


The 21st Century's New Paradigm for Landscape Architecture; Restoration of Spiritual Environments in Landscape Design

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ABSTRACT

omo sapiens are concerned with the environmental crisis. There are many attempts to solve the ecological problems through various disciplines; scientific, political, historical, sociological, religious and architectural. But the situation is getting worse. There seems to be no special subject of study which can solve the problem except landscape architecture.

The main roles of landscape architects are to preserve the natural environment, such as national parks or sea coasts, and to improve the built environment, such as cities and consumed natural resources. But only visible landscapes have been the focus. The environments consist of not only the visible, but also invisible ones. Owing to Western scientific approaches, since the Industrial Revolution, the invisible environment has been forgotten.

One hundred years ago, Keller (1915) argued that the physical environment is not all. There is the societal environment of fellow-animals, and there is yet another environment which does not appear in nature at all: the imaginary environment of ghosts and spirits. He argued that this significant universal belief is a case of parallelism, one of the greatest concerns in primitive life was adapting to that spiritual environment.

A Korean scholar, Son Jin-tae (2002), who was kidnapped during Korean War, cited Keller's assertion. Son Jin-tae emphasized that the disappearance of the third imaginary environment should be restored in Korean culture. But no one pays attention to this third environment. Environments are classified as physical-spatial, economic-social, aesthetic-visual, ecological-natural, historic-cultural and spiritual-inner environments in six fields (Kwaak, 2014). Moreover, the environments might be sub-classified in detail as natural, socio-economic, cultural-traditional, ecological, symbolic, aesthetic, astrological, acoustic and spiritual in nine fields. Most of them are important for humans and should be considered in global planning and design. But the spiritual environment can be acknowledged as a core environment for the quality of life. In this article, values of spiritual environment for landscape architecture will be discussed.

Keywords: natural environment

SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENT

If the spiritual environment of ghosts and spirits seem strange in the modern, scientific world then what are the spiritual environments of ghosts and spirits? Other beliefs were prominent before the founding of the high religions around 4,000 years ago by Jesus Christ, Buddha, Confucius, and Mohammed, with their entailed systems of monks, nuns, fathers, and texts. There were the universal faiths which feared and respected nature in cultures holding pantheistic beliefs such as animism, shamanism, totem-ism, and Mother Earth.

The indigenous believed in the faiths for their luck and that everything has a spirit; not only animate nature but also at inanimate. The realization that human beings are one of the weakest animals initiated a

belief relying on the superpower. The oldest remains of landscaping are the altar and hunting park for praying and for preparing the sacrificial offering to the superpower. The ancients prayed to Nature for their lives and kept a well harmonized relationship between them and the gods.

Thus spiritual environments were thought to be where ghosts and spirits exist. These spirits and ghosts were protected by the world wide, grass root cultures, for examples; the sacred place, the sacred mountain, the sacred tree, the sacred grove, the sacred rock and stone, the sacred well and spring, the sacred grotto and so on. Incidentally the Western cultures denied the spiritual environments with the religions of Monotheism and the Eastern cultures have kept the belief in the spiritual environments with Polytheism.



Ki exercise at sacred Mt. Kailash, Tibet



Shrine at sacred Mount Taishan, China



Ceremony for the sacred tree, Korea



Praying for the sacred tree, Lumbini, Nepal



Sacred grove, Gelim at Gyungju, Korea



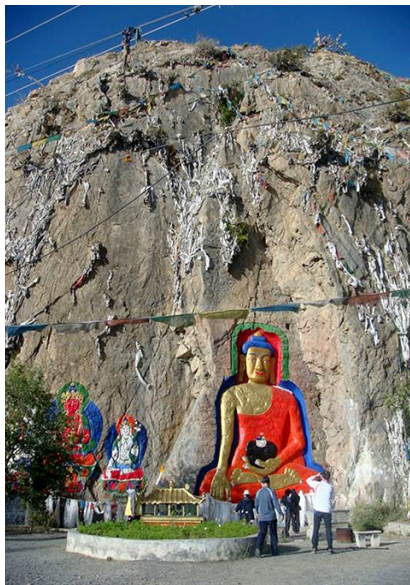
Worship at sacred tree, Kashima Shinto shrine, Japan



Worship at sacred rock of Buddhism temple, Korea



Worship for sacred rock, Korea



Sacred rock for praying at Tibet



Ceremony for sacred tree in downtown, Korea



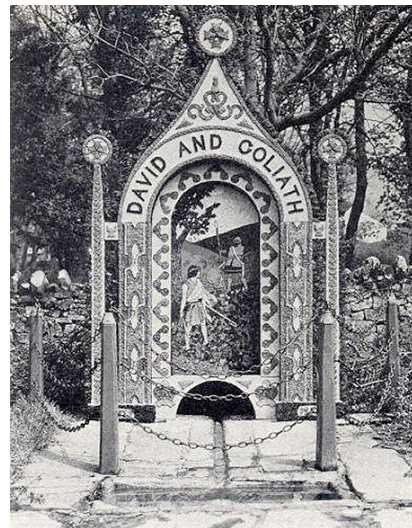
Sacred stone piles, Ovoo, Mongolia



Praying at sacred stone at Kashima shrine, Japan



Ceremony at sacred well, Korea



Well-dressing at Derbyshire, UK (Pennick, 1979)



Sacred fall at Tiger's Nest Temple, Royal Bhutan



Sacred pond at Yaskuni Shinto Shrine, Japan



Sacred grotto at Montserrat Abbey, Spain



Sacred grotto at Mongolian Temple



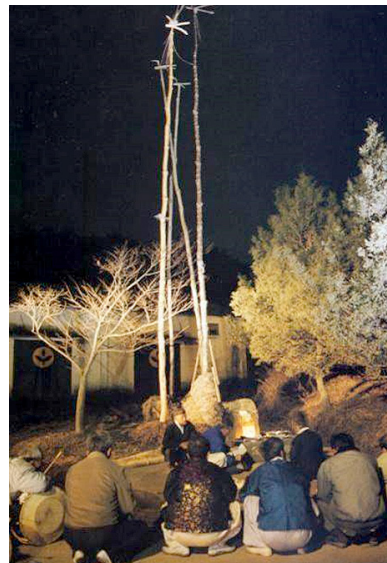
Sacred rope for destructed uphill pass, Tibet



The 1st sacred iron bridge at Royal Bhutan



Ceremony for Janseung Totems, Korea



Praying at sacred pole with ducks, Sotdae, Korea



Sacred spring at Kashima shrine, Japan



Cosmic tree shaped pillars at Sagrada Familia, Spain



Japsang at roof line against devil, Korea



Gargoyle at Westminster Abbey, England

Images of Sacred Places Identified Around the World

The relationships between people and nature were phased by Gudkind (1952) as; the first stage, I - Thou for fear and respect, the second, self-confidence for working with nature such as building Pyramids, the third, I - It for conquest and aggression throughout the Industrial Revolution and now the fourth, as responsibility and unification.

Fifty years ago, at the first United Nations' Conference on Human Environment at Stockholm in 1972, which declared Only One Earth, White (1967) seriously argued on the origin of the ecological problems. Exerts from his famous article, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis at Science" are below;

Modern technology and modern science are distinctively Occidental. Man's relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature. The victory of Christianity over paganism was the greatest psychic revolution in the history of our culture. It has become fashionable today to say that, for better or worse, we live in 'the post-Christian age.'

What did Christianity tell people about their relations with the environment? Man names all animals, thus establishing his dominance

over them. God planned all of this explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purpose. And, although man's body is made of clay, he is not simply part of nature: he is made on God's image

Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.

In Antiquity every tree, every spring, every stream, every hill had its own genius loci, its guardian spirit. But destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of nature objects.

The spirit in natural objects, which formerly had protected nature from man, evaporated. Man's effective monopoly on spirit in the world was confirmed, and the old inhibitions to the exploitation of nature crumbled.

Both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for our ecological crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not. We must rethink and re-feel our nature and destiny.

Clearly ecological problems have occurred from the Monotheistic attitudes of the Western world and this matter should be solved with religion as White indicated. That is, to solicit the dualism that matter and spirit as one, not two. It is an Oriental value with polytheism.

After human society developed from ancient nomadic societies to agricultural based societies, cultures began coping with Nature. After the Industrial Revolution, when divorced from Nature, human beings within the precepts of Occidental society's Monotheism became arrogant, wanting to conquer Nature. Can human beings conquer Nature? Is matter and spirit different? Universal cultures should restore the feared and respected Nature and the belief that everything has a spirit.

SPIRITUAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR LANDSCAPE DESIGN

There are seriously unbalanced phenomena in modern society. The material world is highly developed and people enjoy the affluence of a material lifestyle. However, with less attention to the spiritual world they feel lonely. F.L. Olmsted addressed this issue in 1858, through his Greensward plan for Central Park. Thus a remarriage with matter and spirit, through importing Nature to urban environments, was the main impetus behind the birth of landscape architecture. Preservation, conservation and a creation of spiritual environments surrounding living environments can be said to be the main roles of landscape architects; to generate a balance between matter and spirit. But landscape architects generally develop only visible landscapes. Most of modern landscape architects are derelict in their duties by generating only ornamental landscaping, especially in wealthy America.

Human beings make environments and environments makes human beings. A special commitment has been given to landscape architects to work towards the best design to enhance quality of life. Thus the landscape architect's unique role should be reconsidered at an educational level and emphasize the best design approach.

Matter and spirit should be balanced in environmental design. Landscape architects put theories into practice for a better life through making suitable environments. Users' wants and needs are so diverse that landscape architects should broaden their studies to include the related fields of civil engineering, architecture and urban planning.

Each country or region has its own characteristics developed from their indigenous cultures and ancestors. Most of them are deeply related to spiritual environments of the ancient faiths. These faiths were oppressed by the new-born, powerful monotheistic religions. But they did not disappear and existed as grass root culture. Recently monotheistic religions have faltered and are being argued as the causes of the ecological crisis.

Universal cultures such as geomancy (Poongsujiri in Korean, Fengshui in China, and old straight tracts or ley-line in English), *genius loci*, dragon culture, worship of the sacred rock, sacred tree, sacred well, sacred mountain, and folk cultures should be re-evaluated. Their values could be employed for

expanding the cultural diversity around the world. Cultural diversity advocates the development of civilization and can be said to be more important than the recently emphasized bio-diversity. If a culture disappears, it cannot be restored, but the lifestyle can be replicated through the developing technology.

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SUMMARY

Currently life is lived in monotonous environments without dreaming of an ideal world, Utopia, because of the enculturation by a few strong countries. Landscape architecture which plans and designs human environments began by supplying public parks for the poor workers' health, but after 150 years has passed, a new paradigm is needed to enhance the quality of life. Landscape design should be considered holistically to include the invisible world of spiritual environments. Spiritual environments, which are managed by various religions all over the world, cover approximately 7% of the globe (<http://www.arcworld.org>). Landscape architect should develop the methodology and technology, for not only ecologically sound and productive environments, but also for spiritual environment for quality of life.

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