren wilderness.⁶

In these historic and contemporary contexts, human's rejection of wilderness came from both east and west, and was attributed to both biological and cultural origins. Without the comprehensive and scientific knowledge of the environment, theists abandoned the wilderness because it was considered as a world of supernatural beings; utilitarians abandoned the wilderness because it was functionally useless to them. As a result, no positive value has been attributed to wilderness throughout humanity's prehistory or the mainstream development of civilisation. The rejection of wilderness became, in effect, a genetic burden that impeded the advent of an era of ecological civilisation.

5 Joseph R. Des Jardins, *Environmental Ethics: An Introduction to Environmental Philosophy* (Belmont, 2001; 3rd edn), 157.

6 Simon Bell, *Landscape: Pattern, Perception and Process* (Abingdon, 2012; 2nd edn), 80–9.

2. Rethinking the Significance of Wilderness

During the period of industrialisation, particularly after World War II, science, technology and economy developed at an unprecedented speed, invading the world's wildernesses for the resources of energy and space to maintain the rate of development. Wilderness has been brutally demolished by industrial civilisation. This unrestrained intrusion directly gave birth to the eco-crisis which, in the 1960s, finally prompted the public awareness of the environmental value of wilderness. In 1964, the Wilderness Act was established by the US government and became the first legislation in human history aimed at the preservation of wild landscapes. It led people to rethink the significance and to discover the value of wilderness rather than treating it as a dispensable environmental resource.

What is the significance of wilderness?

(1) Facilitating eco-equilibrium. According to the definition given by the Wilderness Act, a wilderness 'is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.' The Chinese environmental philosopher Ping Ye said, 'The notion of wilderness, in a narrow sense, specifically refers to the wild lands. But generally, it can imply all the terrestrial and non-artificial environment that operates itself under, but not necessary thoroughly under the natural mechanisms.'⁷ Although each definition is subtly different in description, however, there is a key point that does not change: mankind is never the dominator of the place. Without human interference to the dynamic of the wilderness eco-system, balance between the environment and its species would be maintained by natural laws. The eco-equilibrium of the earth has been largely threatened by the industrial over-development of last century. It indeed changed but was still relatively stable because there is still a considerable amount of wilderness that can mend the damage caused by man. The hope is that eco-equilibrium on earth will continue to exist, if some wilderness can survive.

(2) Breeding lives and civilisation. The wilderness offers water, air, sunlight and many other inorganic elements which are essential to the earliest lives on earth. Under the dynamic of 'natural resistance' and 'natural conductance', the rhythms of life and death, every species evolved toward a higher formation.⁸

7 Ping Ye, 'Wilderness in ecological philosophy, *Journal of Philosophy Research* (October 2004), 64–9.

8 Holmes Rolston III, 'Can and Ought We to Follow Nature?', *Environmental Ethics* 1

All lives came from the wilderness, so did mankind. When apes appeared over thirty million years ago and finally evolved into *Homo sapiens*, human civilisation began to reveal itself in the form of what we called history. Through the periods of hunting and fishing civilisation, agricultural civilisation, industrial civilisation and ecological civilisation, each of them is created by the interaction between man and wilderness. The wilderness breeds all forms of human civilisations, even though it has itself been humanised step by step during the progress of history. As Aldo Leopold said, 'Wilderness is the raw material out of which man has hammered the artefact called civilisation.'⁹ The foundation of ecological civilisation is not the synthetic but the spontaneous ecology that consisted of numerous, immense and diverse wildlands. The human—nature relationship in the past stages of civilisation manifested itself as the rejection and manipulation of wilderness. For the future stage, it will be substituted by the conservation and respect of wilderness.

(3) Spiritual and religious entailment. Mankind are emotional as well as rational beings. People would believe that the earth has an actual life like every creature in the world, and they would do this even without any scientific evidence. Moreover, they would believe that nature has a human-like spirit which links to mankind owing to the biological and archaeological fact that man came from the nature. Henry David Thoreau once said, 'The earth I tread on is not a dead, inert mass; it is a body, has a spirit, is organic and fluid to the influence of its spirit.'¹⁰ Eastern culture has a long history of the oneness cosmology which can be simplified as a thought of the unity of heaven and earth or heaven and humanity.¹¹ People, besides Confucianists, Taoists or Zenist, all have worshiped and been awed by the spirit of nature, the spirit of heaven and earth. And the spirit of nature always reveals itself as an imaginary of wilderness. On the one hand, wilderness provides water and foods for life in general, and, on the other, it brings about natural enemies to all creatures. The competitions of life and death have been constantly allegorised as battles between brightness and darkness, and hence have been one of the original debates in religious narratives. The wilderness preservationist and pioneer of environmental philosophy, John Muir, encourages people to revere wilderness

(1979), 7–30.

9 Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* (New York, 1968), 188.

10 Roderick Frazier Nash, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (Madison, 1989), 36–7.

11 Ralph Weber, 'Oneness and particularity in Chinese natural cosmology: the notion *tianrenheyi*', *Asian Philosophy* 15 (2005), 191–205.

as the way they revere god, as in his oft-cited lines he formulates: ‘In God’s wildness lies the hope of the world — the great fresh unblighted, unredeemed wilderness. The galling harness of civilisation drops off, and wounds heal ere we are aware’¹² The wilderness accommodates innumerable and indescribable mysteries which are far beyond knowledge and imagination, and therefore granted it the power of deterrence. This deterrence stimulates individuals’ feelings of divinity and awe while they are experiencing the flow of their lives, the shift between dark and light in wilderness. It makes the wilderness spiritually or religiously valuable to mankind.

(4) Recording history. The forms of life have existed for billions of years while human beings merely appeared in the last millions. Fortunately, the wilderness has written down the history of prehistory period albeit in the language of geology, biology and meteorology. The American ecologist Holmes Rolston III said that the wildlands ‘provide the profoundest historical museum of all, a relic of the way the world was in 99.99 percent of past time.’¹³ Archaeologists and geologists have been devoted to unveiling the missing history of nature through the research of fossils of ancient creatures and layers of soils and rocks. By 2016, with the joining of Western Tien-Shan across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, the number of world natural heritage sites included in the list made by UNESCO has reached 203. From the convention text given by the Organisation since 1972, ‘physical and biological formations’ and ‘geological and physiographical formations’ have been attached with crucial significance in two of their three principles to define the natural heritage sites.¹⁴ All these formations are gifts from the nature which hide in the wilderness. They are the witness of the history of all living beings on earth.

(5) Aesthetic appreciation: the notion of natural heritage, of course, involves awareness of its aesthetic value. The final principle to evaluate a natural heritage site is to assess its ‘outstanding value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.’ The unknowable mysteries of the wilderness bestowed themselves with freedom and infinity and thence granted endless possibilities for aesthetic appreciation. In 1790, Immanuel Kant wrote:

12 John Muir, *John of the Mountains: The Unpublished Journals of John Muir*, ed. Linnie Marsh Wolfe (1938; Madison, 1979), 317.

13 Holmes Rolston III, ‘Valuing Wildlands’, *Environmental Ethics* 7 (1985), 23–48.

14 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Paris, 16 November 1972. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. P2, I. Definition of the Cultural and Natural Heritage, Article 2.

...whereas nature in those regions, extravagant in all its diversity to the point of opulence, subject to no constraint from artificial rules, can nourish his taste permanently. Even bird song, which we cannot bring under any rule of music, seems to contain more freedom and hence to offer more to taste than human song, even when this human song is performed according to all the rules of the art of music, because we tire much sooner of a human song if it is repeated often and for long periods.¹⁵

Kantianism delivered a two-dimensional judgement on the natural beauty: nature possesses the greatest quantity and the best quality of the things which are constitutive of beauty. Therefore, wilderness, as pure Nature, must similarly boast the greatest quantity and the best quality of beauty.

In an aesthetic context, the sublime traditionally holds a superiority over gentle beauty. What kind of environment on earth is the most representative exemplification of sublime? Assuredly the wilderness. Sublime is 'produced by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital forces followed immediately by an outpouring of them that is all the stronger.'¹⁶ In wildlands, the forceful tension between 'natural resistance' and 'natural conductance' urge lives to compete and evolve, and hence stimulate the feeling of sublime.

3. Conceptualising Ecological Landscapism

The notion of 'gardening' has been widely developed into 'landscaping' since the second half of the eighteenth century. No matter how the concept has been built, its 'Artificial Quality' remains unchanged. Wang Juyuan, one of the founding fathers of Chinese landscape architecture claimed that landscaping involved both the knowledge of engineering and art. This early definition directly conducted the engineering approach and artistic approach to design and build the landscape in both academic research and empirical practice. In the era of ecological civilisation, the notion of 'landscaping' should be imbued with a new dimension, a perspective of ecology. The approaches to make a landscape would not only belong to engineering and art, but also ecology. The aims of landscaping would no longer stick to the well-being of mankind, but

15 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (1790; Indianapolis, 1987), 94.

16 *Ibid.*, 98.

to the well-being of all inhabitants in a particular environment. We called this ideology ‘ecological landscapism’.

(1) Ecological civilisation is the soul of ecological landscapism. Gardenised landscape has been considered as the ideal living space for humans due to its environmental supportiveness of survival and living. It possesses a huge variety of natural beings which makes people feel like they are returning to nature itself. This feature should be continually inherited in the era of Ecological civilisation, but additionally, it should be extended to an eco-level.

The distinctions between gardenised landscape (GL) and ecological landscape (EL) can be summarised in three points. First, the environmental service of GL is primarily towards humanity, while that of EL is unbiasedly to all species. Second, GL emphasises stationary aspects, for instance the perceptual and functional significance of landscape, while EL is focused on the dynamic mechanism of the environment. Third, GL regards landscape as a physical space assembled with different combinations of individual beings, while EL aims at a whole interconnected organic system with various degrees of diversity and sustainability.

As the successor of GL, the way to EL could not simply jump over engineering and artistic approaches. But the presence of ecology brings different limitations to these two approaches, for none of them should cross the line of eco-equilibrium. Judging simply by appearance, GL and EL might look identical. Lush trees, blossoming flowers, chirping birds, all these images could be contained in the visual description of both GL and EL. However, behind the similar images are aesthetic significances distinguished by different rules. Under the context of ecological landscapism, the beauty of a landscape is not merely stimulated by pure perceptual experience. It also involves cognitive information about its eco-system. The beauty of EL essentially lies in the equilibrium of its eco-system, rather than just the sceneries, sounds, winds, or smells of nature.

(2) Ethics mediates conflicts in the relationship between humanity and nature: social or religious ethics have played a fundamental part in shaping gardens by developing different physical layouts that are accorded a variety of allegorical meanings. For instance, in early Persian or Islamic formal gardens, the pavilion built in the centre of the garden’s cross-axis has been generally regarded as a display of power. In the Christian world, the cloister of a medieval monastery garden has always symbolised the Virgin Mary or the terrestrial garden where Adam and Eve lived after they have been cast out of Eden. And in Chinese gardens, pine, cypress, and bamboo were extremely highly thought

of because people believed these forms of vegetation epitomised all the noble moral values. In the era of EC, another dimension, the environmental ethics should be encouraged to join with social and religious ethics to co-operatively re-shape the significance and appearance of human landscapes.

‘Eco-justice’ is the core of environmental ethics.¹⁷ It indicates an interspecies justice which considers vegetation, animal and human life as of equal value. The notion of eco-justice carries an obligation for mankind to overcome species discrimination and overturn the radical consequences of human-centrism. Beyond eco-justice, mankind should cultivate an ‘eco-conscience’ that develops respect and sympathy for all natural beings. Peter Singer, an early American moral philosopher claimed, ‘If a being suffers, there can be no moral justification for disregarding that suffering, or refusing to count it equally with the like suffering of any other beings’.¹⁸ To have commiserations on all natural lives is not enough, we should instil in ourselves a feeling of ‘eco-reverence’ of the kind the German philosopher Albert Schweitzer indicated when he appealed not only to sympathy for natural creatures, but a reverence of nature which would be achieved of *Aufhebung* transcending the alienation between mankind and other beings.¹⁹ This ‘eco-conscience’ and ‘eco-reverence’ are the cornerstones of all values of moralities that are founded on environmental ethics.

(3) Introducing wilderness into human landscape: the ‘gardenisation’ paradigm of urbanism has transformed cities into ‘mankind properties’ than the previously shared environment inhabited by other species. If there is a hill in the city, then urbanists will tend to develop it into an attraction. If there is a lake in the city, they will prefer to put a housing or commercial project around it. This paradigm diminishes the wilderness step by step from cities and towns, meanwhile steadily corrupting the spontaneous eco-system. Why do we gardenise every piece of land in urban area? Why do not we introduce wilderness into human landscape rather than remove it from there? Why do not we think through landscapism, instead of urbanism, to create shared habitats rather than private properties?

Both categories of landscape, gardens (or parks) and wildlands are necessary for the appreciation of urban environment. We enjoy garden landscape

17 Li Peichao, ‘On Ecological Justice [Lùn shēng tài zhèng yì]’, *Guangming Daily*, 15 March 2005.

18 Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York, 1990; 2nd edn), 171.

19 Albert Schweitzer, *The Ave of Life [Dù shēng míng de jīng wèi]*, trans. Chen Zehuan (Shanghai, 2006), 160.

because it embodies more the gentle beauty, the beauty of art. We also admire wild landscape because it embodies more the sublime, the aesthetic quality of pure nature. Imagine an urban fabric which multiplies pieces of wildlands interwoven with the sites of houses and skyscrapers! People could live simultaneously in a city and in a wild jungle and on a beach, enjoying both the convenience brought by urban infrastructures and the refreshment produced by breath and a scene of wilderness. What a magnificent landscape it would be!

(4) Conserving landscape identities: the conservation of landscape identities is never a merely cultural movement, it also contains ecological meanings. Landscape architects and urban designers advocate the utilisation of local species and natural terrains to maintain the sense of place on the one hand, and sustain the native eco-system on the other. Exotic species which are considered as economically, functionally or aesthetically meaningful have been migrated by man since the Agricultural Civilisation. Some of them became invasive or dominative species due to the lack of natural enemies and therefore disturbed the food chain and the equilibrium of local eco-system. This eco-crisis endangered landscape identities and even human lives or societies. In the context of eco-justice, environmental engineering, planning and design should take the existing ecosystem into account to avoid the violation of the rights of any inhabitants.

4. Separational Harmony and Boundary Philosophy

Empirically, how to harmonise gardens and wildlands in a human landscape since they respectively belong to the two poles of nature? The answer is to keep the boundaries of each, and create a separational harmony.

The idea of harmony has had two forms in the ancient oriental wisdom; we can call them Integrational Harmony and Separational Harmony.

(1) Integrational harmony means the unification of individual beings under a certain force. *Zuo Zhuan*, one of the Confucian classics which written in the fifth century B.C. provided a brilliant account for the integrational harmony. It says that soup is the best metaphor to harmony. Under the force of fire and water, salt, fish, vegetable and any individual ingredients are unified as soup, and eventually, are melted into only one taste, which is the harmony.²⁰

20 See Jiang Jichi (ed.), *Zuo Zhuan [Zu ǒ zhuan]* (Changsha, 2006), 288.

In Chinese ancient philosophy, harmony was the consequence of Yin-Yang reciprocal dynamic. When this dynamic is reflected in the relationship between humans and the natural world, it is embodied as ‘Tian ren he yi’, the oneness cosmology that we have discussed in the second part of this essay. In the *Book of Changes*, people harmonise themselves with nature (or with heaven and earth) by synchronising their principles of action and thought with the laws of nature.²¹ An ancient philosopher and politician Guan Zi (About B.C. 723–645) noted that the beauty of nature came after the unity of heaven and humanity.²² A contemporary Neo-Confucianist Fang Dongmei summarised that in the eyes of most Chinese ancient philosophers, the relationship between man and nature were always flawlessly harmonious.²³

(2) We can speak about Separational harmony when natural beings, although interconnected with each other to some extent, as the Butterfly Effect suggests, keep a relative independence in the experiential world, so that we perceive the world in its diverseness, since it consists of a multitude of individual species and individual life beings. This separational harmony has also been discovered and developed in Chinese philosophy. Confucianism claimed that the political method to govern the country was to develop and implement the systems of Li (*lǐ*) and Yue (*yuè*). Li means rites, includes both etiquettes and religious rituals. In the system of Li, people followed different tiers of rites based on their social identities. Yue means music. Chinese philosophers and politicians regard music as a discipline of both politics and the arts because every citizen across different tiers of classes could all enjoy and be united by the very same kind of music. Therefore, like the book *Yue Ji* once said, ‘Yue implies integration while Li indicates separation.’²⁴ When the separational harmony reflects on the relationship between human beings and the natural world, it manifests itself as the notion of ‘Tian ren xiang fen’, the opposite theory of the oneness cosmology. The book *Xun Zi*, which is one of the most representative works of this theory, said that humanity and nature were separational, just as heaven and earth were dissociated. They could not be confused as one because each of them have different roles to play in the universe.²⁵

21 See *The Book of Changes*, chapter of Wenyan Zhuan.

22 See Fang Xuanling, Liu Ji (annot.), Liu Xiaoyi (ed.), *Guan Zi* (Shanghai, 2015), 300.

23 Fang Dongmei, *Philosophy Outline of Chinese Life [Zhōng guó rén shēng zǎhé xué gài yào]* (Taiwan, 1970), 37.

24 See Wang Wenjing (annot.), *Annotation and Explanation of Record of Rites [Lǐ jì yì jiě]* (Beijing, 2001), 531.

25 See Xun Zi, *Xun Zi*, annot. Sun Anbang, Ma Yinhu (Taiyuan, 2003), 188.

The essential distinction between Integrational Harmony and Separational Harmony is that the former is more idealistic and stresses on spiritual significance, while the latter is more pragmatic and emphasises empirical achievements.

Separational harmony is a specific expression of eco-equilibrium from the perspective of inter-species relationships. Although the everyday world is filled with races between life and death, preys and predators, natural laws have created natural enemies for each species to guarantee that no one could wipe out the others. The existence of natural enemies maintains the diversity of lives and facilitates eco-equilibrium, as each species is maintaining its self-independence while continuing to relate to others. That is the very manifestation of the phenomenological meaning of separational harmony. However, with the accomplishments of human civilisation, especially in science and technology, the natural enemies for human beings have become more ambiguous than in the earlier epochs of evolution and civilisation. If mankind steps over the rules that govern the balance produced by natural enemies, eco-equilibrium will collapse and with it will end this interspecies separational harmony.

Integrational harmony remains the purest idealistic pursuit because at the current stage of human civilisation it is impossible to avoid contradictions with the natural world. Neither ideological schemes nor pragmatic technics are properly qualified to produce the requirements of EC. Separational harmony is therefore the alternative which can provide a solution to the contemporary relationship of humanity and nature. If we cannot integrate the different aims of economy and politics, ethics and aesthetics, together with ecology, at least we could introduce the eco-world into human society while, at the same time, restricting the impact of human civilisation and maintaining its distance from the eco-world. Culture and nature co-exist in a human landscape but the boundaries need to be preserved. This ‘boundary philosophy’ offers an initial strategy to step into the early stages of EC. Before any development of landscape architecture, we have to set up or even to legislate boundaries for ecology, covering qualitative and quantitative, spatial and temporal issues. More specifically, we should introduce a certain number and quality of wildlands into our cities and towns, committing not only a certain area to such developments but ensuring that they last for a certain span of time. Wildscape and cityscape should be woven together but simultaneously should retain their individual independence in the fabric of human landscape. This hypothetical fabric is the scene of separational harmony. On the one hand, it would be of benefit to urban ecology, and, on the other, formulate an unprecedented

aesthetic quality in this evolutionary formation of the human landscape. The emphasis on the boundaries between civilisation and ecology might be regarded as an exacerbation of the process of alienation between humanity and the natural world but, on the other hand, it is essential if there is to be a truce between humanity and nature since our current epistemology has failed to reconcile the conflict between civilisation and ecology. As was the intention of the ancient Chinese rites system, the classification of people is only a strategic policy to avoid social conflicts and achieve internal stability.

In well-developed metropolitan areas, people maintain the tradition of introducing a 'second nature' into the human landscape: Regent's Park and Hyde Park in central London, Central Park in New York, Villa Doria Pamphili in Rome, the Luxembourg Garden in Paris, Jingshan Park in Beijing, Ueno Park in Tokyo – all these gardenised landscapes offer people and other inhabiting species a certain extent of eco-system services, but still there is neither eco-justice for other life beings nor for the environment itself. These pieces of second nature need to be constantly 'maintained' in order to satisfy the aesthetic or utilitarian needs for human. The first nature, the wilderness is still being blocked out of the everyday horizon, 'well-preserved' in the anti-human landscape which we call 'national parks'. Note how ironic is that even after we banished the wilderness from our territory, we still name it as a 'park'.

Situations get worse in those regions which are densely populated and now experiencing an increasingly intensive urbanisation progress. For instance, Wuhan, a city situated along the Yangtze river in China, was once called the Lake City because it holds more than a hundred wild lakes. Unfortunately, under the impulse of urbanization, dozens of lovely lakes have been demolished and re-planned for commercial, industrial or residential land use, so that today there are only twenty or so large lakes left, which have proved, as yet, too difficult to demolish. This brutal and irreversible consequence of urbanisation was triggered by the urban environmental crisis, but it effectively erased the landscape identity of this city.

Ecological civilisation can be regarded as a rejection of linear conceptions of human history, in order to allow different 'stages' of history to intersect with one another. In an ecological civilisation, ideologies and actions would manifest the evolution of this new era, while avoiding tipping over into idealistic fantasy. Instead of following the path of aggressive preservationists, we propose a strategic theory, ecological landscapism, which would aim to naturalise the human landscape and facilitate its ecoequilibrium by introducing wilderness into cities. One might say, from a common sense perspective, that

wilderness would cease to exist once it has become a part of the everyday life of cities and, thus, that a wilderness in a city is not a wilderness anymore. However, the perspective of ecological landscapism defies such common sense. Wildscape and cityscape could achieve a non-aggression balance in which each respected the boundaries of the other. They could coexist in the form of a separational harmony.

Throughout the time from the Stone Age to Industrialisation, human history has been a war between mankind and the wilderness, but that would change with the advent of ecological civilisation. As environmental issues have risen in public concern, people have become desperate address so-called ecology issues without even pondering the sophisticated interrelationship between nature and culture. By developing the notion of ecological landscapism, we hope to provide an ideological foundation for engineering, planning and design. It would be unfortunate if we disregarded rewilding as a possible approach to urbanisation, because cities and towns originally came from 'first nature'. It may take centuries, or even millenniums, to generate the sustainable coexistence of nature and culture but now, at least, it is on the horizon.

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