Urban Studies, Vol. 44, No. 3, 551–568, March 2007

Surveillance in Urban Japan: A Critical Introduction

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[Paper first received, December 2004; in final form, September 2006]

Summary. This paper provides a critical introduction to the development of surveillance in the Japanese city. Adapting the analytical scheme of understanding, intensifying, automating, integrating, globalising and resisting surveillance, it considers whether the historical and contemporary development of Japanese urban surveillance fits the narrative of Western surveillance studies. It shows that there are many interlinked and parallel evolutions, particularly in the context of shared global fears of urban terrorism and crime. However, Japan's history, governance, urban morphology and sociocultural evolution provide a particular context, which means that surveillance in urban Japan must be considered not just in comparison with the West, but in its own right.

Introduction

While surveillance has been extensively studied in the West, particularly the growth of urban closed-circuit television (CCTV) (see Norris *et al.*, 2004), there has been comparatively less attention given to surveillance in non-Western cities and nations. This paper provides a critical introduction to the development of surveillance in the Japanese city.

The emerging narrative of surveillance studies describes a trajectory from the bodily control of Foucault's panopticism (1977) to a 'surveillance society' (Lyon, 1994) of real and virtual 'dividuals' (Deleuze, 1992), via a 'new surveillance' (Marx, 1988, 2003) of computerised and increasingly automated 'social sorting' (Gandy, 1993; Lyon, 2001, 2003a) based on 'categorical suspicion' (Norris and Armstrong, 1999). In this society, urban space is securitised in response to fears of crime (Raco, 2003) or terrorism and war (Graham, 2002; Lyon, 2003b). Urban space is fractured (Graham and Marvin, 2001), split by multiple variously permeable boundaries through which dividuals may pass differentially according to the social sort (Graham and Wood, 2003; Murakami Wood and Graham, 2006).

Recent theoretical work on surveillance in Japanese would seem to support this story, but is more strongly influenced by Marxist sociological traditions. Sakai (2001) is largely Foucauldian, as indicated by the subtitle of his work, 'a genealogy of the present'. Shibuya (2003) draws on Foucault, and also on Deleuze and neo-Marxism, to conduct a 'power analysis of neo-liberalism', paying particular attention to technologies

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0042-0980 Print/1360-063X Online/07/030551–18 © 2007 The Editors of Urban Studies
DOI: 10.1080/00420980601176097
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and techniques of surveillance in post-disciplinary society and exploring the potential for new power struggles at a time when socio-economic divisions are broadening and deepening. Saito (2004) criticises the general trend of recent Japanese society towards safety and security, and argues that the people are willing to be policed and put under surveillance for the purpose of living in 'security'—as is clear in the sub-title, 'people who want to be controlled' (echoing Foucault's (1977) 'docile bodies'). Most important of all in the context of surveillance has been Ogura Toshimaru who, in three edited collections from 2001 to 2005, has provided a sustained Marxist-influenced critique of contemporary urban surveillance, as well outlining a strong normative conception of 'privacy', a relatively recent development in Japanese culture (see below) and a clear message of personal freedom. Most recently, Ogura (2005) criticises the tightening of state policing and militarisation as both a product of and reaction to globalisation. As we also argue in reaction to the threat of terrorism, contemporary nation-states are eager to introduce tougher policies concerning surveillance and policing (see also Lyon, 2003b). Under such political conditions, 'others' (including racial minorities, the homeless and resident aliens) receive harsh and constant surveillance. Such policies can violate human rights, as public fear enables states more easily to introduce new surveillance policies and businesses to offer pre-designed technologies in a 'surveillance surge' (Wood *et al.*, 2003).

Japanese theorists and campaigners then clearly have similar concerns to those of Western scholars, but to what degree is the surveillance studies narrative valid in Japanese urbanism? Are new theoretical accounts to be developed that take into account the specificity of Japanese (and other non-Western) experiences? To answer this question, we adopt a three-part schema of understanding the context of surveillance in urban Japan; setting out the dimensions; and, finally, examining how surveillance is regulated, reacted to and resisted.

With the global construction of shared 'threats' to cities in the 21st century, particularly those of terrorism, crime and population mobility, and in the aftermath of attacks on global cities such as New York, Madrid and London, one must ask whether Japanese cities are at risk. Tokyo, in particular, offers a prime target because of the "extraordinary density of people and concentration of buildings and other infrastructure" (Botting, 2004). But neither political violence nor surveillance is new to Japan. The 1995 gas attack on the Tokyo subway highlighted the realities of terrorism and surveillance infrastructure was reinforced. To understand surveillance in urban Japan, however, one must not neglect responses to earlier political 'enemies within' and the development of the police and bureaucracy. New surveillance practices and technologies also have to be contextualised within broader politics of information and media (Hara *et al.*, 2001; Abe, 2004) and the development of urban morphology and sociospatial characteristics (Jinnai, 1995).

One must also examine the dimensions of surveillance. Japan has followed a similar path to many other countries in automating surveillance—Japanese companies are pioneers and remain sector-leading innovators—and integration: the 11-digit *juki-net* ID number will serve to enhance this. Surveillance is also globalising in Japan, with augmented airport security, and following American requirements for smart visas and passenger data. But Japan also has local–global issues to consider, such as immigration and attitudes to *gaikokujin* (foreigners). Surveillance to deal with terrorism and crime may parallel developments in other countries that appear to use 'anti-terrorist' measures as a means of combating older 'enemies'.

Lastly, one must consider regulation, reaction and resistance. Moral panics (Cohen, 1972) can lead to the bypassing of public debate; however, there are signs of resistance. There are also important constitutional and legal issues that could present arenas for contestation (Goold, 2002). This is not new: there is a long history of opposition despite the

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dominance of the American 'techno-oriental' stereotype (Morley and Robins, 1995) which portrays the Japanese as compliant in their reception of new technologies.

We conclude by arguing that the Japanese context is not reducible to global trends and has to be considered in its own right. Nothing should be considered 'essentially' Japanese, nor should Japan be held up as an 'exotic' mirror for Western societies (see Rosen, 2000; Clammer, 2001).

1. Contextualising Surveillance in Urban Japan

To understand surveillance in Japanese cities, four broad contextual areas are considered: internal security; bureaucracy; urban space; and, socio-cultural factors.

Internal Security

Pre-modern Japan under the Tokugawa shogunate was a society of rigid status (the so-called *shi-nō-kō-shō* system) enforced by custom and visible bodily punishment, exile and outcasting (Howell, 2005).[1] However, during the period of the Meiji restoration at the end of the nineteenth century, society and penality in Japan were influenced by the desire to be seen as modern and Western. For example, prison design was transformed by the discovery of Bentham's panopticon and the colonial prisons of British Singapore; the very word for prison shifted to *kangoku*, or 'surveillance jail' (Botsman, 2005).

Although early in the modern period, there were still fears of a *samurai* counter-restoration, from the early twentieth century, Japan shared modern Western nations' fear of workers' revolution. The 1925 'Peace Preservation Law' transformed a small political police, the *Tokubetsu Kōtō Keisatsu* (*Tokkō*), into a significant force (Tipton, 1990). The *Tokkō* infiltrated the labour, socialist and student movements that had grown with industrialisation, urbanisation and democratisation. The 1936 'Law for Protection and Observation of Thought Criminals', expanded its role into a total 'thought police' (Dower, 1993). With social militarisation and the growth of the *Kenpeitai* (military police), state surveillance deepened to police even *graffiti*, gossip, rumour and minor insults to the emperor. Following a history of actions extending central control of religion (Garon, 1997), the state also attacked the *shin shūkyō* ('new religions') and many were banned as threatening public morals or, like the huge *Ōmotokyō*, had members arrested and property seized (Reader, 1991; Clammer, 2001).

In common with modern European disciplinary forces (Foucault, 1977), the *Tokkō* considered itself as acting for the common good (Tipton, 1990; Katzenstein and Tsujinaka, 1991). This paternalist surveillance was also found in the softer control of state *kyōka* ('moral education') policies, designed to bring together urban inhabitants, felt to lack traditional rural communal values, in joint associations for mutual support and surveillance (Garon, 1997). As in the West, welfare and control went hand-in-hand (Gilliom, 2001), although in pre-war Japan it was felt that both should be provided by people themselves. These modern ideals of internalised discipline were supplemented in practice by pre-modern sovereign power (threat and use of force) from the *Tokkō* and *Kenpeitai*, contradicting orientalist ideas of a homogeneous support for imperialism (Dower, 1993). The *kyōka* campaigns sowed the seeds of many extant instruments of urban social order in Japan, particularly *chōnaikai* ('neighbourhood associations') which, although they are taken less seriously by younger people today, still act in ways favourable to state aims—for example, implementing anti-crime and public safety initiatives.

During the 1946–52 US occupation, the seeds were sown of new threats and new forms of surveillance. The necessity of swift urban reconstruction linked to a weakened state meant that both US forces and Japanese bureaucracy turned to unofficial groups to assist with restoring order, rebuilding and even taxation. These groups, that became known as the *bōryukudan* or *Yakuza* ('Japanese mafia'), evolved into a complex network of legal, semi-legal and illegal businesses

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productive of criminality but also, through their own street-level discipline, an agency of surveillance over everyday criminality and disorder (Hill, 2003; Kaplan and Dubro, 2003). Until the early 1990s, the police had an ambivalent relationship with these groups: they surveilled *Yakuza* activities but also realised that crackdowns would mean less predictable problems. Some ex-*Yakuza* writers have also argued that the Police and *Yakuza* were not that different in their aims and objectives, with Manabu (1996/2005) claiming that the 1992 Organised Crime Countermeasures Law (*Bōtaihō*), which finally shifted this balance more decisively towards the state, can be seen as a struggle between rival gangs for control of the revenues from prostitution and *pachinko* arcades.

The US occupation had initially seen a brake on the state's monitoring of political activity; however, by the 1950s the US was re-employing even ex-*Tokkō* as well as *Yakuza* members to stifle the perceived threat of communism and Soviet influence. The end of the occupation in 1952 and a new constitution, consequently saw the state able to legitimate its reassertion of its right to monitor and control political and subversive activity. The 1952 Subversive Activities Prevention Law created a new internal security agency, the *Koanchō* (Public Security Investigation Agency), which targeted similar activities to the *Tokkō*, albeit within the new framework of rights and freedoms.

In the post-occupation period, anti-government groups flourished—for example, the communist *Chukaku*, the mass student movement of the 1970s, *Zenkyoto*, and the nationalist novelist Mishima Yukio's *Tatenokai*, as well as terrorist groups like the Japan Red Army (Apter and Sawa, 1984; Katzenstein and Tsujinaka, 1991). A major concern from 1967 until 1978 was the huge popular environmental resistance to Tokyo's Narita Airport (Apter and Sawa, 1984); the depth and scale of feeling remain a problem in expanding Narita (*Japan Times*, 2005). However, the *Koanchō* was never large or powerful and, by the mid 1990s, as left-wing groups declined, it was being downsized (Global Security, n.d.).

Then, in 1995, the Tokyo subway system was attacked by followers of the *Aum Shinrikyō* cult using Sarin nerve gas. This had deep effects on the Japanese psyche (Murakami, 2001), following close after the Great Hanshin Earthquake. *Aum*'s activities had been under investigation but, unlike in the 1930s, constitutional freedom of religion made police wary of acting against cults (Kaplan and Marshall, 1996; see also Reader, 2005). It was also a surveillance failure: the Tokyo attack was the third carried out by the cult using Sarin: in 1994, they attempted to kill a Buddhist leader and attacked judges' apartments in Matsumoto, and the group was implicated in other kidnappings and murders. However, *Aum* were not considered terrorists until after the subway attack and even then were able to carry out several others involving explosives, hydrogen cyanide (Nazi 'Zyklon B') and the attempted assassination of the national police chief (Brackett, 1996).

There were several responses, not least a further increase in the size of the police, already much larger per head of population than in comparable countries (Katzenstein and Tsujinaka, 1991), one of the main reasons being that the police are heavily involved in everyday bureaucratic surveillance (see below). For actual crime remains comparatively low: murder rates are three times lower than the UK, burglary eight times lower (UNODC, n.d.; see also Johnson, 2002). However, the media and political right have played up small recent increases in crime (almost never put in the context of massive historical decline).

Bureaucratic Surveillance

The Japanese administrative state has grown tremendously over the past century and with it the capacity to scrutinise everyday lives. The *junkai-ren* (residential survey), for example, involves twice-yearly visits to ordinary householders by officers of the *Keisatsuchō* (National Police Authority, NPA) who ask questions about residents, house contents and suspicious

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persons in the neighbourhood (Bayley, 1976; Miyazawa, 1992; Goold, 2004). The NPA are also responsible for staffing small neighbourhood *kōban* (police boxes) in urban areas, with as few as one or two officers, who compose the 'street-level bureaucracy'. This, as Aldous and Leishman (2001, p. 11) convincingly argue, is more accurately described as "primarily an agency of surveillance" than a throw-back to a more innocent age of policing as community glue, as many adulatory commentators assume. We shall return to the origins of the *kōban* below.

Bureaucratic processes are rarely neutral: a major concern until recently was the reinforcement of Japanese ethnic identity through identification and monitoring of *gaikokujin*, who from 1952 until recently were required to carry a *Gaikokujin Tōroku Shomei-shō* (alien resident ID card) with fingerprints. The fingerprinting requirement was removed in 1999 (although it may return; see below), but the conception that these residents, many of whom, in particular 'Koreans', are otherwise indistinguishable from other Japanese, are 'foreign' not 'Japanese', remains. Of course, separateness was reinforced by political solidarity and identity-construction within these communities, but voluntary integration and rates of intermarriage have increased markedly as state monitoring has declined, which demonstrates the role of state surveillance in controlling identity.

Beyond this, political opposition and criminal activity have been subject to surveillance by technological means—for example, the wiretapped telephone—and, during the spectacular economic growth of the 1960s, Japan attempted to take a lead in the creation of 'information societies' (Masuda, 1980). Surveillance in itself does not require electronic mediation, but the use of computer software and networks increases capacities extensively (Marx, 2003). There is a sense in which all modern societies are by definition 'information societies' (Poster, 1990; Castells, 1997–2000). However, because much of the 'information' in question is personal or affects life-chances, modern societies are also surveillance societies (Lyon, 2001). Thus, alongside extensive factory automation, Japan also used new technologies to enhance administrative structures within government departments and municipal records. The Japanese civil service has long been relatively strong (Johnson, 1995) and Japanese information society initiatives were conceived of in formal planning terms: information society was something that could result from deliberate policy decisions rather than simply technological change, which is how it is often—mistakenly—viewed in the West (see Webster, 1995).

From the outset, concerns were expressed about possible negative consequences of personal information processing (dataveillance). Questions of 'privacy' topped the list of potential problems with the expansion of administrative technological rationalisation (Morris-Suzuki, 1988, p. 15). Privacy and security had to be balanced with democratisation in the 'information society'. Recently, information society has once again been foregrounded in Japan with emphasis on 'e-government' and privacy questions. Tajima (2002) focused on the then, proposed *Kojin-Jōhō Hogo-hō* (Personal Data Protection Law) used a normative human rights framework to compare the Japanese law (generally negatively) with personal data protection laws from other nations.

Ogura (2005) argues that, contrary to the naïve belief that the electronic government is efficient and client-friendly in its services, it aims at the realisation of a totalising dataveillance system, harmful for privacy and human rights (see also Abe, 2001). Azuma (2002–03), in a series of 14 articles in the current affairs magazine *Chu'ō Kōron*, puts 'modern values' on which the concepts of privacy and individuality are founded at the heart of a sustained critique of the influence of information society on the freedom of the everyday life of citizens.

As in other nations, reality did not fit the theory: government departments and police were able to share personal data across systems, and other kinds of surveillance—especially consumer surveillance and database marketing—emerged, thus increasing the variety of personal dataveillance. At first, these

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were separate, but largely because of parallel concerns of risk and opportunity analysis, data collected in one sphere became relevant to others. Both administrative or policing and commercial surveillance draw upon geodemographic data: police may use risk assessment done by insurance companies to guide them in their priorities and marketers may avoid areas deemed by police to be high risk (see Ericson and Haggerty, 1997).

Despite the techno-oriental image, government and workplace surveillance is still much stronger in Japan than consumer surveillance. However, with a rapidly growing Internet penetration rate and widespread enthusiasm for the Japanese innovation of third-generation mobile phones, e-commerce is growing quickly (MPM, 2002, pp. 7–15). The Asia-Pacific region in general shows the fastest-growing development of customer relationship management (CRM) and in Japan it is expected that e-CRM, using mobile technologies, will become the preferred mode (Sostrom, 2001). This opens possibilities for further surveillance spheres to develop, which may be more important than state surveillance.

Surveillance and Urban Spatial Design

Another major factor is the historical and contemporary construction of urban space. Japanese cities lack many things that Western urbanists traditionally expected in 'great cities', like obvious historical character, open space and clear hierarchy of use. Observers have been baffled by the amorphousness, anonymity, repetitiveness, lack of planning and small sizes of urban form, even as individual Japanese houses were being praised as exemplary of modernism (see Popham, 1985; Bognar, 1995; Cybriwsky, 1999; Richie, 1999; Shelton, 1999; Sorensen, 2002). Only more recently, when the West has embraced 'post-modern' urbanism, has the Japanese city become 'acceptable' and, in an inversion of previous loathing, the city is now celebrated as the future in the present. Of course, both reactions are in some senses orientalist.

However, Japanese urban space has always been intensely surveilled. In the Tokugawa period *Edo* (Tokyo), the different caste groups were spatially separated in different areas of the city radiating from the core, with often strict regulations about movement, from speed to means of mobility. The various *machi* or *chō* (neighbourhoods) were further divided by *kido* (gates) across their entrances, watched from guard houses (*kido banya*). The *kido banya* formed the basis for police stations, *jishin banya* (or in *samurai* areas, *tsuji bansho*), the forerunners of modern *kōban*, which still occupy historical strategic points and more modern ones, like railway station entrances (Jinnai, 1995). The biggest surveillance network was not, however, connected to human movement but to the real threat of fire, and was the responsibility of townspeople rather than the central authority. The regulation of urban space and social relations was, however, strictly hierarchical, with a chain of command from *shogun* down to the *goningumi* (five-family groups) that formed the lowest level of social control.

Unlike Western cities, many of which were redesigned partly to allow the penetration of state military forces, Japanese cities, with frequent dead-ends and T-junctions, were more impenetrable and inaccessible from the outside. Indeed, the nature of streets themselves was (and remains) somewhat different from the Western concept (Shelton, 1999). For *nagaya* (merchant houses) in particular there was no clear separation between private shop/house and street, with streets often being permanently narrowed to alleys by unofficial extensions.

This results partly from strong land-area-centred property rights. The importance of these rights means that land prices are crucial in determining urban form. The price of construction is cheap relative to land and therefore most buildings are regarded as temporary occupants of a plot: it has been estimated that the average lifespan of a building in Tokyo is 26 years, far shorter than the equivalents in Europe (Shelton, 1999). Consequently, Japanese cities are a patchwork of different uses, with large developments

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concentrated around major stations, along larger streets and wherever patches of land have been accumulated and, whilst local areas differ immensely, places themselves, overall can look very similar.

There is also with comparatively little notion of public space; rather, such space evolved as 'common' to local residents, who were therefore responsible for its management. Shopkeepers assumed responsibility for managing 'their' streets through *shōtenkai* (merchants' associations). Although the Meiji administration tried to introduce Western town planning techniques and succeeded with 'building line' legislation in putting a stop to permanent capture of streets by shopkeepers (Sorensen, 2002), general notions that property rights were foundational and that streets should be a communal responsibility persist.

The railways' transformative influence on Japanese urban morphology adds to the stock of publicly accessible but privately surveilled space. Stations provided foci for new urban development and were soon surrounded by important local shops and services. Further, many railway lines, stations and suburbs were constructed by department store companies (Sorensen, 2002). Modern Japanese cities thus developed as polycentric urban agglomerations based on semi-public spaces of consumption. This is crucial in the development of open-street surveillance: after the Aum attacks, CCTV was installed throughout urban public transport networks in Tokyo and beyond. Railway property remains amongst the most surveilled urban space in Japan.

The predilection for semi-public space was strengthened by the explicit effort in the 1980s 'bubble economy' to provide for the financial services industries that boosted Tokyo (temporarily) into the top three 'global cities' (Sassen, 1991). Despite the bubble bursting and the slowdown in land price increases, the development of large semi-public space in a style instantly recognisable from corporate redevelopment across the world continues—for example, Shinjuku Times Square, Shiodome Shiosite and Roppongi Hills (Sorensen, 2003)—accompanied by secure, surveilled space for a new élite, with video-surveilled 'mansion' developments and gated 'security towns' (Igarashi, 2004). Recent Japanese architecture and urban design have moved to more 'fortress-like' forms to guarantee security, which has resulted in what Igarashi (2004) calls an 'over-protected city'. Like Saito (2004) and Ogura (2005), he locates this trend in the culture of fear and distrust in the context of domestic and global terrorism and crime.

Sociocultural Factors

We have seen that in practice public space in the idealised Western sense is scarce and this derives from quite distinct philosophies of space, to whose complexity we cannot hope to do justice. Japanese has no word corresponding exactly with the common English usage of the word 'privacy' today (nor indeed to 'public'), which can produce confusions when discussing open-street surveillance, and terms like *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) are more nuanced. In addition, as Goold (2002) has pointed out, there is no reference to privacy in the Japanese constitution; however, there are clauses with implications for surveillance (see below).

The concept of 'public' is often linked to state, bureaucracy, or indeed any institutions like *shōtenkai*, which are felt to be 'caring' for people and not separate from them.[2] From this perspective, there seems no reason why any quasi-public body cannot be trusted to watch public spaces. The concept of 'private' is correspondingly complex. Berque (1982, 1993) showed that the Japanese conception of privacy involves a 'folding' of the public into the private. The boundary between *uchi* and *soto* is not often obvious in physical or in social terms; instead, there are gradations of intimacy, or what Clammer (1997, p. 55) terms "the establishment of symbolic boundaries". These relate strongly to Japanese norms of social interaction which do not rely on preset conceptions like 'public' and 'private' but vary according to

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social relationships, circumstances, time and consumption practices.

Another sociocultural specificity is the role of mass media. There is very little political variety in mainstream Japanese media and Abe (2004) argues that public debate is limited as a result. The classical democratic ideal, that has mass media as one means of creating an informed democracy, does not hold in Japan. But as Iida (2003) has pointed out, with the 'Koizumi phenomenon' (the unprecedented marketing of former Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro's public image), the post-modern conflation of image and substance is now as much part of cultural globalism as anything 'Japanese'. The danger she identifies is that the combination of lack of public debate and concentration on image results in totalitarian media (Iida, 2003). This might be alarmist, but it is true that, for all these reasons, that which might appear paradoxical in other democracies occurs in Japan: public confidence in government bureaucracy seems higher than in mass media (Abe, 2004). However, this has been complicated by scandals over state dataveillance (see below).

Finally, there is the question of family relations and Japanese ethnic and class identity. We have already observed that the state maintained particular categorical control of the 'Korean' population. In a country isolated from others for so long, and which even now has only small ethnic minorities, prejudice against foreigners is hardly surprising. There continue to be tensions and, in recent years, accusations that the *Koanchō* have unfairly targeted Koreans in Japan for surveillance and violated their human rights (*Japan Times*, 2001).

China and the Koreas remain Japan's regional rivals. Already relations with North Koreans are strained and people who originated in North Korea are suspects. Such suspicion is being extended to others, such as the tiny Arab presence in Japan, or the growing numbers of Japanese-Brazilians, now over 250 000, mostly migrant factory workers (see Weiner, 1997). Other changes include the growing equality of Japanese women, which has seen fewer working in the massive Japanese hospitality and sex industry and their replacement by immigrants from south-east Asia and eastern Europe (Noblestone, 2004). It would not be surprising if surveillance were strengthened to exclude or discriminate against such people. Although ID cards are still controversial for Japanese citizens, there is little discussion of the discriminatory categorisation of foreigners, except in *gaikokujin* communities themselves (see below).

The attitude reflects and feeds back into popular attitudes. A longstanding use of the Japanese private surveillance industry has been family checks on the records of proposed spouses of sons and daughters for undeclared foreign or *buraku* origins. The *burakumin* are the little-discussed descendants of the hereditary pre-modern out-castes—*himin* ('non-humans') and *eta* ('great filth')—for example, night-soil porters, butchers and leather-workers—who still face largely unacknowledged discrimination.[3]

2. Dimensions of Surveillance in Urban Japan

There is no doubt that surveillance has intensified after recent international terrorist attacks. Tourists see the difference: Tokyo Disneyland has allowed overt security, with bag searches, visible CCTV and guards. But ordinary citizens see the changes too. Prime Minister Koizumi initiated special anti-terrorism legislation in October 2001, primarily to permit the Self Defence Force (SDF) to be deployed in support of the US. Attention was also paid to matters such as terrorist funding by monitoring international consumer financial transactions. In airports, security measures were increased and signs warning of anti-terrorist measures began to greet travellers. Japan's relationship with the US, and regional as well as global anxiety about security, help to explain the intensification of surveillance.

Elements of suspicion and secrecy continue to emerge in the new climate, although many were pre-existing features of Japanese governance. The latest anti-terrorism plans reflect

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longstanding controversies, particularly the December 2004 *Tero no Mizen Boshi ni Kansuru Kodo Kikaku* (Action Plan for Preventing Terrorism), which suggested reintroducing fingerprinting for foreign residents, ahead of general changes to passports or the introduction of ID cards. Critical analysis of Japan's post-war 'success', tends to focus on corruption and hidden economic and bureaucratic power behind formal political processes (see McCargo, 2004), but if there is an ongoing intensification of surveillance in response to terrorism, it is being superimposed on a situation where new surveillance technologies were already in evidence.

In the emerging 'societies of control', new technologies are used as constant monitoring devices (Deleuze, 1992; Jones, 2000). Rather than the physical coercion of prison-like settings, or the increased self-discipline encouraged by modern disciplinary methods (Foucault, 1977), societies of control use 'audio-visual protocols' to sort socially and spatially citizens in daily life. Such surveillance has two characteristics that are visible in the Japanese situation: automation and integration. The first involves technical identity-verification, personal data checking and movement monitoring. The second provides connection between different forms of information, creating more accurate profiles and finer-grained records across databases.

Increasing automation in tracking individuals can be seen in the growth of CCTV in Japan. It has been argued that CCTV cameras have been slow to catch on in Japan (Goold, 2002) and state open-street surveillance is relatively uncommon compared with the UK or US. However, even in 1998 in Tokyo, Cybriwsky noted

> a remarkable profusion . . . of video surveillance systems installed in stores and shopping centres, entryways to large buildings, public plazas, train and subway stations, and many other places where large numbers of people come together (Cybriwsky, 1998, pp. 48–49).

These were clearly mostly railway and private systems installed and run by *shōtenkai*, strong and early adopters of CCTV surveillance (see above), as Cybriwsky (1999) emphasises. It was reported in April 2005, for example, that a major Kyoto *shōtenkai* had installed the largest single CCTV network in Japan, with 82 cameras (*Japan Times*, 2005). Despite clear separation, data are usually handed to police when requested: in Nagasaki, the apprehension of a school student for the murder of 4-year-old Tanemoto Shun depended on police use of Hamaichi Arcade *shōtenkai* CCTV systems, installed not long previously "to discourage potential offenders" (Matsubara, 2003).

Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department has also encouraged *shōtenkai* to install CCTV and, on 9 July 2003, a Tokyo Metropolitan Government ordinance was passed instructing citizens and businesses to help prevent crime. However, as Martinais and Bétin (2004) have pointed out in a study of French urban CCTV, such systems often prioritise areas of high commercial value but low crime, and this seems true in Tokyo too, where the Ginza high-fashion district had the first *shōtenkai* CCTV system and remains heavily covered.

The first state urban public area camera system actually dates from 1986: the N-system was set up by the National Police Agency (NPA) to monitor road traffic (Ogura, 2000; Sakurai, n.d.). It is an automatic number-plate recognition (ANPR) system with over 540 cameras nation-wide, designed to track stolen vehicles or cars used by suspected criminals. Details of all vehicle plates passing the camera points are sent instantly and automatically to NPA Tokyo headquarters. Another 320 speed cameras detect offenders on highways and a similar number of cameras record traffic accidents at busy intersections nationally. This system was introduced earlier than similar ANPR systems in the UK—supposedly the pioneer of public are surveillance—which were installed in London only after the IRA bombings of the early 1990s (Coaffee, 2003).

N-system is already used for much wider purposes than merely traffic infringements and vehicle theft. Public security intelligence can be gathered because the police can in

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principle track any vehicle using the nation's main roads (Matsubara, 2001). As the images are digital, the N-system could be upgraded to focus on faces (Ogura, 2000). If this were cross-referenced with driver licence photos, it would yield an unprecedented means of monitoring citizens. N-system has already turned out to be an effective policing tool: suspects in the Aum Shinrikyo attacks of 1995 were traced when the licence plates were spotted (Abe, 2004).

The state use of CCTV for urban crime prevention has finally taken off in Japanese cities since 2001. For the critical school of Japanese studies, this is further evidence of how 9/11 has been used as a pretext for reinforcing surveillance measures (see Ogura, 2005). But other fears have been important too: the World Cup in 2002 (Abe, 2004) when the NPA announced the introduction of 190 video cameras in parts of 10 of the largest Japanese cities (Goold, 2002). That same year, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government installed 50 CCTV cameras in Kabukicho, the major red-light district. Violent crime here was 185 times higher than the Tokyo average (*Japan Times*, 2002a) and the streets are controlled by 30 *Yakuza* and Chinese gangs. Bar-owners complained that this would mean the 'end of Kabukicho' (Matsubara, 2003; Noblestone, 2004), but it is more the increased police presence and crackdowns on soliciting and the harassment of women by adult video makers, unlicensed workers and illegal prostitution that points this way. There is now noticeable police presence on the Kabukicho streets and reports suggest that this is leading to displacement of prostitution to other areas (notably the nearby Shin-Okubo district) and the more risky 'delivery health' business (prostitutes visiting clients' offices, hotels or houses) (*Shukan Bunshun*, 2005). After several 'successes' of this system were publicised, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government experimentally introduced CCTV in several other public spaces in the capital including Ikebukuro, another area with many bars and sex clubs. Several more suburban ward authorities have also announced systems.

In some areas, eye-level cameras have been installed on lamp posts accompanied by special 'help' facilities that allow a member of the public to communicate with local police and all the state systems use top-of the-range digital technologies. It seems to be the case that having waited to introduce CCTV longer than some Western countries, the Japanese state has by-passed the era of analogue surveillance and videotape, installing sophisticated, flexible, multifunctional systems, that will also allow further automation and upgrading in future.

Digital systems are not only more readily automated modes of surveillance, but also can easily be networked. That is, data from them may readily be combined with data from other sources within an integrated system. And the advanced infrastructure for such an integrated system was established during 2002 and 2003, the so-called Juki-net. This is an on-line database containing the name, address, birthdate and sex of every citizen, accessed through an 11-digit universal identifier. In principle, Japan's 126 million citizens will soon be able to access Juki-net for a range of different government services, including passports and visas or filing tax returns. This e-government system links all central and local government departments (*Information Week*, 2003)

A national registry based on a unique identification number for each citizen represents an important development in surveillance. It is the key that unlocks the means of combining and recombining personal data from diverse sources. For instance, the Juki-net card could include biometric data and could be used for banking and other financial services. Other ID card systems currently being rolled out, for instance in Malaysia and in Hong Kong, are similarly multipurpose in character. Although the system was set up ostensibly to make bureaucracy more efficient through e-government, it could have implications for immigration policy and, of course, anti-terrorist measures. Recognising the potential for further expansion and fearing possible abuse, many individuals, groups and even whole towns opposed the

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Juki-net scheme (see below). The 22 papers in Tajima *et al.* (2003), many based on court cases, make it clear that Juki-net implies profound threats to the privacy of the individual citizen. Whether this will lead to modifications remains to be seen.

3. Regulation, Reaction and Resistance

The introduction of many of the systems in Japan, particularly urban CCTV, has been without consultation with parliament or central government (Goold, 2002). Goold further argues that the NPA and local police forces produced

> no evidence . . . to support the claim that the presence of CCTV deters offenders or improves the ability of the police to respond to or investigate crime (Goold, 2002).

In other words, just as in the UK in the 1990s and currently in the US, public debate is bypassed, instead harnessing 'moral panics' (Cohen, 1972). Crime has already been mentioned and especially crimes against children (see above). It remains to be seen whether public concern in these cases will provoke similar emotional reactions as in the similar James Bulger case in Britain in 1992 (Smith 1994), acting as a 'signal crime' (Innes, 2003), suppressing opposition to the spread of CCTV.

However, other moral panics have already been used to justify heightened surveillance in Japanese cities, particularly around *gaikokujin*. Fear of football hooliganism around the 2002 World Cup was an important justification for the expansion of video surveillance especially in cities hosting British fans (Abe, 2004).[4] However, the systems were not removed after the event. In a society which has had a very strong sense of coherent identity, now in some degree of turmoil because of growing visible ethnic minorities, fear of outsiders remains pervasive. This can be witnessed by the debate, largely amongst foreign residents, started by the NPA's selective promotion of statistics relating to 'foreign crime' and continuing with new anti-terrorism laws which seem to target outsiders indiscriminately (Arudou, 2005).

However, the case is made—whether it is through drawing on moral panics or the more prosaic argument that access to public services will be more efficient—when this goes with a national registry and new ID cards, some misgivings are to be expected. In the late 1970s, during an earlier phase of personal record computerisation, protests did occur. In Tokyo's Suginami ward, residents feared the consequences of putting personal records onto electronic databases and tried to prevent it. Local officials side-stepped the protests by stealth, installing the offending new technology in the early morning (*The Economist*, 2002).

In the past few years, resistance to surveillance and distrust in state surveillance in Japan has grown, involving lawyers, journalists and academics, plus labour unions, civil liberties groups and other citizens. Non-profit organisations (NPOs) have become more noticeable, with dedicated movements such as the Network against Surveillance Taskforce (NaST). Such activities often involve significant career risks for participants, given the obscure ways that positions in the media or in academe are obtained and maintained.

As a foretaste of what was to come, in 1999, public controversies broke out over a new wire-tap provision, the Communications Interception Law. This permits telephone or fax inception, and e-mail monitoring, in cases of narcotics, gun offences, gang-related murders and major smuggling of immigrants (Laurant, 2003). Opposition came from the Federation of Bar Associations, journalists and trades unions, who obtained a petition of 200 000 objectors. The bill became law, but not without modification. Two further striking cases of popular outcry against surveillance occurred in 2002/03, the first regarding an SDF data-matching exercise and the second stemming from the introduction of the Juki-net.

In May 2002, it came to light that the Defence Agency had been compiling secret files on those requesting information about

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them. Freedom of information (FoI) is central to information politics and vital to accountable government; however, integration of surveillance systems makes it easier for checks to be made on who is interested in a given department and to discern patterns that might indicate challenges. In this case, the Agency wanted to know what sorts of citizens—journalists, members of anti-war and civil society groups, or NPO organisers—were seeking information on it.

Although at first it was portrayed as an isolated abuse, it transpired that the SDF Information Office did this routinely and when newspapers publicised the story they attempted to delete offending files from the Agency's LAN (Abe, 2004, p. 223). Each SDF branch was systematically collecting data on individuals who made information-disclosure requests, including occupation, workplace and possible connections with SDF workers (*Japan Times*, 2002b). The scandal was lengthy and officials were forced to apologise for breaches of confidentiality and inadequate privacy awareness.

Meanwhile, public cynicism about the capacity of public agencies to be careful with personal data increased. One ironic result was a backlash against a private information protection law that was before the Diet: critics argued the law would make it harder for the media to obtain information about political scandals. The SDF controversy did not disappear: in 2003, it was revealed that for years they had been collecting personal data on teenagers eligible for recruitment, including parental occupations. Significantly, these data were collated from more than 550 different municipalities, showing that many parts of government were complying with inappropriate disclosure requests (*Japan Times*, 2003a).

A much larger dispute over surveillance broke out in 2002 relating to Juki-net. Despite being billed as an electronic streamlining of public services, this e-government initiative was resisted surprisingly strongly by a number of towns, civil liberties NPOs and individuals. A poll in the national *Asahi Shinbun* showed that 76 per cent thought the project should be postponed, and many argued that a privacy law should be in place first (Laurant, 2003). Given security breaches and the evidence from the SDF case, it seems that many Japanese could no longer trust in the care of the state.

Many of these protests came from local governments, including Suginami ward, which had protested against computerisation in the 1970s (Joseph, 2002). The mayor, Yamada Hiroshi, polled residents and found that over 70 per cent did not want to participate. The threat to freedom symbolised by the new registry was cited as a main reason for civil disobedience. Writer Morimura Seichi also argued that Japanese 'individuality' was at stake (*The Economist*, 2002), an interesting critique in the light of the oft-cited priority of the group in Japanese consciousness.

The foremost reason given for opposition to Juki-net was the lack of an adequate privacy law, something promised by the late Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo as a precursor to any new network. This absence links to debates about constitutional protections: the Japanese constitution was imposed by US in the post-war occupation, and both the US and the Japanese constitutions give no specific right of privacy, unlike some European constitutions—for example, Germany (Gras, 2004). However, Goold (2002) considers that several articles offer potential privacy rights, in particular Article 35, which talks of "the right of all persons to be secure in their homes, papers and effects against entries, searches, and seizures" and also Articles 21 (freedom of expression) and 12 (respect for the individual). However, none has been tested in the courts and thus legal tests of the constitution remain a potential field for contestation.

A second reason for opposition is the fear, fed by past experiences, that civil servants or even private companies might gain illicit access to the database. A notorious case of repeated snooping into the files of a non-regular employee in Yokkaichi city, Mie Prefecture is often cited in this context. A third reason is that codes might be used for

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purposes other that those explicitly stated—by matching, for example, with medical data (*Japan Times*, 2002c): already Juki-net numbers are used for 93 different kinds of administrative service, with plans to extend this to 175.

Such resistance to surveillance is noteworthy on several counts. First, it fits the theoretical view that major institutional areas of modern societies seem to generate oppositional movements (Giddens, 1985). As surveillance has become a key aspect of contemporary governance, it is not surprising, in this view, that resistance should coalesce around some critical developments such as communications interception, data-matching, a national registry and ID cards.

Secondly, it raises questions about the unfortunately common argument that 'Asian' societies are incapable of developing strong civil society traditions. This argument seems immediately thin to those aware of not only the massive social movements in both the pre-war period and those which provoked panic in the 1960s and 1970s (see above), but also the more gentle, pervasive 'bicycle citizenship' of women's consumer co-operatives like the *Seikatsu* club (LeBlanc, 1999; see also Clammer, 1997; Schwartz, 2002).

In addition, since the failure of state organisations after the Kobe earthquake and Sarin gas attack in 1995, and the growth of global co-operation and knowledge-sharing, the Japanese

> are no longer inhibited from objecting to state policies or demanding social justice. They are forming and joining NGOs to press their demands, and the state in turn has started paying more attention to the views of NGOs (Hirata, 2002, p. 3).

The process may be slower than Hirata suggests but a new mood is emerging.

Conclusion

Japan is an advanced urban surveillance society, dependent on sophisticated technologies for identifying, tracing and tracking citizens, and has significant automated and integrated surveillance capacities, based on nationally networked databases. However, Japan was a surveillance society long before current global fears and this is reflected in the morphological development and everyday life of Japanese cities. There is also both similarity to and divergence from other countries' surveillance practices, and Japanese urban development and socio-cultural characteristics, which although they have undergone many changes in the interaction with Western capitalism and outside cultures, give surveillance in urban Japan, a distinct 'style'.

The social control effects of such surveillance may be unintended results of institutional efficiency as Lianos (2003) has argued, and e-government, expressed in the form of Juki-net, is a good example. But, without clear guidelines and legal limits, such developments are unaccountable and undemocratic; this is what Japanese protesters are concerned about. However, Japanese citizens *are* watched, traced, identified and monitored with a view to influencing, managing or controlling them. The social sorting (Lyon, 2003a) and permeable boundaries (Murakami Wood and Graham, 2006) through which people have to pass in everyday urban life operate through carefully coded categories, resulting in differential, often exclusionary, treatment. Some are eligible for a tax rebate; others are not. Some qualify as Japanese citizens or residents; others do not. Some appear to have suspicious connections with foreigners; others do not. Some exhibit 'proper' consumer behaviour; some are 'out of place' in the new corporate spaces.

So there are real questions as to how socio-technical systems are developed and used. Is there democratic scrutiny and participation in the design and implementation of surveillance systems, or are secretive old bureaucratic practices still operating? New privacy laws are in process, but debate can only be positive for information politics in Japan. The danger that systems such as Juki-net will be used for other purposes than are currently envisaged is one of the most telling arguments not only for a strong privacy law

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but for the broader fostering of a culture of care regarding personal data, not least to provide greater protections to minorities under categorical suspicion.

It is difficult to tell how far the most significant changes in Japanese surveillance can be directly attributed to the global fear of terrorist attack. Most of the major changes affecting personal data for state and policing purposes and urban video surveillance in Japan were in process before the recent attacks. As with other states, however, it may be that the alliance with the US in the 'war on terror' is helping to accelerate or bring forward augmented surveillance plans.

Many things are uncertain regarding the proliferation of new surveillance techniques in Japanese cities. Some display similar features to those in other countries—namely, that they are part of a trend towards preemptive, algorithmic surveillance, using searchable databases (Norris and Armstrong, 1999). Societies of control are emerging across the world. How they are coded—into categories of suspicion (for policing) or of seduction (for consumption)—will depend on the specific circumstances of Japanese history, politics and culture.

Researchers east and west need to redouble their efforts at all levels from the assessment of the extent and types of surveillance in Japan, particularly urban CCTV, to case studies of policy formation, legal regulation, implementation and operation and response and resistance. It is clear, however, Japan's society of control is coded, that opposition is growing and that can only be good news for democracy and civil society. However, open-street CCTV is often a territorialising substitute for social trust, and both surveillance itself and the more oppositional politics that it appears to generate, could also hasten the decline of social cohesion. Japan has been a society that could accommodate Western ways of modernity, urbanity and surveillance. What kind of Japanese city results from the accommodation of the post-modern Western mode of surveillance and how far Western countries can learn from it, remain to be seen.

Notes

1. The military rulers (*samurai* or *shi*) including *shogun* (military governor) and *daimyo* (lords); peasant food producers (*nō*); artisans (*kō*) and merchants (*shō*).
2. There is of course a necessary debate about care and surveillance in any cultural context (for the West, see: Lyon, 1994, 2001).
3. Very little writing on the contemporary *buraku* issue is available in English; for a rare example, see Kitaguchi, 1999.
4. This was also a factor in the uncontested spread of CCTV in the UK in the early 1990s; and protection of major sporting events has been a significant theme in the introduction of CCTV in other countries—see, for example, Samatas (2004, ch. 7) on the Athens Olympics.

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