Learning from Tokyo urbanism: The urban sanctuaries

Anni Greve *

Department of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde University, Denmark

ABSTRACT

This article takes up the challenge of demonstrating that 'we' can learn from Tokyo about the intrinsic importance of in-between realms to a cosmopolitan culture: the urban sanctuaries. It has four sections. *The first section* encircles a location from where to learn from Tokyo as well as an angle from where to start. This leads into the leading concept of the article: the urban sanctuary. *The second section* goes back in history to the early modern era and, with point of departure in traveller's reports, localises an experience of strangeness *and* familiarity when it comes to a distinct ritual choreography for meeting at eye level. At the centre of *the third section* is a second generation of Japanese architects who came to maturity after World War II. Here, the work of Arata Isozaki is of specific interest, because it is precisely a *formula* for the construction of an urban sanctuary that sets up an in-between realm for an international culture that he returns to in work and life: the traditional concept of 'interval' or *ma'*. *The final section* relates Tokyo as a command centre for the global economy to its urban sanctuaries. It calls for a broadening of the research agenda by addressing a new set of questions concerning a formula for an in-between – a distinct ritual choreography for meeting the stranger with (universal) hospitality.

If I want to imagine a fictive nation, I can give it an invented name, treat it declaratively as a novelistic object ... I can also – though in no way claiming to represent or to analyze reality itself (these being the major gestures of Western discourse) – isolate somewhere in the world (*faraway*) a certain number of features (a term employed by linguistics), and out of these features deliberately form a system. It is this system, which I shall call: Japan. Roland Barthes (1982).
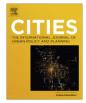
Introduction

Why is Tokyo of specific interest to 'us'? Until recently it seemed that it was the other way round, that Tokyo to a large extent has learned from 'us'. Today, however, there has been a shift away from a common assumption about cities throughout the world that they are essentially an elaboration of the Euro-American model. Recent studies of World Cities have pointed out that the city-region is diverse, and the reason for its economic health over recent decades is by no means its global nature. This goes for European as much as for East Asian World Cities (Bishop et al., 2003; Massey, 2007). It is an approach that shifts the emphasis to internal developmental processes within the social world, rather than seeing globalisation as the primary mechanism (Delanty, 2006, 25–6). Also, by taking a closer look at the case of Tokyo, we can learn about certain 'internal' mechanisms in a society that paradoxically gives rise to wider 'external' outlooks.

This essay takes up the challenge of demonstrating that we can learn from Tokyo about the intrinsic importance of in-between realms to an international culture: the urban sanctuaries. It is the overall hypothesis that certain urban societies are more robust than others because they offer socio-spatial capacities that enable the development of worldly outlooks. It studies places that may open the way to an international culture, and they are considered here in their quality as urban sanctuaries. Today urbanism is in its fastest and most dynamic phase in history. Old cities are being reconfigured, and global cities will be functionally different, thus less and less calculated objects. What remains of earlier stages? It is a leading idea that a source of Tokyo's success as a world city is its heritage of the utopian early phase of modernism, namely sanctuaries for coming to terms with modernity.

The article has four sections. With inspiration from fieldwork science *the first section* encircles a location from which to learn from Tokyo, as well as an angle from which to start. This includes two dimensions, which are the positioning of 'we' or 'us' who can learn from Tokyo and the distinction of oneself or us from 'others', i.e. Tokyo as absolutely different, as culture. It argues that 'we' who wish to learn are situated in space, time and ritual: (i) in a space of 'intellectual hospitality' in which we or us and the other can share insights derived from different backgrounds; and (ii) at the in

* Tel.: +45 46 74 20 00.
E-mail address: anni@ruc.dk

-between spaces of urban society that are marked by a whole new set of social relations with universal impact. This leads to the leading concept of the article: the urban sanctuary.

At the centre of *the second section* are studies that have made the gaze upon the strangers a natural focal point, namely, research in traveller reports. Thus, it goes back in history to the early modern era, when Japan was completely closed to foreign influence, and, with point of departure in traveller's reports, localises an experience of both strangeness *and* familiarity. The writing 'I' is situated within a countermovement of things and time, where things that appear here in the medium of a subjective now reappear in a number of different ritual settings elsewhere in the world. I am interested in a formula for an in between, a distinct ritual choreography for meeting at eye level.

The third section opens a way into the urbanism of modern Tokyo from the stance of its urban sanctuaries. It follows a line of thought introduced by Michel Foucault in his late work on the concept of 'problematisation' and engages with architecture defined as 'a practice of representation as well as of space- and place-making' (Lucas, 2004). At its centre is a second generation of Japanese architects who came to maturity after World War II sharing a critique of the *International Style* that, paradoxically, seems to lack a sense of the in-between spaces of urban society that may open the way to conceptualising an international culture. Here, the work of Arata Isozaki (2006) is of specific interest, because it is precisely a *formula* for the construction of an urban sanctuary that sets up an in-between realm for an international culture that he returns to in work and life: the traditional concept of 'interval' or *ma'*. *The final section* relates Tokyo as a command centre for the global economy to its urban sanctuaries. The present financial crisis, which was kick-started by the irresponsible lending of US mortgage companies, has increased our focus of attention to 'Cultures of Corruption' and to the role of informal behaviour rules, social norms and social preferences in contract making. It calls for a broadening of the research agenda by addressing a new set of questions concerning a formula for an in-between that opens for the 'time of the moment', a moment of agreement. It is a moment sanctioned by a distinct ritual choreography enacted in sanctuaries that are set apart.

A position from where to study Tokyo

Besides, I came tumbling out into the World a pure Cadet, a true Cosmopolite; nor born to Land, Leaf, House or Office (James Howell 1688, 285, in Sennett, 1976, 17).

Let me start with principles for constructing a position from which to learn from Tokyo. In doing this I take inspiration from anthropology, in particular its built-in practice of reflecting upon the realm from which to conduct fieldwork, how to create a location for work in a foreign context, where to start, the risk of going native, the tricks for maintaining a distance, and the procedure for writing. In "The Ethnographic Present, A Reinvention' (1990), the anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup argues that the fieldwork is a ritual unto itself, a *liminal* stage characterised by ambiguity, openness and indeterminacy, in which we as researchers leave our own social world for a moment with the intention of being transformed by the experience. Simultaneously it chooses a position within a field with its own rules of the game. Seemingly the researcher is a spectator outside the world, *but thinking also has a location*, taking place somewhere absent from the energetic activities of everyday life, in a void, a vacuum in between two worlds which are neither completely different nor completely the same.

Learning from Tokyo also takes place in a void. The writing 'I' is situated in a vacuum of thoughts and struggles, in a zone of walking, seeing, talking and hearing, as well as in decisions to be taken upon the position from which one should write, to whom and from

what angle. Simultaneously thinking is also socially situated in place, time and ritual. 'The point is that we cannot write proper cultures without sharing the experience of others' (48); 'there is no privileged position and no absolute perspective from where we can eliminate our own consciousness from our own object' (Rabinow, 1977, 151, in Hastrup, 1990, 46). Who are 'we' who wish to learn from Tokyo? 'We' are not the ones who, from a distant position, seek in Tokyo an exotic reflex, a native logic not yet polluted by Western civilisation; 'the ever growing anthropological literature on "the Japanese self", for example, both works to locate "indigenous" constructions of self hood and to distinguish the Japanese from the American (or Western) self' (Robertson, 2005). To 'us' there is no external position. Regardless of place and time, there are certain universals that we all share.

'We' are situated in a space of 'intellectual hospitality' (Kaufman, 2001) in which 'we' or 'us' and 'the Other' can share insights derived from various backgrounds – and by which we can refine our research question. Stuart Hall (1993: 361) has argued that 'the capacity to live with difference is, in my view, the coming question of the 21st century'. This question – framed in the more specific terms of how we might forge a civic culture out of difference – is also of central importance here. It is linked to the urban experience of a world beyond the clan and the local community constituted by a whole new set of social relations with universal impact. It is compelled to show itself 'out there'. James Howell's experience of coming 'tumbling out into the world' has a *topos* in that it takes place out in the city at particular sites. It is my central argument that at certain moments these sites exhibit the qualities of urban sanctuary.

The urban sanctuary

The urban sanctuary offers a formula for a distinct ritual choreography that opens up a realm of (universal) hospitality as is argued by Mustafa Dikeç, in 'Pera Peras Poros: Longings for Spaces of Hospitality' (in Featherstone, 2002, 6): 'hospitality is not simply a right but a sensibility, which can be developed in social relationships and interactions'. In following Immanuel Kant, hospitality is defined as 'a right of resort (visit)'. The visit amounts to 'the idea of passage, of the transitory, of the short period' and does not involve residence, the establishment of a home: constructing a habitus and secure dwelling. Hospitality has a *topos* in that it takes place out in the city at particular sites – in the words of Jacques Derrida (in Featherstone, 2006) it depends upon the maintenance of open spaces in which hospitality can develop something.

The urban sanctuary is where people of different backgrounds interact as if equal; it provides a common ground for transactions between persons from different backgrounds with different interests. People behave differently they meet as equals and perform for people who are equal in accordance with a social etiquette, as if in a theatre. They are eager to come there out of free choice, they gather as equals, and what counts are the skills and merits that are performed when meeting. Like the sacred sanctuary, it is a place of ritual. We are dealing with rituals creating high intensity at the level of those of 'real' religions. They are serious, and you have to stick to the rules – cheating is forbidden (Greve, 2006).

It is an in-between phenomenon. It is spatial in the sense that there are certain socio spheres in every city that have the quality of sanctuaries, and temporal, in that an interval of time is created when sanctuary conditions take over. It is an in-between phenomenon, taking place at the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space. It is somewhere 'released from life's necessity'; in the words of Hannah Arendt (1958), it is 'the man-made space that houses the interactions of equal yet distinct persons'. In this 'world', 'we' can confirm ourselves to one another as members of the same world.

I am interested in the specific formula for the construction of an in-between realm for meeting at eye level, a distinct ritual choreography that is rule-bound and situated in time and space: 'the very idea of rituals indicates attention to place, setting, timing and interaction, not only to abstract beliefs' (Alexander and Smith, 2005, 26). Taking inspiration from Kevin Hetherington (Hetherington, 2007), who has taken up the Greek term 'Kairos', the study encircles and localises 'the time of the moment' in the city. It is spatial and non-linear time, the time of the sanctuary.

The shock

How to study a foreign culture without dismissing its specificity? The *shock* is a productive point of departure. 'Culture is made visible only by shock': here Hastrup refers to one's initial experiences of a foreign culture, what 'we' find strange, exotic and different when visiting a foreign culture for the very first time. 'Once it has become visible it is objectified in writings. Fieldwork, and the ethnographic present, is an opportunity to get insight into culture *as an analytical implication*... for a culture to materialise it requires an external "Other" in relation to which difference can be perceived and exaggerated' (47). It is in the meeting with the 'Other' that we can get an idea of culture: 'we can no longer claim that culture is an objective fact, it is an outcome of the other, the other culture is described as everything one's own culture is not' (...) 'A primary conclusion, then, is that, unlike a society which is an empirical entity, culture is an analytical implication' (47). Culture is absolute difference, estrangement.

This idea has its weaknesses: 'any ethnographer would probably agree that first encounters generate personal alienation and a sense of extreme relativism that forever marks off the field. First experiences belong to an experimental space that cannot be done away with by literary criticism' (Hervik, 1994, 80). It can lead to 'Othering' culture, as is the case in literature on exotic Japan, or extreme idealism, the foreign country is where everything works fine, the stuff that dreams are made of:

There are no historical records that demonstrate the existence of an open city that was built in pursuit of the virtues of universal rights or as a result of a tolerant educational system. However, there are numerous biographical narratives and travel stories that describe cosmopolitan experiences. In these stories the experience of travelling to foreign lands and encountering a mixture of people is central to the formation of a cosmopolitan consciousness. (Papastergiadis, 2007, 143).

Also in my own study (Greve, 2011), the shock has been used as a productive point of departure, but unlike anthropology it is not only the experience of estrangement and radical difference that is in focus. I am using the gaze of the visitor and the experience of strangeness *and* familiarity as methodological keys. The writing 'I' is situated within a countermovement of things and time, where things that appear here in the medium of the subjective now reappear in a number of different ritual settings elsewhere in the world.

The traveller's report

Apparently seeing Japan as both very strange and yet very familiar is a complete novelty. But it is not: just in recent years, historical studies of Japan have made much of emphasising differences as well as similarities between Europe and Japan. These are studies that have made the gaze upon the strangers a natural focal point, namely, research in traveller reports. What is interesting here is that over time travellers to the country have repeatedly reported an experience of something quite strange and somewhat oddly familiar. The Jesuits were among the first missionaries who travelled to Japan, their activities beginning around 1549 with

Father Francis Xavier's arrival and ending abruptly in the mid-1600s when there was an end to all Christian missionary activity. Xavier wrote enthusiastically:

They are the best race yet discovered, and I think among non-Christians their match will not easily be found. (in Lidin, 2002, 166).

The shock of the first visitors was one of *estrangement*, but also one of *familiarity*. According to the early Europeans who visited Japanese cities, they were in some respects comparable to European cities, though cleaner and better organised. The cleanliness of streets and buildings (and of the people) surpassed all European standards. De Vivero y Valesco wrote,

Our Spanish ... houses look better from without [but] the interior of these [Japanese] houses is far more beautiful. (in Shelton, 1999, 2).

Also Timon Schreech's (Screech, 1996) groundbreaking study of the Swedish biologist Carl Peter Thunberg's stay in Japan under the Edo era (1600–1867) leaves the same impression. At the end of the eighteenth century, Thunberg, pupil and successor of Linnaeus, spent 18 months in Japan. He wrote (in Screech, 1996, 210):

Their doctrine chiefly inculcates the following maxims, to lead a virtuous life, to do justice to every man, to behave at the same time to all persons with civility, to govern with equality, and to maintain an inviolate integrity of heart.

How could an Oriental culture, which was of a completely different nature compared to Occidental civilisation, manifest such familiarity when it came to universal codes for civility? It was the era of European colonialism, with its precise ideas about the relationship between Europe and other parts of the world as one between 'modernity' and 'tradition'. In this historical period, 'the West never invaded Japan nor blockaded it, and it never had the writ to command. Japan, consequently remained fully independent' (Screech, 1996, 1).

The culture of abstraction

What was it that reappeared? An imaginary, an act of abstraction enabling a meeting on equal terms within a particular historical context; from the point of view of Emile Durkheim in his late work (Durkheim, 1995), we might be dealing with a society with the ability to create a distinct ritual choreography for playing with images beyond the clan or the local community. Indeed, despite the hierarchical character of Tokugawa society, bonds of civility had emerged, defined as:

A ritual technology of interpersonal exchanges that shapes a kind of intermediate zone of social relationships between the intimate and the hostile. Civility tends to govern non-intimate interpersonal relations because it provides a common ground for transactions between persons from different backgrounds with different interests (Ikegami, 2005, 29).

My postulate is that the experience of the writing "I" is one of both estrangement and familiarity. The cultural/ethnic element has to do with the fact that they tend to overdo the rituals. But, paradoxically, while refining these, the (universal) elements in ritual and ceremonies come to the fore. Its *universal* dimension permits ordinary people to be confident in interactions with those of unknown or different backgrounds, making it possible to form social bonds in the absence of friendship or kinship. In particular, rituals become visible when viewed from the outside because culture matters. Culture is absolute difference, but more than this, it is in the meeting with the other that we become aware of ritual choreographies – they follow certain standards that are familiar to 'us'.

I am interested in the specific formula for the construction of an in-between realm for meeting at eye level, 'a kind of pantomime representation of spatiality' (Isozaki, 2006), which is a formula for a distinct ritual choreography. It is ritual of a specific quality that is rule bound and situated in time and space. This creates a moment for meeting on equal terms, of mutual expectations. It is where individuals can enjoy a relatively unsupervised personal life, with the possibility to perform in or as if in a theatre. It is linked to a vision of a world beyond the clan and the local community constituted by a whole new set of social relations with universal impact.

In search of an in-between

How do we detect places in their quality as urban sanctuaries? I have an assumption that they also exist in the modern Tokyo, but how can I know this? In this I follow a line of thought introduced by Michel Foucault in his late work on the concept of 'problematisation'. In urban political economy, place has been studied functionally from the angle of the global economy. From the work of Saskia Sassen (1991), we have learned that place matters to the global economy, and that the Global City is one of these places. However, when detecting places in the qualities of urban sanctuaries we cannot assume a direct correspondence between our ideas about these and 'things' as they are in the world. As Foucault explains:

> Problematisation does not mean representation of a pre-existing object, nor the creation by discourse of an object that does not exist. It is the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object for thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.) (Foucault, 1990, p. 257).

This is my approach to architecture. I would like to pay attention to a second generation of Japanese architects who came to maturity after World War II sharing a critique of the *International Style*, 'that homogenous isotropic and infinite – in a word, neutral – space in which similarly rectangular buildings have mushroomed all over the world, regardless of any locality' (Berque, 1997, 337). Paradoxically, *the International Style* seems to lack a sense of the in-between spaces of urban society that may open the way to conceptualising an international culture.

Here I would like particularly to highlight the architect Arata Isozaki. Like other post-war architects (Ando, 1992; Jinnai, 1995), he reverted to a two-pronged method of architecture that prevailed until the 1920s based on principles drawn from the Edo period. It is a method with two legs: one that relates to the nation state, and another for civil society's 'passions' and 'interests' (Hirschman, 1997). This second leg is a method dedicated to the principle of 'piecemeal engineering'. His work repeatedly returns to a particular formula for constructing an in-between realm that opens up to a specific range of possibilities for worldly outlooks.

Isozaki's idea opens up a path to studying Tokyo using ideas about the Japan-ness of an international culture. This is not to say that an international culture is 'ethnic', but it is to say that an international culture is not mainstream culture, yet there is a logic hidden in this mode of organising the universe that we call universal. Japanese architecture, regardless of its strangeness, has decisive elements of this. Let me try to clarify this by referring to a similar reversal in Denmark. The latest special issue of the journal Arkitektur Dk, titled 'Export,' claims that Danish architecture no longer exists. Until recently, it has had a special uniqueness. Values such as democracy, functionality and simplicity to which we have linked welfare architecture in the twentieth century do still apply, albeit more in process than in the expression, e.g. reflected in the

buildings' spatial organisation and simplicity in design and detail. But seen from the outside – from international architecture – there is no particular Danish architectural style.

This special issue is interesting because it leads to putting the issue of the *differentia specifica* of the architectural profession in a new way. The question is not what is specific to Danish architecture, but how Danish architecture is contributing to architecture in the sense of a craft that does not know borders. There is something universal that characterises architecture, which seen from this angle is not a particularly Danish architectural style: 'one cannot from the facade see if a house was designed by a Danish, American or Australian architect, says director Henning Larsen Architects Mette Frandsen Kynne in one journal containing three interviews' (Ifversen, 2011).

Also in the Japanese context, you will experience new ways to ask questions. The key is no longer the ethnic nature of Japanese architecture but the ways in which Japanese architects contribute to the architectural profession, a profession that knows no national boundaries. There is something universal about architecture, and in the field, it is possible to speak of a Japanese dimension. This is the architect Arata Isozaki's central allegation in the book *Japan-ness in architecture* of 2006.

The Japan-ness in architecture

For Isozaki the leading motive is to specify the contribution of Japanese architecture to international architecture. Isozaki points to similarities as well as particularities between Tokyo and any other large city in the world. For one thing he takes the large city at face value: any large city in the modern capitalist world has to face up to the repeated intentional destruction of the civic environment. Tokyo is of particular interest because building on ruins has been its *sine qua non* ever since it turned into an enormous urban formation in the seventeenth century: 'the sporadic destruction of whole districts – if not entire cities – (is) a familiar occurrence in Japanese life, due to the vagaries of fire, typhoon, earthquake and war' (Stewart, 2002, 219). Thus 'the trauma of urban collapse has been so severe for us in Japan, the inevitability of destruction and rebirth' (Isozaki, 2006, 99–100).

Its specificity, on the other hand, what makes it 'particular', has to do with its unique abilities to cope with eruptions and sudden changes. (Recently this disposition found expression in the wake of the massive earthquake on March 11: 'in this difficult time the discipline of the ordinary Japanese people predominated' (Boruma 13.4.2011)). Japanese architects are distinguished by their skills in coping with a universal problem of urban society, namely the repeated intentional destruction of the civic environment. It is not only a matter of smart engineering – only recently was wood replaced by less fire-prone material – but also, it is due to its ability to draw on tradition whenever it has to get back on its feet again.

Isozaki takes inspiration from anthropology, and not least from ideas about the ritual qualities of place. It is about Japanese architecture understood as belonging to 'the category of the *spatial* and *performative* – to the Japanese architectonic will – rather than the *material* and *constitutive* characteristics of the Western architectonic will' (Hamaguchi, 1944 in Isozaki, 2006, 48).

A formula

Transforming ruins into a city for the future is not achieved by replicating the *International Style*: it needs the inclusion of a rather stable *formula* for the construction of image schemes. In the case of Tokyo, Isozaki is seeking a formula for the construction of a Japanese spatiality, which is a method for constructing images. It is precisely a formula for the construction of an in-between realm

for an international culture that he returns in work and life. The metaphorical aspect of high-tech began to be exploited, as opposed to Kenzo Tange and Le Corbusier, Isozaki explains (Isozaki in Stewart, 2002, 225–226): 'What in Le Corbusier's late style might be called the rehabilitation of a semantic approach to architecture inclines towards semiotics in the work of some younger architects' . . . [And] 'In keeping with his mainly semiological concerns the architect is careful to avoid any thematic consensus; space itself is no longer endowed with the old sense of sensibility'. Isozaki's concerns are more rhetorical than syntactical, and the various images they consist of were described as metaphors. The result is a kind of pantomime representation of spatiality.

Isozaki goes back to the Edo era, and points to a principle for architectural place-making formulated by Masao Maruyama (1952) in *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*. It is a principle crystallised in a two-pronged method, with two opposed concepts, namely *sakui* and *jinen*. *Sakui* signifies the will to construction, while *jinen* is a notion of self-becoming,

> Not only did Maruyama point out the fact that both these ways of thoughts were present in the political thinking of the Edo period, but later he theorized that their interaction had formed a determinant scheme throughout the history of Japanese cultural production. (Isozaki, 2006, 24).

In 'The Space of Darkness' (1964), Isozaki distinguishes between 'abstract space', that is, 'a spatial order based on the image of illusion', and the 'unconscious of society', that is, 'a spatial order related to the image of darkness'. The Japanese city is a combination of invisible systems, a 'nest of invisibilities'. In order to comprehend Japan-ness in architecture as a 'nest of invisibilities', Isozaki opts for a spatial semiotics and a 'discourse on the theme of "metaphoricality"' (in Stewart, 2002, 228). This implies a particular Japanese motif, a Japanese idea about 'in-between', place and occasion, the Japanese term *ma*.

> In Japanese, when the concepts of time (*jikan*) and space (*kukan*) were first written down, the Chinese ideogram *ma* – an interstice – was used as a second character for both. I determined to search for clues in this space in-between. (Isozaki, 2006, 90).

The tea ceremony

Almost every book on Japanese cities introduces a Japanese conception of place. (Cybriwsky 1998, 11) dwells on the distinction between *omote* and *ura*. *Omote* means 'in front' and *ura* 'back', which can refer to front vs. backstage, or front streets vs. back streets. 'With respect to cityscape, we see that *omote-dori* is a wide, public thoroughfare with important offices in tall buildings and fashionable shops, while *ura-dori* are the private residential back streets that are hidden behind the big streets'. David Steward (2002, 10) writes about the importance of *chashitsu* (tea room): 'This "style" of the *soan chashitsu* (where tea was drunk in a thatched hermitage) as eventually perfected has been referred to as the beginning of "space" in Japanese architecture'.

In architecture, attention to the tea ceremony was, paradoxically, invoked by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, 'a principle of spatiality that was more open to questions than had previously been suspected'. While working in Japan, Wright came under the influence of Tenshin Okakura's *Book of Tea* (1906), which elaborated on the aesthetic of the tea ceremony. Okakura's explanation of the *chashitsu* was highlighted by an invocation of the Chinese philosopher Lao-tse (quoted in Isozaki, 2006, 5):

> The reality of a room. . .was to be found in the vacant space enclosed by the roof and walls, not in the roof and walls themselves. The usefulness of a water pitcher dwelt in the emptiness

where water might be put in, not in the form of the pitcher or the material of which it was made. Vacuum is all-potent because all containing.

In New York in 1952 Wright gave a talk entitled 'The Destruction of the Box', in which he recalled Okukara's explanation of the *chashitsu*. In calling attention to the Taoist concept of omnipresent emptiness, Okakura reminds us that the tea room, like the tea utensils, has significance only in terms of its emptiness. But, according to Isozaki, Wright misinterpreted this not as *omnipresent emptiness*, but as a teleologically constructed internal space. He tries to do what Isozaki takes to be 'freeing empty space from the bonds of metaphor' (Isozaki, 2006, 5): 'He collapsed an ontology based on *nothingness* into the process of designing a specific space' and failed to understand the ancient Eastern notion of omnipresent emptiness, since Western architecture is so hypnotized by architecture in its quality as an illustration of deeper meaning:

> I sometimes think that the entire history of European Architectural space is the story of techniques developed for the introduction of natural illumination. (Isozaki in Stewart, 2002, 231).

One example is the Gothic cathedral, where 'space was conceived as a means of direct expression, and became an object of emotional experience'. It fails to acknowledge architectural depicting – not merely in terms of illustration. Isozaki became ever more committed to the development of specific metaphors, and argues for replacing Wright's 'destruction of the box' with 'the destruction of architecture' driven by 'a unity of aesthetic representations' later to be displaced by a rehabilitation of the traditional concept of 'interval' or *ma* (241). It is 'the time of the moment' or the 'immediate present'. It is spatial and non-linear time, the time of the sanctuary.

The tea ceremony is where people of different background interact as if equal. It is highly ritualised and you have to stick to the rules – cheating is forbidden. As in the sacred sanctuary, the tea ceremony offers an open realm for reflection and second thoughts, 'a framework in which our empirical observations arrange themselves and which enable us to think about them' (Durkheim (1912a) 1995, 372). To 'us' the tea ceremony is of importance because it offers a formula for a distinct ritual choreography that opens up an in-between realm of (universal) hospitality, an opportunity to meet and perform in accordance with a social etiquette for meeting on equal terms, as if in a theatre; it is a formula replicated in different cognitive domains, in language, visual perception, abstract ways of reasoning, emotions and actions.

The time of the sanctuary

Tokyo offers a unique intellectual laboratory for the study of worldly outlooks as socially situated in ritual, place and time. It is among the largest city regions in the world, with more than 35 million inhabitants, and is a command centre for the global economy. In this particular city, sound financial transactions take place everyday within rather stable or predictable ritual choreographies. Place matters to the global economy, and Tokyo is one of these places. The present financial crisis, which was kick-started by the irresponsible lending of US mortgage companies, has increased our focus of attention on 'Changing Cultures of Competitiveness' (Jessop, 2009) and 'Cultures of Corruption'. Which types of institution are important?

> Should our attention be limited to formal institutions, i.e., to those supported and enforced by systems of law and order? Or should we also consider the possible role of informal behavioural rules, social norms and social preferences, enforced or reinforced externally through social exclusion, sanctioning,

and shaming and internally through feelings of guilt? (Barr & Serra, 2006).

Other things being equal, economic spurts are correlated with a willingness to take risks, and risk-taking is related to trust 'in situations when we have to act in spite of uncertainty and risk' (Sztompka, 1999, 25). We know that institutions matter for trustworthy economic relations, but even in cultures with a long tradition of institutionalised forms of legal regulation, we see instances of fraud and misuse. What are the preconditions for reliable contract relations? Seen in this light, a closer look at Tokyo urbanism gains in relevance. 'We' can learn from Tokyo that in contract not everything is contractual:

> Japan businessmen do not use so much agreements with contract content and preparation of detailed descriptions … They tend to be more loyal to what they really think is the real deal: what has been agreed face-to-face. They keep their word and live much in the spirit (Gregersen, 2011).

At first sight the Japanese salary man (*sararīman*) tends to overdo rituals; this has been interpreted as instance of exoticism and absolute difference. Living with an almost schizoid split personality, the businessman meets the obligations of the modern world with codes for civility, but behind the mask is tradition. But the classic sociologist Emile Durkheim argued that 'in a contract' – the legal form of all modern market exchange – 'not everything is contractual' (1984, 138). Moreover, the contract, Durkheim argued, presupposes a bond between the contractors, owing its existence 'to some virtue *sui generis*', turning the contract into a 'solemn formality', which, in its turn, points to the transaction's ritual qualities (Durkheim, 1992, 178, 182). This is a radical argument, not just embedding the market within society, but positing the existence of a social infrastructure as a presupposition for, and not just a boundary to, any market-place action.

'We' can learn from Tokyo that ritual might not after all be 'an anachronism confined to the maintenance of pre-democratic cults' (Cottle, 2006). Indeed when Japanese businessmen enter into a contract, they tend to overdo the rituals. But, while refining these, the (universal) elements in ritual and ceremonies come to the fore. And it is the *universal* dimension in ritual that opens for a 'we' of the world, permitting ordinary people to be confident in interactions with those of unknown or different backgrounds, and making it possible to form social bonds in the absence of friendship or kinship. In matters of creditability, there is a risk that symbols become abstracted, without any links to everyday life. If they are to remain relevant and alive, symbols have to be visualised within the framework of those rites and rituals, which produce memory and meaning. The ritual confirms and initiates feelings: there is something beyond personal interest that works as 'categorical imperatives', no matter what we 'think'. This is the purpose for the sanctuary: it offers a ritual choreography for commemorative ceremonies.

Conclusion

A society's disposition for worldly outlooks does not manifest itself only in its capabilities to partake in global networks, as if globalisation were the primary mechanism. It shows itself in its abilities to provide a common ground for transactions between persons from different backgrounds and with different interests. And this is very much the work of ritual. This article began with a theoretical argument for linking a society's disposition for worldly outlooks to its urban sanctuaries. The urban sanctuary offers a formula for a distinct ritual choreography: it is rule-bound and situated in time and space, and it opens up a realm for (universal) hospitality defined as 'a right of resort (visit)'. Then the article suggested methods for detecting the urban sanc-

tuaries in society, *first* by taking the positioning of the visitor. Going back to the early modern era localised an experience of estrangement and familiarity in traveller's reports when it came to the ritual choreographies of civility. In particular, rituals became visible when viewed from the outside because culture matters. Culture is absolute difference, but more than this, it is in the meeting with the other that we become aware of ritual choreographies – they follow certain standards that are familiar to 'us'. The *next* is to enter Japanese architecture: since Tokyo turned into one of the largest cities in the world in the late 17th century, the trauma of urban collapse has been a recurrent condition. In this it shares aspects with any other large city in the world: it has to face up to the repeated intentional destruction of the civic environment, albeit to the extreme. *What do people make out of the new conditions*? A group of post-war architects has pointed to the existence of a formula for the construction of a Japanese spatiality, a method for constructing images. It is precisely a formula for the construction of an in-between realm for meeting at eye level. The formula is the work of ritual. When uprooted individuals become attached to sanctuary life they tend to overdo ritual, and, while refining them, the (universal) elements in rituals and ceremonies come to the fore. And this is precisely what makes these objects of knowledge recognisable and possible through the lens offered by urban sanctuary research. It is a formula replicated in different cognitive domains, in language, visual perception, abstract ways of reasoning, emotions and actions. The *third* is to take the positioning of the businessman in global economy: when Japanese businessmen enter into a contract, they tend to overdo the rituals. But, while refining these, the (universal) elements in ritual and ceremonies come to the fore. And it is the *universal* dimension in ritual that permits ordinary people to be confident in interactions with those of unknown or different backgrounds, making it possible to form social bonds in the absence of friendship or kinship.

References

Alexander J. C. et al. (2005). Introduction: The new Durkheim. In J. C. Alexander J., P. D. Smith (Eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Durkheim.* Cambridge University Press.

Ando, T. (1992). *Tadao Ando theme: Urban dwelling. In Japan Architect 5 winter 1992-1.*

Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Arkitektur DK Nr. 6 2010 – EXPORT.

Barr, A., Serra, D. (2006). Culture and corruption. In *Proceedings of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).* Oxford: Global Poverty Research Group.

Barthes, R. (1982). *The empire of signs.* New York: Hill and Wang.

Berque, A. (1997). Postmodern space and Japanese tradition. In Georges. Benko et al. (Eds.), *Space and social theory: Interpreting modernity and postmodernity.* London: Blackwell.

Boruma I April 13th (2011). *Japans patriarkalske uvæsen in Dagbladet Politiken.* Copenhagen Denmark.

Cottle, S. (2006). Mediatized rituals: Beyond manufacturing consent. *Media Culture Society, 28.*

Cybriwsky, R. (1998). *Tokyo:The shogun's city at the twenty-first century.* John Wiley & Sons.

Delanty, G. (2006). The cosmopolitan imagination: Critical cosmopolitanism and social theory. *British Journal of Sociology, 57*(1), 25–46.

Durkheim, E. (1984). *The division of labor in society.* New York: The Free Press.

Durkheim, E. (1992). *Professional ethics and civic morals.* London: Routledge.

Durkheim, E. (1995). *The elementary forms of religious life.* New York: The Free Press.

Featherstone, M. (2002). Cosmopolis: An introduction. *Theory, Culture and Society, 1–2*(19), 1–16.

Foucault, M. (1990). The concern for truth: An interview by Françoise Ewald. In L. D. Kritzman (Ed.), *Michel foucault.* New York: Politics, Philosophy, Culture, Routledge.

Gregersen, T. (2011). *Virksomheder i kulturtræningslejr.* Politiken May 21.

Greve, A. (2006). Civic cohesion and sanctuaries for coming to terms with modernity. *Durkheimian Studies/Etudes durkheimiennes,* n.s.12.

Greve, A. (2011). *Sanctuaries of the city: Lessons from Tokyo.* Ashgate.

Hall, S. (1993). Culture, community, nation. *Cultural Studies, 7,* 349–363.

Hastrup, K. (1990). The ethnographic present: A reinvention. *Cultural Anthropology, 5*(1), 45–61.

Hervik, P. (1994). Shared reasoning in the field: Reflexivity beyond the author. In K. Hastrup & P. Hervik (Eds.), *Social experience and anthropological knowledge.* Routledge: European Association of Social Anthropologists.

Hetherington, K. (2007). The time of the entrepreneurial city: Museum, heritage and kairos. In *Proceedings of the conference Ubiquitous Media: Asian Transformations Theory, Culture & Society 25th Anniversary 13–16 July*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo.

Hirschman, A. O. (1997). *The passions and the interests: Political arguments for capitalism before its triumph*. Princeton University Press.

Ifversen, K. R. S. (2011). *Dansk arkitektur findes ikke længere, in Dagbladet Politiken 23*. January.

Ikegami, E. (2005). *Bonds of civility: Aesthetic networks and the political origins of Japanese culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Isozaki, A. (2006). *Japan-ness in architecture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT press.

Jessop B. et al. (Eds.) (2007–2009), Changing cultures of competitiveness, conceptual and policy issues. *ESRC Seminar Series*. Lancaster University.

Jinnai, H. (1995). *Tokyo: A spatial anthropology*. California: University of California Press.

Kaufman, E. (2001). *The delirium of praise*. London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lidin, O. G. (2002). *Tanegashima. The arrival of Europe in Japan*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, NIAS Press.

Lucas, R. (2004). Inscribing the city: A flaneûr in Tokyo. *Anthropology Matters, 6*(1).

Maruyama, M. (1952). *Studies in the intellectual history of Tokugawa Japan*. SAGE: Making Sense of Society London.

Bishop, R. et al. (Eds.). (2003). *Postcolonial urbanism: Southeast Asian cities and global processes*. London: Routledge.

Massey, D. (2007). World City Cambridge: Polity Press.

Papastergiadis, N. (2007). Glimpses of cosmopolitanism. *European Journal of Social Theory, 10*(1), 139–152.

Rabinow, P. (1977). *Reflections on fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Robertson, J. (Ed.) (2005). *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan*. Blackwell.

Sassen, S. (1991). *The global city*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Screech, T. (1996). *The western scientific gaze and popular imagery in late Edo Japan: The lens within the heart*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sennett, R. (1976). *The fall of public man*. London: Cambridge University press.

Shelton, B. (1999). *Learning from the Japanese City*. London: E&FN Spon.

Stewart, D. B. (2002). *The making of a modern Japanese architecture – From the founders to Shinohara and Isozaki* (2nd ed.). New York: Kodunsha International.

Sztompka, P. (1999). *Trust – A sociological theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.