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An Application of the Interpretive Social Science to the Landscape*:
— A Paradigm for Landscape Design —

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景觀解釋을 위한 解釋的 社會科學 槪念의 應用 :
— 造景設計를 위한 槪念的 틀 —

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槪　要

最近 人文社會科學은 地域的 特殊性과 文化的 背景(context)를 無視하고 法則과 體系(system)을 追求하는 自然科學의 槪念을 人間社會에 適用하려는 여러 理論들이 人間의 根本的인 問題를 解決하는데 限界가 있음을 指摘하고 있다. 이러한 法則主義에 의한 汎人間的인 解釋보다는 地域的이고 文化的 狀況下에서 人間社會의 問題를 理解하려는 傾向이 지금까지 行態(behavior)나 社會構造(social structure system)의 理解를 통해 人間社會를 分析하고 있다. 그 方法論으로는 全體의 脈絡(context)이나 주변의 聯關關係를 通해 意味를 理解하는 冊(text)의 解釋(interpretation)의 比喩를 그 틀(paradigm)로 하고 있다. 이러한 傾向은 藝術과 美의 問題도 같은 體系(system)속에서 理解하여 現代의 傳統, 文化와 大衆으로 부터 分離된 藝術과 美로 부터 傳統, 文化, 個人과 生活이 共鳴할 수 있는 本來의 藝術과 美를 찾으려 한다.

本 硏究는 이러한 社會文化 理論의 槪念을 分析하고 그 原理와 理論의 側面에서 景觀(landscape)을 解釋하고 景觀의 意味(美를 포함한)體系(meaning system)을 分析하여 設計言語(design language)를 찾아내며 이를 設計에 應用할 수 있게 하는 基本的 틀(paradigm)을 提示하고자 한다.

1. Introduction

Across the human sciences there has been reassessment of dominant ideas, extending to art, landscape architecture, architecture, philosophy, and literature(Marcus 1986). In the humanities and social sciences, this present condition is often characterized as postmodernism. Lyotard

characterizes the postmodern as incredulity to-ward metanarratives'(Lyotard, 1984)[1], which pre-viously legitimated the rules of science. He says postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differ-ences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable'(p.xxv). Also, he reports about the Postmodern condition that the authority of 'grand theory'styles seems suspended for the mo-ment in favor of a close consideration of such issues as contextuality, the meaning of social life to those who enact it, and the explanation of ex-ceptions and indeterminants rather than regular-ities in phenomena observed.

Geertz[2] also characterized the human sciences as having turned away from a laws and instances ideal of explanation toward a cases and inter-pretations one(Geertz 1983). This trend tries to "displace this science of society by the social observers situated within linguistics, structural-ism, cultural and literary theory who understand society not as fact but as poesis and as tex-t."(Rose 1986).

As part of these conditions, Marcus and Fischer(1986) present a crisis of representation which arises from uncertainty about adequate means of describing social reality, They also point out a shift of theoretical debates to the level of method, to problems of the epistemology, interpretation, and discursive forms of representa-tion themselves, employed by social thinkers. These issues which have been explored by philo-sophical and literary theories of interpretation in-spire theoretical and selfcritical reflection in so many disciplines.

In anthropology, the study of human culture, the emphasis has shifted from anthropological analysis of behavior and social structure to the study of symbols, meanings, and mentality. The interpretive anthropology in its expression as a reflection on ethnography exercises a valuable critical function in relation to the social sciences and other disciplines with which it is associated-(Marcus 1986).

In art, landscape architecture, and architecture, the techniques that once had shock value or reoriented perception, such as surrealism, today have lost their original force, thus stimulating a debate about the nature of postmodernist aesthe-tics(Jameson 1984, Habermas 1983b). In this postmodernist light, the artifact is likely to be treated more as a text in a postmodernist sense than as a work in modernist terms, With this tex-tual model, the postmodernists deconstruct mod-ernism to open its closed systems, Their project aims at a differentiated relinking of modern cul-ture with an everyday praxis that still depends on vital heritages, but would be impoverished through mere traditionalism(Hebermas 1983b).

With the trend of postmodern knowledge, this paper examines the concepts of the interpretive social science, and applies its idea to the land-scape.

2. Interpretive Approach to the Human Society

With a process of science, early human scien-tists tried to borrow their paradigm from a natu-

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1. Lyotard(1984) contrasts between "scientific knowledge" and "narrative," and says that a "sci-entific statement is subject to the rule that a statement must fulfill a given set of conditions in order to be accepted as scientific," contrasting with "narrative knowledge" as the sort which "does not give priority to the question of its own legitimation, and ··· certifies itself in the pragmatics of its own transmission without having recourse to argumentation and proof." He describes "the scientist" as classifying narrative knowledge as "a different mentality: sav-age, primitive, under-developed, backward, alienated, composed of opinions, customs, author-ity, prejudice, ignorance, ideology." He wants to soften this contrast and to assert the rights of "narrative knowledge." He says that once we get rid of the metanarratives, legitimacy re-sides where it always has, in the first-order narratives.

2. He is a prominent anthropologist, and the foremost proponent of the intellectual movement to revive the study of culture as a symbloic system.

ral science according to which human actions can be fixed in their meaning by being subsumed under the law like operations of the epistemic subject. From this attempts they emphasized holism. Actions in the historical, cultural context are reduced to the operations of a purely epistemic subject. The explanatory power of science is the consequence of its basis in a logical epistemic subject whose activities can be generalized and understood as context free operations.

The interpretive approach, having developed since the 60's, has criticized lawfulness, predictability, historicism and cultural relativism in their classical froms (Gadamer 1976; Habermas 1971; Ricoeur 1981). It has refocused attention on the concrete varieties of cultural meaning, in their particularity and complex texture, and aspired to elicit the "native point of view" (Geertz 1983), to elucidate how different cultural constructions of reality affect social action, and to examine the communicative processes (Habermas 1983a) and the form and method of representation (Marcus 1986).

Interpretation begins from the postulate that the web of meaning constitutes human existence to such an extent that it cannot ever be meaningfully reduced to constitutively prior speech acts, dyadic relations, or any predefined elements(Ricoeur 1981, Gadamer 1976). Intentionality and empathy are seen rather as dependent on the prior existence of the shared world of meaning with which the subjects of human discourse constitute themselves. The interpretive social science can be called a return to the objective world, seeing that world as in the first instance the circle of meaning within which we find ourselves (Rabinow ans Sullivan 1979).

This notion becomes the basis of the "hermeneutics" of human science. The objective world an object of study becomes a text, or a text-analogue. According to Geertz(1973), social activities can be read for their meanings by the observer just as written and spoken materials more conventionally are. Not only does the observer read symbols in action, but so do the actors(observed), in relation to one another. These efforts have adopted hermeneutics to the

human sciences. Hermeneutics have become a label for close reflection in the way natives decipher and decode their own complex "text" - literally texts or other forms of cultural communication, such as rituals.

Paul Ricoeur (1981) presents a model of the text for human action, His theory of interpretation is closely connected to the concept of the text, that is written discourse, which defines the object domain of hermeneutics. Thus the principal features of his theory of interpretation can be derived from the characteristics of written discourse.

For Ricoeur, discourse performs the function of bringing what is said out of the immediate situation to a world which is opened up by the references in the text. In order to interpret the discourse, one must understand the world.

He elaborates specifically on two points about the interpretation of written discourse. First, discourse being public and fixed is freed from the subjective intention of its author; it is intersubjective and therefore open to interpretation, The meaning of a text must be guessed or construed as a whole; only then the parts make sense. This guess or constructs is highly fallible and is open to error, recasting, and to reinterpretation. He offers us a sketch of what he calls a 'dialectic of guessing and validation' for this. Second, the interpretation of written discourse engenders two possible attitudes toward the text. On the one hand, the reader may suspend any judgment concerning the referential dimension of the text, treating the latter as a wholly worldless and selfenclosed entity, On the other hand, the reader may seek to unfold the non-ostensive references of the text. The first attitude is adopted by the structuralist approach, which attempts to explain the text in terms of its internal relations. But Ricoeur argues that any such explanation presupposes a form of understanding which cannot be reduced to structural analysis. His presupposed form of understanding is the concern of the second attitude that the reader may adopt towards the text. To understand a text is to move from its sense to its reference, from that which it says to that which it says about. In Ricoeur's

theory. explanation and understanding are no lon-ger contradictory attitudes, as has often been assumed in the history of hermeneutics. On the contrary, with the mediation of structural analysis[3] it seems possible "to situate explanation and interpretation along a unique hermeneutical arc and to integrate the opposed attitudes of ex-planation and understanding within an overall conception of reading as the recovery of meaning"(Ricoeur 1981, p.161).

Then what does this metaphor of interpretation as the reading of texts both by the observer and the observed mean in the actual process of re-search? This means that the intelligibility of any action requires reference to its larger text, a cultural world. The aim is not to discover univer-sals or laws but rather to explicate context and world(Geertz 1973). It initiates "a process of a re-covery and reappropriation of the richness of meaning found in the symbolic contexts of all areas of culture" (Rabinow & Sullivan 1979, p.13).

Contemporary interpretive human science inte-grates an explicit epistemological concern for the construction of the interpretations and for the textual representation of objective discourse with-in their interpretations, Through their ethnog-raphic writting, they attempt to "synthesize the classic debate on hermeneutics between philo-sophical reflection about the nature of interpreta-tion, which emphasizes the open-endedness of in-terpretive activity, and the methodological attempt to create a science of interpretation, which emphasizes the pososbility of systematic, self-contained interpretation." (Marcus & Cush-man 1982).

The interpretive human science, summarized in the text, discourse, and dialogue metaphor, is "the essence of relativism properly conceived as a mode of inquiry about communication with and between cultures"(Marcus & Fischer 1986, p.32). While neither denying a hierarchy of basic hu-man values, nor opposing generalization, interpre-tive human science in its expression as a reflec-tion on ethnography exercises a valuable critical function in relation to social sciences and other disciplines with which it is associated.

Then how can we relate these interpretive ideas to landscape ?

3. Landscape as a Text

In his book Discovering The Vernacular Land-scape', J B Jackson(1984) defines 'landscape' as 'a composition of manmade or man-modified spaces to serve as infrastrucuture or background for our collective existence' and he says that 'a landscape is not a natrual feature of the environ-ment but a synthetic space a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land, functioning and evolving not according to natural laws but to serve a community-for the collective character of the landscape is one thing that all generations and all points of view have agreed upon' and 'a landscape is a concrete, three dimensional shared reality'(p.5). In terms of the meaning of landscape, the reality refers to an ideational system in which a society expresses its outlook on the total environment in which its members live, that is, world view. The reality ex-ists independently from a subjective mind.

A reality, independent from an individual sub-ject as well as from an object beyond itself, is the mental constrction[4] of a group.

Its validity is based on the consensus of the total society or of one of its specialized groups. Thus a meaning of landscape is socially con-structed realities. In this sense the meaning of

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3. cf. Levi-Strauss.

4. 'Mental construction of a group' mentioned here is conceptually different from 'group mind' or 'collective mental construction' that excited controversy in the early twentieth century.
The concept of "Culture as 'symbolic meaning system", which surfaced since the late 1970's in the mainstream of the humanities and the social sciences, constructs the main body of 'in-terpretive social science' introduced in this study. It denies fundamentally those theories of 'culture as group mind' or 'culture as collective mental construction'. See the introductory theories on the semiotics or C. Geertz's books on the cultural theroy.

landscape can be called a reutrn to the objective world and can be a basis of hermeneutics.

In the post-modern age, as Foster(1983, p.x) said, the artifact is likely to be treated less as a work in modernist terms than as a text in a post-modernist sense. To what extent may we say that the landscape conforms to the paradigm of the text? Ricoeur(1981) draws four traits of the text as characterized by 1) the fixation of the meaning, 2) its dissociation from the mental intention of the author, 3) the display of non-ostensive references, and 4) the universal range of its addresses.

We may apply these four criteria to the meaning of landscape. In the first trait, meaningful action is fixed by writing. An action leaves a trace, it makes its mark when it contributes to the emergence of patterns which become the documents of human action, As a text is a mark of this human action on its time, so is a landscape a mark on which human action leaves a trace. Further, people maintain a complex array of symbolic relationships with their physical surroundigns, and their relationships, which may have little to do with the serious business of making a living, play a fundamental role in shaping other forms of social activity(Ortiz 1969). Consequently the landscape is the ideational resources with which they constitute their surroundings and invest them with value and significance. Thus the landscape as a fixed meaning may become an object of science through a kind of objectification similar to the fixation which occurs in writing.

For the second trait, in the same way that a text is detached from its author, a landscape[5] is detached from its agent and develops consequences of its own, This autonomy of the landscape constitutes the social dimension of the meaning, The meaning of a landscape is a social phenomenon not only because it is done by several agents in such a way that the role of each of them cannot be distinguished from the role of the others, but also because our deeds escape us and have effects which we did not intend.

For the third trait, a meaning of landscape has the importance of which goes beyond its relevance to its initial situation, This trait is very similar to the way in which a text breaks the ties of discourse to all the ostensive reference. Like a text, landscape can develop non-ostensive references which we called a world-as an ontological dimension, The meaning of landscape exceeds, overcomes, transcends, the social conditions of its production and may be reenacted in new social contexts.

Finally, like a text, the interpretation of landscape is open to all possible readers such as resercher, designer, planner, politician, and people who live in the landscape.

From Ricoeur's criteria stated above, the meaning of landscape conforms to the paradigm of the text. A landscape whether natural or man-make says something to us and belongs to matrix of thing we have to understand. Thus, applying Gadamer's(1976) view to the landscape, a landscape is a text which we can read and it is an object of hermeneutics. Our task is to understand the meaning of what it says about landscape, to make it clear to ourselves and others, and to apply this meaning to our practice.

So far, we examined the hermeneutics of the landscape. Then what about its design and aesthetics in terms of practical application? Can we explain it in the same sense?

If one of the major goals of a landscape design is aesthetics, we should consider the meaning of landscape in terms of aesthetics. A current thought discussion concerning noition of aesthetics ard art is that aesthetics is a cultural meaning system(Geertz 1983; Gadamer 1976; Maquet 1986). Consequently it may be argued that a landscape aesthetics also is considered as a cultural meaning system. But, when we talk about landscape aesthetics unlike art, we must include the experience of aesthetics in both nature and artifact. Then how can we link between natural and artistic aesthetics?

The concept of natural aesthetics has been sub-

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5. There can exist diversified definitions on the concept of landscape. Note on my concept defined in this study.

ject to historical change. As Theodor Adorno(1984〔1970〕) says, natural beauty comes from "histroical remembrance" not from nature itself, and natural beauty is a reflection of the beauty of art. Thus when nature is regared and enjoyed as beautiful, it is not a timeless and wordless pure aesthetic object that has its exhibitive ground in the harmony of forms and colors and symmetry of design . It is as Gadamer says in his book 'Philosophical Hermeneutics', "How nature pleases us belongs … to the context that is stamped and determined by the artistic creativity of a particular time"(Gadamer, 1976, p.98). In this sense, a natural aesthetics also can be considered as a part of cultural meaning system as an artifact. Therefore landscape aesthetics is cultural meaning system, interpreted and understood, an objective and intersubjective meaning system.

Adorno says, "aesthetic creation itself was not . subjective invention so much as the objective discovery of the new within the given, immanently, through a regrouping of its elements"(Buck-Morss, p.132). Once articulated, the elements could be rearranged in order to render intelligible its truth, or to recreate aesthetics in other way. In the same way, environmental design is a mode of text building, a way of putting symbols together to construct an expression, Environment design in term of aesthetics is not as the expression of subjectivity, but as a search for knowledge which lay outside the designer, as potential within the object, the landscape, and the environment, Environmental design expresses the symbolic meaning that, hermeneutically regarded, belongs to all being.

Therefore, a new model for environmental design may be an interpretive one, Environments should be able to reunderstood and reinterpreted. For that, we have to deconstruct (associated with Jacque Derrida(1974〔1967〕) the text (landscape) and reconstruct (associated with montage-allegory, grammatology of Derrida) critically our environment so as not to alienate out tradition, culture, meaning, everyday praxis, and self reflection, Applied at a broad scale, under the same metaphor, the overall design and planning should be the montage rather than collage of the each autonomous cultural element through the new setting, in other words, design and planning should consider its cultural particularity and contextuality rather than applying universal scientific laws toward more effective manipulation of the technical worud.

In this way we can rediscover the lost "aura"(Benjamin, 1968〔1955〕) of modern environment, and the ways to live together in harmony and mutual dependence with environment and to achieve the communicative (associated with the Habermas'(1983a) communicative action [6] environment.

4. Conclusion[7]

One of our designers' and planners' purposes is to construct principled interpretations of culturally constituted worlds, to try to understand what it's living like in them, and to build better future environment for them. Thus, the aim of interpretation of landscape is not merely more interpretation; it points beyond itself to the fun-

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6. This study aims at overviewing in terms of humanities, the relation between the humanities & the social sciences, and planning & design; checking the applicability and proposing the orientation. The validity of the argument of this study can be cleared through the fruther studies in this field. This theroy has been under experiment in the design & planning field. Various post - modernism - oriented articles and books in every field are helpful for understanding. Especially refer to R.Venturi's Learning from Las Vegas(1977) and H.Foster's The Anti-Aesthetic(1983).

7. Harbermas related a rational theory of communication to social conditions. The basic conceptual distinction on culture by him is rational-purposive action and communicative action, The former is characterized by an instrumental orientation toward the material environment and the latter is governed by implicit rules governing the articulation of conflict, by world-views or patterns of thought, and the self-concepts of groups and individuals.

damental problems of the theoretical, practical and aesthetic aspects of human existence. An interpretation of landscape should be a basis of a future desired direction of environmental design and planning, The cultural idea of environment has served in the area of historic preservation, This motif no longer serves well enough for the better future environment, When we look at environment as a cultural meaning system, it opens up epistemological and aesthetic problems in the relationship between human and environment. And the new emerging cultural critical idea may serve in the same way for the environmental design and planning; it may serve as a critique of environmental design and planning. It may also make possible a bridge over the modern split between social science and political practice[8] in the environmental planning and design.

If the basic goal of the enterprise is to find out the dynamics of collective life and alter them in desired directions, the environmental design with this approach may meet this basic goal for people.

Societies must survive, but social life is more than just surviving, And landscape meanings are peripheral only for those who choose to make them so, We need a broader and more flexible approach to the study of human-land relationships in which the symbolic properties of environmental phenomena receive the same kind of care and attention that has traditionally been given to their material counterparts, It may be impossible to make better environment without understanding the meaning of landscape. Environmental design pursuing aesthetic cannot succeed without it.

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8 This modern split between social science and political practice has been the major issue of the Frankfrut school-including Adorno and Habermas-of critical theory, Their objective of critical theory was to develop a single theroetical framework in which scientific investigation and the political implications of these investigations and the political implications of these investigations could be united.

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