A railway station as a public space

The case of Tokyo

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Introduction

In the last century, much has been written on the subject of space and social theory, and many aspects have been touched upon in the works of David Harvey, Michel Foucault, and others. It is argued that space has influence over social interaction between different actors within that space. Elements of this influence can be found in the urban setting of the city. In this urban setting, it can be observed that spaces within the city are divided into different sections and that social interaction differs per space. Within this discussion on space and social theory, there is a tendency to focus on the functions and influence of space. However, the actors who play a part within this theory can be overlooked in this kind of debate. I argue that it is important to discuss the actors as well. This will be the focus of this thesis.

As its main question this thesis asks how private railway companies in Japan gained control over railway development, and how this impacted the development of Japanese railway stations as a public space. In order to answer this, I shall be discussing the importance of public space, and also the importance of looking at actors within space and social theory. I define actors as those who interact with and shape space. In the case of railway stations, this can be the railway companies, the government, as well as department stores. Every actor has the ability to shape space, but it is important to know which actor is essential in the shaping of said space. Of course, commuters can also be thought of as an actor, as they can be defined as stakeholders within the space of a railway station. In my thesis however, the focus will be on the private railway companies found in Japan. I shall be analyzing the history of Japanese railway stations to find out how private railway companies in Japan gained more control over railway development. I will also discuss Ikebukuro Station and Tokyo Station in order to demonstrate how railway stations have developed as a public space.

Though the history of Japanese railway companies share similarities with those found for example in the Netherlands and Belgium, there are differences. I argue that these differences facilitated the control of private railway companies in Japan. Furthermore, Japanese railway companies expand on their service by undertaking various side businesses such as department stores, being active in real estate, and so on. Because of this difference in activities, I argue that their impact on the development of railway stations as a public space has been greater than those found in Europe. Even though it can be argued that space is political, space itself is shaped by historical and natural elements (Zielenic 2007, 83). Thus, to understand how Japanese railway companies have influenced public space, it is important to look at its historical component.

I will first discuss space and social theory and use this as a starting point for my theoretical framework, allowing for an insight into how spaces are defined and how they influence social interaction. After discussing general theory on space, I will discuss space within an urban setting in order to demonstrate how different aspects of theory on space come into play. I will delve into how urban environments like cities are divided but also how on the other hand these are connected with each other. Within the established framework, I will then focus on two railway stations, Ikebukuro Station and Tokyo Station, to demonstrate that even though they are both a public space they differ in their representation of a public space.

Chapter 1: Space and Social Theory

The main focus of the field of space and social theory is on how space is defined and what its social influences are. Crucial work in this field includes the writings of Georg Simmel and Henri Lefebvre, who both discuss space but approach it differently. To Simmel, space is important because every form of social activity is spatial in nature. Space can thus determine social interaction, but it is conversely also created by it (Zieleniec 2007, 35). According to Simmel, space is made up out of five aspects, of which boundaries of space, fixed social forms of space, and mobility of space are most important.

According to Simmel, every space has boundaries, be it physical or otherwise. For example, a wall around a prison is a clear boundary. A form of non-physical boundaries is how different sectors within a city can be divided into working space, and private space. These boundaries are present, but not as apparent as a prison wall. Furthermore, Simmel argues that social forms are fixed to a space. This can be seen in the urban environment, where space is divided into different spheres. For example, there are leisure areas and working space, each separated from each other and each facilitating different social interaction. The last aspect of space is its mobility (or its immobility). As Simmel argues, "The immobility of a material object relevant to action thus obliges agents to go to it if they wish to utilize it in achieving a goal". If space is immobile and fixed, then social actors must first travel to it in order to use it.

Lefebvre's view on space concerns itself more with nature, the urban environment, and everyday life in general. The reason for this is that according to Lefebvre, space is interwoven with all sorts of social relations, and cannot be seen as a separate entity, "it is not only supported by social relations but is also producing and produced by social relations" (Zielenic 2007, 85). It is this spatial organization of society that is a fundamental social factor for Lefebvre. However, because of all these social connections, space is political. It is a product of the views of different parties, and is shaped according to these views. The development of spaces thus brings in a historical element, which Lefebvre considers essential in the production of space. Accordingly Lefebvre seems to agree with Simmel that the city is a stage where everything happens, production and consumption, manufacturing of ideas etc.

Both Simmel and Lefebvre agree on the influence that social interaction and space have on each other. However, for this "relationship" to come about, there needs to be a primary actor who influences the build of that space for instance. Space cannot appear out of nowhere, it has to be built and shaped. Taking railway stations as an example, they have clear physical boundaries and also less

clear boundaries. In case of Ikebukuro Station, sections within the station building clearly belong to one company and not to another. It is however, fixed in its location. This coincides with Simmel´s aspects of space. Also, Lefebvre's historical element is one that must not be forgotten. If space is a product, then its production and development is controlled by those who control space. This control over space is an important aspect that needs to be considered while discussing railway stations.

A reoccurring theme throughout space and social theory is the premise that those who control space, control what happens inside that space. Lefebvre argues this by stating that those who control how space is represented, control how it is produced, organized and used (Zielenic 2007, 74). David Harvey concurs, stating that who controls or owns space, ultimately has control of how social, political and economic conditions are defined within that space (Zielenic 2007, 120). It can be argued that control of space and how it is represented is the same thing. However, I argue that this not the case, even though they are tied closely together. Representation is what naturally follows after control over a space. Thus, this makes the fight for control over space political. The production and organization of space can be used to promote an ideology or idea, since it is the spatial organization is a fundamental social factor (Zielenic, 2007, 77). For Lefebvre, space is political and strategic, and thus makes control over space important for ruling parties.

Castells too, seems to agree, even though his argument is set in a context of the urban setting. He argues that the ones, who initiate change and have influence over the outcome of that change, are the dominant class within the district of the city (Castells 2003, 25). Because the dominant group changes the meaning of the city, the city itself has no control over it. However, it is not always clear who controls space or who is the dominant group, because there can be more than one actor in place. Concerning Japanese railway stations, there has been written extensively on how department stores have financed the construction of railway stations and how they have had a significant part in the development of railway stations. For example, Mitsukoshi financed the construction of a subway station in Ginza in 1931. Furthermore, 1929 saw the birth of the terminal department stores. These were railway stations where the department store was more important than the main function of the station itself (Chiba and Ito 2001, 8). However, private railway companies and department stores are linked in that railway companies like Hankyu Railway started to build their own department stores (MacPherson 1998, 166). As such, both are connected to one another.

Urban environment

In order to define what kind of place a railway station has in a space such as a city, we must first discuss what a city is. Steve Pile stresses that cities are mostly made up of multiple districts which are separated from each other. This means that certain classes within a society are assigned to different districts. Furthermore, work is separated from private life and vice versa, creating different spheres within a city. This caused scholars to think of the city not only as a place of physical entities, but a place which had social contact and social meaning to it. They are socially organized (Pile 1999, 17). Manuel Castells also struggles with the definition of the city, though he acknowledges that a city is a historical product (Castells 2003, 23). It is clear to him that there is a social organization within a city and that it is under constant social change, just like the city. It is the structural outcome of the conflictive process between the history of the city and the society (Castells 2003, 24). The meaning or function we choose to give to buildings and structures can change throughout the course of history. Furthermore, different groups of people give different meanings to places (Madanipour 2003, 140) and the way space and its meaning changes also vary.

Private space and work space are two separate entities. Madanipour argues that it is between these two spheres that the public spaces lay that connect them. However, the constantly shifting landscape of the city causes its inhabitants to speed through most of these public spaces, without interacting with them. Accordingly, this had as an effect that physical contact between citizens started to decline even though city progress was being made. Madanipour argues that this reduction in public spaces, the reduction social contact between people, is because of the constant fragmentation of the city and its various spheres (Madanipour 2003, 144). Furthermore, the functions that public spaces hold are in decline. Pile also argues that through the development of cities social distance is created. Though cities were once thought of as being a place where people could freely meet with each other, the opposite may be true. Pile argues that although cities developed and expanded further, a sort of distancing was produced between people even though they lived close to each other (Pile 1999, 45). The city had an opposite effect in that cities did not bring the people closer together through work and public transportation. Because of the size of the city and segregation of its people, geographical and social distances were created between the city's inhabitants.

There is not one sort of public space. Each public space is different and has developed along different lines. To further analyze railway stations in Japan, it is important to know what sort of public spaces exist, because as public space, railway stations developed in different ways. According to Fran Tonkiss, these public spaces can be divided into three (Tonkiss 2005, 67). Even though

Tonkiss admits that these three definitions are ideal in nature, they do give a good grasp on public space. The first is the “Square”. Tonkiss argues that the Square is a place which is provided or protected by the state. These places usually invoke a sense of collective belonging. Examples are parks, monuments and so on. The second is the “Café”. The Café stands for spaces that offer social interaction with other people. This includes meeting others and exchange of experiences. Though a public space, these cafés do not give the sense of being out in public as much as the Square does. The third and final public space is the “Street”. The Street represents every public space which is meant for communal use. When we take streets for example, people use this to travel. Social interaction that occurs here is usually nothing more than a casual greeting. As we can see, these three publics spaces all have their own unique characteristics. It is important to make that distinction in analyzing railway stations. Their development could have been influenced by the type of public space they represent or vice versa. As stated above, the dominant group controls space, but it is also argued by Simmel that space has influence over social interaction. However, it can be argued that this influence goes both ways.

Functions of a railway station

As discussed above, cities consist of different spheres. This landscape is ever changing, and according to some the public space is decreasing. If so, I argue that remaining public space such as railway stations are a very interesting place to study. This could give an insight on why these public spaces remain and how they function. In the case of railway stations it is obvious why they have remained as a public space, as they are used to access transportation. However, the function of railway stations changed throughout their development.

In the beginning of railway development, railway stations were generally used as a place to unload goods and passengers, and to refuel. As time moved on however, railway stations started develop towards more than a place to board a train and they began to be used for other ends as well. Because of this development, it is possible to define what some of the basic functions of railway stations are, be it in Japan or elsewhere. This was done by Zemp et all, who have tried to define five basic functions of railway stations. Their research has taken into account that railway stations can be a social challenge. The reason for this is that there is a variety of stakeholders in building a railway station. Not only railway companies and construction companies, the population must also be taken into account. If the population does not want a railway station, or if they are not happy with the design, this can create problems. This is what Zemp et all defines as social challenges. Furthermore, Zemp et all also states that users of railway stations are stakeholders within railway stations. This

correlates with what we have seen in theories on space, where both space and the community can influences one another. Even though this research was done in Switzerland, it does not mean that its conclusions are not applicable to Japanese railway stations.

The first function is called “Linking catchment area and transport network”. Railway stations act as a connection for users to the transport network. Without stations, its users cannot board trains. Thus, the railway station acts as a central hub by getting all users to one central place and providing them with public transport. The second function, called “Supporting transfer between modes of transport”, has a close connection with the first. What a railway station does is offer different modes of transportation. This all seems straightforward, but it still is a function that is needed in order for a railway station to function properly. The third function is “Facilitating commercial use of real estate”. This means that a railway station may be used for commercial purposes. Be it opening a café**,** or a bakery, commerce is a part of the station. Selling goods on station grounds is also a way to make additional revenue, a practice seen a lot within Japanese railway stations. This links closely to theories on space, as Lefebvre, Simmel, and Harvey argue that those who control space, control how it is developed. The fourth function is “Providing public space”. Railway stations are the stage for social activities, public events, markets and such. As argued by Tonkiss, public space can be divided into three different types. These types are the Square, the Café, and the Street (Tonkiss 2005, 67). The last function of the railway station is called “Contributing to the identity of the surrounding area”. This means that railway station can also be a cultural heritage, or can become significant for its surrounding because it contributes to its identity. When the first railway station in Japan was built, its main purpose was to be a sign of modernity. However, it is also used as a sign of the government and the power it holds over its people. Railway stations differ in size, building style, interior and exterior. Different railway stations have different ways of contributing to their surroundings and have a different feeling to them, even or especially in a metropolitan area such as Tokyo. For example, the railway station in Harajuku is quite small with only two tracks and an old-fashioned building, but the station in Ebisu has elevated tracks and a modern look. This in part has to do with function five of the railway station, constituting to the identity of the surrounding area. Where Harajuku is more fashion and trend oriented, Ebisu is known for its high standards. Railway stations facilitate the producing of an identity. Another example to create a sense of community is *Ekikon*, a festival where Tokyo Station is host to classical concerts and symposia (Okura 1988, 12).

Railway stations as public space

Railway stations in general had the ability to be the foundations of towns and cities. Because trains in the 19th century and early 20th century were built with steam engines, they could only run for about 200 miles before they needed to refuel. As such, railway stations were built at set locations for refueling purposes (Richards and MacKenzie 1986, 121). These railway stations needed to be manned and maintained. Small towns started to appear and these railway stations were their center. Some towns were even financed by railway companies themselves in order to accommodate the station's personnel (Richards and MacKenzie 1986, 118). The railway stations acted as the center of towns, providing supplies, visitors and business. Passengers started to discover places outside the city they lived in. This enforces the idea that railway stations can act as a doorway to the outside world. Railway stations in the country side acted as a linkage to the world outside small towns, whereas the stations in the city offered an escape from the city. However, passengers wandering out of trains also had an effect on the stations themselves. The development of these stations caused other businesses to thrive. Station buildings started to incorporate hotels and bath houses, becoming a leisure resort for those willing to come out to the railway station (Ito and Chiba 2001, 9). Railway stations evolved even further, incorporating parks and public space in their design, following the Garden City design (Ito and Chiba 2001, 8). These developments created the feeling of a community, with the railway station in the middle. Furthermore, the desire for people from the city to have their own house in the country side caused them to come out to smaller towns by train.

The railway station also became a stage for social interaction on many different levels, since it became a place where people could meet on during their commute. But even the railway station had influence on who you could meet. Difference in class, race and sex meant that you would meet different people because of class separation within railway stations (Richards and MacKenzie 1986, 137). Railway stations also attracted others who did not have any plans to travel. Pilgrims and beggars found refuge in railway stations and used the light and water found here (Richards and MacKenzie 1986, 144).

Such a divide between people is also observable in present day Japanese railway stations. According to Freedman, the public transportation in Tokyo is a social and a cultural space, which differs per metropolitan area. This is because it is easy to observe the effects of urbanization than in any other public space. Furthermore, Freedman states that behavior and interaction that is not possible anywhere else can be observed (Freedman 2010, 5). She elaborates by stating that rather than unifying people, trains actually create more individualism because most people do not talk when on public transportation and usually engage into checking and writing e-mails on their mobile

phones (Freedman 2010, 13). This divide between people goes even further. Depending on the departure time of the train, people from different social classes can be seen using trains. Laborers travel on different times than those with white-collar jobs (Freedman 2010, 10). This thus creates a gap between the two classes, even though they both use the same service. However, Freedman also argues that public transportation actually brings people from different social classes together (Freedman 2010, 16). Railway stations are hubs, where social interaction is achieved. An example of this is people waiting on family and friends at railway stations, only to visit department stores within and around the station building to shop. Usually, the station exits are used as a meeting place. Exits are pointed to throughout the station and usually every exit has its own name, be it West Exit or Exit C-3.

Major railway stations in Tokyo are very large in size and incorporate several other facilities besides public transportation. When looking at the history of Shinjuku station, we can find evidence that it indeed is and was a hub of social activity. During the 1930's, there was a chalkboard in Shinjuku station where people would leave messages for friends, family or lovers (Freedman 2010, 142). Shinjuku was not only used for traveling but also for social interaction, and it became a focus point for authors during the same period, since railway stations became prominent entity in urban life and not only in spatial terms (Freedman 2010, 18). These are all signs that major railway stations in Tokyo can be a social hub.

As discussed in theories on space, control of a space means control of what happens in it. This holds true for Japanese railway stations as well. During the Meiji period in Japan, they were also a tool of the government to exert control over its country (Chiba and Ito 2001, 4). However, railway stations in Japan also began to develop social functions when the population moved towards the suburbs. For rural areas it became their means of escape to the city, and vice versa, for those in major Japanese cities, they became the means of escape to rural areas. The station contributed to the community's identity by being this gateway (Chiba and Ito 2001, 8). Because a variety of social classes use the station building, it forms a link with its community and the outside world (Freedman 2010, 15).

An example of early influence of the government in building railway stations can be seen in the early 20th century. During this period, railway stations were being built according to a ranking system. There were five different ranks, each incorporating at least some form of Western design (Chiba and Ito 2001, 5). With this ranking system, the community surrounding the railway station was ranked as well. This links to one of the functions Zemp et all discusses, in that a railway station is contributing towards the identity of the community. Most important however, is to note that at the time of this ranking system, the Japanese government still had control over the development of railway stations. This changed during the first half of the 20th century.

As we have seen in this chapter, there is more way than one to look at a space. There are different sorts of space, each with its unique elements, it can contribute to the identity of an area, and its history are defining in what it represents today. Railway stations can be defined as a public space, complete with its own set of five basic functions. However, because control over space determines what happens inside that given space, it is important to look at the different actors. This also holds true for Japanese railway stations.

Chapter 2 History of railway stations in Japan

The importance of railway stations cannot be overlooked. As Hosken argues, public transportation is the lifeline of cities (Hosken 1973, 53). This is especially the case for railway stations in Tokyo, where public transportation is an essential aspect of daily life. In Tokyo, the length of the operational railway tracks stretches over 300 kilometers (Di 2013, 106), and a subway system that stretches 195km[1]. Furthermore, more than 14 million people per day use the railway system, with most commuters coming in from outside city limits. Even though there are more than 100 train lines and 13 subway lines present in Tokyo, congestion is a daily ordeal, with around 47% of all inhabitants using public transportation. An example of this heavy usage of public transportation is the Chiyoda Ward, which holds 1 million people during the day, yet only 40,000 inhabitants remain during the night (Nakamura 1995, 3).

There has been extensively written on railway stations, and it has been argued that railway stations in Tokyo have developed from a place of public transportation to sites of social interaction (Freedman 2010, 116). I argue that this development was largely due to private railway companies who have been actively engaged in railway development in Japan. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a reoccurring theme within space and social theory is the control of space. Lefebvre and Simmel agree that control over space means control what happens within said space. As private railway companies gained more control over railway stations as a space, they also gained control over how the railway stations developed. However, this was not always the case. In the early stages of railway development, the Japanese government still had control over the railway companies. Private railway companies were obligated to receive licenses from local authorities for construction of railway lines or anything related to the railway system. Because of several shifts from public to private and vice versa during the development of the railway system in Japan however, private railway companies gained more influence over the railway development.

Railway networks and railway companies

To further understand how private railway companies in Japan gained more influence, I shall give an overview on the early years of railway development in Japan, starting in 1872. There have

[1] http://www.tokyometro.jp/en/corporate/enterprise/transportation/conditions/index.html, Last accessed July 4, 2014

been several switches between private and public railway companies within the history of railway development in Japan. I argue that this impacted the development of the railway system, and gave private railway companies more influences over this development. Furthermore, this will also give a better understanding of why in Japan private railway companies have this control, especially compared to companies in Europe where private railway companies were bought out beginning of the 20th century (Government 1901, 301).

At its inception, the railway system of Japan was a government project. The first railway track was realized in 1872 and its 27 km long track provided a train service between Shimbashi and Yokohama. One of the reasons behind constructing this track was to show Japan's progress towards modernization. This was not the only reason however, as there was pressure from outside and inside Japan that led to tracks' construction. Per example, the British minister Sir Harry Parkes was quick to point out that if Japan had a railway network, it could offer support to areas which were suffering from famine. Yokohama merchants as well were keen on a railroad system. (Nobutaka Ike 1955, 219). The railway track between Shimbashi and Yokohama came to be regularly used by the population, with around 1.4 million passengers using it daily by 1873 (Chiba and Ito 2001, 5). However, due the inability to fund an expansion of the national transportation network, the government began to encourage privatization of railway construction (Noguchi 1994, 21). This resulted in the first privately owned railway company, *Nihon Tetsudō*, which opened a line between Ueno and Kumagaya in 1883 (Mizutani 1994, 9).

The long depression at the end of the 19th century also had its effects on Japan. Japan tried to give its economy a boost during the depression, by adding another railway line to its existing railway network. At first, it was proposed to let this line run through a mountain filled area. However, the Japanese government instead opted for another line, that became the *Tōkaidō* line (Aoki 1994, 34). The *Tōkaidō* line was finished in 1889, and by now, Japan´s railway network extended over 1700 km long. The network itself was divided between the Japanese government, who owned 880 kilometer, and private railway companies, who owned the remaining 840 kilometers. It is important to note that already in the early stages of railway development; there was a sense of joint ownership of the Japanese railway system. This joint ownership is followed by the switches from private to public and vice versa. This continuing switching stimulated railway development and as a result, railway stations became larger because of the continuing adding of railway lines. As such, they grew as a public space as well.

By 1893, interest in a national railway network was growing. Private railway companies invested more into the network and as such, they collectively owned 3010 kilometer of the railway tracks (Aoki 1994, 35). As can be seen, private railway companies in Japan were present at the beginning of the railway system already. Furthermore, in contrary to private companies in Europe,

Japanese private railway companies were not bought out but they were encouraged by the Japanese government. However, even though private companies invested more and more into the railway network, their passengers were not satisfied with the fare increase and poor service privatization brought with it. This, alongside pressure from the military and the depression, led to the "Nationalization of Railways Act" in 1906, marking the end of the push for privatization. Through the Nationalization of Railway act, the Japanese government took control of 17 of the large privately owned railway companies, just as it was the case in Europe. In contrast, smaller companies with short lines were not acquired (Aoki 1994, 34). By this time however, the railway system had reached up to 70% of its current size and scope (Mizutani 1994, 9). Following the nationalization, the Ministry of Railway was established in 1920, which acted as an operator of the railway system.

The railway network did not stay in the hands of public railway company for long. The costs of maintaining this network were high and as such, construction of bridges and tunnels was avoided. The result of this was that a significant number of lines were not connected to large cities with shopping districts. Furthermore, smaller stations did not have any personnel running the stations (Aoki 1994, 35). This meant that there was business opportunity to be filled by the railway companies, who have been incorporating shopping malls in stations since the first half of the 20th century.

Private railway companies had had side business since the beginning of the 20th century, as is evident with is Hankyu Corporation. Established in 1907, it connected Osaka and Takarazuka with a railway line in 1909. This railway line proved to be profitable, and not soon after, Hankyu opened its first hot spring. Hankyu opened other side businesses like the Takarazuka Family Park and by doing so, started to generate profit outside their railway line. However , in 1929, the *Chiho Tetsudo Hō*, or Local Railway Act, allowed them to further expand these side businesses without many restrictions. Originally drafted in 1919[2], the Local Railway Act is mostly focused on construction of the railway system in Japan and on licenses needed for construction. However, a revision was made in 1929 and section 9 of this law was deleted. This allowed private railway companies to indulge in side businesses, since it was no longer needed to get permission from the local government to indulge in side businesses (Mizutani 1994, 28). This includes construction of houses which were usually located near railway stations, travel agencies, and much more. The freedom given to the private railway companies is characteristic to Japan. When comparing to other countries in Europe, we can see that in the 19th century, projects concerning the railway system were entrusted to the state. For example, in Belgium it took legislation in 1834 to allow for a public railway network. This legislation concerned a public railway network and not a private one (De Groot 2011, 710). The reason for this is twofold. First, the construction of a railway system was seen as technologically challenging and thus its design

[2] http://www.houko.com/00/01/T08/052.HTM, Last accessed July 4, 2014

was primarily done by state engineers. Second, construction of private railway lines was done in the Netherlands and England but this often failed. As a result, private railway companies in Europe had far less influence over railway development than railway companies in Japan had (De Groot 2011, 704).

Eventually, private railway networks started to construct department stores because of the freedom they enjoyed due to the revision of the Local Railway act (Aoki et al 2000, 90). It can be argued that during the development of railway stations in Japan, the department stores have been a great facilitator. Although it is true that they had a significant influence, I argue however, that the private railway companies as actor have had the most influence on the development of railway stations as a public space. This does not mean that department stores must be set aside completely. Railway stations and department stores have a shared history, dating back to 1899 when advertisements for department stores first appeared at Umeda Station.

Present day department stores of Japan find their origin in 1904, when the company Mitsukoshi opened their first department store, an example followed by others. Department stores were perceived as a symbol of civilization and enlightenment (MacPherson 1998, 141). But not only this, they also became a symbol for status and pleasure of consumption and thus became an attraction to the Japanese population (MacPherson 1998, 28).

The contribution of department stores to the development of railway stations started in the 1920's, when the department stores started to move to closer towards railway stations general. This movement started by Mitsukoshi in 1923, when they opened the Mitsukoshi Market in Shinjuku station (Freedman 2010, 144). That same year, department stores became increasingly popular to the upper middle class of Japan, which was followed by with the move of the population towards suburbs following the great Kantō earthquake. This growth in popularity, made the department stores rethink their locations. They had to be built at an easy to access location. For example, Mitsukoshi located itself in Yamanote. The move toward Yamanote attracted new customers because of it is easily accessibility by public transportation.

The first example of such a case can again be seen at Umeda Station. The Japanese company Hankyu Corporation opened an eight story high department store incorporated next to station building in 1929 (Chiba and Ito 2001, 8). Here, the department store was a more important aspect of the station than the station itself. This station provided travelers with easy access to goods, and moreover, travelers did not have to travel far from the station building. This in turn, gave rise to residential housing around railway lines provided by private railway companies, increasing ridership and visitors (MacPherson 1998, 163). Another example of a department store having influence in the development of a railway station, is of Mitsukoshi. In 1931 they signed a contract to completely

finance the construction of a subway station in Ginza. This was done to get a large number of customers to their stores (MacPherson 1998, 166).

As I have discussed in theories on space, space can influence social interaction, but a dominant group can also influence the development of space. The development of the Japanese railway network is an example of this. With increase of railway fares and poor service at the beginning of the 20th century, the population started to complain about the railway system. Due to these complaints of the population, and the inability of the railway companies to handle these complaints, the railway system needed to change. In this case, the population was the dominant group and as such, forced the railway network to change. As argued, space is always changing, adapting to social change. This is also true for railway stations. However, because space is always changing, private railway companies were not out of the picture completely. As stated previously, through the revision of the Local Railway Act in 1929, Japanese private railway companies gained more control over the railway stations as a space and as such impacted its development.

The Japanese railway network connected large cities, making up the framework of transportation. Urban transportation connected suburban areas to city centers. The way this was done however, differs per city. For example, it is argued that there is a difference between the Kansai region en the Tokyo region in how railway network developed. The Kansai region connected their lines to places that promoted leisure. In contrast, Tokyo laid out their lines towards the surrounding suburbs, catering to the demand that it created (Shouji 1996, 23). In Osaka and Kobe, urban transport is mainly run by private railway companies. They extended the railway network by connecting city centers with their own lines. In contrast, Tokyo is mainly made up of JR Company lines (Kato 1996, 44). Private railway companies started to sell residential areas in the suburbs, effectively creating their own markets for transportation. An example of this is the Hankyu Corporation.

Due to the influence railway companies had on the development of railway stations in Japan, they also impacted the daily life of inhabitants of cities. Private railway companies had major contributions in the development of real estate, station buildings and how transportation developed. Their influence came from them choosing which lines to run through which stations. As a result, they also controlled were their side businesses went and how a railway station would develop. Take for example Ikebukuro Station. Both Seibu and Tōbu use this station as the starting point for their lines and they both have very large department stores, one on each side of the station, and they both have a travel agency located inside the station. Railway companies have even been able to influence tourism. Like Hankyu, railway companies promote their lines through tourism. For example, it is said that Nikko became popular because Tōbu started promoting its line to Nikko (Aoki et al 2000, 85). The same holds true for the hot springs in Kinugawa, also promoted by Tōbu (Aoki et al 2000, 92).

Several functions of the railway station become apparent here. The most important however, is that the railway companies used the stations to facilitate commercial use by the promotion of their own lines.

Second half of the 20th century

Difficult times for the railway sector followed after the Second World War. A large part of Japan's infrastructure was destroyed. The railway network also sustained damages, but it remained usable for transporting goods (Kato 1996, 46). Four years after the end of the Second World War, the Japanese National Railway company was founded on June 1st, 1949 (Imashiro 1997, 46). With the start of the Korean War in 1950, Japan became a military base for the United Nations. This sparked the need for a better railway network and resources were spend for this purpose.

During the Korean War, railway demand rose and an effort was made to improve the railway network. However, with the increase of ridership, and the boom in the economy, congestion remained a problem. This changed after the introduction of the car. The market share of railways dropped from 76% in the 1960s to 40% by 1980 for the passenger market (Imashiro 1997, 50). The JNR had made profits until the early 1960s, but even after the introduction of the high-speed train Shinkansen in 1964, they started to run into red numbers. To counter this, they raised ticket prices and reduced staff to increase revenue. However, these plans only decreased ridership. Furthermore, the financial support they got from the government was used to pay off the interest they had on loans. By 1987, the JNR was 37 trillion yen in debt. Because of this economic turmoil due to mounting deficits (Noguchi 1994, 34), a plan was devised in 1985 to split up the group. On April 1st 1987, the Japanese National Railway was divided into six groups for passenger transportation. The JR group proved profitable, and saw profits of 340 billion yen in their first year, rising to 900 billion yen in 1992. This was because following the economic boom, demand for transport rose, and labor costs were reduced. Furthermore, the companies were released from the old JNR debt (Imashiro 1997, 52).

Suburban Rhythm

Since its inception, the development of the Japanese railway network has been turbulent. We have seen that there are a number of times were management has switched from private companies to public companies and back. The revision of the Local Railway Act of 1929 gave the development a boost however, since it allowed private companies to have side businesses without

the need of government approval. This meant another source of revenue for the companies, which helped to keep fares low. However, there have been two other events which have been important in the history of the Japanese railway network.

In the beginning of the 20th century, expansion towards rural areas was favored. Also, a subway system was built in order to cope with the increasing demand. Up until 1923, Japan was seeing overall economic growth, which was facilitated by the First World War and by its wars with China in 1895 and Russia in 1905. This caused the population to turn towards major cities in Japan, which resulted in the construction of new housing areas (Chiba and Ito 2001, 7). However, this changed with the great Kantō earthquake in 1923. Following the earthquake, the Japanese population started to move outside city centers and suburbs started to expand. As a response to the housing shortage and other problems this move brought, the Japanese tried to adopt the so-called "Garden City" idea (Inoue 2003, 85). The general concept of the Garden City is the merging of several districts, for example a merge between the work district with leisure district. What happened in Japan however, was that large urban environments without any employment opportunities were created (Chiba and Ito 2001, 7). As Madanipour argues, this results in a fragmentation of space within the city. Still, the population and the suburbs underwent a growth and thus, a connection to where people worked was needed. With more people commuting from outside city centers, an increase in ridership occurred. To answer this problem, the number of trains running per hour was increased. Government funding of electric powered trains and metro lines allowed for this increase, and as such, boosted the development of the railway network (Aoki et al 2000, 96).

After the Second World War, the number of people who commuted to the metropolitan areas increased dramatically. Yet, railway companies were faced with financial difficulties because of the increasing inflation. However, during the economic growth in the 1950's, there was an increase of people moving from rural areas to metropolitan areas. Because of the economic growth Japan now enjoyed, the secondary industry started to move towards the suburbs alongside the general population (White 1980, 360). Moving towards the city became popular under young workers who were attracted by work and housing opportunity Tokyo offered. They started purchasing housing in the suburbs, and this prompted railway companies to extend their lines further outwards, making a sixty-minute-commute not uncommon (Chiba and Ito 2001, 12). The population around Tokyo rose, especially in Saitama, was it grew from 1.3 million to 3 million in 1975 (White 1980, 367). Even though congestion also became a problem, medium-ranged travelling became the primary focus of Japanese railway companies (Fujii 1994, 3). The reason why this is important to note is that it shows that railway stations are used daily and have developed to keep up with demand. We can see that Japanese railway companies do indeed use railway stations for linking the catchment with the transport network, one of the functions Zemp et all defined as basic function of railway stations.

Because of the rise in population, the catchment area of railway stations increased. Thus, it can be argued that because more people use railway stations each day, social interaction also increases. Railway stations begin to play a bigger part in the lives of commuters and as such, their function as public space becomes more important.

The Japanese railway system has several large railway operators, but some small operators as well. As of 1990, there were around 183 of these small operators, with 125 of them being solely operators for passenger transport. Some of the smaller operators effectively transport more passengers than their larger counterparts (Mizutani 1994, 7). Furthermore, in contrast to the early beginnings of the Japanese railway system, the private railway industry in Japan is now profitable on fares alone and is not funded or subsidized by the government (Mizutani 1994, 21). Also, most of the privately owned operators have side businesses, generating revenue through activities outside the railway business, allowing them to stabilize ticket prices. Furthermore, by investing in side businesses, they are able to increase the number of passengers using the railway services they themselves provide (Mizutani 1994, 28). These are indicators of how vast and important passenger transport has become to the Japanese railway system.

Since the Local Railway Act, side businesses have been an important aspect for private railway companies in Japan. It could be argued that without these side businesses, the industry itself would collapse. Throughout its development, ticket prices were kept low because of the profits companies gained from these side businesses. Ticket prices would increase dramatically, if this profit were to be left out. When looking at how these side businesses developed, it becomes apparent how large this industry has become. We have seen this with businesses like the amusement park opened by Takarazuka in the early 20th century. We have also seen the incorporation of department stores with Japanese railway stations in 1929. Hankyu was not the only Japanese company to do so, and since the 1940's, there have been other private railway companies who have developed their own department stores as well. The move towards the suburbs not only increased ridership, it gave the private railway companies the possibility to start developing real-estate (Shouji 1996, 29).

It can be argued that the Japanese government still has the most control over the development of the Japanese railway system. Private railway companies still need permission from the Japanese government if they want to expand within the railway network. However, even though permission from the ministry of land, infrastructure and transport is needed, to what extent the Japanese government can really control the plans of private railway companies is unknown. Present day, the Local Railway Act is no longer present. It was replaced on December 4 1986 by the 92nd law, or Railway Business Act (Imashiro and Ishikawa 1998, 2). This new law concerns itself more with the construction of railway network and railway maintenance, rather than possible side businesses. According to the Railway Business Act, private railway companies still need permission from the

government for construction of the railway network, this in contrast to side businesses. Because of this, it can be argued that the Japanese government at least still has some control over how the railway network develops.

Chapter 3: Tokyo Station and Ikebukuro Station

In the previous chapters, I have discussed theories on space and have analyzed the functions of public space. In the second chapter, I have discussed how private railway companies gained more control over railway development in Japan, in contrary to Europe. Essential in this gain of control, was the revision of the Local Railway Act of 1929. In the case of Japan, we can see that the development of the railway stations as a public space was primarily facilitated by private railway companies. Two other important factors within this development are department stores and the population movement towards the suburbs. Because of the influence of private railway companies, these railway stations became a hub for commercial use. A public space was created through the inclusion of department stores, all while the railway station became a central point because of commuters.

In this chapter, the focus will be on how railway stations in Tokyo have developed and how they have evolved into the public space they are now. My focus will be on namely Tokyo Station and Ikebukuro Station. Though they are both large railway stations, as well in size and in ridership, both stations are different to one and another. Tokyo Station was primarily built with the modernization of Japan in mind. However, Ikebukuro Station was not and as such, the building falls under the dullness of most modern buildings (Hosken 1973, 166). Here, I shall demonstrate how both railway stations have developed in public spaces, but also how they differ in being a public space.

Tokyo Station

Tokyo Station is one of the busiest stations in Tokyo, with 380,997 people using just the JR Lines daily[3]. It has also increased in size since it was first built. It covers 13000m^2 making it one of the biggest railway stations in Tokyo (Kurosawa 2011, 30). Looking at the layout of Tokyo Station, we can see that there is a large hall constructed beneath its tracks from which you can reach all tracks. As such, it can also be used by commuters as a public space, and not only as a railway station. Furthermore, Tokyo Station is regarded as an impressive architectural work which can easily be distinguished from other railway stations in Japan. The reason for this is that Tokyo Station is made from brick, giving it the nickname 'Red Brick Station' (Takeda 2002, 4).

[3] http://www.jreast.co.jp/passenger/2011.html Accessed July 4, 2013

Planning of Tokyo Station started at the end of the 19th century with two goals in mind. The first was to make the station a symbol of Japanese modernization and a place where national events could take place (Takeda 2002, 9). Second, the plan was to connect Shimbashi Station and Ueno Station. Both stations were the starting point of two important lines, which reached well outside Tokyo but were not connected in any way. The plan was to connect these two through a central station, so that it would become easier travel from one to the other (Takeda 2002, 7). Furthermore, Nihonbashi was considered to be the economic center of Japan. It was considered to be convenient to build a station nearby to facilitate easy access. As such, Tokyo Station was built near Nihonbashi. By doing so, Tokyo Station was immediately attached to an important catchment area, fulfilling the primary function of a railway station.

The land that Tokyo Stations stands on, was bought by Mitsubishi in 1890. The official opening of Tokyo Station however, was 24 years later in 1914. Even at its opening, Tokyo Station was used by the inhabitants of Tokyo as something other than a station. As a sign of modernity, buildings like Tokyo Station were a rare sight in those days. It was not uncommon that people would enter the stations, just to admire the architectural work. Since Tokyo Station has had running water, there have been cases of people entering just to wash themselves. By doing so, Tokyo Station fulfilled the function of railway station by being a public space. The inhabitants of Tokyo did not need to go to Tokyo Station to board a train, they could go there for other purposes and use it as a public space. When compared to modern day Tokyo Station, people also accessed the tracks differently. The station was built in such a way that it had separate places where you could board the train, and where you could get off the train (Takeda 2002, 26). However, as trains became more crowded over the years, it eventually did not matter anymore where you would board or get off.

Comparisons between Tokyo Station and other central stations in Europe have been made. When looking at these, it becomes apparent that most of the central stations have a similar layout. Furthermore, central stations in Europe are more often the beginning of lines rather than a stopover. However, Tokyo Station contrasts this by being none of these. It is a station between stations, a place where several lines pass through and connect. In that sense, Tokyo Station, which was meant as a central station, is different to other central stations in Europe. Of course, there are some exceptions in Europe like Amsterdam Central Station that are similar in this.

The idea to make Tokyo Station a sign of modernization is reflected in its design. It was built to be grand and unlike other stations in Tokyo. However, when it came to designing Tokyo Station, several problems did arise. It was going to be built near to royal palace, which meant it had to adapt to its surroundings. Furthermore, the stations would become the place where the royal family would greet their visitors. Thus, Tokyo Station should be an impressive building, fit to host events, and the inside of the station had to be of such a standard that the royal family could welcome guests and

conduct official business. However, Tokyo Station should not be a more impressive building than the royal palace. This contradiction was a problem when they designed Tokyo Station (Takeda 2002, 12).

When designing Tokyo Station started, the Japanese turned to two foreigners for advice, namely Hermann Rumschöttel and Franz Balthasar. Both had a great influence on the design of the station. Rumschöttel worked on Kyūshū for a railway company before moving to Tokyo. In Tokyo, Balthasar worked on plans for an elevated railway track and of course, Tokyo Station. Balthasar had published work on the Japanese railway system in 1903. In one of his works, he tried to connect the German railway system with the Japanese railway system. According to Balthasar, Tokyo Station should be designed with the future of Japan in mind. He argued that Tokyo Station should be able to incorporate more lines in the future. If not, its function as a central station would be lost. Tokyo Station was meant as a hub for transportation activity. In that regard, it was central station but not in its design. Even though criticized for being too Western, it was regarded as a great achievement when Tokyo Station finally opened.

When taking the three different types of public space described by Tonkiss, how is Tokyo Station defined as a public space? I argue that it does not fit in just one type, but shows signs of all three. Of the three types, Tokyo Station shows signs of the Street most clearly. When using the station for just traveling, social interaction within the station building is kept to a minimum. However, Tokyo Station also shows signs of a Square. As stated above, at the time of designing Tokyo Station, modernization was kept in mind. Furthermore, the station was to be built as a place where visitors of the royal family could be welcomed. As such, it can be compared to a monument in that it signifies the sign of modernization. This is what the Square is all about. However, due to its numerous restaurants and shops, Tokyo Station also shows signs of a Café. It is even possible to travel to Tokyo Station to go shopping, eat, and go back, all without passing through the ticket gates. All essential shopping can be done there. Furthermore, the numerous cafés present facilitate social interaction in Tokyo Station and above all, every store can be accessed by the large main hall. You can enter Tokyo Station even if you do not have to get on the train, though this will cost you 150 yen. As a public space then, Tokyo Station does not fit in just one of the three types of public space defined by Tonkiss.

Ikebukuro Station

Occupying roughly 15.000 square meters of space, Ikebukuro Station is home to 18 separate train lines and has three metro lines. It also houses four different railway companies. When compared to Tokyo Station, the architecture of Ikebukuro Station is very different in that it does not

stand out architecturally like Tokyo Station. It falls into the background, surrounded by four large department stores. Inside the station building, the JR is situated in the middle, Seibu on the east side of the station, and Tōbu on the left side. When looking at usage, JR states that 544,762 people used their lines every day in 2011[4]. This makes Ikebukuro Station also one of the busiest stations in Tokyo, together with Tokyo Station.

At first, the tracks leading to Ikebukuro Station were meant to pass south of a prison. However, these plans were revised. The reason behind this revision was because of the problems it could cause in the future, when freight transport would come through Meijiro (*Ekibukuro* 2004, 3). Just as with Tokyo Station, this is an example of the first function of a railway station, linking to transport network, since by doing so it was easier to access Ikebukuro Station. Since its opening, private railway companies had a hand in the further development of the station itself, Tōbu and Seibu in particular. However, in the early 20th century, private railway companies were still forced to get permission from the local government for construction, which arguably could have hampered development of railway stations. An example of this can be found in 1904, when the Japanese company Tōbu received a temporal building permit. This was turned into an official permit in 1912. It is to be noted though, that in the original plans of Ikebukuro Station, the station was meant to be the starting point of the Tōbu Tōjō line. However, the Tōbu only showed interest in this plan after the opening of the station building. Other changes in the original plans of the station were a proposed tram line from Ikebukuro to Tokyo. However, since trams were slowly losing out to trains during that period, this was never realized. Tōbu was not the only company that showed interest in Ikebukuro Station. Several years after its opening, the Japanese company Seibu changed the starting point of their line to Ikebukuro Station. This was realized in 1915. According to the *Nihon Tetsudō*, Ikebukuro Station would grow in size. There were several other companies interested in this station, aside from Tōbu and Seibu. Eventually these companies lost to Tōbu and Seibu, even though both these companies did not initially intend to go to Ikebukuro Station (*Ekibukuro*, 8). Another factor for the rapid growth of Ikebukuro Station, is the fact that in 1910 a line between Ikebukuro Station and Tataba Station was completed which increased freight transport. Eventually, the Marunouchi line found its way to Ikebukuro Station in 1954, with the Yūrakuchō line following in 1974. The growth of Ikebukuro Station can be linked to the interest shown by Tōbu and Seibu. Present day, these companies are very visible in Ikebukuro Station. Both have large department stores and other side businesses present in the station building, which I argue contribute to it as public space.

As argued, Tokyo Station shows signs of being a Square. However, Ikebukuro Station does not due to the fact that it is barely visible because of the buildings surrounding it. I argue that what

[4] http://www.jreast.co.jp/passenger/2011.html Accessed July 4, 2013

Ikebukuro Station primarily does, is contribute to the identity of its surrounding. Evidence of this are the many statues of owls, the symbol of Ikebukuro, inside the station building. Furthermore, Ikebukuro is known for its many shopping malls like Sunshine City. With two department stores, it can be argued that Ikebukuro Station indeed promotes a sense of shopping.

Just like Tokyo Station, Ikebukuro Station can be defined as a public space, though how it fills this role is different. Even though it is accessible by anyone, it can be argued that Ikebukuro Station does not meet the requirements of being a Square. It does not promote a sense of belonging or show signs of power and as a building it fades into the background. It does however, have multiple department stores with shops and cafés inside and a shopping mall in the metro section called Echika. As such, it does fill the role of the Café just like Tokyo Station, even though it is not needed to go through the ticket gates in order to get to the shops. Furthermore, it can be observed that Ikebukruo station is used as a point of reference for people to gather. At most of the exits, social interaction is observable in that people are using it as a meeting place and musicians for playing music and interacting with their crowd. Ikebukuro Station, of course, also shows signs of the Street. With its many exits it facilitates traveling since it can be used to quickly get from one side of Ikebukuro to the other.

Conclusion

Control over space is an important concept within theories on space. Both Simmel and Lefebvre argue that this is due to the fact that control over space means control over how it is organized and used. To move this concept of control to a urban setting, Castell states the dominant group within space influence change. I argue that this is not true in the case of Japanese railway stations as a public space.

Madanipour argues that within the urban environment of the city private space and working space are separated and that public space is in decline. However, this is not true in the case of Japan or Tokyo at least. I argue that public space itself is not in decline here, but that the distances between private space and work space have grown greater. This does not mean public space is in decline. The reason for this increase of distance is the following. Japan has seen movements towards the suburbs twice. That this increased distance seems logical. However, the reason for increase in distance is because the concept of a Garden City was interpreted wrongly. Instead of creating working opportunities nearby, large, urban environments were created without working opportunities. As such, a great distance between home and work was created.

To travel to one space to another, you must travel through public space. As such, I argue that railway stations emerged as a public space because they cannot be avoided within Tokyo. They fit the criteria given, as they lie between public space and working space. As is evident from the statistics themselves, the number of commuters in Tokyo is huge. Furthermore, as can be seen in the early 1920's, department stores started to move closer to railway stations in Japan. Furthermore, they contributed to the development of railway stations, as is evident with Mitsukoshi financing the build of a railway station in Ginza. This shows that railway stations became to be perceived as important by other companies besides private railway companies themselves.

Further aspects of public space can be found like social interaction can be found here. Zemp et all supports this, as one of the functions of railway stations is to provide public space. However, the three types of public space presented by Tonkiss, do not fit in the case of Tokyo Station and Ikebukuro Station. I argue that railway stations in Japan cannot be put in just one of those three types. Tokyo Station, as well as Ikebukuro Station, exhibits signs of all two or more of these definitions. At a glance, Tokyo Station and Ikebukuro Station may seem to have a lot in common. Both stations are heavily used by commuters as both have more than 400,000 users per day. Both stations are used for traveling, but they are also used for commercial ends. Both Ikebukuro Station and Tokyo Station can be defined as public space as well. However, I argue that these stations are different to each other as a public space. Both stations also contribute to the identity of its

surrounding areas, be it in different ways. Tokyo Station stands out as an architectural work and was meant as a sign of modernization. With Ikebukuro station, this concept is not present at all as it is not different to the buildings surrounding it. Furthermore, with the many shops present inside the station building, it can be argued that Ikebukuro Station facilitates commercial use more than Tokyo Station does. It is here that both stations are different. However, this may be due to the different demographics that they cater to. As mentioned, Tokyo Station is near Nihonbashi, which was considered an economic center. In contrast, Ikebukuro Station is near Rikkyo University and because of this, sees many students commuting on a daily basis. Whether this contrast in demographic difference is the reason for difference as a public space however, is up for debate. Since both stations do not fit just one type of public space, I argue that these types must be redefined or at least that the definition of Tonkiss is incomplete.

I argue that private railway companies made railway stations in Japan a public space. Though this may be logical, the way that private railway stations in Japan developed is different to Europe. In Europe, governments were quick to buy out private railway companies, as they had no faith in them. Evidence of this lack of confidence in private railway companies can be found in the history of Belgium's railway network. This also happened to a certain extent in Japan with the National Privatization Act in 1904. However, not all private railway companies were acquired. Furthermore, these companies regained control over railway stations as a public space. I argue that instrumental in this was the redesign of the Local Railway Act in 1929. Without this revision, private railway stations would still require permission from local governments. Because of this revision, they were also able to engage in side businesses. This facilitated in the development of railway stations as a public space, since private railway companies were now able to incorporate their side businesses within the station building.

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