The Historic City Preservation Act and the Task of Preserving a City of History, City of Culture

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ABSTRACT

경주는 2천년에 걸친 역사의 경험을 축적한 도시로서 전 지역에 걸쳐 그 혼적이 산재해 있는 명실상부한 한국을 대표하는 고도이다. 그러나 거기에 살고 있는 주민들은 타 도시에 비해 발전 속도가 느리고 경제적으로 풍요하지 못한데 불만이 많다. 여기에다 오늘의 경주는 도시의 이미지를 대표하는 무수한 문화유적은 제대로 정비되어 있지 못하고 있으며, 문화유적 보호를 위한 각종 규제 는 오히려 도시 발전의 저해요소로 인식되어 있기도 하다. 최근에 제정된 고도 보존에 관한 특별법 은 이러한 상황을 개선할 수 있는 계기로 기대를 모으고 있으나, 법안 내용을 보면 경주의 산적한 문제를 해결하기에는 미흡한 심정이다.

경주가 신라천년의 고도로서의 이미지를 회복할과 동시에 도시 발전을 이루기 위해서는 타 도시 에 비해 다양하고 특성화된 발전전략을 마련하여야 한다.

본 연구에서는 고도보존법의 제정의 취지와 문제점을 분석하고, 이 법의 시행에 따른 바람직한 역사문화도시 보존 방안을 제시하였다. 아울러 도시발전과 역사도시 활성화 방안을 제시하였다.

Key Words : Historic Cities Preservation Act, Historic Cities Development

1. INTRODUCTION

The Gyeongju city is a place with a history of more than two millennia. It witnessed the evolution of history during that time and has accumulated more than two millennia’s worth of experience and cultural heritages. The entire city is covered with historical vestiges and artifacts, and even today the city is a key traffic point and is positioned at the posterior position of major industrial cities such as Daegu, Pohang and Ulsan. In other words, Gyeongju is definitely one of the high-profile cities in Korea, in terms of both history & culture and strategic importance in terms of traffic. But interestingly and quite ironically, things are going very

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slow for the city itself, especially in terms of city-wise development.

The fantastic cultural vestiges and national historical artifacts, which should be put into good use in representing the city with all their rich images, are being abused or even practically abandoned. Some of the legal procedures and governmental restrictions placed around the city in order to protect such assets are now being perceived as barriers to the development and prosperity of Gyeongju. The Special Act of Historic Cities Preservation (which will be referred to as ‘Historic Cities Preservation Act’ in this article) was recently legislated, and is expected to bring some changes to the current situation, but considering the contents of the Special act, one can express some serious doubts about the legal abilities and the overall authority the act could project in its dealing with all the problems Gyeongju city is displaying right now.

A more diverse yet specialized development plan should be devised in order to come up with practical solutions in restoring the original image of Gyeongju as the capital city of the Silla dynasty, and also successfully in achieving industrial development in the process.

In this article, both the intentions and problems of the Historic Cities Preservation Act will be examined, and how the task of restoring and preserving the historical and cultural assets of this memorable city should be handled in the eve of this new law’s being implemented, will be contemplated upon as well. Also, the issue of creating an optimal environment and thus revitalizing the city itself will be addressed.

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE HISTORIC CITIES PRESERVATION ACT AND IT’S PROBLEMS

1. Why the Act is Necessary, and What is It’s Objectives

Historic Cities Preservation Act was legislated under the intention of managing age-old cities, such as Gyeongju, Buyeo, Gongju and Iksan which had all served as capital cities for the ancient dynasties of the Korean peninsula, more effectively and more appropriately. These cities all have historical vestiges

Figure 1. A View of the older parts in Gyeongju city

Figure 2. Positions of cultural heritages