**The Multi-Volume History of China’s Eco-Environmental Evolution**

The multi-volume History of China’s Eco-Environmental Evolution, edited by Professor Wang Lihua of Nankai University, adopts a comprehensive and regionally divided editorial framework. The first volume, General Discourse, addresses theoretical and conceptual issues in environmental history, laying a foundational framework for the entire series. In addition, the work is divided into regional volumes—Southern China, Northern China, and Northwest and Qinghai-Tibet—based on widely recognized geographic divisions within academic circles. This editorial approach aims to construct a new narrative structure that more fully illustrates the historical evolution of China’s ecological environment and its interconnectedness with global environmental history.

The General Discourse volume provides an in-depth exploration of key theoretical issues in Chinese environmental history research. It draws upon contemporary practices in natural conservation and eco-civilization construction in China to identify the core nature and underlying causes of environmental challenges and ecological crises. By extracting relevant concepts from traditional Chinese ideas about nature, environmental thought, life consciousness, and ecological culture, while also incorporating insights from world environmental history, historical geography, modern ecology, environmental science, and environmental ethics, this volume endeavors to articulate an indigenous Chinese school of environmental historiography—one grounded in distinctive Chinese perspectives, theories, and discourses.

The Northern China volume focuses specifically on the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, the cradle of early state formation and agricultural civilization in ancient China. This region was the birthplace of fundamental patterns of human-nature interaction during traditional eras and witnessed some of the earliest manifestations of intense environmental stress and conflict. As the political center for much of Chinese history, the region exerted profound influence not only on internal transformations in population, economy, resources, and environment, but also on massive flows of material and energy between itself and other regions or external civilizations. These dynamics have had significant implications for economic, social, cultural, and ecological history, offering valuable explanatory frameworks for many major historical phenomena.

The Southern China volume centers on five core themes: (1) the historical interweaving of civilizational expansion and environmental change; (2) the mutual shaping of water-soil systems and regional societies; (3) the holistic and differentiated interactions between different ethnic groups and the natural world; (4) the spatiotemporal diversity and long-term ecological consequences of resource exploitation and environmental transformation; and (5) the impact of environmental threats and disasters on socio-cultural conditions and civilizational trajectories. Through extensive case studies across periods, localities, domains, and layers, the volume seeks to illuminate the purposes, methods, driving mechanisms, and historical processes through which ancient southern communities continuously adapted to and co-evolved with their natural environments.

The Northwest and Qinghai-Tibet volume investigates the historical development and transformation of dominant modes of human-environment interaction within the complex geographical and ecological settings of the northwest and Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, particularly in relation to the diverse ethnic societies inhabiting these areas. A central focus lies on the ecological linkages formed via the Silk Road, including exchanges of flora and fauna, flows of materials and energy, and the diffusion of technologies and tools between these regions, the Central Plains, and other global civilizations. By integrating the life stories, environmental experiences, and ecological cultures of numerous ancient ethnic groups across vast territories into the broader narrative of Chinese environmental history, this volume significantly enriches the intellectual and conceptual foundation of China's environmental historiography.