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## RECONSTRUCTION BOOM IN JAPAN: ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND BACKGROUND

In Japan, many works of reconstruction have been carried out. From primitive huts or world heritage site 'Nara Palace Site', to 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings, there are various examples of reconstruction works. It looks like a boom of reconstruction. Most of cases are a part of presentation of historic sites based on scientific grounds, but the range and nature of their grounds vary.

Why are Japanese eager to reconstruct ancient buildings? Historic sites in Japan or East Asia have peculiar characters. They have extremely few vestiges on the ground, and only holes left in the ground, so to speak, only of the negative of the buildings are remaining. It can be the consequence of the fact that the architectural tradition has been mainly composed of wood. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to exhibit architectural vestiges leaving it exposed. That is, authentic things often cannot be observed in situ within historic sites. Settings can be the only means of understanding the sites from the actual place observation. Therefore, many people have come to approve of the reconstruction of lost buildings, and to make it useful for understanding the sites.

Pros and cons of this situation are always argued. Pros point towards the significance of utilisation of historic sites or as a landmark as in a recently case of reconstruction of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century building in the city centre to recover its history. Cons include the problem of credibility or the fixation of the historic image, the doubt about the situation itself that there is nothing on the ground space. Argument is moving in the landscape problem of broader area including historic sites.

In this presentation, I will present various reconstruction cases in Japan in typological orders, and reflect on the reason, the background, and the significance of the reconstruction boom in Japan.