

The Scenery Containing Meditation and Redemption of Life

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There is a saying "Renewing something day by day is great virtue." In the Book of Changes (I-Ching), we say it is beautiful when one changes oneself all the way into the new. Especially for an artist, such changes seem even sublime, and the works of art produced in this process lead us to state of happiness. It doesn't mean a superficial valuation of works as good or not, but the power of life an artist constantly shows through works.

To an artist, essential energy consists of continuation and changes. In terms of an Oriental concept of art, it means law and change at the same time as well as universality and individuality in contemporary art. It creates relationships between past and present, the world and oneself, inside and outside. The theme of the artist involving these two elements is 'road.' The road has three meanings: a religious meaning such as 'road of a seeker of truth;' a journey of life on the 'road of life;' and natural scenery uphill path. In this way her works are made up of these three elements and are always focused on natural scenery. The works vary only according to what color she uses by putting two different elements on the basic natural scenery. At the first solo exhibition, the road of nature was compared to a journey of life. What she tried to show was, most of all, the trace of work process. As it were, her works are "the process itself forming the uncertain road of life through the repeated action of erasing a great number of brush touches, leaving the trace of road on the empty ground, drawing something and again removing it (99 SEAF artists note)." The off-crossed journey of life was represented with the repetition of various actions, and the results came to be her works. The repeated lines by brushing touches took the form and shape of nature. However, since the actions of the artist came from what she had concretely experienced in the past, the expressions corresponding to it were emotional and irregular.

At this exhibition, all actions are condensed to one. That is life itself. Here she poses a question of redemption and meditation on life. 'Meditation' is represented in large series works, while redemption' is shown individually in many small-sized works or series works. At first glance they look different, but they all indicate her existence and conflicts in the present. They can be classified into two by color tones one is 'black

pictures' and the other is 'light pictures.'

Black pictures imply the depth of life and meditation, not something nihilistic or pessimistic, and generate a kind of subtle aura (Lao-tzu). At the previous exhibition, the road of life was somewhat ambiguous and split, but now it is turned to the border of nature. The artist's self-reflection on life is represented as the border of nature. In her recent works we can find depth and emotion. The usual things that we meet easily around us appear as towns, roads, hills, or mountains. These are usual matters, but for that reason they are meaningful. They cannot be ignored because of their universality, for these elements play a role of strongly binding the past impression that the artist got through the lapse of time. Here we can also find her efforts to unify the universality of natural matters and the artist's subjectivity. The artist draws the minimum form of nature by simplifying, transforming, and magnifying the object of nature, while she tries to throw a notion of the road of the artist's life on nature. That's why she sometimes uses a gunny bag to symbolize both the earth and life as an object with an organic form and yellow straight lines, which help turn the road of life into the border of nature. Life is made up of numerous experiences that

accompany emotion. Therefore life has signs indicating numerous emotions. Emotion is at first concrete and individual but the mood of accumulated emotion in life is universal and philosophical. As a result, the artist has a strong love of traditional use of ink, for she thinks it is the only medium to express the mood of life. She pours accumulated and numerous personal emotions with the lapse of time on composition by repeatedly brushing red ink which is said to contain five colors, so to speak. These are actually not individual colors, but elements of a single color. As the emotion repeats itself more and more, it becomes richer and deeper. It is gradually sublimated as a sign of general life beyond personal or individual emotion. The artist seems to be sure that traditional mountain and river paintings have new changes of the very plastic traits.

'Light pictures' indicate another existence of the artist the theme of which is religious redemption and conversion. However, it is different from the meditation on life represented in black pictures.' How could the different elements, meditation and redemption, be consistent to an artist? It perhaps comes from the Oriental balance of emotional life and personal religion. These works have been put on exhibition since 99 SEAF, she says I take as a theme my road hanging around toward absolute value. (99 SEAF artist's note). That exhibition showed several small works and I couldn't find out how meaningful it was. At this exhibition, as the previously mentioned 'black pictures' are put together the meaning becomes more clear. The artist says these works make her psychologically comfortable because they are connected with religious faith. The works are as a whole emphasized on composition of geometric forms with gunny bags and Korean paper Hanji. This is an aesthetic expression of a silent God having no actual tension, and bright atmosphere symbolizes the light of Christianity. Light-colored ink touches are so soft that they give human emotion to the composition, and mixed mediums, especially pencil, charcoal, and ink are used to draw lines or dapples in the works. She makes the best use of these mediums to symbolize her own road of life subconsciously formed. In other words, it could be said that she on the whole represents her comfort received from God. However, when these works are displayed side by side according to the time they are made, interesting changes are created. These drawing works are at first found lack of absolute plastic traits, but gradually strong lines and bold technique are used on the composition. She seems to come to have the confidence to plastically draw pictures. It is thought that such confidence comes from the process to seek her own identity through meditation on life and from the development of 'black pictures.'

The artist herself says she began to seek for her identity in preparing for this exhibition. She says this with confidence about future works. The reason I mentioned in the beginning "great virtue" (I-Ching) is that I saw her true works that continuously made new changes. One thing that I hope is the severity of 'black pictures' and psychological comfort will be put together, and developed to the whole sublimation.