



*Kanazawa ~A City That is Responsible
for Its History ~*

Cover Photo: Kanazawa Castle

*Review of the 12th World Conference
of Historical Cities*

12 - 15 Oct., 2010 in Nara Japan

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WORLD HISTORICAL CITIES

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The Historical City of Kanazawa

~ A City That Is Responsible for Its History

Historic City Promotion Office, City of Kanazawa

Features of a Castle Town

Kanazawa is located in the coastal area along the Sea of Japan, half-way up the main island of the Japanese archipelago. It is a medium-sized city with a population of about 450,000. Kanazawa has a variety of geographical features including three plateaus and two large rivers, and is blessed with a rich natural environment with seasonal changes. It is in such an environment that buildings with historical value and beautiful cityscapes have been preserved, and the lives of the people of Kanazawa are heavily influenced by the history and traditions of the city. The people and the city combine to produce a distinctive presence, flavor and atmosphere.

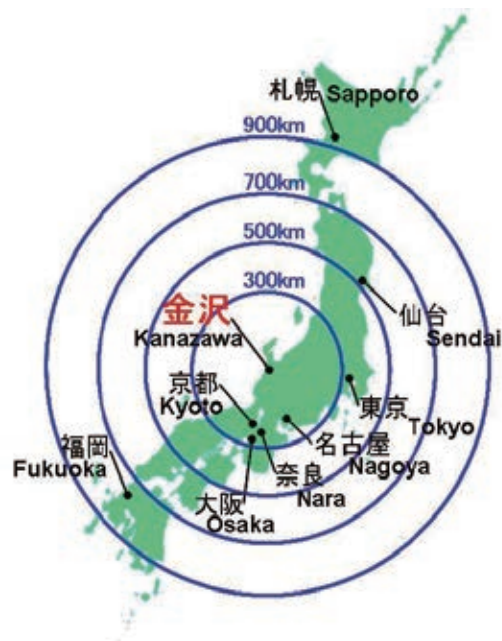
In the period from the end of the 16th century to the early 17th century, before the country was ruled by the Tokugawa Shogunate, over 200 castle towns were constructed by local feudal lords all over Japan - an extraordinary feat from the perspective of world history. These castle towns were developed according to city plans distinctive for Japan, taking geographical characteristics into consideration, placing the castle in the middle and designating residential areas around it according to people's position in society, and introducing water systems for fire prevention.

Kanazawa was established 420 years ago by the Maeda lord who ruled the Kaga domain, the area that included Kanazawa. In those days, Kanazawa, which was a castle town governed by the richest lord of all local clans in Japan, played an important role as the center of the Kaga domain with regard to politics, economy and culture. While the lords avoided battles against the Shogunate, they promoted cultural activities such as crafts and the performing arts. Kanazawa has never been damaged by war - not even during World War II.

Since the city has been peaceful for a long period of time, its structure and historical assets have been preserved in good condition. Kanazawa's multilayered features include its city structure, historical assets, traditional culture and industrial arts; it is a typical Japanese castle town of which all of the important elements have been preserved.

Measures for the Preservation of Cultural Assets

In the age of high economic growth, when urban development was being promoted all over the country, Kanazawa City established the "Ordinance for the



Preservation of the Traditional Environment of Kanazawa City" to promote and develop good circumstances and landscapes in the city. Established in 1968, it was the first ordinance of its kind in Japan, and it provided the impetus for launching various activities related to cityscape preservation. Since then, Kanazawa City has been carrying out city planning that highlights historical and cultural assets based on the principle of "maintaining a balance between preservation and development". Below are some examples.

<Preservation of Historical Cityscape>

The number of traditional buildings has been decreasing year by year due to diversification of lifestyle and urban development. Under such circumstances, Kanazawa City has been preserving small but historically characteristic areas by designating them as preservation areas, and providing subsidies for the repair of buildings in preservation areas, such as a samurai area and a merchant area. In order to make the cityscapes with historical canals attractive as places of relaxation for local residents, the covered conduits were opened up. In addition, the city promotes the use of black roof tiles to maintain the characteristic landscape of the city, and the elimination of electrical poles on the streets.

<City Planning Agreement>

A City Planning Agreement, the rules of which were determined by the residents, has been concluded between the Mayor and the citizens of Kanazawa. As for the Higashi chaya area, the agreement stipulates regulations for the preservation of the area: vending machines are prohibited; it is recommended that



Dance performance at a chaya house

souvenirs sold there be products manufactured in the city or related to the city; and it is necessary to consult with the local preservation society before using or constructing a building in the area. The City Planning Agreements were drawn up with the characteristics of the area in mind, and 24 areas have one.

<Training of Human Resources and Succession of Traditional Techniques>

In order to preserve intangible traditional culture, artisans' high-level traditional skills and handicraft techniques that have been handed down through the generations, the city offers the following training systems:

In 1946, in the tumultuous aftermath of World War II, Kanazawa College of Art was established to develop industrial art and promote local culture and industries. The college has produced many leading artists and designers who are playing important roles on both domestically and internationally. It has also been conducting international exchanges through arts and crafts.

In 1989, Kanazawa Utatsuyama Craft Workshop was established to succeed and develop traditional crafts and promote distinctive culture. The workshop is home to five types of crafts; ceramics, glass, lacquerware, dyeing and inlay works, and its program has been completed by 208 trainees.

In 1996, the City established the Kanazawa Institute of Traditional Crafts to train artisans in the long-standing sophisticated techniques used in nine fields, including carpentry and gardening. Mid-level artisans follow a three-year program to brush up their skills. Many trainees who have completed the program now repair cultural assets and historical buildings, and their work is highly evaluated.

<Children's Art Classes>

The city offers training in the arts for elementary and junior high school children. Classes include Kaga-hosho Noh theater, subayashi music and handicrafts. Kaga-hosho is a school of Noh theater that has been designated as an Intangible Cultural Asset by Kanazawa City, and subayashi is traditional local music.

Children learn about the culture, beauty and manners associated with these performing arts, and will play a role in handing them down to the next generation. They can also learn traditional handicraft techniques, experience the joy of making things on their own, and may go on to become artisans in the future.

<Integration of Tradition and Creation>

We believe that it is important to succeed the characteristics of the city as precious assets and to infuse new breath for the preservation and creative regeneration of a historical city. There are no cities which have the exact same nature, history and culture. It is important to clarify their characteristics and what makes them different from other cities, and to disseminate that information both domestically and internationally.

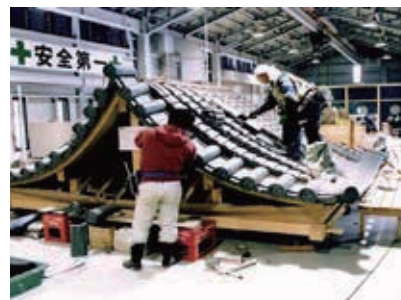
In addition to characteristic landscapes and lifestyles, outstanding handicrafts were developed in Kanazawa as part of the samurai warriors' culture of the feudal days, and these have been handed down through the generations. Kanazawa City became a member of the UNESCO Creative City Network in the category of crafts in June 2009. The City has been promoting the linking of culture and industries while promoting itself as a city of handicrafts. The city is addressing the development of new craft products, such as wedding dresses using Kaga yuzen silk dyeing and Kutani wine glasses produced in collaboration with a Kutani-yaki ceramics manufacturer and a German glass manufacturer.

Conclusion

As a city that has not been damaged by war, Kanazawa should be responsible for its history, and for the preservation and inheritance of its traditional culture, industrial arts, historical properties and environment. We share the recognition of the League of Historical Cities that "every city has its own history and a Historical City can be defined as a city which takes pride in and endeavors to foster its unique heritage", and endeavor to enhance Kanazawa together with its citizens to give it unique characteristics as a world-class historical city.



Kenrokuen Garden



Training of artisans at Kanazawa Institute of Traditional Crafts



Kaga-hosho Noh class for children



Kimono using Kaga yuzen silk dyeing technique



Kutani wine glasses produced in collaboration with a Kutani-yaki ceramics manufacturer and a German glass manufacturer

For further information

Historic City Promotion Office,
Historic Heritage Preservation
Division,
City Policy Planning Department,
City of Kanazawa

1-1-1 Hirosaka, Kanazawa,
Ishikawa 920-8577 Japan
Tel : +81-76-220-2311
Fax: +81-76-224-5046
e-mail:
rekishitoshi@city.kanazawa.lg.jp

Voices from Participants in the Youth Forum Held on the First Day of the 12th Conference Students from Boston, Kanazawa, Kyoto and Nara

Sydney Sykes from Boston

Though my brother and father attended the 10th & 11th World Conference of Historical Cities, I knew little of what to expect from my own experience at the 12th Conference, but my experience exceeded my expectations. I learned a lot from Youth Forum participants. The discussions we had regarding our cultures, histories, and opinions provided some of my best memories. I believe the Youth Forum will become an increasingly important part of the future World Conference of Historical Cities. Looking back on my time in Nara, a memorable part was connecting with the Japanese people I met, especially the family I stayed with. I spoke no Japanese and my family spoke little English, but we became closer because of the effort we had to make to communicate. Mr & Mrs. Nakamuro provided a wonderful new experience for me of living a "traditional Japanese" home life. I was able to enjoy Nara to the fullest because of their kindness and generosity. I learned most about the Japanese language from the Japanese students I met, and through sharing languages we became friends. My interactions with the people of Nara, Kyoto and all of the member cities were the best part of my trip.

Kaho Mugita from Kanazawa

To prepare for our presentation I went on an educational tour of the city accompanied by staff from Kanazawa City. We took in traditional preserved buildings, narrow water courses run between houses, etc. Through this tour I studied again but in greater detail the history and culture of Kanazawa that I had learned at elementary school. After the Forum I visited the well-known Kenrokuen Garden and Kanazawa Castle Park again. Walking around the park while thinking back to what I had studied for the presentation I began to appreciate the virtues of Kanazawa and the profoundness of its history even more. During the Forum, I listened to presentations made by people from other countries and prefectures. I was surprised by differences between the various cultures, languages, dialects, etc. This was the first time I heard English, Korean and Chinese spoken in one place and I must confess to having felt a little uneasy about it. However, I am very happy to have had such a precious experience and feel that I must make use of it in some way when I go out into the world in future.

Yuta Kamei from Kyoto

One thing I have gained by participating in the Youth Forum is an ability to look at things with a new vision. Beforehand I had assumed that high school students sharing the experience of living in a historic city would have very similar opinions. However I was surprised to find out that people from different countries, regions and cities could have such different opinions. It was especially meaningful to me that the discussions included a variety of perspectives, such as the economic considerations, which I had not really thought about before. I feel my horizons have widened because we could freely exchange information and ideas and, because I learn more information about different countries and cities,

my horizons continue to widen even now beyond the few hours of the conference. I trust that this kind of exchange among high school students will turn out to be a great benefit for the succession of historical city with creative revitalization.

Mika Matsumoto from Kyoto

I am glad to have been able to participate in the Youth Forum. In this Forum, we exchanged our thoughts and opinions including people from other communities who we would not normally meet. Before taking part in the conference I used to take the various old buildings, works of art and customs that surround me for granted. However, in the process of participating I was shocked to realize how many things I did not know. Thanks to being given such an opportunity through the Forum I gained new knowledge about Kyoto and began to really think about the succession of my historical city and its creative revitalization. I believe that, just like myself prior to the forum, there must be many people who know very little about their own home town. I would like to tell them what I have learned and thought about at the Youth Forum, and about the opinions expressed by other people. That way, I will at least be able to contribute something to the development of historical cities.

Akari Horiuchi from Nara

In this commemorative year of the 1,300th anniversary of the establishment of Nara Heijokyo, I feel honored that I could participate in this conference. Moreover, as a representative of Nara Prefecture I was happy to share the details and results of the daily study with the wider world. It was nice to enjoy exchanges with people from other cities. Throughout this conference I have come to see that, although every historical city has its own unique history and culture, these cities are all alike in sharing many of the same problems. I refer to problems such as how to manage the relationship between the preservation of historical areas and urban development, how to deal with the various aspects of tourism, etc. I have also come to understand that meetings of this kind give us an opportunity to reexamine each region's problems, share an understanding of them, and discuss possible courses of action for resolving them. I felt once again that we youngsters participating in the Forum will have to take the lead in passing on the history and culture that has been handed down to us by our ancestors. I will not forget what I have learned and by attending this conference, I certainly wish to learn more about the splendors of Nara during my daily studies. In addition, I wish to become a person who can convey this learning to others.

Yoshiko Fujiwara from Nara

Having had the opportunity to participate in the Youth Forum, I now realize how important it is for us to learn about the local areas in which we live and to pass on what we have learned to others. Taking part in the discussions gave me the precious experience that is never usually possible in the course of normal day to day life. That was the experience of exchanging opinions



with other high school students who live in other prefectures or in foreign countries. In particular, despite the language barriers, I got on very well with the high school students from South Korea, China and the US and made some friends among them. Thanks to my participation in the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities, I am very happy to have learned many things, come away with many good memories, and enjoyed the interaction with many different people. Being deeply appreciative that I was able to take part in the conference, from now on, I wish to make good use of the experience gained, learn more about Nara's culture and history, and hand down this knowledge to future generations.

Nozomi Murata from Nara

After applying for the Youth Forum, we spent five months discussing what we should do to make Nara, a city where the residents and tourists spend their time comfortably. During our discussions, we agreed non-essential tourism-related development was not necessary and that we must display our activities as local volunteers. I practiced my presentation many times, obtained invaluable advice from teachers and managed to complete without any major mistakes. In the discussion held after the presentations, the debate heated. Everybody agreed that "we need to keep protecting nature and heritage and to hand them down to the future." I was impressed that we shared this basic understanding despite coming from different places. Through this conference I learned many new things. I now think more deeply about Nara and am more aware of its charms. I have begun to form a real attachment to Nara and would like to make good use of this experience in the future.

Chinami Saito from Nara

In our presentation, our concerns were to preventing excessive tourism development and to maximizing the positive aspects of Nara's current tourism resources. In the discussions following the presentation, there were heated exchanges owing to the Nara students (against large-scale tourism-related developments) being countered by students from other prefectures and countries who approve such developments. We also exchanged information about methods for implementing and participating in the historical learning activities employed by each city. Regarding methods for publicity, depending on the city or place, there were differences in the levels of attachment people feel to their own local area. Although specific problems seem to differ from one local area to another, the fundamental problems they face are the same. It was very good opportunity for individual citizens to think about their own local area. The Youth Forum prompted me to think about where Nara should be heading in the future. I haven't come up with any answers yet but the time I spent thinking about it has been very meaningful.

Reona Okada from Nara

I would like to appreciate for the precious experience I had in taking part in this forum. At the Youth Forum, in addition to listening to other

people's presentations, I could encounter things outside of my usual experience such as attending a Noh performance and gaining advice from university professors. When I was conversing with the foreign students of my own age and listening to their opinions I realized that what I consider to be common sense is by no means always the case for people of different religions and cultures. When we had discussions, my companions expressed opinions I could never have expected to hear. I was also able to make friends with people of different cultures by using a common language. It excited me very much to think I could become friends with people who had been total strangers to me until yesterday. From now on I will study the history of Japan more deeply and, in so doing, learn about my origins. I will do this so that I can take greater pride in those roots and talk about my country's history with people from other countries who I hope to encounter on the world stage.

Kazuya Nishimoto from Nara

Thanks to participating in the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities I have begun to love my local area more than before, and, having made new friends at the conference I have also developed an interest in the cities where they live. During the Forum presentations I was impressed when I saw students of my generation expressing their opinions so clearly. I was also able to sense the deep love that they have for their own local areas. It was then that I realized that we all share this common feeling of love for our historical cities even though our countries or regions may differ. In the group discussions we exchanged opinions about what we could do. We promised that we would take home all the feelings and impressions gained through the Forum and that we would try to spread awareness of the splendor of historical cities to more people. I sincerely appreciate for the opportunity and hope that similar events will be organized again in future.

Junpei Yamamoto from Nara

It was my first time to make a presentation at such a large venue. I was very nervous but it was a good experience. In the discussion, I shared my thoughts on cultural succession and listened to other people's ideas which was very informative. I realized that people inheriting historical cities were 'ourselves'. On the final day of the Conference, I had the honor to read out the Youth Forum Declaration. I was entrusted with a major role - something made me feel more anxious than I had ever been in my life - but I could read the declaration while pondering the meaning of every sentence. What each of us can do may be modest but the accumulation of our efforts will result in something very powerful. I am glad that I could participate in the Forum for exchanging opinions about our culture and traditions and, more than anything, I was especially pleased that I could make friends with people from abroad. I still keep in contact with students from Xian and have promised to visit them next year. I appreciate to the people who gave us such an excellent forum.



Ms. Sykes from Boston



Ms. Mugita (right) and her fellow students from Kanazawa



Ms. Matsumoto (left) and Mr. Kamei from Kyoto



Ms. Fujiwara (left) and Ms. Horiuchi from Nara



Ms. Saito (left) and Ms. Murata from Nara



Ms. Okada from Nara



Mr. Nishimoto from Nara



Mr. Yamamoto from Nara

Chernivtsi, Mtskheta and Strasbourg
 Greetings from the Mayors of
 New Member Cities

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that three cities have become new member cities of the League of Historical Cities namely Chernivtsi (Ukraine), Mtskheta (Georgia), and Strasbourg (France). Their memberships were approved at the LHC Board of Directors' Meeting 2010 held last October in Nara, Japan. The followings are the greetings from the Mayors of the above cities. The League enlarged membership to 89 cities from 56 countries.

**City of Chernivtsi
 (Ukraine)**



*Mykola Fedoruk
 Mayor*

We are very grateful for accepting the city of Chernivtsi to the League of Historical Cities. I am sure that it will contribute to development of new interesting projects on cultural heritage preservation of our city, cooperation development with other cities of the world.

The city of Chernivtsi has seen different rules, belonged to various empires, but has always remained respectfully tolerant and wonderful. The atmosphere of Chernivtsi has been formed throughout centuries. It is impossible not to fall in love with Chernivtsi once and forever. After the first visit, you will certainly arrive here again. So welcome to Chernivtsi - the city of mystery of the bygone and the modern, which has been waiting for guests in its nobility and unfailling beauty.

History of Chernivtsi takes its beginning in the old times. Disposition on the crossroads of the trade routs and states' boundary crossings had greatly influenced the city development. In 1365 the Moldavian principality was formed on the lands of Transylvania and Bukovyna. A range of frontier customs, including the one in Chernivtsi, was founded by Moldavian Governor Alexander the Good. Owing to him the first written mention about the city in the "Ordinances about Custom Dues" bearing the date of 8 October, 1408 has reached our times.



This date is now celebrated as annual City Day. Since 1457 Chernivtsi has become the place for fairs and administrative centre of the region.

During its history the city was a few times destroyed, belonged to Ottoman empire, in 1774-1918 - to Austro-Hungarian empire, in 1918-1940 - to Romania, in 1940-1991 to the Soviet Union, since 1991 - to Ukraine.

The period of XVIII - XX centuries was particularly significant in the history of city building. In middle XIX - early XX centuries a lot of architectural monuments were built: City Hall (1848); Central Post Office (1855); Armenian Church (1875); Jewish synagogue (1877); Drama Theatre (1905); Palace of Justice (1906); Railway Station (1908).

The most precious treasure of architectural masterpieces of old Chernivtsi is the former Residence of Bukovynian Metropolitans - the work of famous Czech architect Joseph Hlavka. Now Chernivtsi is a regional administrative centre, its population constitutes 250 thousand citizens. The city is a commercial, cultural, scientific and educational centre; it is situated on the banks of the Prut river and occupies the area of about 150 square kilometers. Chernivtsi is about 50 km away from the border to Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Favourable disposition in the vicinity of EU borders and transport junction, availability of natural, recreational, labor resources, high level of education and science, unique monuments of architecture of diverse epochs and styles create preconditions for city development and beneficial cooperation.



**City of Mtskheta
 (Georgia)**



*Andro Kalandadze
 Mayor*

We are very glad that Mtskheta became a member of the League of Historical Cities. It's worth mention, the role of this organization in introducing the inheritance of historical city to the whole world. World famous Georgian public character and poet Ilia Tchavchavadze said that "the past is as hard foundation of the present as the present of the future" and the reality of these words lies in history itself. These ancient relics help us to preserve our

history. It should be protected and introduced to the rest of the world. We have to set our goals, and implement them together for the better future. All member cities of the League are unique and represent the single model of various civilizations. We will do our best to be a respected member. We will take part in all kind of activities on behalf of the League.

Mtskheta is located approximately 20 kilometers north of present capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, at the confluence of the Aragvi and Mtkvari rivers. Mtskheta was populated in the III-II millennium BC. In the beginning of 3rd millennium BC, the King Farnaoz founded the Georgian kingdom and declared the Mtskheta as the capital of the country and created the alphabet. According to Georgian history



Chernivtsi City Hall

Armazi fortress on the Bagineti mountain, which dates back to the 4th millennium BC played a significant role in cities life, while Mtskheta was the capital of Georgia. The fortress has been destroyed many times by various enemies. Archaeological excavations on the Armazi fortress started from the end of XIX century and it still goes on. So this historical city played an important role as a political, religious and cultural center of the kingdom more than 800 years. Its strategic geographical location increased Mtskheta's historical meaning. Just because of this situation Mtskheta was the main trade city on the silk road between the Caspian and the Black Seas. Mtskheta is named as a "museum-reserve". It was the country's spiritual center, where many valuable archaeological monuments of various epoch meet each other. The Grate Mtskheta Archaeological State Museum-Reserve, which stretches for 30 hectares, is famous for archaeological and architectural monuments. As for the main value of Mtskheta, the churches there are real specimens of art dated back to the medieval centuries. They show the high artistic and

cultural level. It is interesting that 3 of 6 monuments of Georgia, which are under the UNESCO World Heritage Center, situated in Mtskheta. They are:

1. Jvari Church (585-604) which is built on the place where, at the beginning of the IV century, the enlightener of Georgia St. Nino and first Christian Georgian king Mirian erected a large wooden cross.
2. Svetitskhoveli Cathedral stands on the spot of the first Christian church in Georgia. The fragment of these churches are still preserved.
3. Samtavro Monastery XIc. The first Christian royal couple-king Mirian and Queen Nana was buried here.

The greatest restoration activities are on in Mtskheta, but it's authenticity is protected. The rehabilitation program has been given a fine estimation from representative of UNESCO.



City of Strasbourg (France)

Roland Ries
Mayor



Strasbourg is located in the heart of the Upper Rhine Valley, on the boundaries of the German and the Roman worlds. A place of meetings and exchanges but also of conflicts until the end of the Second World War, Strasbourg was chosen as the symbol of reconciliation for the establishment of the Council of Europe. In total, Strasbourg is home to some twenty international organizations. Like Geneva and New York, Strasbourg, without being a State capital, is an international capital. Nowadays, this densely populated region is organized around a network of urban centres not dominated by a single metropolis.

Its centre provides a homogeneous and remarkable urban complex, constructed over the course of the centuries. The layout of the streets is the legacy of the first Roman camp: in the Middle Ages, the medieval town was built around the cathedral, a masterpiece that witnesses the apogee of the city's history. The French town-houses of the 18th century, the German City, or "Neustadt", of the 19th century and contemporary creations complete the architectural features of the city.

Strasbourg's "Grande-Ile" has been a world heritage centre since 1988, identified on the World Heritage List by UNESCO. The "Grande-Ile" site constitutes the historic core, which hosts a large part of the city's central and commercial operations. Its southern side is protected by a conservation area of 73 hectares, established in 1972. The city

contains more than 200 listed or classified historical monuments.

Thus, between its prestigious and invaluable history and the transformations required to meet the needs of its future population, Strasbourg faces a major challenge. We attach equal importance to the Neustadt of the 19th century and to the medieval town. Therefore we intend to submit a new application to UNESCO, to show the link between the past and the present in our city. It is our responsibility to continue building and preserving our city to a high standard of quality, without freezing her in the past. For example, the historic centre is criss-crossed by a modern tram-line, which promotes and encourages traffic not based on the car, and helps to contain both energy use and urban sprawl. The preservation of our historical heritage is essential in this age of economic globalization and contemporary environmental issues, which are "de-regionalising" the future of metropolises such as ours.

After all, Strasbourg does not wish to become a living museum or a show-piece city. On the contrary, as a 21st century metropolis, Strasbourg is building its future by looking back to its roots. Therefore the League of Historical Cities is an important component of the international strategy to enhance the political, economic and cultural attractiveness of Strasbourg. Together, we can define the priorities and identify the strategies for the protection and revitalization of our heritage.

Beyond these considerations, the active participation of Strasbourg in this international network will be an opportunity to exchange information and share experiences with cities like yours, which face similar challenges.

Review of the Youth Forum Held on 12 Oct. 2010, the First Day of the 12th Conference Isoo Tabuchi : Coordinator of the Youth Forum



Isoo Tabuchi
Professor of Nara University of Education,
Coordinator of the Youth Forum in the 12th
World Conference of Historical Cities

Numbers of high school students from Boston, Xian, Gyeongju, Nara, Kanazawa and Kyoto gathered to show their appreciation for their own local areas, which all boast a wealth of historical resources, and to discuss what can be done to hand down those resources to future generations. The Youth Forum was conducted by dividing it into two sessions, namely, Part 1 and Part 2.

Part 1 was held as the first symposium at which participants in the World Conference of Historical Cities gathered following the Opening Ceremony. Session featured eight presentations by students on how to potentially develop their own areas based on the histories of their respective cities. These presentations by young students shared two characteristics in terms of their contents and method of presentation. The first was that specific measures were proposed to promote each local area after taking a look at the past and the future. The second was that the presentations were conducted in a way that was easy on the audience by making use of capabilities of PowerPoint presentation software. The presentations included proposals for tourism promotion measures that utilize historical resources not merely as 'pleasure trip' style tourism resources but also as educational resources that allow visitors and local residents to learn from each other, as well as for actively fostering the development of traditional industries rooted in the identity of each city. Some proposals looked ahead towards a sustainable future by not placing an extra load on the environment, as in the case of a plan to develop bicycle-use tourism routes. The audience listened with nodding appreciation to these proposals.

Part 2 was held in a different conference room where other high school students joined the presenters. Altogether, around 70 students were divided into eight groups within which they went on to exchange opinions and develop friendships with one another. At the conclusion of the Youth Forum, they issued a declaration.

Isoo Tabuchi

The first point was a declaration of their intention to continue their studies: "We have decided to consciously continue learning afresh about the essence of the history and the culture we possess." In other words, the students agreed with one another that 'to have an attitude to try to consciously study their own local area' is important from the standpoint of the "Succession of the Historical City". They also confirmed that today's historical resources have not come down to us merely by chance but that they represent the fruit of the efforts of successive generations to preserve and hand down their own cultural inheritance. Moreover, the students resolved that they are like a set of runners in a relay who have been loaned, temporarily, the baton of historical resources from future generations and tasked to pass it on to the next set of runners.

The second point was an expression of a shared determination "to actively dispatch what we have learned and noticed as individuals involved in the succession of historical cities." They agreed that, for realizing such an aim, they would need to convey the actual information and insights they had studied to the world at large, deepen their mutual understanding through more opportunities to exchange varied viewpoints and ways of thinking, and encourage more people to raise their level of interest in the preservation of historical resources.

The third point was an appeal "to use today's meeting as a form of sustenance, deepen our exchanges from now on also, and expand our network of connections." This forum allowed high school students from diverse regions to meet together, hold discussions, and realize the importance of carrying out mutual exchanges. They confirmed with each other that their affection for historical cities was the same even though they came from places far apart. It can also be said that they reconfirmed that, being young people, and as a result of meeting directly with one another and enjoying an exchange and sense of solidarity, they have become torch bearers for their own historical cities.

I would like to express what I personally felt as a coordinator. I was particularly impressed by the fact that these high school students were able to socialize beyond national and ethnic boundaries and hold serious discussions about the future of their respective historical cities. This gave me a strong sense of hope for the future. It is my wish that a similar forum, in which other high school students can likewise exchange their opinions, will be established on a regular basis as a part of future World Conference of Historical Cities.

The League of Historical Cities Secretariat

International Relations Office,
City of Kyoto
Teramachi Oike, Nakagyo-ku,
Kyoto 604-8571, Japan
Phone: +81-75-222-3072
Fax: +81-75-222-3055
E-mail: lhcs@city.kyoto.jp
URL: <http://www.city.kyoto.jp/somu/kokusai/lhcs/>

The 13th World Conference of Historical Cities in 2012 City of Hue, Vietnam

Contact: Mr. Nguyen Nhien
Director of the Center for International Cooperation
Hue City People's Committee
01 Le Hong Phong Street, Hue City, Vietnam
Phone: +84-54-2220444
Fax : +84-54-2220445
E-mail : hoptacquoctehue@vnn.vn



Imperial City of Hue