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JANG SUH NOH: HERITAGE AUTHENTICITY AND MONUMENTALIZATION FOR
POLITICAL POWER- A CASE STUDY OF THE CHEONGGYECHEON RESTORATION
PROJECT IN SEOUL, KOREA. THESIS ADVISOR: DONALD ELLSMORE, Ph.D. 158 pp.

When the former mayor of Seoul Lee, M.B. won the 17th presidential election of Korea, local media picked up the success of *Cheonggyecheon* restoration project led by Lee as one of the key contributors to his win. The belief that the *Cheonggyecheon* restoration project was a great success making Lee a hero was a widespread and unquestioned myth. This research attempts to answer the questions: 'Is it really a successful heritage restoration project?' and 'What kind of process has made the project become a myth and Lee a hero?'

At first, investigating the history of *Cheonggyecheon*, this research revealed that *Cheonggyecheon* was a main component forming the sacredscape of ancient Seoul. And it always had to face human intervention, the traces of which had accumulated in the stream until it began to be covered up by roadways in the development of downtown Seoul in the late 1950s.

Secondly, this research reviewed the history of social changes leading to a call for the restoration of *Cheonggyecheon* by civil society in the late 1990s which, in 2002, was officially adopted as a public project by Lee, the then mayor of Seoul, In 2005, the project was officially completed in spite of intense conflicts among the stakeholders in the process of implementation. Local media hailed the restored Cheonggyecheon as a great success under the excellent leadership of Lee. Then the project has become a myth and Lee has become a hero.

Thirdly, to verify the myth and heroism, this research attempted to evaluate the authenticity of various restoration features of the project based on the principles of internationally accepted heritage charters and protocols, including the Burra Charter. The research found the restoration of Cheonggyecheon was superficial and fell far below the standards of the principles. This research argues the project is not a successful heritage restoration project.

Fourthly, based upon the processes of monumentalization discussed by Dietler (1998), this research revealed that the project successfully turned into Lee's personal achievement by monumentalizing itself and him. The symbolic mechanism to mystify the project and the leader was embedded in the restored Cheonggyecheon tangibly and intangibly.

Finally, this research found that the project had great political, environmental, cultural and economic impacts on the whole of society. However, the research pointed out the project lacked such important values as political and economic fairness, environmental sustainability, and heritage authenticity. Accordingly, based upon the lessons learned from the above discussions, this research suggests:

- (1) All projects involving community-owned cultural assets should be planned carefully and be consistent with established guidelines and protocols.
- (2) Projects involving community-owned cultural assets should be planned carefully with the active and voluntary participation of community stakeholders representing all legitimate community interests.
- (3) Such projects should ensure that benefits are distributed equally and fairly.
- (4) Such projects should establish protective measures for cultural heritage at the outset.
- (5) Such projects should avoid privatization of public heritage assets.

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