

WORLD

The League of Historical Cities Bulletin

# HISTORICAL CITIES

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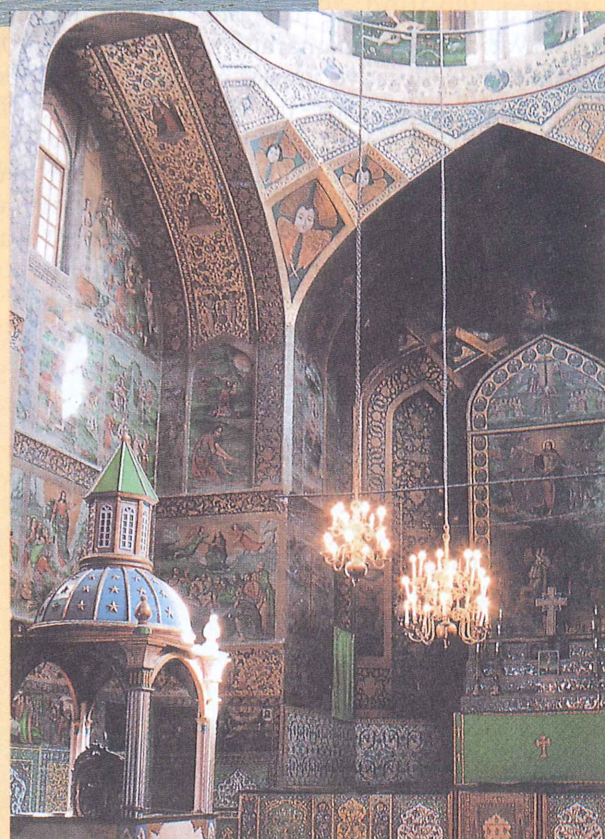
The Houses of Parliament in Budapest

**Budapest**

**Isfahan**

**5th World Conference in Xian**

**Interview**



Kelisa-ye Vank in Isfahan

## Conserving Budapest's Heritage

A central European Capital defending its character



View from the Gellert Hill to the Southern part of the city with a prospect of the Chain Bridge, the Castle of Buda and the Margaret Island

Throughout the world, historical cities are struggling for the preservation of their character. Despite the destructive impact of modern life and industry, the city still bears many signs of its historical legacy and native geographical features.

However, the task of preserving Budapest's history must be treated differently. Although the fundamental problems are the same. The solutions and methods vary according to each city. Each has original features, a historical past and resulting differences in its character as well as a different range of possibilities in the present. [fiscal and logistical differences] In order to help the reader identify with the problems of our city we would like to introduce the most important events in the development of Budapest.

The first characteristic of Budapest is its geographical position. Budapest lies in the heart of

the Carpathian basin, and has been the center of the Hungarian state for 1100 years-although not in the geographical sense. However, it is sufficient to look at the network of roads as well as different geographical and economic features to understand why Budapest was first inhabited and continued to flourish as a commercial and military centre since

the prehistoric age.

The most advantageous place within hundreds of kilometers for crossing the Danube can be found here; Budapest is a bridge city or, if the river is considered to be the border as it was during the Roman times, a gateway.

Everything in Hungary, the roads, the railways, and even the telephone lines come to or start



Baroque Mansion-nowadays a museum

out from Budapest.

Budapest has been the capital of Hungary since the mid-19th century, at which time a large number of public buildings were erected, railways constructed and the city entered a period of rapid economic development. At first Viennese architecture was imitated, eclectic imperial capital, but by the turn of the century Budapest was one of the initiators of secession (Art Nouveau).

The last 150 year period is the age of urbanization. This period still continues today, despite the two wars and the siege of Budapest during 1944-45 which brought 40% of the city to the ground. Three months of war made the picture of the city similar to the time when it was occupied by the Turks, but in 20th century proportions.

This lively history of destruction and creation makes Budapest multi-faceted and dynamic, but simultaneously threatens its monuments with destruction.

Nevertheless, the overall picture of the city is balanced, with only the mass public housing projects of the past few decades tainting its original character.

However, due to the traditions in city planning and intensive research into the past face of the city, there is hope to save the charm of Budapest for the future. although it may not be as unified as some other western historical cities, it exudes a historical atmosphere with characteristic charm unequalled by other modern industrial metropolises.

The urban planning methods used in Budapest were published in 1992 and summarised the most important principles of similar western research projects (Hamburg, Vienna, small Austrian cities and Ronchamp), as well as Hungarian city research

projects documented since 1910.

The complex architectural analysis distinguishes 16 regions, blocks of buildings or parts of the city with special characteristics which require special protection.

Not all of these are of World Heritage importance, and the plan only tries to preserve their pleasant mood and original identity for those living there. However, parts of the inner city stretching for 5 kilometers along the Danube are registered on the list of UNESCO's Cultural World Heritage sites. This area is eclectic in architectural style and in regards to city planning. It also contains significant historical gothic, baroque and more modern romantic and secessionist styles with some necessary recent supplements.

A special problem of Budapest are the empty lots scattered throughout the city. The most recent of these are a result of the bombing during the Second World War, as well as demolition for various reasons.

The remaining parts of buildings on these sites require either restoration or preservation as ruins. However, some good things did arise from the misfortunes of war and artifacts of historical value were found from under these ruins either accidentally or by planned excavation.

For example, the base walls of ancient Roman buildings whose rooftops were burnt off by the Huns or the Goths, and a medieval garbage disposal site which hid 52 gothic statues from a palace of King Sigismund (approx. 1380) were found. Political unrest and modern life also took their toll on old buildings, some of which were destroyed in order to build bridges, a subway and so on.

Another important issue is that in spite of many plans Budapest is "the city of unfinished concepts". Experts know very well that it takes decades of hard work to give unified image to a city. Before a power, ideology, trend or other factors can terminally change a city, the next ones arrive bringing new ideas, concepts and colours.

It is worth mentioning only for its peculiarity that 40 years ago a concept was aimed at changing Budapest's circular structure to an orthogonal square network of roads for political reasons. Regimes come and regimes go, plans are partly implemented and partly forgotten but the city lives on and formulates its character.

There is no architectural concept able to provide the city with features more original and true than history itself.



The bridgehead of Elisabeth Bridge



Meidan-e Imam

## Isfahan in Iran

The emergence and formation of the historic city of Isfahan dates back many years before Christ. Two villages named Sarauyeh and Mehrin were united together after sometime and the foundation of urbanization and civilization was formed at this area. The process of development and urbanization of this city was intensified during the reigns of sultan Malek Shah Saljughhi and Ale-Buyah (935-1196 AD).

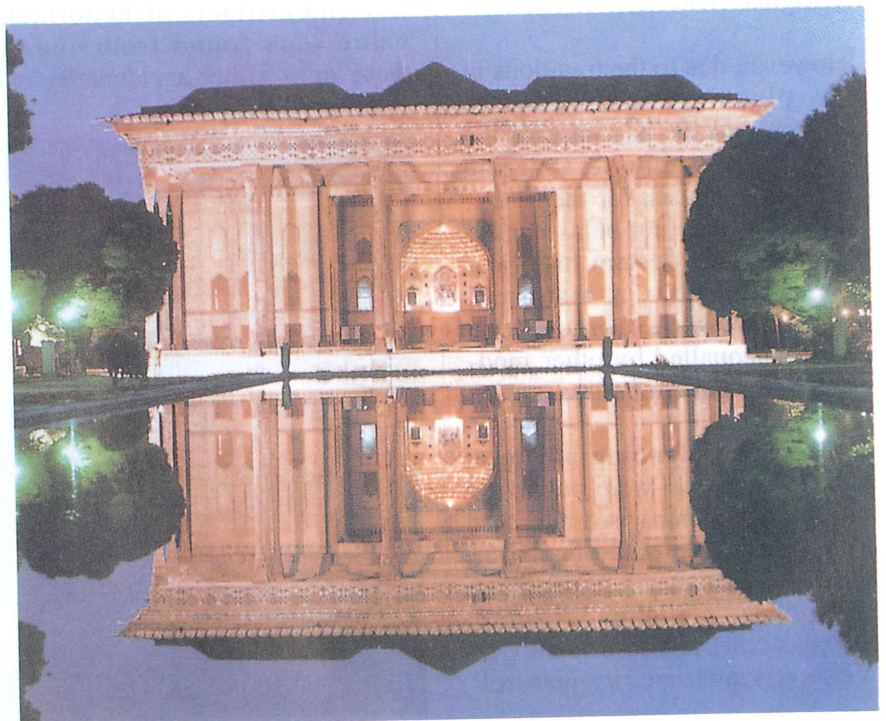
The first development projects, and city buildings of this period had elements from Persian-Islamic patterns. The city expanded to the north, north east and towards the south. with Masjed-e jame (11th century AD) as its center.

After this period, in the course of transferring the capital of the country to Isfahan in the Safavi period the city was redeveloped and took on a new style with regard to the city-planning and architecture. With guidance by such learned scholars as Shaykh

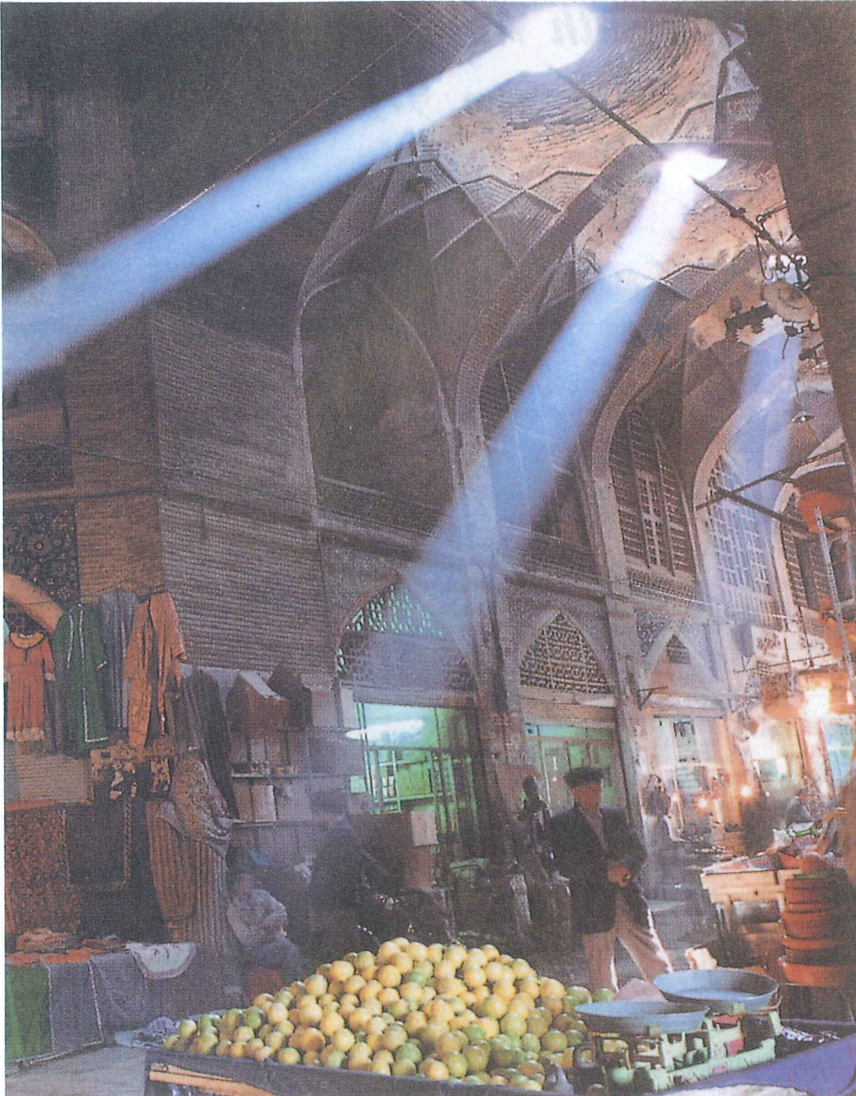
Bahei and engineers such as master Ali Akbar Memar et al. The unique architecture and artistic masterpieces like Chehelsoun Palace, Si-o se pol, Pole e khagu, Naghsh-e- jahan square (Emam) (1612 AD), and Chahar bagh street were built according to the latest city planning and

architectural standards and principles of that time. Presently the most of these buildings like the magnificent Masjed-e-Eman are registered on the UNESCO's list as World Cultural Heritage Sites.

There are two important geographical factors which protect



Chehelstoun Palace



Bazaar-e-Gheisarieh

Isfahan and its ancient structures from ruin throughout the centuries. On one hand, the low rainfall (110 mm per annual) and the low rate of moisture protect the buildings. On the other hand, this ancient city is not situated on a fault line, and this has a proportionally effective role in preserving the traditional structures of the city.

However, unfortunately in the course of time, due to rapid economical development and changing life styles, people are moving from the old and traditional quarters to the modern part of the city.

These old quarters were left-empty of dwellers and has lost its

dynamic functions of the city.

In this respect, Isfahan municipality already carried out activities to restore the important functions to these quarter and to rebuild traditional structures.

These activities include rehabilitation and reorganization of Meidan-e-Emam (1612AD) and elimination of travelling by automobile over the Historical bridges (si-o- sepol, khaju, shahrstan). In mid 1994, the municipality has established an organization for rehabilitation and conservation of Isfahan city” This group seeks to preserve precious cultural, artistic and architectural heritage which has formed the history of the city

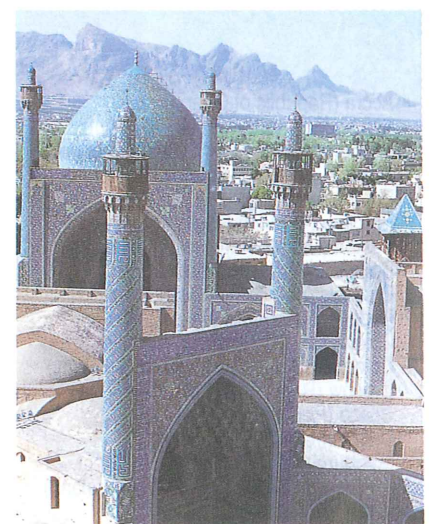
since the ancient times. Another function of this group is to create harmony and balance between the traditional areas of the city and modern structures, with due attention to economical and social perspective and ultimately to revive the traditional structure of the city.

The rehabilitation and reconstruction of Darvazeh Dilat Square and chahar-bagh street are to be put on the priority list of this organization and preliminary stage of the design is to be accomplished.

More over, to revive traditional quarters of the city, any urban activites in ancient areas are strictly controlled by this organization.

Further more, after negotiation between the cultural heritage organization and some city government officials some historic quarters were chosen for rebuilding. In this way the private sector has been motivated to invest in the ancient quarters, and ultimately revitalized the functions of these quarters: Dardasht, joy-bareh, khaju and jolfa.

For more information on the rehabilitation activities in Isfahan, please contact Mr. Khalil Jafarpisheh chief of public and International Relations Office of the organization.



Masjed-e Emam

# Information Update for the 5th World Conference of Historical Cities in Xian, Sep. 9-13, 1996

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Date	Morning	Noon	Afternoon	Evening
<b>SEPT 9th (Mon)</b>		<b>Luncheon</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 12:00 13:50	<b>Preliminary Session</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 14:30 15:30 <b>Press Conference</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 16:00 17:00	<b>Cocktail Party</b> (Golden Flower hotel) 18:30 19:00 <b>Welcome Party</b> (Golden Flower hotel) 21:00
<b>SEPT 10th (Tue)</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony</b> (Grand New World Hotel) 9:00 11:30	<b>Luncheon</b> (Grand Castle Hotel Xian) 12:00 13:30	<b>Session</b> (Grand Castle Hotel Xian) 14:30 15:40 <b>General Assembly of the League</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 16:10 18:10	<b>Tang Dynasty style Song and Dance show</b> (Tang Yue Gong) 19:10 21:45
<b>SEPT 11th (Wed)</b>	<b>Session</b> 8:30 11:00	<b>Luncheon</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 11:30 13:40	<b>The Museum of Emperor Qin Shi Huang's Terra-Cotta Warriors &amp; Horses</b> <b>The Shaanxi History Museum</b> 13:40 17:30	<b>Dinner Party</b> (Xian Garden Hotel) 18:00 19:30 <b>Shopping</b> 19:45 21:15
<b>SEPT 12th (Thu)</b>	<b>Attending Xian Investment and Trade Forum</b> 9:00 10:30	<b>Closing Ceremony of Conference of Historical Cities</b> 11:00 12:00 <b>Presentation to the Press</b> 12:15 12:40 <b>Garden Party</b> (Chun Xiao Garden) 12:50 14:30	<b>Visit to the Hi-Tech area</b> 15:20 16:45	<b>Welcome Party to the Ancient Culture and Arts Festival</b> (Jianguo Hotel Xian) 17:30 19:30 <b>Opening Ceremony of the Ancient Culture and Arts Festival</b> (Gymnasium) 20:00 21:30 <b>Fire works from City Wall</b> (Nancheng gate) 21:30 22:30
<b>SEPT 13th (Fri)</b>	<b>FREE (LEFT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PARTICIPANTS)</b>			

### The League of Historical Cities List

- |                                                                  |                                                 |                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Accra (Republic of Ghana)                                        | Fez (Kingdom of Morocco)                        | Montreal (Canada)                              |
| Alexandria (Arab Republic of Egypt)                              | Florence (Republic of Italy)                    | Nanjing (People's Republic of China)           |
| Amsterdam (Kingdom of the Netherlands)                           | Guadalajara (United Mexican States)             | Paris (French Republic)                        |
| Athens (Hellenic Republic)                                       | Hanoi (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)          | Prague (Czech Republic)                        |
| Barcelona (Spain)                                                | Isfahan (Islamic Republic of Iran)              | Quebec (Canada)                                |
| Bordeaux (French Republic)                                       | Istanbul (Republic of Turkey)                   | Rio de Janeiro (Federative Republic of Brazil) |
| Boston (United States of America)                                | Jerusalem (State of Israel)                     | Rome (Republic of Italy)                       |
| Bratislava (Slovak Republic)                                     | Kaesong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) | Tashkent (Republic of Uzbekistan)              |
| Brussels (Kingdom of Belgium)                                    | Katmandu (Kingdom of Nepal)                     | Tunis (Republic of Tunisia)                    |
| Budapest (Republic of Hungary)                                   | Kiev (Ukraine)                                  | Ulan Bator (Mongolia)                          |
| Chiang Mai (Kingdom of Thailand)                                 | Kyongju (Republic of Korea)                     | Varanasi (India)                               |
| Cologne (Federal Republic of Germany)                            | Kyoto (Japan)                                   | Vienna (Republic of Austria)                   |
| Cracow (Republic of Poland)                                      | Lahore (Islamic Republic of Pakistan)           | Xian (People's Republic of China)              |
| Cusco (Republic of Peru)                                         | Lisbon (Portuguese Republic)                    | Yogyakarta (Republic of Indonesia)             |
| Dublin (Ireland)                                                 | Melbourne (Australia)                           | Zagreb (Republic of Croatia)                   |
| Edinburgh (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) | Mexico City (United Mexican States)             | Zurich (Swiss Confederation)                   |

## Scenic spot in Xian

### The City Wall

The city wall of Xian is an extension of the old Tang Dynasty structure, as a result of this wall building campaign. Xian's city wall after its enlargement in the Ming Dynasty stands 12 meters high. It is 12-14 meters across the top, 15-18 meters thick at bottom and 13.7 kilometers in length.

There is a rampart every 120 meters. The ramparts are towers that extend out from the main wall, the top of the rampart being at the same level as the top of the wall.



### The Big Wild Goose Pagoda

This is one of the famous Buddhist pagodas in China. Originally built in 589 A.D. in the Sui Dynasty, the Temple was named, Wu Lou Si Temple. It was not until 648 A.D., when Emperor Li Zhi, then still a crown prince, sponsored a repair project on the temple. This was a symbol of thanksgiving to his mother for her kindness, after she had suffered an early death.

The temple then assumed the present name Da Ci'en Si (Temple of Thanksgiving). The Emperor was said to pay homage to the temple twice a day (in the morning and at dusk) by looking in its direction from the Hanyuan Palace. The temple, with 13 separate courtyard, contained 1,879 magnificent looking rooms altogether and was a place of grand extent in the Tang Dynasty.

### The Museum of Emperor QIN SHIHUANG'S TERRA-COTTA WARRIORS & HORSES

In March 1974, the villagers from Xiyang Village of Yanzhai Township in Lintong County accidentally discovered many broken pottery figures. After archaeological excavation and textual research, it was found that this was an oblong pit in which were buried terra-cotta warriors and horses from the Qin Dynasty. In 1976, after drilling, another two pits were discovered respectively 20 meters and 25 meters north of the former one. They were numbered Pit 1, 2 and 3 respectively in order of discovery, with a total area of 22,780 square meters.

The bronze chariots and horses were the earliest and most exquisitely made bronze valuables. They enjoy the highest class and have the most complete harnessing wares. They are also the largest bronze ware discovered in the history of world archaeology. The excavation of the bronze chariots and horses provides extremely valuable material and data for the textual research of the metallurgical technique, the mechanism of chariots and technological modelling of the Qin Dynasty.



## INTERVIEW

## Wang Xi Zhao

*Vice Secretary-General of Xi'an Municipal People's Government, The People's Republic of China  
Director-General of Foreign Affairs Office of Xi'an Municipal People's Government  
President of Xi'an People's Association For Friendship with Foreign Countries  
Member of Organizing Committee for the 5th World Conference of Historical Cities & Director for Preparation Office of the executive Committee*



Will you tell us about the theme and the programs of the 5th World Conference of Historical Cities ?

The object of this conference is to facilitate understanding and friendship, and to develop communication and cooperation. It is also our aim to discuss what we should do to conserve the landscape of ancient city while constructing modern city, and to revive an original landscape of ancient capital.

The theme of this conference is to revitalize historical cities. We will have three themes to discuss. The first is "traditional civilization and modern thinking". The second is "exploitation of historical cultural assets and their utilization" The third is "protection of historical cultural assets and construction of modern city, and mutual cooperation among historical cities."

The main content to be discussed under the first theme is "historical function of traditional thinking", and what is the evaluation of traditional thinking in this present world.

The main content to be discussed under the second theme is "how to utilize cultural assets in historical cities for economic development of the cities. We will also discuss exploitation of historical cultural assets and maintenance of the status of historical cities in the world.

The main content to be discussed under the third theme is how to beautify their towns and facilitate the development and modernization of cities. It is also our aim to discuss how to cooperate and facilitate the development of historical cities through mutual cooperation.

Xian has a very long history. Where do you recommend the participants of the conference to visit in Xian to appreciate its history ?

As for the places I recommend you to visit are "THE MUSEUM OF EMPEROR QIN SHIHUANG'S TERRA-COTTA WARRIORS & HORSES" and "THE CITY WALL" and "THE SHAANXI HISTORY MUSEUM" These places will give you lasting impressions.

Do you have any difficulties in preparing for the conference ?

At first we have had a financial problems. As you may know, People's Republic of China is one of developing countries. This financial burden is significant. Xian has made great effort to prepare for holding this Conference. Secondly we have difficulties in collecting statistics or information from the participating cities. The opening of the Conference is coming closer, but the required information from more than a few participating cities has not yet arrived.

What do you expect from the conference ?

The representatives and mayors of historical cities in the world will meet in Xian on September 9th, 1996. I hope all participants will take full part by introducing their city and development plans, and make an effort to understand each other and study the shared problems and common themes. I am certain that mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation will be strengthened and facilitated through discussion and presentation. I pray that this conference will be successful with every member's cooperation.

Please give your message to the members of the League of Historical Cities.

I would like to make a suggestion that we should strengthen our unity, and make an effort to recreate our ancient city's glory.

At present City of Xian and peoples of Xian are preparing well for the Conference. I welcome everyone concerned.

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**The League of Historical Cities Secretariat**

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