

kansai reclaimed

京都風華再現

Japan's conservationists winning the battle to preserve Kyoto's ancient heart

By Benjamin Freeland
Translation by Hsiao-fen Peng

The policymakers of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change made an oddly appropriate choice when they selected Kyoto as the site for the ratification of the 1997 protocol on climate change. While few attendees were probably aware of it, a similar struggle between the forces of development and the forces of preservation was breaking out in the ancient city around them.

The year that saw the world's leading environmental policymakers descend on Kyoto coincided with the 1,200th anniversary of the city formerly known as Heian-kyo. It also saw the unveiling of a new central railway station, a colossal modernist steel and glass structure that now towers over the southern part of the city. The building drew the ire of many Kyotoites, who considered it to be the latest in a long series of affronts to the old capital by the city's developers and urban planners.

Visitors to Kyoto expecting to be graced with a grand old capital akin to a Japanese Prague or Vienna are often perplexed and disheartened by the city's architectural landscape, which at first glance appears to differ little from the drab postwar >

日本古蹟保護團體在捍衛京都的古老風韻中，打了漂亮的勝仗。

1997年，參與「聯合國氣候變化綱要公約」的國家選擇在京都簽署議定書，當時或許只有少數人注意到，京都這座古城同樣面臨了經濟發展和文物保存這兩股勢力交戰的處境。

就在簽署氣候變化議定書的同一年，古名「平安京」的京都慶祝建城1,200年，新的京都中央車站，一棟聳立在城市西南區的巨大現代化鋼鐵玻璃建築，也在這一年啟用，並且激怒了許多京都人。都市發展和市區規劃不斷衝擊這座古都，新車站的落成就是一個例子。

過去10年來，主張現代化發展的力量依然強勢主導著戰後日本；然而日本傳統風貌和美學的捍衛者，以及人數越來越多的草根運動者，在全國性的「京都風」和蓬勃的觀光業支持下，已經開始期待古老的京都能夠保存下來，加上整修的風氣，使得這座古老的文化和藝術中心，重新燃起文化復興的希望。

探訪京都的遊客，期待欣賞到足以比擬布拉格或維也納的壯麗古都，對於這座城市的建築景觀往往感到失望，因為乍看之下，它跟日本其他城市在戰後大量形成的單調風景並無太大差異。更可悲的是，京都的變化跟東京、大阪、名古屋有所不同，其他城市的戰前建築已經被空襲破壞殆盡，但古老平安京的衰亡完全是自己造成的。

在日本的各大城市中，只有京都幾乎毫髮無損地逃過二次大戰的空襲。然而矛盾的是，京都傳統的戰前景觀，反而加深了這座城市長期以來面對東京的自卑情緒。這種情形可以回 >





At the start of the 21st century,
there were 28,000 machiya
remaining in Kyoto
進入21世紀，京都剩下的京町屋
只有28,000間。



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brutalism that predominates major urban centres. What makes the situation in Kyoto all the sadder is that unlike other cities whose prewar skylines were obliterated by wartime bombardment such as Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, the demise of old Heian Town has been overwhelmingly self-inflicted.

As the only major Japanese city to be entirely spared from aerial bombing during the Second World War, Kyoto emerged from the conflict essentially unscathed. Ironically, however, Kyoto's traditional prewar appearance ultimately served to further compound the city's longstanding inferiority complex with regards Tokyo, a relationship that dates back to Kyoto's loss of political power to Edo (now Tokyo) in 1600 and its eventual loss of official capital status with the relocation of the imperial throne in 1868.

A perfect example came in 1964, a watershed year for postwar Japan, which saw Tokyo host the Summer Olympics, the inauguration of the high-speed Shinkansen rail system and the construction of the 131-metre Kyoto Tower, built in the face of widespread protest to provide the city with a landmark to match Tokyo Tower.

The subsequent decades would see the systematic destruction of many of Kyoto's historic neighbourhoods and the long-iconic kyo-machiya (traditional wooden townhouses), with only the city's 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites considered off-limits for redevelopment. This destruction reached a crescendo in the 1990s when in the wake of collapsing land prices, landowners maximised profit margins from their properties, leading to an increasingly vocal minority of Kyotoites and their supporters denouncing what Kyoto Buddhist Association leader Kojo Nagasawa described as "the gradual Manhattanisation of the city".

For many of old Kyoto's benefactors, the completion of the new Kyoto Station in the face of widespread opposition was the last straw. The popular English language arts magazine Kyoto Journal ran an issue with a cover image depicting the gigantic edifice as a tombstone for the city (with "Heian-kyo: 797-1997" inscribed thereon), and an angry backlash followed. This was led by activists such as American-born author, traditional arts expert and longtime Kyoto resident Alex Kerr, who has emerged as a leading figure in Kyoto's architectural preservationist movement. The co-founder and chairman of the Iori Co, a company dedicated to saving and restoring the kyo-machiya and other traditional structures, Kerr helped generate national and international interest in the plight of the 28,000 machiya remaining in the city at the end of the 1990s.

The subsequent decade would see a remarkable reversal of the city's mercurial fortunes. A protracted economic recession, in which the Osaka-Kobe-Kyoto region was particularly hard-hit, prompted Kyoto and other cities in the area to accord higher priority to tourism, a move that coincided with a major domestic tourist push in Japan under the kanko rikkoku (country based on tourism) platform of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. A strengthened domestic tourist sector and renewed interest in the urban landscape of old Kyoto have resulted in the current 'Kyoto boom' in Japan, with the city drawing a record number of tourists for the sixth consecutive year in 2007, which in turn has come to serve as a powerful impetus for preservation.

Kyoto's tentative return to form is being greeted with cautious optimism by activists such as Kerr. "Basically, there are two trends going on concurrently," Kerr explains. "On the one hand, the destruction of the machiya is continuing as always. On the other hand, there is a >

搬到1600年，實際的政權從京都轉移到江戶，即現在的東京，1868年皇城遷移後，京都建名義上的首都地位都喪失了。

1964年是戰後日本歷史的分水嶺，在那一年，東京舉辦了夏季奧運會，日本國鐵的高速新幹線也正式營運，京都則在一片抗議聲中，興建了131公尺高的京都塔，顯然有跟東京塔互較高下的意味。

之後的數十年，京都的許多歷史建築和當地最有代表性的古老民宅京町屋紛紛遭到拆除，大概只有被聯合國指定為世界遺產的17處古蹟可以逃過此劫。這股破壞風氣在1990年代達到最高點，當時的地價崩潰，地主希望從地產中賺取最大利潤，但也有越來越多京都人和外地支持者紛紛譴責這種行徑讓這座城市逐漸商業化。

對於許多老京都的愛好者來說，不願單人反對而堅持興建的新京都車站，就是圓塔駱駝的最後一根稻草。頗受歡迎的英文藝術雜誌《京都期刊》為此議題製作特輯，在封面上將這座巨大建築的照片變成京都的墓碑，上面還有「平安京：797-1997」等字樣。憤怒的反對聲浪開始出現，引起國內和國際間關注日本古都衰亡的問題。

在京町屋復興協會、京町屋工匠團體和某些民間古蹟維修公司的努力之下，日本民眾以及國際輿論，均開始注意到京都的困境，並且對於1990年代末期以來，城內僅存約莫2萬8千間的京町屋，重新產生興趣。

接下來的10年，經濟蕭條嚴重衝擊大阪、橫濱和京都地區，使得這些地方的人更努力發展觀光業，而且在當時的首

相小泉純一郎鼓吹之下，日本國內旅遊的風氣也很盛，老京都的城市景觀再度受到歡迎，並在日本形成一「熱」。到了2007年，京都所吸引的觀光客人數已創下創新紀錄，這種經濟趨勢當然有助於推動京都的保存。

艾立克斯柯爾是出生於美國、長期定居京都的傳統藝術專家，他積極參與京都建築保護運動，對於這能否重現昔日風華抱著審慎樂觀的態度。他同時也是業的共同創辦人之一，這間公司的主要業務就是保存町屋和其他傳統建築。柯爾指出，到現在這是一直有被拆掉，可是重建整修這種古老建築的風氣也越來越興。

最近發展局勢出現一項正面性的進展，那就是去年底通過了景觀法。這項突破性的法規要求新的建築，用斜屋頂和傳統式屋瓦，以便與傳統建築的屋頂和諧。柯爾無奈的說，法律半年後才正式實施，導致有些人只在這段緩衝期內拆除與重建老屋，但是從長遠來看，這項法規仍然深具正面意義。

另一個問題則是整修京町屋這種老建築的專業技術欠缺，畢竟這些老房子已經大規模的荒廢了半個世紀，有時候整修的工作只是草草了事。柯爾還注意到，促成都重新整建的幕後推手往往來自京都以外地區，「大多數都來自東京，是日本其他地方的人希望能夠造訪關西都，才推動了這些整修案。」

儘管京都的維護整修有這些問題，但是有很多理由柯爾慶幸。在東京、大阪和其他地區，辦公大樓和民宅的



The Kyoto Tower (left) was built in the face of widespread protest. 備受批評的京都塔(左圖)，頗有較勁東京塔的味道。



“People from the rest of Japan want to be able to visit a beautiful Kyoto”

「日本其他地方的人希望能夠造訪美麗的京都。」



growing move to rebuild and restore [these old buildings].” One of the most positive recent developments, says Kerr, is a groundbreaking new zoning law known as the ‘Scenery Law’ (keikan-hou) that was adopted in late-2007. Among other things, the law requires that new buildings have sloping roofs and traditional-style tiles, so as to better blend with the traditional roofline. “Unfortunately, the law came with a six-month grace period, which has actually resulted in an acceleration of demolition and rebuilding ahead of [the law’s] enforcement. But in the long run, this is a positive move.”

Another problem, according to Kerr, is the overall lack of know-how regarding how to restore old buildings, stemming from 50 years of systematic abandonment of such structures, resulting in sloppy restoration. Moreover, Kerr notes that much of the impetus behind the restoration of old Kyoto is in fact coming from outside the city, including vested interests like the Tokyo-based Kiwa Corporation, a restaurant development firm instrumental in promoting the redevelopment of machiya as trendy eateries. “Most of the money is coming from Tokyo,” says Kerr. “It’s people from the rest of Japan who want to be able to visit a beautiful Kyoto who are behind all this.”

Problems aside, however, Kerr contends that there is much cause for celebration. Amid the widespread securitisation of office and residential property in Tokyo, Osaka and elsewhere, some machiya properties are being securitised in the form of real estate investment trusts (REITs). This helps protect old edifices by maximizing their profitability and suggests that big business is beginning to find common cause with the preservationists. Furthermore, the approaches of Kerr and other Kyoto-based preservationists have begun taking root elsewhere in Japan, particularly in small, depopulated municipalities desperate for tourist revenue. In Kerr’s view, Kyoto’s problems are a reflection of national issues, and both need to be addressed simultaneously. “Japan [and Kyoto] need a big clean-up,” he says. “And we’re now seeing the first little steps. We’re still a long way off, but I’m more hopeful now than I’ve ever been.”

Change is clearly afoot in Japan’s historic capital, and while Kyoto may remain far removed from her Heian-period splendour, the old city appears to be slowly but surely finding her footing once again. ■

證券化是普遍趨勢，在京都也有一些京町屋的屋主以不動產投資信託基金的形式達到證券化的目的，在保護者建築的同時也追求最大的獲利，這也暗示大企業和主張古蹟保存者已經找到了共同的目標。

更可喜的是，京都率先倡導的古蹟保存觀念，已經在日本其他地方生根萌芽，尤其是那些小規模、人口嚴重外流、股切全盼觀光客回流的城市。這使得京都的成就更加引人注目。

柯爾認為，京都的問題反映出的是全國性的問題，兩者須要同步解決，「京都和日本都需要徹底整頓。我們現在看到的只是剛開始的一小步，眼前還有很長的路要走，但我從來沒有像現在這麼有信心。」

日本的這座古都還在持續的變化，儘管距離平安時期的光采還很遙遠，但是看來京都已經以緩慢而堅定的步伐走上自己的路。 ■