

# The Theoretical Construction, Core Characteristics and Global Significance of Contemporary Chinese Meishengology

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Traditional aesthetics defines beauty as the outcome of human perceptual cognition. In contrast, contemporary Chinese Meishengology holds that beauty is a sensible reality, and that the world and humanity possess the essential law and ultimate purpose of evolving toward beauty. Professor Yuan Dingsheng, a contemporary Chinese scholar, established contemporary Meishengology through his observations of heaven, earth, and history, as well as his in-depth theoretical research in ecological aesthetics. Rooted in ancient Chinese philosophical thought, Meishengology realizes the sublimation from the noumenon of “Shengsheng” (eternal engendering)—based on Dao and Qi—to the noumenon of “Meisheng” (beauty-generation). It embodies the contemporary inquiry of Meisheng (beauty-generation) theory into metaphysics. Meishengology investigates how beauty emerges, generates, and grows within the Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field). It clarifies the Meisheng (beauty-generation) essence of the world and humanity as a transcendent existence characterized by greenness, vitality, rhythmic profundity, and endurance. It explores the law, purpose, and value of the world and humanity evolving toward beauty, and outlines the cosmic Meisheng (beauty-generation) schema in which the Dao of holistic generation circulates throughout the world to form the Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field). Meishengology has constructed an independent knowledge system with Chinese indigenous characteristics and achieved a systematic upgrade of ecological aesthetics theory. Its logical speculation and essential connotation possess a global character. Chinese Meishengology will eventually converge with world aesthetics, and jointly build a global community of beauty-generation and a civilization of beauty-generation.

*Keywords:* Meisheng (beauty-generation), Meishengology (beauty-generation studies), Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field), green ascending & rhythmic growth

## Introduction

Since Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten founded the discipline of aesthetics in 1750, aesthetics (as the science of sensation and sensibility) has established its disciplinary attribute as a form of epistemology. Aesthetics became the science that studies human sensible cognition, through which the perfect meaning associated with the aesthetic object is grasped by quasi-reason. Beauty thus became the object of subjective perception, cognition, and creation. Contemporary Chinese subjective aesthetics, such as practical aesthetics and life aesthetics, have

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further established the fundamental logic that “humans create beauty”. For this reason, mainstream aesthetics has long been equivalent to aesthetic science.

With the rise and development of holistic aesthetics worldwide—including phenomenological aesthetics, existential aesthetics, and ecological aesthetics—aesthetics is no longer confined to aesthetic science. Beauty has regained its identity as sensible reality and returned to its core value as the unity of the truth of coupled being (regularity) and the goodness of morality (purpose). Meisheng (beauty-generation) refers to the essence, law, and purpose by which the world and humanity evolve toward beauty. Meishengology is precisely the new theory concerning the green, living, rhythmic, and enduring existence of the world and humanity. Contemporary Chinese Meishengology represents exactly the theoretical upgrading and paradigm renewal of ecological aesthetics and even fundamental aesthetics.

### **Contemporary Chinese Meishengology Is Rooted in Ancient Philosophical Thought**

According to Meishengology, Meisheng (beauty-generation) constitutes the essence of the sustainable, vibrant, and rhythmically enduring existence of the world and humanity. Beauty, as a sensible reality within the world, necessarily possesses its metaphysical ontological ground.

Laozi, a pre-Qin philosopher in China, wrote in *Tao Te Ching*:

There was something formless and complete,  
Born before heaven and earth.  
Silent and boundless,  
It stands alone and never changes,  
Revolving endlessly without fatigue.  
It may be regarded as the Mother of all things under heaven.

The essential nature of the Dao as that which generates all things determines its attribute of cyclic recurrence and eternal inexhaustibility, as well as its ultimate value as the origin of the cosmos. In *The Book of Changes*, it is stated that “The endless production of life is called Change”. This emphasizes that the cosmic noumenon contains the immanent motive force for the generation of life. This also establishes the noumenon of “Shengsheng” (eternal engendering) in ancient ecological philosophy, namely that all living beings themselves are the ceaselessly creative results of the noumenon of Shengsheng. The noumenon of “Shengsheng” (eternal engendering) has evolved into the noumenon of “Meisheng” (beauty-generation) in the contemporary era, meaning that all “generation” implicitly contains the regularity and purposiveness of beauty, and all “beauty” possesses ecological and green characteristics. Beauty-generation not only develops the noumenon of ancient ecological philosophy but also expands the vision and territory of contemporary aesthetics as a discipline. In the course of the world evolving toward humanity and beauty, beauty-generation moves toward a bright, sacred, and lofty cosmic field of beauty-generation.

As the British poet William Blake wrote: “To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower”. This is precisely since the noumenon of Meisheng (beauty-generation) endows the world with the fundamental purpose and core motive of evolving toward beauty. As the ultimate noumenon unifying beauty and life and the original ground of the world, the noumenon of Meisheng (beauty-generation) endows all things with the immanent purpose and generative motive to evolve toward beauty, investing the entire world with an axiological orientation toward beauty and a creative nature of life at the ontological level. On this basis, the world advances toward the Meisheng (beauty-generation) creation that reaches the boundless and penetrates the tiniest details.

Therefore, the noumenon of Meisheng (beauty-generation) inherits the metaphysical philosophical inquiry into beauty, possessing eternal generativity, objective necessity, and universal transcendence.

### **The Establishment and Theoretical Evolution of Contemporary Meishengology**

From its very inception, Chinese ecological aesthetics was not a simple graft of aesthetics and ecology, but a two-way coupling between the ecologization of aesthetics and the aestheticization of ecology. In essence, it represents the ecophilosophical turn of aesthetics—a leap from subjective aesthetics and scientized aesthetics to ecological aesthetics grounded in a holistic ecological worldview. Meishengology is precisely the upgraded form and advanced expression of this theoretical lineage.

#### **Latent Growth: The Germination of Contemporary Chinese Meisheng (Beauty-Generation) Thought (2000-2013)**

Chinese ecological aesthetics emerged in the 1990s and took initial shape around 2000. Zeng Yongcheng advocated the “ecologization of aesthetics itself”; Lu Shuyuan put forward the “tripartite division of ecology”; and Yuan Dingsheng examined human aesthetic activities within an ecological field through aesthetic ecology. All three scholars emphasized the theoretical consciousness of the ecologization of aesthetics.

Since the 1990s, Yuan Dingsheng has studied the aesthetics of Guilin’s landscape and deepened the theory of the aesthetic field using systematic methodologies, laying the foundation for the theoretical construction of ecological aesthetics and Meishengology. In 2001, in his work “Three Paradigms of Human Aesthetics”, he first proposed the concepts of holistic-generation and beauty-generation, abstracting the evolutionary law of the history of human aesthetics into the serial ecological paradigm: Beauty of Dependent Generation—Beauty of Competitive Generation—Beauty of Holistic Generation. He also nurtured the grand ambition of exploring the laws of beauty-generation in the world.

#### **Transformation: The Systematic Construction of the Theory of Meisheng (Beauty-Generation) (2013-2020)**

After more than 10 years of accumulation in the paradigm of symbiosis, Chinese ecological aesthetics condensed the quality of holistic generation and the core of beauty-generation. In 2013, Professor Yuan Dingsheng published *Aesthetics of Holistic Generation*, marking the maturity of his theory of Meisheng (beauty-generation). Based on the ecological holism as its philosophical foundation, the book constructed the theoretical model of the networked hypercycle of the natural Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field) within the sphere of Meisheng (beauty-generation) civilization. Professor Yuan clarified the connotation of Meisheng (beauty-generation):

Meisheng (beauty-generation) is formed in the identity of aesthetics and ecology. It is the coupled generation of the ecological and aesthetic dimensions of life, referring to life and ecology that greenly manifest beauty, generate beauty, appreciate beauty, and create beauty in the whole process and all domains. (2013, p. 60)

As the meta-category of aesthetics of holistic generation, the beauty-generation field represents the culmination and transformed form of the aesthetic field and the ecological aesthetic field, realizing the ontologization, valorization, and teleologization of aesthetic ecology. Starting from the holistic generation of the world, and through green reading, ecological criticism, beauty-generation studies, and ecological writing, it spirals upward to the supreme state of natural holistic generation, ultimately forming the naturally evolving sphere of Meisheng (beauty-generation) civilization.

In 2017, Professor Yuan Dingsheng’s monograph *Aesthetics of Natural Generation* took the globalized

Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field) as its logical starting point and unfolded eight historical forms of Meisheng (beauty-generation): the Naturally Perfected Beauty-Generation Field, Heaven-Created Beauty-Generation Field, Divinely Created Beauty-Generation Field, Imitative Tian Beauty-Generation Field, Controlling Tian Beauty-Generation Field, Harmonizing Tian Beauty-Generation Field, Global Beauty-Generation Field, and Natural Beauty-Generation Field. This formed a theoretical domain where the history of Meisheng (beauty-generation) is identical to the history of nature. The natural circular evolution of holistic generation and Meisheng (beauty-generation) indicates the path toward the naturalization of aesthetic ecology, ultimately transforming the doctrine of Meisheng (beauty-generation) into the theory of Meisheng (beauty-generation) and even Meishengology.

### **Establishing an Independent School: The Systematic Perfection of Meishengology (2021-Present)**

In 2021, Professor Yuan Dingsheng published *Meishengology: The Meta-Theory of Ecological Aesthetics*, marking the maturity of the independent knowledge system of indigenous Chinese Meishengology. Professor Yuan pointed out: Beauty-generation is the supreme purpose of life. Taking cosmic self-spinning generation as the general model, the book derives the natural sound Meisheng (beauty-generation) field as its logical origin, clarifying the origin, fundament, and noumenon of Meisheng (beauty-generation). The double helix structure of holistic generation and beauty-generation couples into aesthetic ecology, serially generating the aesthetic field, the Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field), and the natural Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field). The Meisheng (beauty-generation) world and Meisheng (beauty-generation) activities evolve toward the natural homeland and natural habitation, spirally ascending the sphere of Meisheng (beauty-generation) civilization in their mutual development, and reaching the actuality, oughtness, and transcendence of Meishengology.

Developed serially from the doctrine of Meisheng (beauty-generation) to the theory of Meisheng (beauty-generation), Meishengology has broken through traditional subjective aesthetics and scientized ecological aesthetics, expanding its research vision to the philosophy of holistic-generation and even the philosophy of Meisheng (beauty-generation) noumenon. Exploring the purpose, law, and value of beauty in the holistic existence of the system from a cosmological perspective, Meishengology aims to investigate the integral existential essence of the world and humanity as green, living, rhythmically profound and enduring. Professor Yuan Dingsheng is currently writing *The Category Pedigree of Meishengology*, which will further promote the theoretical maturity and categorical development of Meishengology.

### **Core Characteristics of Contemporary Chinese Meishengology**

Meishengology is rooted in the spirit of Chinese classical philosophy and reflects the contemporary ecophilosophical development. It has realized the creative sublimation and transformation of Chinese aesthetics through three core characteristics:

First, the integration of indigeneity and globality. Meishengology inherits and integrates all positive thoughts in the history of aesthetics. It bears distinct Chinese cultural genes and responds to the inquiry into the noumenon of beauty since ancient Greece. As the self-manifestation of cosmic truth and natural law in the field of aesthetics in the era of ecological civilization, it will eventually converge with world aesthetics.

Second, the synchronization of original creation and meta-theorization. Professor Yuan Dingsheng independently created a series of categories: dependent-generation, competitive-generation, holistic-generation, beauty-generation, self-spinning generation, etc. Among them, self-spinning generation is the meta-Dao of the

cosmic Meisheng-field (beauty-generation field); holistic generation is “the transcendent ecology of the circular evolution of one and the infinite”, which is the supreme law of the world; Meisheng (beauty-generation) is the ultimate law and highest purpose of all life and ecology. These categories historically represent the developmental law of human aesthetics, logically unfold the serial generation of ecology, support the theoretical system evolving from ecological aesthetics to Meishengology, and realize the circular advancement and meta-theoretical construction of the theoretical form.

Third, the identity of theory and method. Chinese Meishengology advances the construction of basic theory and meta-disciplinary research synchronously. It sublates traditional dialectics into network ecological dialectics with holistic generation, hypercycle, and self-spinning generation as the core. It constructs a five-in-one theoretical and methodological system of logic, history, application, meta-discipline, and comparative study.

### **Convergence Between Contemporary Chinese Meishengology and Western Aesthetics and Its Global Significance**

From “beauty lies in the harmony of numbers” in ancient Greece to “beauty lies in the one” in the Middle Ages, Western aesthetics explored the objectivity of beauty in natural divinity. After the Renaissance, it turned to humanism, with a split between sensibility and rationality. In modern times, it moved toward beauty-generation ontology in Immanuel Kant’s teleology of nature. Phenomenological aesthetics, existential aesthetics, system theory, process theory, etc., all provide theoretical resources for Meishengology.

The research of Chinese scholar Professor Zeng Yongcheng has particularly promoted the convergence between Chinese Meishengology and Western aesthetics. Starting from relational and systematic research, through “theory of resonance” and “theory of generation”, with “rhythmic resonance” as the core category, he established the humanistic ecological aesthetics based on Marxist practical anthropology. After his retirement in 2007, he traced the Western thoughts of beauty-generation in philosophers such as John Dewey, Alfred North Whitehead, and Immanuel Kant. In 2025, he published his collected works *Towards Meisheng (Beauty-Generation) Ontology: The Paradigm Evolution of Humanistic Ecological Aesthetics*, which realized the paradigmatic advancement of humanistic ecological aesthetics and promoted the equal dialogue between Chinese Meishengology and world aesthetics. Meishengology is not only a contemporary upgraded form of Chinese aesthetics but also a future developmental trend of world aesthetics.

### **Conclusion**

Meishengology deepens the meta-theoretical construction of ecological aesthetics and composes a new theoretical chapter for contemporary aesthetics. Based on traditional Chinese ecological wisdom, Chinese scholars such as Professor Yuan Dingsheng have uncovered the universal ecological laws of the world, and Meishengology represents an in-depth philosophical inquiry into this ultimate law. It has elevated the academic paradigm of the basic theory of contemporary Chinese aesthetics and provides an important reference for constructing an aesthetic discourse system with Chinese characteristics. At the same time, different from phenomenological ecological aesthetics in Continental Europe and analytic environmental aesthetics in Britain and America, Meishengology demonstrates the academic self-consciousness of Chinese aesthetics in shifting from “following others” to “speaking for itself”, and contributes Chinese discourse and knowledge system to the development of world aesthetics. Meishengology provides a new theoretical paradigm for the construction of a global community of Meisheng (beauty-generation) and Meisheng (beauty-generation) civilization in the future,

shining with the light of Eastern wisdom in the landscape of world aesthetics.

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