

The Aesthetics of Inversion

Gyeongtae Nam(Humanities writer)

"Auntie, Serve it as much as possible!"

The middle-aged should not say like this at the diner-it's not as if they are high school students with a wolfish appetite or college students who can sublimate get-up-and-go to their mettle(Of course, it's very rare to go a snack bar and order 'quantity' at the middle ages). Moreover, It is likely that women standing on quantity at the restaurant can't receive good comments. Even if she is an veteran artist teaching students at the university, It wouldn't be polished in many ways. But a middle-aged woman and sculptor, Soyoung Park did such a 'nonsense' and gave a title 'Going Nuts' to it for good measure. After displaying the similar masses without noticeable differences but size-namely quantity- in room by room of an old inn, she opened the exhibition. In fact, there are only a few turning/going masses, so 'Going nuts' doesn't mean just a physical turn. Therefore, her show becomes more absurd and temerarious and the inversion of various values is converged. At the beginning, the motive of a exhibition comes from reversal.

Deongeori(Mass) put in an old inn is a viewing stone. But prior to the stones, she paid attention to its pedestals. She conceived the body of work when seeing a pedestal picked up on the street. So it didn't start from substance but from shell, which was inverted originally. Even though anyone can see the content but everyone can't see the shell. In the sense, her inversion is aesthetics. The trace she noticed pedestals can be found in four pieces of her drawings also. In the drawings which are more figurative than her sculptures, a pedestal was colored, but curiously enough, a stone as a subject matter were drawn with a pencil.

The second inversion is just a viewing stone. As you know, a viewing stone exists as itself, a natural form. If it is made artificially, it would not be a viewing stone. But she molded it with plaster, ground it very carefully and made it artificially('A created viewing stone' is already adjectival contradiction!). It is not an inversion to paint a landscape copying nature, but to be created something which is worth in nature itself in a very artificial way is definitely an inversion. Moreover, since her viewing stones are all white, the artificial intention becomes more outstanding. It is another inversion that most of works to be seen too smaller as comparison with a relatively large room in the space, are located not at the center but on the corner.

Lastly, the most crucial inversion lies the meaning of quantity. The stones she made are just 'Deongeori'. Of course, every work has different shapes, and we can read the artist's intention from it. But more important thing is the overwhelming sense of Deongeori. As we know by the example of ordering in a restaurant, it's generally obvious which is dominant when comparing quality with quantity. Quantity is primitive in contrast that quality symbolizes civilization. So, quality represented high values in the age of reason, but quantity is easily ignored in a false accusation. If the present is the era respecting reason, various 'quantity' made by Soyoung Park would be thought of literally 'Deongeori' and have been just disposed rather exhibited.

Fortunately, however, the period that reason is regarded as almighty is over. When Marx noticed exchange value instead of use value in the 19th century, and when Darwin was convinced himself that the factor to decide evolution is quantity, 'civilized' intellectuals laughed at them. However, as the scientific truth had revealed that quantitative differences of protons determines the nature of element, and the logic of the dialectic - quantitative changes is the main cause of qualitative changes - had been shifted toward in the 20th century, things weren't what they used to be. Although quantity was not the main character, it could avoid a subordinate position at least.

For most of human history, quantity had been actually received attention by pioneers. Let's view another verse of Lao-tzu's Tao Te Ching. "Even though we make a bowl with clay but what makes it useful is the emptiness in a bowl." A bowl here means quality and the emptiness does quantity. Since when we forgot the common truth and revered only a bowl vigorously. Here is an architect succeeding the teachings of Lao-tzu even if he didn't know him. Frank Lloyd Wright, a 20th-century American architect, criticized that architecture had left its orbit greatly since the Renaissance. It means that the significance of existence on structures, that is to say, the interior space has been damaged or ignored while sculptors constructing the facade, and painters decorating the walls and the exterior of buildings.

In this sense, it is so stunning that Soyoung Park challenged with quantity. The white Deongereri in the place occupied a higher level than real viewing stones through the inversion of values. She was rewarded enough for her tough repetitive labor. As a bonus, she talks of another enlightenment. "I realized again that labor makes form and form creates art."

Outstanding novelists starts working with a very rough plot. They did not make a story elaborately with a detailed timetable but just do it after setting the personality of the characters and the relationships between them. Then, surprisingly the characters get to play amongst themselves and make up a story by themselves. Created characters creates stories rather than a writer does the job. "labor makes form and form creates art." Is it right to perceive her words as

the same meaning? Is it another inversion? If so, is it possible to think that her labor makes form, we makes our art by the form(sometimes independently to her intentions)?