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Veliko Turnovo

~Preserving the Heart and Soul of Bulgaria~

Cover Photo: Old Town and Assenevtsi Monument of Veliko Turnovo

*Invitation to the 13th World Conference
of Historical Cities*

16- 18 April., 2012 in Hue, Vietnam



**WORLD
HISTORICAL
CITIES**

The League of Historical Cities Bulletin

No.60: September 2011

Veliko Turnovo: Preserving the Heart and Soul of Bulgaria

The City of Veliko Turnovo

Veliko Turnovo is a city in north central Bulgaria and the administrative centre of Veliko Turnovo Province. Often referred to as the "City of the Tsars", Veliko Turnovo is located on the Yantra River and is famous as the historical capital of the Second Bulgarian Empire, attracting many tourists with its unique architecture.

Until 1965 the name of the town was Turnovo, and this is still the common name. The old city is situated on three hills, Tsarevets, Trapezitsa and Sveta Gora raising amidst the meanders of the Yantra. Tsarevets housed the palaces of the Bulgarian Emperors and the Patriarchate with the Patriarchal Cathedral, as well as a number of administrative and residential edifices surrounded by thick walls.

Trapezitsa was known for its many churches and as the main residence of the nobility. In the Middle Ages it was among the main European centres of culture and gave its name to the architecture of the Turnovo Artistic School, painting of the Turnovo Artistic School and literature.

Veliko Turnovo is the historical and spiritual capital of Bulgaria. If there is one city that embodies Bulgaria's magnificent and dramatic history, it is Veliko Turnovo. Travellers and chroniclers dubbed the city "The Second Rome," "The Third Constantinople," Bogospasen, or Saved by God, Tsarevgrad Tarnov, or The Royal City of Tarnov, as well as "The Empress and Mother of Bulgaria".

Today, Veliko Turnovo is not only a historical centre, but also a dynamic modern city. Here you can find the most significant monuments and relics tracing the path of the Bulgarian people through periods of progress and suffering.

People who has not visited Veliko Turnovo cannot understand Bulgaria and the Bulgarians. Veliko Turnovo was the "homeland of the Bulgarian spirit" during the centuries when Bulgarians did not have their own country. Thanks to their medieval capital city, Bulgarians can count themselves as equal members of the European cultural and spiritual community.

The Tsarevets Fortress, Baldwin's Tower, the Trapezitsa and Sveta Gora hills, as well as numerous churches and monasteries preserve the memories of ancestors who fought with sword and pen for Bulgaria's place in European history. The fortress still echoes with the footsteps and voices of the mightiest rulers, scholars and religious leaders from the Second Bulgarian Empire. Twice - during 1185 and again in



A view of Old Town with Assenevtsi Monument

1879 - the Bulgarian state was resurrected in Veliko Turnovo. The first Bulgarian Constitution, known as the Turnovo Constitution, was ratified here. In 1908 Bulgarians declared their independence in Veliko Turnovo. This amazing city should not only be seen, but also felt. To visitors with open hearts and minds, the town in return reveals its secrets and recounts legends of its kings, noblemen, monks and scholars who kept the Bulgarian spirit alive during its turbulent, centuries long history.

The eaves of Revival Period houses "kiss" above the steep and narrow streets. The pavements teem with young people, artists and tourists - all drinking in the spirit of Veliko Turnovo. Veliko Turnovo enchants everyone who visits or just passes through by chance. In spring and summer cascades of flowers tumbling from the terraces of the old houses offer picturesque sights. The clever hands of icon painters and woodcarvers on Samovodskata charshiya, or Samovodska Square, conjure up one-of-a-kind souvenirs. Craftsmen and artists are the city's living treasures.

Lively and boisterous groups of students from Veliko Turnovo's two universities fill the city's streets, squares and pubs. They particularly enjoy gathering at the foot of the Asen Dynasty monument. Ambitious young people from St Cyril and Methodius University and the Vasil Levski National Military University compete every year for academic prizes founded and awarded by the city council. These honours help jump start the winners' careers.

Veliko Turnovo is a city that leaves an impression on one's mind. Here you'll feel at home amidst unfamiliar yet open and welcoming people who greet you like an old friend. This royal city of Bulgaria boasts a natural beauty and an exceptionally rich cultural and historical heritage. Yet the city's true wealth lies in its people.

Affectionately called *bolyari*, or noblemen,

by other Bulgarians, Veliko Turnovo natives have a mission: to preserve and pass on Bulgaria's heritage. Thanks to their dedication, all Bulgarians can feel proud when the national flag unfurls atop the fortress of the medieval rulers who put Bulgaria on the map of Europe so many centuries ago!

Whether you come here for the first time or this is just another trip to your favorite city, there's always something new for you to discover.

If you're interested in the old history of Veliko Turnovo or the places connected with the glory of the Bulgarian Kingdom during the Middle Ages, you must visit the emblem of the city - the fortress hill "Tsarevets" which is a medieval stronghold located on a hill with the same name in Veliko Turnovo in northern Bulgaria. It served as the Second Bulgarian Empire's primary fortress and strongest bulwark from 1185 to 1393, housing the royal and the patriarchal palaces, and is a popular tourist attraction.

The visitors have the unique chance to enjoy The Sound and Light audiovisual show is an attraction carried out in the evening that uses three lasers, variegated lights, dramatic music and church bells to tell the story of the fall of Turnovo to the Ottomans, as well as other key moments of the history of Bulgaria. This large-scale show has been organized at Tsarevets since 1985, when the 800-year anniversary of the Uprising of Asen and Peter was celebrated.

To the southwest of the Tsarevets Hill and in the immediate proximity of the Archaeological Museum is situated the museum of "The Bulgarian Revival and the Constituent Assembly". Photos, original documents and materials, and veritable furnishings vouch for the history of the Veliko Turnovo region during the period of the 15th to the 19th centuries are kept here.

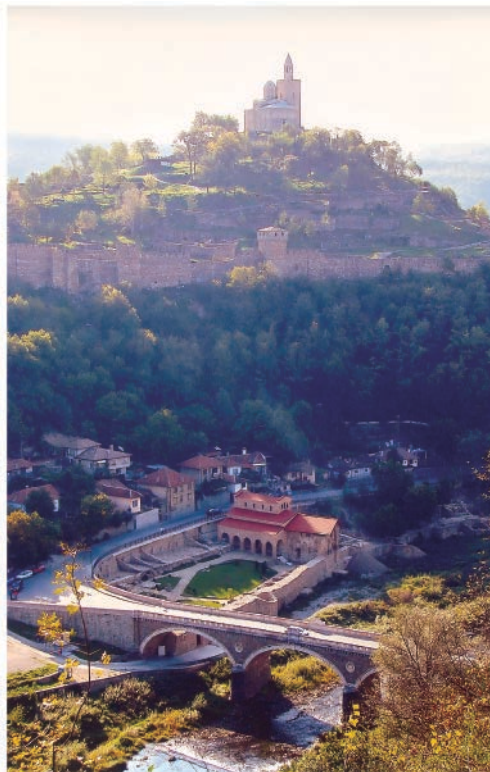
The museum stores some of the best pieces of the art of icon painting - several of them are genuine masterpieces of the Orthodox Christian inheritance. On the last floor is the restored hall, where, in 1879, the Constituent Assembly was in session, during which the First Bulgarian Constitution was proclaimed. That is the place, where the first Prince of independent Bulgaria - Alexander Batenberg - was chosen. Furthermore, the decision for the annexation of Eastern Roumeliya to the Kingdom of Bulgaria was made here.

A building with extremely unique in its exterior and interior design is yet another

piece of work of the eminent Renaissance master Kolyo Ficheto, whose monument rises in the park in front of the central entrance. During the second half of the 19th century master Kolyo Ficheto had built still another buildings in Turnovo: the Saint Constantine and Helena Church, the Hadji Nikoli Inn, the House with the Monkey, and many others.

Many of the tourists include in their schedule also the Saint Forty Martyrs Church. The church, dedicated to the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, was built and painted on the order of Bulgarian tsar Ivan Asen II in honour of his important victory near Klokotnitsa over the Despotate of Epirus under Theodore Ducas on 9 March 1230. The name of the church came naturally as the battle took place on the day of the feast of Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. A royal church during the reign of Ivan Asen II, it was the main church of the Great Lavra monastery at the foot of Tsarevets on the left bank of the Yantra River.

The tourists from different countries of the world don't miss the chance to stop at the Cathedral church "The Birth of the Holy Virgin" - the biggest active church in the city. They can also visit one of the many beautiful monasteries in the region or the ruins of the Roman city Nicopolis-ad-Istrum. For the guests who enjoy outdoor activities the region of Veliko Turnovo can offer many opportunities and pleasant surprises.



A View of Tsarevets Fortress, a Medieval Stronghold and Forty Martyrs Church, also a medieval Eastern Orthodox Church



Museum Revival and Constituent Assembly



Tsarevets Fortress



Saint Forty Matyrs Church

For further information

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Themes of the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities

from 16 to 18 April 2012 in Hue, Vietnam

The Secretariat is pleased to introduce the themes of the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities to be held from 16 April to 18 April in 2012 in Hue, Vietnam. Please be prepared and get ready for the registration. The registration will start from 1 October 2011. Please access to the Conference Official Website at <http://www.lhchue2012.org.vn/> for more details.

Main Theme: DEFINING UNIVERSAL HERITAGE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

As a general rule no country can remain distant from interaction with the region and the world in this age of globalization. Under such circumstances, every developing country faces different problems at different periods of development. Each country has to deal with these problems according to her economic, political, and cultural background. Thus, they will be able to integrate with the development process in a healthy way.

The aforementioned factors also pose a series of problems to cities that have assets of historical value. The big dilemma for these countries is how to protect their assets from extremism and the wave of the current globalization.

Moreover, they are facing the problem of how to protect their cultural values and how could the ancient urban areas preserve their own values while facing the globalization trend. Hue used to be a vital urban center of the region from the mid 16 century to the end of 18 century; and became the capital of Vietnam in early 19 and mid 20 century.

Therefore it was the centre of focus and a place of national epitome in different fields. It was the gathering place of tangible and intangible culture, and the representative of nation during the 19 century up to the mid of 20 century.

Nowadays, Hue as well as other historical cities is facing serious challenges from the current trend of globalization in the path of integration and development.

Therefore, at present, finding a solution to resolve the above problem; and chose the right way between conservation and development is not only an important task for Hue city, but also for other historical cities.

Sub Theme for Youth Forum: YOUTH AWARENESS AND ACTION IN PROMOTING TRADITIONAL HERITAGE VALUES

Apart from some of its modest advantages that need time, the process of global integration and development has been inserting intense pressure on historical cities around the world. Cultural heritage consists of old traditional houses, vestiges and relics, villages, group of architectural buildings and monuments, and natural landscapes which reflect the development process of community and have outstanding universal value.

Nowadays, the value of these world heritage properties is degraded or is in danger of extinction. Some of the main hazards that

cause these problems are the construction of new infrastructure systems, illegal activities of local people, and lack of knowledge about the recognition of the value of cultural heritage accompanied by the misleading information by local authorities.

Meanwhile, the intangible heritage assets such as the precious traditional practices, customs, lifestyle and ways of communication, and traditional methods of trading by people are also not maintained and are fading away because of the adaptation to modern life, computer age and information revolution.

It is said that the integration process as well as the technical and scientific breakthrough are posing increased challenges to many historical cities who are trying to bring about new changes for the preservation of their heritage. Some of these challenges are the rapid popularization of the value of cultural heritage by the internet; and the need for the discovery of new spots of attraction and interest which would elevate the local economy through tourism and related services.

The 13th world conference of historical cities calls for the youth to launch some initiatives, envision new thought and take positive actions to preserve and promote traditional cultural heritage.

Sub Theme for Workshop: INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

In human history, in a narrow sense, industry plays an important role in creating big urban cities. As a result of industrial civilization, new methods of scientific production are created. On the other hand in a wider sense, industry marks the development of urban cities, territories, nations as well as the developmental trend of our time.

So we could comfortably say that industrial heritage is a kind of world cultural heritage reflecting the sum of human being's adaptation process to social development. So, the study of industrial heritage means that we are learning about the footprints of industrial culture which are of historical, technological, social, architectural or scientific value. We also acquire the knowledge about those cultural aspects generated during the process of manufacturing.

However, industrial heritage has encountered serious challenges influencing the existence and transmission of its historical and cultural value. Regretfully, introducing, studying and identifying about its role in human cultural heritage are not popular in many countries.

On the other hand, the trend of identifying, recording and solving these problems of industrial heritage have been troubled in many



Tu Duc Tomb

cities especially historical cities famous for traditional handicraft villages. This conference will be a stage for us where we could research sufficiently and profoundly to find professional concepts on industrial heritage which is very close to us, but yet far from our adequate approach.

**Sub Theme for Round Table:
HERITAGE POLICY AND ACTION PLAN
FOR A BETTER LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

Any efforts to preserve and promote heritage value need the capacity to adapt to several changes in global social-economic integration. The management of historical cities to reach sustainable development while preserving and promoting their cultural heritage is a difficult task. This task needs to find out ways to create new values that should be in accord with social-economic development context, but still keep the traditional value inherited from their ancestors

and pass it to the future generation.

It is time for us - policy makers - to figure out well balanced policies and action plans that could achieve infrastructural development and its related services. Simultaneously, we have to find ways to fulfill the goal of preserving and promoting urban heritage value.

Furthermore, we need to lighten the burden on the lifestyle and customs of local area, territory and country. We are supposed to define and link active and positive engagement of community in urban planning process as well as implement policies to warrant protecting the interest of historical cities.

The Roundtable for Mayors or Representatives would promote sharing the experience in the management of historical cities from different viewpoints.



Tu Duc Tomb



Huyen Tran Princess Temple



Citadel of Hue

<The 13th World Conference of Historical Cities>

Period : 16-18 April 2012 (Pre-conference event will be provided on 15 Apr.)

Theme : "Defining Universal Heritage Challenges and Solutions"

Conference Venue: Hotel Saigon Morin, Hue (<http://www.morinhotel.com.vn>)

Program:

Day 0 (15 Apr.)

All day: Participants will enjoy last day events of the Hue Festival which is to be held from 7 to 15 April.

Night : Participants will take part in the Closing Ceremony of Hue Festival

***About Hue Festival...**

Hue Festival is a big international cultural event organized every two years since year 2000, at the initiative of Hue City and the French Embassy in Vietnam.

This festival is one of the biggest cultural events not only for Hue City, but the whole country as well. In the last festival held in 2010, Art troupes from about 25 countries presented diverse performances ranging from dance, music, circus, drama and others.

Day 1 (16 Apr.)

AM Opening Ceremony
Keynote Lecture
Youth Forum
PM Youth Forum / Workshop

Day 2 (17 Apr.)

AM Workshop
Round Table Forum
PM Round Table Forum

Day 3 (18 Apr.)

AM Excursion
PM General Overview for the Session
General Assembly of the League of Historical Cities 2012
Closing Ceremony

Registration:

<Date of Commencement>
1 October 2011

<Registration Fee>

Registration to be made by the end of December 2011: USD 500.00- per person
Registration to be made on and after 1 January 2012: USD 800.00- per person

*** The registration fee covers the followings:**

Participation in the conference including excursion on 18 April, Accommodation (for any 3 nights between 14-18 April 2012) in Hue, Meals during the conference and transportation from Phu Bai airport Hue to hotels and vice versa.

<Method of Registration>

Internet (<http://www.lhchue2012.org.vn/>) or download the registration form from the official website and either e-mail (hoptacquoctehue@vnn.vn), Fax (+84-54-2220445) or post it to 01 Le Hong Phong Street, Hue City, Vietnam

<Method of Payment of Registration Fee>

1. Bank transfer
2. Pay on-site (only cash accepted)

Contact for the 13th Conference

**The 13th World Conference of
Historical Cities Secretariat
(City of Hue)**

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<http://www.lhchue2012.org.vn/>

**The League of Historical Cities
Secretariat (City of Kyoto)**

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Greetings from the Host Mayor of the 13th Conference and Mayors of New Member Cities

**Mr. Phan
Trong Vinh**

*Chairman of Hue City
People's Committee*



Welcome to the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities which is being held from April 16 to 18, 2012 in Hue, Vietnam. Following the success of the 12th World Conference 2010 in Nara (Japan), it is a great honour for Hue, as the first city of South East Asia, to host the 13th World Conference of Historical Cities.

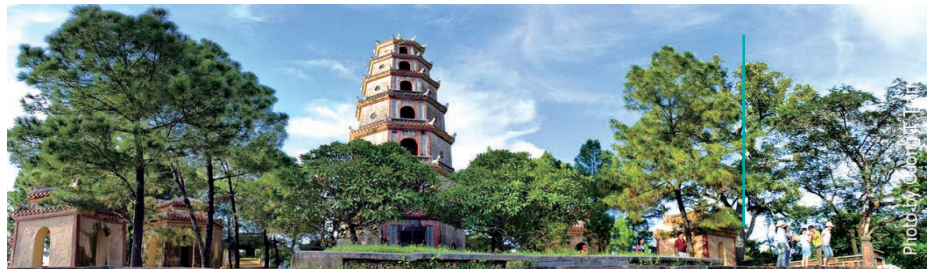
Under the theme "Defining universal heritage challenges and solutions", the conference once again brings together mayors, city

representatives and professionals from all over the world in order to exchange ideas and broaden our perspectives for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage values of our historical cities.

During this 3-day conference, you will be able to participate in multiple sessions, including a roundtable for mayors, a youth forum for university students and workshop for experts. In addition, there will be art exhibitions and excursions to the historical sites of Hue's Ancient city.

On behalf of Hue city leaders and its people, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the honourable delegates attending the 2012 Conference.

Looking forward to meeting you in Hue city!



Thien Mu pagoda

<Applicants for Round table, Workshop and Youth Forum Wanted ! >

City of Hue invites those interested in making a presentation based on the following themes in the Round Table, Workshop and Youth Forum of the 13th Conference.

Persons who wish to make a presentation, please read the followings and contact the 13th Conference Secretariat (City of Hue) at

Tel: 84 54 3817972/ 84 54 3817971
Fax: 84 54 2220445/ 84 54 3817972
Email: hoptacquoctehue@vnn.vn

Round Table (Meeting for Mayors and Administrative Officials to be held on 17 Apr.)
<Theme> "Heritage Policy and Action Plan for a Better Local Governance"

Workshop (Meeting for Experts and Specialists to be held on 16 and 17 Apr.)
<Theme> "Industrial Heritage Challenges and Solutions"

* Submission of the abstract in English (1000 words) by 31 December is required for applying for making a presentation in Round Table or Workshop. The organizer will notify selected speakers, who will then be required to submit the full manuscript no later than 15 Mar. 2012.

Youth Forum (Meeting for University Students from member cities from 16 to 18 Apr.)
<Theme> "Youth Awareness and Action in Promoting Traditional Heritage Values"

- * Submission of the abstract in English (1000 words) by 31 December is required.
- * Please note that the abstract must be submitted via member cities of the League of Historical Cities. Each member city can recommend one student (or one group).
- * Please state students' name, school, grade, age and sex in the abstract.
- * Members of the League of Historical Cities are required to submit a recommendation letter for the applicant together with the abstract.
- * Youth Forum speakers will be selected in the screening to be held in Hue in January. The organizer will notify them via their member cities. Later, the speakers are required to submit the full manuscript no later than 15 Mar., 2012.
- * Participation fee for the Youth Forum is 500 USD per student. The fee includes the participation in the forum and items mentioned under <Registration> in page 5.



Khai Dinh Tomb

Three cities have been accepted as new members of the League of Historical Cities, namely Ankara (Turkey), Sanliurfa (Turkey) and Termez (Uzbekistan) at the Board Meeting of 2011 held in Hue, Vietnam last June. The Secretariat is pleased to introduce Ankara and Termez in this issue.

City of Ankara (Turkey)

Melih Gokcek
Mayor



I would like to express my deepest gratitude for being admitted to the League of Historical Cities. Preservation of cultural heritage and sustainability is one of the major duties of local administrations. Therefore, it is a great opportunity for us to be the member of the League which gathers information and experiences, throwing light on the works of people from all over the world and creates ideas about challenges and solutions related to the preservation of historical and cultural heritage. I am certain that our Municipality is going to make significant contributions to the favourable works performed by the League up to now. We will be very proud to share the experiences related to the preservation and sustainability of historical and cultural heritage for our Municipality. We will play an active role in the future works of the League.

I would like to introduce our project on Ulus Historical City Centre Renovation Area. Ulus is the first residential area of Ankara. One of the main purposes of our municipality is the restoration of this area as a prestigious and historical city centre. After the declaration of Ankara as the capital of the Republic of Turkey, Ulus has been one of the trade centres of Ankara. In this region, there are approximately 30,000 independent sections mostly in bazaars and inns. The renovation project includes the region centred around Ulus, Youth Park in the south, Atifbey crossroad including Rome Bath in the

north-west and Ankara Castle and Haci Bayram Veli Mosque in the east. Hacibayram quarter is the connecting point of Ismetpasa, Hidirtepe and Atifbey shanty house quarters. The project area is approximately 210 Hectares. Hacibayram Veli Mosque, one of the historical symbols of Ankara, is included in the project area. The mosque, which is near Augustus's Monument, was constructed between 1420 and 1450. External structure of it is very plain while its inner architecture is very rich, having valuable furniture works and ornaments. Although 12,000 people visit Hacibayram Mosque a day, 5,000 domestic and foreign tourists visit Augustus's Monument every day. Adding them to those who occupy about 20,000 commercial and public building in that vicinity, it comes to a mass of between 47,000 and 50,000 people in the daily life.

In Hacibayram region, 95 of the parcels from 242 have been confiscated in lieu of payment of about 100,000.00 TL from the budget of the Greater Ankara Municipality. The confiscated parcels and the buildings on them have been leased out by the Municipality to third party persons and organizations for the right of construction for 25 years by a model similar to build-operate-transfer model. The third parties who have been given the right of construction have been conducting their projects for the restoration of buildings and these projects are screened by KUDEM, the project office. There are 83 buildings which have been approved to be restored by this method and the restoration of 60 of them has been completed recently. The whole renovation projects are planned to be finalized up to 2012. At the end of the project, Ulus Historical City Center will gain a perfect appearance worthy of the capital city of Turkey.



Haci Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Monument



Haci Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Monument after renovation of the region



Old Ankara Houses

City of Termez (Uzbekistan)

Nemat Soatov
Mayor



On behalf of all inhabitants of ancient Termez, I would like to thank the League for the honor given to our city to stand on a par with other world renowned cities.

Membership in such a prestigious organization provides us enormous opportunities to study deeply one of the oldest cities of the world together with scientists from other countries. Termez is an administrative, economic and cultural centre of Surkhan-Darya province of Uzbekistan.

The city, built at the crossroads of the Great Silk Road, from the earliest times served as a link between North and South, East and West. For a long time various religions coexisted here.

The Kushan Empire, having a military power almost equal to China, Rome and Parthia, was aware of the importance of Termez, which controlled the vital trade route leading from India to Margiana and Parthia through the Oxus valley, as well as across the Caspian Sea to the mouth of the Rion and through the Black Sea to

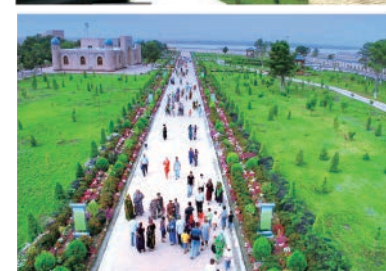
the Roman territories. The Islamic period created an artistic and intellectual atmosphere, leading to the emergence of great historic individuals such as Mukhammed Ali Khakim At-Termeziy, Abu Isa At-Termiziy and Sheikh Varrah Termiziy, highly honored in the Muslim world.

Despite all the odds Termez faced in different periods of history, it maintained its traditional significance and inherent features, while acquiring new appearance by achieving qualitatively new degree in its development. However, Termez got a huge impact in its development, especially during the Independence of Uzbekistan.

As a result of the resolution of the 30 Session of the UNESCO in November 1999 and in accordance with the Decree of the Cabinet of the Republic of Uzbekistan, it was decided to celebrate the 2500th anniversary of Termez at an international level.

Today Termez has become even more beautiful, the streets have been broadened and roads have been renewed.

While preserving its historical heritage, the city is becoming a manufacturing and transport and logistics hub of the region and an important part of the modern Silk Road. There is no doubt that the combination of traditional history and the new phenomena of modernity would lead to a glorious future.



Minoru Senda

Member of the Planning Committee for the
12th World Conference of Historical Cities,
Director of Nara Prefectural Library
Information Center



Review of the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities Minoru Senda : A Member of the Planning Committee for the 12th Conference

I was involved in the planning of the 12th World Conference of Historical Cities, which was held in Nara last year, and I also participated in the Roundtable Meeting as a coordinator. In the following paragraphs, I would like to manifest the impressions I gained from taking part.

(1) At the Roundtable Meeting particularly, each of the cities presented reports that were motivated by their wish to announce, at an international level, the results of measures they had been working on for a long time. Moreover, each employed their own distinct and aspiring urban development method from which I learned a great deal.

As a consequence, I believe it will be very important to widely publicize the fruits of this conference. They should be disseminated as widely as possible among those officials from Japan's local authorities and private NPO members responsible for urban development.

Unless this is done, there will be little meaning in holding the conference itself. To be specific, it would be useful to create opportunities for delivering details about all the discussions to local residents of Nara Prefecture and Nara, the host city.

These details should be available in an easy-to-understand way that will allow people to gain some insights for thinking about how historical cities should be. If this is not done, the individual messages of the World Conference of Historical Cities will remain disconnected and not unified on the issues where the views of the city and those of the prefectural residents apparently differ. Thus, the significance of unifying the conference will be lost.

Moreover, it is our duty to ensure that residents of Nara Prefecture take pride in the fact that Asuka, Fujiwara-kyo and Heijo-kyo were the first real cities established in Japan.

(2) As a coordinator, in my conclusion remarks at the close of the discussion, I stated that the purpose of the World Conference of Historical Cities was to restore the identity of each city, and there were some comments from the floor that agreed with this stance.

People often talk about "the creation of historical cities" but it should be understood that historical cities are valuable not simply because of their history. They are also valuable because their residents share the basis of a way of life through living in them. However, I was surprised how few remarks were actually expressed stemming from that viewpoint. Instead, the discussions were focused almost entirely on the methods and techniques of urban revitalization.

(3) This last point is connected with what I have mentioned above. Because most of the participants were people engaged in fields related to architectural history, urban planning or urban engineering, there was no philosophical discussion concerning the kind of issues that historical cities tend to raise among people.

I wonder why no such discussion took place? One conceivable answer is that none of the participants came with an attitude that questioned the basis of the conference.

As a result, a strong emphasis was placed on technical issues during discussions. This leads me to the assumption that the trend of future conferences could easily run in the direction of superficiality. If the World Conference of Historical Cities is to truly make its mark and take up the problems of history and cities as its own concern, it will need to become a forum for discussion about the essential problems of historical cities.

For example, it should address the meanings that historical spaces have for people by inviting the participation of other professionals from the fields of literature, philosophy, history, and religious studies. If not, as I mentioned before, the conference will simply remain a place where engineers exhibit their techniques while other participants respectfully listen to them.

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The 13th World Conference of Historical Cities in Hue, Vietnam 16-18 April, 2012

Theme: Defining Universal Heritage Challenges and Solutions

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Noon Gate, Imperial City, at night