Leiden University

Tāminaru depāto, ekichika and ekinaka

A study on the Japanese railway station as urban playground through the case of Shinjuku

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Introduction

With about two thirds of the population commuting every day (Kato 2013, table 1), the railway system is the beating heart of Tokyo's urban daily life. JR East (East Japan Railway Company) alone, a major railway company in Japan, carries half the total number of passengers in the city, operating some of the busiest terminals in the country, such as Shinjuku and Ikebukuro station (JR East Annual Report 2017, 70). In the constantly evolving landscape of the city, the railway station has come to fulfill a role that goes beyond its primary function of node in the transport infrastructure. Major stations, in particular, have developed into destination themselves, acting as economic, social and cultural hubs, that often contributes to the development of the areas surrounding them (Amano 2013, 32-33). This thesis focuses on one of them: Shinjuku station.

The origin of the railways in Japan can be traced back to 1872, with the establishment of the first train line between Shimbashi and Yokohama as a result of both public and private initiative (Aoki 1994, 29). In 1906, seventeen private railway companies were absorbed through the Nationalization Act by the Japanese Government Railways (JGR). Among these were Japan and Kōbu Railways, owners of the former routes of two of today's busiest lines in Tokyo, the Yamanote and Chuo Line. The Act did not prevent the formation of new private railway companies, which played a fundamental part in the development of new lines and station buildings throughout the century, as it will be explored in the second chapter, and created the premises for the development of the current railway body of Tokyo. With the beginning of the American occupation that followed the Second World War, the Japanese Government Railways were turned into a public corporation, renamed as Japanese National Railways, or JNR (Mitsuhide 1997, 46). In 1987, towards the end of Japan's bubble economy, JNR was finally privatized, giving birth to the seven companies of the JR Group. In Tokyo, the JR East group, which today accounts for a fourth of Japan's total railway

operations with an average of 17 million passengers per day (JR East Annual Report 2017, 68), has performed a pioneering role in the revitalization of railway stations with the project "Station Renaissance" of the early 2000s. Currently, eight of the sixteen major private railway companies of Japan are located in the Kantō region (Japan Private Railway Association 2019), three of which – Keio Railway, Odakyu Railway, and Tokyo Metro – operate Shinjuku station with the JR East group.

With an average of 3.46 million passengers every day, Shinjuku is the busiest station in the world (Shinjuku Convention & Visitors Bureau, n.d.), and a vivid example of the evolution of the structure of the urban railway station in Japan. The platforms of Shinjuku are almost completely hidden by the seven massive shopping facilities that the skeleton of the station is composed of, and the number of permanent and temporary stores, and different underground paths that permeate its inner spaces. One of Tokyo's most vital centers, Shinjuku primarily functions as transfer station (MILT 2017), and it is mostly associated by commuters with ideas of entertainment, eating-out and shopping (Jeki 2009, 9-10). It is an eloquent case of how Tokyo's major stations have transformed into a combination of leisure and shopping facilities, in which the boundaries between commuting through the station and *consuming* it have considerably blurred. As Covatta (2013) suggests, "the bigness of Tokyo, in terms of the flow of people and transportation systems conveying them, has resulted in a complex and idiosyncratic infrastructural network" in which "each urban element hybridizes its identity as it interacts with its surrounding infrastructure" (206). In the case of major stations, with attention to the volume of their passengers, this has emerged prominently, hence the frequent depiction of these junctions in the transportation system as cities within the city.

A central factor in the development of the railway station in Japan is the engagement of private railway companies in the real estate sector. This practice, referred to as *ensen kaihatsu* (development along the railway), is based on the creation of appealing areas centered around a specific station and the construction of residential complexes along the companies' train routes

(Taniguchi 2018, 287-289), and it implies a conceptual shift in the idea of commuter, from passenger to costumer. Hankyu Railway, a major company in the Kansai area, was the first one to adopt this strategy and extensively invest in real estate development, giving birth in 1929 to a specific type of department store within the railway station referred to as *tāminaru depāto* (terminal department store). As Ida (2019) shows, Hankyu's experience influenced the development of stations in other major cities, where private railway companies started to experiment the new model before Japan's engagement in the Second World War, and more extensively during the rush for construction that characterized Japan the 1960s (153). On the other hand, the introduction of subway lines during the 1930s brought attention to the potential of the underground as a type of public space and shopping-oriented facility, later addressed as *chikagai* (underground city) or *ekichika* (basement floors of the station). In Tokyo, this space was developed simultaneously with that of the terminal department store under the lead of private railways companies such as Tokyo Chikatetsudō (Tokyo Subway), now known as Tokyo Metro (Fujimoto 2013, 6). In the last two decades, finally, attention has shifted to the development of the areas within and around the gates of the railway station, which have come to be associated with the word *ekinaka* (area inside the station), and are particularly exemplified by the facilities of the JR East group.

This thesis argues that these three space of *tāminaru depāto*, *ekichika* and *ekinaka*, which will be further discussed in the second chapter, are the constitutive components of Tokyo's major railway stations, and that by promptly integrating new urban elements in the context of the station, railway companies have created actual urban playgrounds for the commuter. These stations have become landmarks in the city, hosting different companies and types of passengers, and they have been integrated with a variety of facilities to support and enhance commuting. This thesis thus aims at understanding and defining the major railway station as an urban playground of leisure and consumption, while presenting its formation and current status through the case study of Shinjuku.

The literature on Shinjuku is revealing of the tight relationship between railways and urban development (Mishima & Ubukata 1989; Akaiwa 2018; Nishimori 2019), and although *tāminaru depāto, ekichika* and *ekinaka* have not been particularly explored yet in its specific context, Shinjuku is a significative example of their development throughout the 20th century. In fact, the station is still a site for the experimentation and implementation of new spaces for the commuter, as in the case of Station Work, which will be discussed in the third chapter.

The argument presented in this thesis will be based on the analysis of primary and secondary sources, the latter mainly represented by works on the history of Shinjuku and the station, and the historical development of the three types of consumption-oriented spaces mentioned above. These will be integrated by data from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MILT) and, specifically for the case study, by the analysis of newspaper articles on Shinjuku in Japanese and English from 1885 to present, taken from the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Japan Times*, and other relevant historical accounts referring to the city. Moreover, the understanding of the complexity of the structure and flows of the station and its current *ekinaka* will be the result of the analysis of *Ekisumer*, a research magazine on consumption in the station, and observations conducted in Shinjuku between the beginning of September 2019 to the end of January 2020, through which the Keio Railway concourse between the south gates and the Keio department store, and the JR East South entrance *ekinaka* have been selected for the case study.

The thesis consists of three chapters. The first one will examine the research on the Japanese railway station, which is revealing of the different roles the railways perform in the city. The second chapter, on the other hand, will discuss the three spaces of *tāminaru depāto, ekichika* and *ekinaka*, contextualizing their development and specificity to provide a background for the analysis of the case study. The case of Shinjuku will be explored in the final chapter, providing the historical context in which the area first developed, with attention to the companies and the routes that contributed

to increase its ridership. The analysis will then go in depth on the construction of the station into a "playground", discussing respectively: the development of the terminal department store, the birth of the underground spaces of the station, and the *ekinaka* of Shinjuku.

Chapter 1 – Japanese Railway Station: Research to date

The variety of literature on the Japanese railways is revealing of their cultural and historical centrality, and of their role in the urban development of the country. This interest, which is mostly expressed in the Japanese scholarship, has recently resulted in the exhibition "A Railway Story in the Sky" (Mori Art Center Gallery 2019), which saw the contribution of over 20 railway companies from all over Japan. In this panorama of fascination for the railways, the station building has promptly adapted to social and urban change, dragging attention in different ways. The simple wooden structures of the late nineteen century, in fact, turned soon into new buildings in concrete, hosting restaurants and department stores by the 1920s in hybrid forms, to transform again in the 1960s into massive and articulated structures.

In the English literature, the astonishing evolution of the station in Japan was pointed out for the first time in Richard and McKenzie's monumental work (1986) on the social history of the railways station, although confined in a brief section titled "The Far East" (Richard and McKenzie 1988, 81-83), where the Chinese and Japanese experiences are explored together. Harada's much more extensive treatment of the subject in *Eki no shakaishi*, (Social history of the station), published in Japanese one year later, on the other hand, has shown the complexity of roles the station has performed as intermediary place in the everyday life of Japan and in the contradictions of its semi-public nature. In this context, Amano's research (2003) provides not only a frame to understand the social significance of the railway station, but also, I argue, concrete coordinates to move through the variety of literature that have dealt with it. Here the station is first explored in its three central functions as 'contact place', 'mass-being place' and 'symbolic place' (34-38). The first one refers to the nature of the station as a place of encounter and gathering. Interestingly, although the station is indeed a place for the "exchange of bodies" (Eckersall 2011, 338), its role as *forum* is rather

complex. The anti-Vietnam war protests of the late 1960s in Shinjuku, in this sense, have been used as an emblematic example of the ambiguous nature of the station as public space (Harada 1987, 198-199; Eckersall 2011), as it will be discussed in the case study. The second function of the railway station is that of a place for the 'mass'. Amano (2003) specifies that this latter is far from being "uncontrolled", since people interact according to a shared "social code" specific to the place, in order to maintain and protect their status and privacy (35). Finally, the symbolic value of the station lies in its function of landmark, or in the sense of belonging this can foster in the commuter (Amano 2013, 36-38). To give an example, the railways and their new station buildings have not only been eloquent symbols of the advent of modernity, but also a factor in the creation of the very idea of *nation* in Japan, connecting its *regions* on the map, while beating a new standardized tempo for the country through the introduction of timetables (Takashina et al. 2014, 4-5). Furthermore Amano examines *eki tsukuri* (the construction of the station) as a trigger in: (1) the physical and (2) financial development of the station, its surrounding area and facilities; (3) a support for the improvement of users' daily life through the introduction , for instance, of services not related to the railways; (4) a resource in the creation and promotion of culture, may this be achieved through the historical relevance of the station building itself, the cultural event there held, or in the fostering of new actual cultural practices; finally, as a (5) site of exchange and initiative that can lead to the creation of community centers or other annexed facilities (Amano 2003, 32-33).

These five areas of development identified by Amano, are some major points on which the literature on the railway station has been focusing. In the context of spatial development, for instance, the *Japan Transport & Railways Review* gives insights on the innovations and changes that occurred in the railways and the station building from an historical and technical perspective. Nagaoka (2018) provides an analysis and periodization of the Government - and later JR - station buildings. As for the complex urban development of station-centered areas, this has first been a

product of the early years of the 20th century, as consequence of the Nationalization Act (1906). The regulations, in fact, allowed private companies to build new routes only if they did not interfere with the national ones, triggering for the first time the necessity to create ridership in places with less demand (Saito 1997, 3). This enabled the growth and expansion of flourishing residential and shopping areas, which in the latter case has brought to their association with the modern *sakariba,* "the busiest parts of the city, […] amusement district or entertainment quarters" (Kowalczyk 2011, 25), where, according to Covatta (2017), "Tokyo's hybridization between infrastructure and collective space takes its roots" (206). The direct engagement of railway companies in the real estate sector, moreover, has resulted in a range of literature on their diversification strategies (Shoji and Killeen, n.d.; Shoji and Song 2016). Ida's work (2019), on the other hand, explores the relationship between railways and business in the evolution of spatial and retail models that occurred throughout the twentieth century, as in the exemplary case of the so-called *tāminaru depāto*, or terminal department store. Finally, the cultural value of the station resulted in works such as "*Eki bunka o kangaeru"* (NHK 1988), a NHK special publication on the *ekikon*, an abbreviation of the word *eki* (station) and *konsāto* (from the English word "concert"), a concert series held in Tokyo station from 1987 with the birth of JR East. In addition, "*Tetsudōgaku no susume"* (Haraguchi, 2003) and "*Tetsudō ga tsukutta nihon no kindai"* (Takashina et al. 2014) give insights on how the railways have penetrated different sides of the modern and contemporary society, culture and popular culture of Japan. The former work, in particular, places the research under the name of *testudogaku*, 'railways studies', which the author explaines not as a properly defined field, but rather as a site for the expression of an interest that goes beyond the technical aspects of the railways, and that rather focuses, for instance, on their historical, sociological, and cultural value (Haraguchi 2003).

Chapter 2 – Research Keywords: spaces for consumption in the railway station

A prominent feature of major urban railways stations in Japan is how their structures and platforms completely blend in a combination of shopping centers, department stores, and other facilities organized for leisure and entertainment. In Tokyo, this is mainly the case of terminal stations on the Yamanote Line, which carries more than a million of passengers everyday (JR East 2019). Shinjuku station, to give an example, is located on the west side of the annular shaped line, and presents different types of consumption-oriented facilities, owned by three major railway companies: the JR East group, Keio Railway and Odakyu Railway. The massive stores, which have become the faces of Shinjuku east, west and south exits, surround and penetrate the station from outside to inside.

This transformation of the major railway station into a small-scale reproduction of what it is normally offered by the city, has to be contextualized in railway companies' practice of *ensen kaihatsu* (development along the railways), through which the company traces the trajectory of the commuter's daily life by providing housing along its railway lines, and by investing in appealing terminal stations where these lines merge. Commuting, moreover, which is a fundamental aspect of Tokyo everyday life experience, is a significantly time-consuming activity: in the case of workers, for instance, it has reached a daily average of 42.9 minutes (E-Stat 2018). Private railway companies' terminal and major stations, which function mostly as transfer nodes, have thus become "a boon to the busy worker who can combine his return from work with a shopping excursion" as the *Japan Times* would already write in 1964. Although most of major stations in Tokyo underwent this reconfiguration into labyrinths of consumption and leisure facilities during the 1960s, the origins of this development can be traced back to Hankyu Railway's experience in Osaka during the 1920s. With attention to the structure of major terminals in Tokyo, as in the case of Shinjuku, three types

of consumption-oriented urban spaces that were reintroduced in the context of the station are analyzed here as constitutive factors in their evolution as playgrounds in the city: the terminal department store, the *ekichika* (underground shopping area), and the *ekinaka* (area inside of the gates).

2.1 The Terminal Department store

The *tāminaru depāto* (terminal department store) is a type of department store combined with the railway station, directly managed by a railway company as a form of diversified business. Hankyu Railway's department store at Umeda station inaugurated in 1929 is considered the first terminal department store in the world (Ida 2019, 110).

The lines between department store (hyakkaten) and terminal department store (tāminaru depāto) today might be perceived as blurred, and so the particular connotation of 'terminal' dictated purely by the location of the store and its direct relation with the railway company. However, when it first appeared, the terminal department store had specific characteristics that do not always clearly emerge in the research on the *hyakkaten*. This latter, in particular, has been discussed as an evolution of 'large-sized kimono fabric stores' from the Edo Period (Usui 2014, 76). Mitsukoshi, in particular, which opened in 1673 the drapery shop "Echigoya" in Edo, to later expand to the areas of Kyoto and Osaka (Usui 2014, 76), had a pioneering role in the development of the department store in Japan. Followed by Shirokiya, Matsuya and Takashimaya, to name a few, Mitsukoshi was the first to adopt in the early 1900s western-style forms of retailing particularly inspired by the American experience, such as the display of goods with fixed prices - inside and outside the store -, the abolishment of the practice of kneeling on tatami-mats or that of removing one's shoes at the entrance (Usui 2014, 79; 85), while engaging in advertising activities to promote new trends, and employing qualified people who would commute to work rather than living in the

store (Morean 1998, 146). The modern department store left costumers free to enjoy and *consume* not only the goods exposed but also the very atmosphere of the location which soon began to be associated with cultural events as well, as it emerges from the number of art exhibitions advertised throughout the century. Primarily sites of consumption for the upper-middle class, the department store became a middle-class phenomenon only after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, when the number of stores and the new demand for daily necessity intensified the competition. Usui (2014) argues that the number of Meiji Period's new kimono fabric retailers, along with the development of the terminal and the provincial department stores contributed to the 'popularization' of the *hyakkaten* (92). Moreover, he suggests that the terminal department store has been indeed "the main driving force in accelerating the price competition and 'trading down' of the department stores" (92). In this context, Ida (2019) has explored the fundamental role of Hankyū Railways experience in establishing a new tradition of department stores, under the lead of the founder Ichizo Kobayashi (106), who opened in 1920 a *shokudō* (restaurant) on the second floor of the Umeda station building, while renting the first floor to Shirokiya *hyakkaten*. According to Ida, this was a formative experience for Hankyū Railways on how to manage this type of retail business (Ida 2019, 109), which ultimately resulted in the inauguration of the *Hankyū Māketto* (Hankyu Market) on the 2nd and 3rd floors of the building, after the termination of the contract with Shirokiya. Finally, in 1929 the market and dining floors, which had been moved on the 4th and 5th floors, became the Hankyu Department Store, namely the first terminal department store in the world. Ida underlines that among the factors of Hankyu's success were: the large scale of the business which was targeting for the first time *ensen kyaku* (customers along the railways), providing them with daily necessities (Ida 2019, 106-107; 127-128); the very nature of the company with no expertise in the retail sector, which triggered the adoption of new marketing models; and the focus on the restaurant floors, which attracted a remarkable number of passengers every day (Ida 2019, 126). Morean (1998) also explains that

> "Clothing, in particular, was crucial to both sales and prestige and so to the success of a fledging department store like Hankyu. Yet, by introducing high quality clothes from the beginning of the 1930s, the kinds of goods that it offered to costumers soon ceased to be *that* different from those displayed by the old department stores that had developed from Edo period drapery shops." (163)

The Hankyu experience was not only a blueprint for the urban terminal *depāto* of the post-war period, but a model for the traditional and provincial department store as well (Ida 2019, 153). Although Hankyu's Umeda station was a phenomenon of the 1920s, railway companies of Tokyo started to extensively engage in this type of diversified business only during the 1960s. As it will discuss in the next chapter, Keio Railways was the first one during the second half of the 1920s to experiment it in Tokyo at the Keio Shinjuku station building. However, the Keio department store, too, became a reality only in 1964.

2.2 Ekichika

The term *ekichika* literally means "underground floors" of the station. The development of remarkably extended and complex shopping-oriented underground routes is also associated to the word *chikagai* (the underground shopping area), of which *ekichika* is a particular type. The underground areas of the station can be of different nature, and can refer, for instance, to shopping areas with pre-made food and *omiyage*, which in the case of a the department store are also called *depa-chika*, as a result of the words 'department' and '*chika'* (underground). Again the word *ekichika* can refer to the several underground paths that connect a station to other station buildings and areas of the city, or that function as transfer points between different companies in the context of the same station. These paths thus accomplish different purposes, and are very specific to the area of the station they belong to: they "are given identity and tempo not only by their own form,

or by their nodal junctions, but by the regions they pass through, the edges they move along, and the landmarks distributed along their length" (Lynch 1960, 54). This kind of space mostly developed during the post-war period with the extension of subway lines and the introduction of strategies to manage pedestrian and car traffic on the streets, although Fujimoto (2013) shows that the first proposal to use the underground area of the city can be trace back to the end of the Taisho period, and the implementation of underground shopping facilities was intended to compensate the costs of the construction. The project had no followings, but according to Fujimoto (2013) it was the first time the idea of exploiting the underground of the city as a commercial-oriented facility was contemplated. The first underground facilities came, in fact, with the birth of the subway in the pre-war period, although it was their subsequent connection to the department store to enable their development into more elaborated underground areas featuring high-selling products, and thus exploiting the new flows of people populating them. During the war, above-ground regulations shifted attention again to the perception of *chikagai* as a form of public space, which solidified during the post-war reconstruction with the further extension of lines, as in the case of Shinjuku, and the integration of actual underground malls. The role and shape of *ekichika* finally developed at the end of the 1960s, in association with new underground parking areas in the context of a more automobile-oriented society (Fujimoto 2013).

2.3 Ekinaka

'Ekinaka' translate literally as 'area inside of the station', and has received utmost attention during the last two decades. The term does not have a clear definition, and in Tokyo, it commonly refers to the commercial spaces within the gates of JR East's facilities. This association is mostly due to JR East engagement in the renovation of major stations of Tokyo after the privatization of JNR in 1987, although the company was fully privatized only in 2000. During the same year a 5-years business plan was defined, "New Frontier 21", with the aim of a conceptual and physical renewal of

the station building as a full costumer service-oriented space, not only intended as a place for commuting but for gathering too (JR Annual Report 2001, 4). The project is known as “Station Renaissance” and it was aimed “to achieve the best possible allocation of group business activities at railway stations [and perform] large-scale developments at main stations in the Tokyo metropolitan area” (JR Annual Report 2001, 9). JR East addresses “Station Renaissance” as a response to societal changes such as ageing population, and rising competition among private railways companies. The initiative has played a fundamental role in shifting the attention from *around* to *inside* the station, triggering a new kind of research on the possibilities of this latter from both customers and marketers’ perspectives. This also translated into the creation of so-called ‘lifestyle businesses’ (shopping centers, hotels and office buildings), and the establishment in the Tokyo area of the word *ekinaka*. The topic, however, goes beyond the calculated development of shopping areas within the gates, since it is also rooted in the changes that commuting culture underwent at the turn of the 21st century, triggered by the implementation of IC (integrated circuit) cards, rechargeable cards that are tapped at the station gates on a designated reader. The use of cards at gates was already common by the introduction of their IC version, but the technology was significantly different since the card was supposed to be introduced in the gate as a ticket rather than tapped. The introduction of IC cards, with the JR Suica (2001) and then Pasmo (2007) in the context of Tokyo, has not only been a new solution for peak hours’ crowds at the gates, they have also become a common payment method in the city, and thus they are not confined anymore to the place they were first intended for. This created the basis for a system in which the commuter can use an IC card to get into the station, and pay at stores, stands and vending machines there located much quicker than before. In fact, especially during morning rush hours IC cards are the most used payment method in the areas within and nearby the gates of the railway station (Jeki 2011, 4). Intense rush hours in major hubs such as Shinjuku, reaffirm the need every day for efficient

management in term of transit and safety, which is first achieved through the spatial and visual configuration of the station, through signs with specific colors and posters on manners. Differently from the terminal department store, the shopping areas of *ekinaka* are more deeply rooted in this idea of transit, in a sense of movement and transition that is constant in the context of the major Japanese urban station.

Although focused on the JR East business, an insightful source to understand the space, target and direction of *ekinaka* is the magazine *Ekisumer*, published by *Eki Shōhi Kenkyū Sentā* (Research Center of Consumption in the Station) of JR Higashi Nihon Kikaku, also known as "Jeki", the company in charge of JR East marketing. The name of the publication plays on the combination of the two words of *eki*, station, and *consumer*, and it has been ongoing since 2009 providing quantitative and qualitative data on JR East owned businesses in the area of *ekinaka* and nearby the gates. In particular, *Ekisumer* shows that the facilities within the gates are mostly visited during working days, with the highest peaks between 6am and 10am, and 6pm and 10am, and an average expenditure of 521 yen (Kato 2013, table 9), which corresponds to less than 5 euro. This number is not entirely surprising when looking at the type of products consumed by passengers in the context of *ekinaka*, which primarily features newspapers, beverages and prepackaged food (Kato 2013, table 11; Jeki 2010, 6). Another data provided by the company concerns the moment in which the choice of a specific shop is made, which in the case of *ekinaka* occurs mainly when the shop is spotted while transiting through the station in an "impulsive", rather than calculated way.

Ekisumer has a relevant role in the discussion of the transformation of the station into urban playground for the commuter. With particular attention to the last five years, the publication has been more frequently presenting a structure in which the observation of specific urban spaces is followed by a discussion on how these can be integrated in the context of the station. An example of this trend is the research of places in the city where people feel most comfortable (Jeki 2014), or

spaces that support working mothers in their daily life (Jeki 2015), or more generally, that can capture the shifts of the working culture (Jeki 2016). More recently, the issue of ageing society (Jeki 2017), along with that of diversity (Jeki 2018) appears to be central in the discussion of the renewal of shops within the railways station.

Terminal department store, *ekichika* and *ekinaka*, with the variety of services they offer, are examples of how urban spaces have been promptly integrated by private railway companies in the context of commuting to exploit the potential of the station as a place of transit, while providing passengers' with new opportunities, and thus reasons to spend time within it. Hankyu Railway was the first company to engage in the practice of *ensen kaihatsu,* and contributed to the construction of the station as a center of leisure and consumption by combining the station with the terminal department store only few years after its birth, while targeting passengers as constumers. At the same time, with the advent of the subway, railway companies started developing the underground spaces of *ekichika*, which today are constructed in different ways and can present specific formats as in the case of Tokyo Metro 'Echika Ikebukuro' and 'Echika Omotesando'. *Ekinaka*, again, has moved attention to those areas of the station that are more easily accessible while commuting, bringing consumption "inside". It is also an example of how the station has been a site for the reproduction and production of the city: as the urban elements are researched, absorbed and re-introduced in the station, this itself becomes a new dynamic urban space for the passenger. The next chapter explores how Shinjuku developed from outskirt to prosperous center of the city, and how throughout the century the busiest station in the world has been shaped into the playground of spaces it is today by the railway companies that have come to operate in it.

Chapter 3 – Shinjuku: birth and development of a playground station

The origins of Shinjuku station can be traced back to the Naitō Shinjuku *shukuba* (post-station), located in the rural area of the Musashino plains (Akaiwa 2018, 8). Naitō Shinjuku was the first post-station entering Edo from the Kōshū Kaidō, one of the five roads on which *daimyo*, feudal lords, would travel to reach the Capital during the Edo period (1603-1868). With the introduction of the railways that followed Meiji Restoration (1868), Shinjuku was reconverted into a station, and inaugurated in 1885 as a stop on the Shinagawa-Akabane line, which was owned by Japan's first private railway company, Japan Railways. Few people used to crowd the platform of the wooden station, which was mainly used for freight transport, while the shops in the area primarily dealt with fuel resources, such as charcoal and wood, and raw silk (Ubukata 1989, 70; Takano 2015). The number of passengers saw a significant increase when in 1889 Kōbu Railway opened a route between Shinjuku and Tachikawa, starting operating the Station together with Nihon Railway. The line was then extended to Hachijōji in 1894, and a new route established between Shinjuku and Ushigome the same year (Nishimori, Chronological Table of Shinjuku Station). In 1906, however, both Nihon and Kōbu Railways were absorbed by the Japanese Government Railways through the Nationalization Act of 1906, along with Shinjuku station.

Steam trains and simple station buildings were not the only new elements of the urban scenario of Shinjuku: during the early years of the century, the first electric trains, tram cars, and semi-modern department stores started appearing in Tokyo. In 1903 a tram car, the Tokyo Shigaiden, conveniently connected Shinjuku for the first time to places such Asakusa, Ryōkoku and Ginza (Nishimori, chap. 1), namely the hearts of Tokyo and its new spaces of consumption, creating the premises for an interest in the development of the area. New stores appeared in this early period, as in the case of Nakamuraya, which in 1909 opened near Takano's fruits specialized shop, one of today's landmarks of Shinjuku, and soon gained the reputation of a place of intellectual discussions

and cultural activities (Nishimori, chap. 2). In addition, in 1915 Keio Railways opened a new station at the Shinjuku *oiwake*[1] strategically connected to the tram car. Keio Shinjuku station was thus not in its current location, where it was moved to in 1947 (Keio Corporation 2013), but five minutes walking from the main station on Shinjuku Avenue. Between 1900 and 1920, only the number of the National Railways' passengers in Shinjuku had increased by 7 times, reaching a daily average of 14,358 people (Nishimori, Introduction, The Station in Numbers – 1). Commuting was becoming a common aspect of the workers' daily routine which in 1919 was powerfully depicted in the following way: "In the morning, the salarymen that from the outskirts of the city move to the center, look like perfect parts of a machine, like *they* are indeed the ones in charge to beat the tempo of modernity, practicing the very sport of commuting everyday" (Maeda, as cited in Harada 1987, 203; my translation).

Although with the creation and extension of new lines Shinjuku was already started to become a flourishing center right outside Tokyo, only after the Great Kanto Earthquake the area witnessed a quick and more profound growth. During the disaster, in fact, most of the buildings on the main avenue of Shinjuku Sanchome - where Kinokuniya and Isetan are located today - burnt along with the east side of the station, that was still dedicated to freight transport (Nishimori, chap. 1). Soon after the earthquake, on October 20th, however, the *Japan Times* was already praising the rapid development of what was still addressed as the "outskirts" of Tokyo (The Japan Times & Mail 1923, 2). Retailers began to open shops in Shinjuku more consistently, starting with Hoteiya, which in January 1925 moved its department store to the area of the oiwake, while Mitsukoshi opened a branch store in front of the station at the end of the same year. Kinokuniya book store opened in 1927, when Odawara Express Railways, today's Odakyu Railways, launched a line between Shinjuku

[1] The term *oiwake* in Japanese literally means "forked road", and in the specific case of Shinjuku it refers to the area located near the Marui Building of Shinjuku Sanchome.

and Odawara. During the same year, Keio Railways opened a new building in Shinjuku Sanchōme where the company moved the station and hosted Shinjuku Matsuya, a department store which had to close few years later due to rising competition in the area (Yomiuri Shimbun 1932, 7). Isetan, one of todays' landmarks of Shinjuku, opened in 1933 and absorbed Hoteiya two years later to become the largest department store of Shinjuku (The Japan Times and Mail 1937, 5). Overall, the extension of Keio Lines to Shinjuku and the opening of Odakyu lines significantly increased the number of passengers going through the station: in 1927, at the dawn of Showa Era, while the area was rapidly evolving into a hub of commercial facilities and entertainment, Shinjuku gained the title of busiest station of Japan for the first time (Nishimori, chap. 2). Interestingly, Shinjuku only became part of Tokyo after 1932, when it got included in the new prefecture of Yodobashi. 1932 was also the year in which Odawara Express Railways started operated a direct express train between Shinjuku and Odawara, what today has come to be known as the Romance Car.

When looking at historical sources from these first decades of the century and particularly from the 1930s, it appears that the area of Shinjuku was gaining popularity for its small shops, department stores, café, theaters and movie theaters, which by 1938 reached the number of twelve (Nishimori, chap. 2). A book on culinary experiences in Tokyo from 1930, the *Tokyo meibutsu tabearuki*, records some of the restaurants in the area as well, mentioning in specific cases food and prices, while giving short assessments through the dialogues of three characters. The sections on Shinjuku (91-103) include Hoteiya and Mitsukoshi branch store, which both featured a restaurant on the fifth floor, the Keio underground dining area, and a series of café such as Meiji Seika, or Meiji Confectionary - precursor of today's Meiji Chocolate company -, Takano Fruit Parlor and Nakamuraya, mentioned for its *karē raisu* (curry rice). Again, on December 25th, 1937, the *Japan Times* dedicated an entire article to Shinjuku, praising its main department stores, Mitsukoshi and Isetan, while listing some recommended places for their variety and quality of food. The Keio station

building here is of particular relevance, since Keio Railway was the first company in Tokyo to host a department store on the upper floors, as mentioned earlier, although the experience with Matsuya was rather short. In fact, the company kept developing the building as a hybrid of transport and leisure facilities, advertising it few years later under the name of "Keio Paradise" (Yomiuri Shimbun 1934, 7), which presented the following structure:

B1	Japanese cuisine with Gekkeikan Sake
2nd Floor	Kirin Beer Hall
3rd and 4th Floor	Western Cuisine and Tea Room "of unparalleled splendour"
5th and 6th Floor	Banquet Hall

1 - Keio Paradise advertisement. Yomiuri Shimbun, 1934.

The underground floor of the building was already addressed as "Keio underground *shokudō*" by 1930, as seen in the *Tokyo meibutsu tabearuki*. In this sense, Keio was among the first ones in Tokyo to rethink the station not only as an *interface* between transportation and the city, in Amano's words (Amano 2003, 31), but also as a place for passengers to spend time, following Hankyu Railway's first steps almost immediately, along with Tokyo Chikatetsudō (Tokyo Metro) at Ueno Station (Tsuchiya 2019, chap. 1). Keio Paradise, however, closed on September 1st 1936, as reported in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* (1936, 5) on the October of the same year, and it can be considered at best a precursor in Shinjuku of the development of the terminal department store of the 1960s.

By the end of the 1930s, Shinjuku would be remembered as:

> "[a] thriving business and amusement center. […] It serves as the shopping and amusement area for the salaried man and his family, the student and the middle class business man […]. It might be called the "Asakusa of the Intelligentsia", or a Ginza in the miniature. There is a resemblance to Asakusa in the crowds that nightly throng its streets; in the rows of theaters, cafes and eating places, but the tawdriness and

> squalidness of the former are missing. There is something Ginza-like in the brightly-lit shops and department stores that line the main avenue, but it is on a smaller scale." (The Japan Times & Mail 1937, 5)

A final feature of Shinjuku in this formative period was also the high number of female visitors, which according to Nishimura gave birth to the following expression: 'The western style cloths of Ginza, the ladies of Shinjuku, the Japanese style clothes of Asakusa' (Nishimori, chap. 2; my translation). An article of the *Japan Times*, from 1933 reports that there were "three women to each man passing through Shinjuku street" (The Japan Times & Mail 1933, 8), while one in 1940 concerning the results of a survey on the use of Kimono, explains that area of Shinjuku Station towards Isetan had the highest concentration of "girl traffic" between 1pm and 3pm, when compared to Ginza, Shibuya, Tokyo Station and Ueno, although Shinjuku was still addressed in the survey as the "backyard of the capital" (The Japan Times & Mail 1940, 2). By the 1940s, thus, the quiet area of Shinjuku, where at the end of the 19th century steam trains appeared to be threatening the survival of the surrounding crops, and sometimes no passenger would be recorded at the station on rainy days (Ubukata 1989, 70), had profoundly changed. Certainly, the urban development that Tokyo witnessed during these early decades of the century was also catalyzed by the upcoming Olympic Games, which were scheduled in the city for 1940 and later cancelled because of Japan's engagement in the war.

During the war period, railways companies and stations underwent major changes since routes were restricted to prioritize army and war supplies transport rather than regular passengers and freight. In 1942, Odawara Express Railways was incorporated with Tokyo Yokohama and Keikyū Railways in Tokyo Express Railway. Keio Railway was absorbed two years later, and the name of the company changed again to Daitōkyū Railway. The war represented a moment of disruption in the development of lines and station buildings, and left most of Shinjuku and the station destroyed after

the bombing of Tokyo. On the 20th of August 1945, few days after the end of the war, the first black market of Tokyo appeared on the east side of Shinjuku station, under the lead of Kinosuke Ozu, from the Ozu gangster organization. The market is remembered as *hikari wa shinjuku yori*, commonly translated as "the lights shining from Shinjuku", and it began as a sequence of simple wooden stalls managed by *tekiya* (stallholders) in the area between Nakamuraya and Mitsukoshi, also spreading in what was left of the department stores' buildings (Akaiwa 2018, 54). People would gather to the markets to find daily necessities and food, and soon after, other markets appeared around Shinjuku, as in the case of Wada and Nohara's markets on the east side, and Yasuda on the west side of the station. Although the markets were illegal and a series of counteractions were taken to close them down, it took years before that became possible, and few cases could managed to get recognized as official markets (Nishimori, chap. 2). Shinjuku, described as a "burned-out" land, featured around 500 vendors selling food at times without actual stalls (Nippon Times 1945, 3). Traces of this period are still evident in the very shape of the areas around the station: the markets that were on its east side were ultimately forced to move to what later became the popular area of Golden Gai, while the west side markets went to form the tiny streets of Omoide Yokocho. Overall, the area of Shinjuku was mostly left burnt and destroyed by the bombing, which on the other hand, created need and room for new planning and reconstruction. The early 1960s witnessed the advent of the terminal department store, and with the development of the Marunouchi subway in Shinjuku, new underground commercial possibilities in the spaces of the *chikamachi* (the underground city) and the station building's *ekichika*. The new spaces of the station above and underground redefined again the landscape of Shinjuku, widening its perception in the physical dimensions of height and depths of its buildings and underground passages, but also figuratively, in the new possibilities that it offered: "If you haven't been around for few months, you won't know it. New buildings seem to be everywhere, and the Shinjuku of yesterday has all but disappeared" (The Japan Times 1964d, 6).

3.1 Terminal department store: the three faces of Shinjuku

With Japan's postwar recovery and rapid economic growth, a "rush for construction" (Nishimura chap. 3) began to redesign the profile of Tokyo. In Shinjuku, this translated in a further centralization of the role of the station as result of the subsequent number of station buildings and terminal department stores erected from the 1960s by railway companies. As mentioned earlier, the *construction* of ridership through the creation of attractive station-centered areas was a practice of the early years of the twentieth century as consequence of the Nationalization Act, strengthened in the 1920s by Hankyu Railways' experience of retailing, which brought attention to the potential of the passenger as customer. During the postwar period, the issue of housing gained further attention because of the shortage of dwelling that followed the bombing, becoming central in the panorama of public policies and private initiative, as railway companies intensified their engagement in the real estate sector and built new complexes along their routes (Ronald 2011, 186). In the landscape of rapid urbanization that Tokyo underwent after the war, Mitsuhide (1997) explains that the post-war recovery of the railway business resulted quite problematic, since it had to support the increasing demand for public transportation, in a moment in which the railway machine itself was not fully restored yet (49). While Japan was under the spotlight for the upcoming Olympic games of 1964 and Osaka Expo of 1970, the new colorful trains that were starting running through the stations' platforms in this period, along with the launch of the Shinkansen in 1964, translated in the Japanese imaginary as a symbol of recovery and pride (Nishimura, chap. 3). Furthermore, the TV, which spread in Japan between the 1950s and 1960s, was starting to portray new lifestyle models based on the concept of the American nuclear family "surrounded by consumer luxuries and electric appliances such as refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines—and with the family car parked in the driveway"(Ivy 1993, 179). A middle-class consumerism culture was thus developing in the post-war period, fostering new desires and ideas of consumption, while

modern and massive station buildings provided new spaces for their expression, and established a new idea of *ekimae* – the area in front of the station. This latter should not be only understood as a physical place, but rather as an atmosphere, a combination of sensorial experiences that function as a tempting threshold between the city and the promises of the station building. If between 1935 and 1955 the passengers of the Government railways in Shinjuku had a 230% increase, only between 1955 and 1960 the number doubled again, reaching an average of around 297 million passengers per day (Nishimura, The Station in Numbers – 1). The area surrounding Shinjuku station underwent major developments from the 1960s, reflecting a new centrality in the context of Tokyo, while the commercial facilities of the station started to take their current shape.

Odakyu Railway department store's 11-story building was the first one to be built on the west side of the station in 1962, followed by JNR Shinjuku Station Building and Keio Department Store in 1964. It appears that in 1961 smaller retailers in the nearby areas of Shinjuku, Setagaya, Nakano and Suginami, were against the opening of the Odakyu building, since they were already competing with Mitsukoshi, Isetan and the more recent Marubutsu department store (Asahi Shimbun, 1961, 4). However, Odakyu railway opened one year later on November 3rd, under the concept of *minna no depāto* (everybody's department store), as result of the recruitment of fifty people to present original ideas on how to increase the appeal of the store (Yomiuri Shimbun 1962, 3). As an advertisement from 1962 shows, the department store not only featured men and women clothing (Yomiuri Shimbun 1962, 8), but also hosted the Nippon Broadcast's Satellite studio on the 2nd floor, and a baby room on the 7th floor. In addition, a Japan Times's article reports a description of the "Nippon Gallery", a souvenir shop targeting foreign visitors selling "cloisonné, representations of wood-block prints, paper lanterns, hand-dyed *noren* curtain decorations, bar accessories, party toys" (The Japan Times 1964c, 11) and other gadgets. The same article explains that the store was a 5-minute taxi ride from the Olympic stadium, and that it featured English-

speaking “sales girls” and receptionists, making it an accessible attraction for foreign visitors in view of the Olympic Games. During the 1960s, the Odakyu’s department store is indeed the only one in Shinjuku where English-speaking staff is mentioned, and the souvenir gallery further suggests that the target was not confined to the Japanese-speaking clientele, the commuter or casual railway passenger stopping by the station building. In 1966 the Odakyu department store was moved to a new building, namely its current location, between the west and south exit, while the former building became Odakyu Railway’s “HALC” shopping center the following year.

The Shinjuku Station Building was the next one to open in 1964, under JNR initiative and private investment (The Japan Times 1964b, 2). Here, the Japan Times again provides a detailed description of the floors summarized in the following table, giving an idea of the type of items and areas the new department store-like station building was offering to its passengers:

B1	Display of boxed food (described as gifts)
1st Floor	Station entrance; ticket sale counter and gates
2nd Floor	Sport related good; observation window with view on the station
3rd Floor	Clothing (sweaters and handy knit dresses)
4th Floor	Gift items; handbags; items for the house (space savers, gadgets for the “semi-western style” house and dusters)
5th Floor	Dining area
6th Floor	Toys and kids clothing; kiddie car concession
7th Floor	Wedding room and wedding gifts; bride school
8th Floor	Dining area and roof garden; pets and garden supplies

Table 2 - Shinjuku Station Building's floors as described in The Japan Times, 1964d.

The building was renamed “My City” in 1978, and from 2006 it is known as the JR East “Lumine Est” shopping center.

Although Keio Railways tried to adopt Hankyu’s models in the 1920s already, it was only in 1964 that the Keio department store became the “third” face of Shinjuku Station, following the Odakyu and the JNR buildings. The rise of militarism and the following engagement of Japan in the Second World War disrupted the development of Keio Shinjuku station, which was moved after the war to its current location in 1947, while the company was part of the Daitōkyū Railways until 1948, along with Odakyu Railways (Keio Railways, n.d.). The railway company’s department store opened soon after the new Shinjuku Station building on November 1964, as a 80.000 square meters store, the seventh largest in Japan (The Japan Times 1964a, 3), featuring an exhibition area named the Keio Umeda Gallery. Keio engagement in real estate development culminated in Shinjuku with the construction of the Keio Plaza Hotel in 1971, the tallest hotel in the world at the time. Because of the extensive investment of Keio Railway in the western side of Tokyo, with attention to Shinjuku which was and still is a main terminal for the company, the Japan Times would write in 1988 that “the company may rightly deserve being called a “pioneer in the west”, owning around 340 billion yen of land” (Kawasaki 1988, 7).

3.2 Shinjuku Underground

The birth of the *chikagai* in the context of Shinjuku was simultaneous to the development of the terminal department store of the 1960s, and came as a result of the extension of the Marunouchi subway line to Shinjuku in 1959 by the Teito Rapid Transit Autority[2]. In fact, the first project for a subway to “run directly from Shinjuku station under the […] tram car line to the

[2] The Teito Rapid Transit Authority (TRTA) was established in 1941 as the successor of Tokyo Chikatetsudō, the company who opened the first subway line in Japan in 1927. In 2002, finally, TRTA was reorganized into today’s Tokyo Metro subway operator (Japan Subway Association, n.d.).

Mitsukoshi department store" (The Japan Times & Mail 1933, 1) can be traced back to 1933. The plan, however, saw the immediate opposition of retail store owners in the area only few months after the announcement, as it was perceived as a threat to the local business, since it enabled people to go directly to the Mitsukoshi department store from the station. The project did not start indeed, and because of Japan's engagement in the second World War, the first underground subway in Shinjuku was completed only during the post-war period. With the extension of Marunouchi line, a first underground path called "Metro Promenade", was created between Shinjuku and Shinjuku Sanchome station. The promenade was located exactly under Shinjuku Avenue and had access to most of the shops above ground, as in the case of Takano and Kinokuniya bookstore. The metro promenade is still today the main way to reach the east side of Shinjuku from the station and with the Subnade underground commercial area inaugurated in 1973 (Yomiuri Shimbun 1973), is a constitutive part of the underground structure of the station. Unfortunately, there are few articles mentioning Metro Promenade and Subnade between the 1960s and the 1970s, most of which mainly deal with accidents or reconstruction works. A structural difference between the two, however, was that the while Metro promenade was an underground path with access to above-ground facilities, Subnade functioned as an actual underground mall featuring 100 shops at the opening, and connecting Shinjuku to the area of Kabukichō and the new station of Seibu Shinjuku (Yomiuri 1973, 18).

Another underground space that was completed in 1966 was the Shinjuku West side square, remembered as the "first tridimensional square in the world" (Japan Times 1967, 10), because of the different layers - above and underground – it was composed of. In the landscape of "flower people and underground theaters" (The Japan Times 1969, 11) that characterized the area during this period, the new massive terminal department stores of Shinjuku, along with the new square created the *illusion* of a public space for gathering and for the expression of an emerging urban

counterculture, of which Shinjuku became a landmark after the emblematic events of the anti-war movements of the end of the 1960s, that took place in the new west plaza of the station. In response to the protesters, however, the square was renamed "Shinjuku West exit underground passage", and thus reconverted into a place for transit. Eckersall (2011) explains that "the closing down of the protests suggests an end to the possibility of this underground plaza being used as a spatial metaphor for a free space of political action […] The reordering of space in this way is designed to keep bodies moving and shows a singular focus on efficiency and discipline" (340). With the instrumental replacement of the word "*hiroba"*, plaza, with that of "passage" as a form of repression, the square thus shifted "from an associative and collective space to a linear and functional one" (340). In fact, the primary function of the underground square was there of a new transit area to solve the issue of rush hours' crowds at the West entrance of the station. The underground square was and still is an access point to a variety of underground facilities, bus terminals and station buildings. In the context of *ekichika* development, in particular, the square was connected to the new underground malls that railway companies developed from the end of the 1960s, as in the case of Odakyu Ace (1966) and the later Keio Mall (1988). The west side of the station, where these new underground facilities were located, underwent major changes during the recession period starting with the redevelopment of the Yodobashi water plant into a skyscrapers-business district, and culminating with the relocation of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, completed on December 1990. The last decade of the century is also remembered for the establishment and the subsequent evictions of the Shinjuku underground homeless' cardboard village, "300 cardboard houses inhabited by 600 to 800 people, lined up along two pedestrian passages leading from the space known as Information Square, an underground plaza near the West Exit of Shinjuku Station" (Cassegard 2013, 623). When in the 1998 the third and last eviction occurred, Odakyu railways was inaugurating the wide area of the Southern Terrace of Shinjuku, which with the establishment of

Takashimaya Times Square, contributed to the social contradictions within the very idea of the station and its *ekimae* square as a form of public space.

3.3 Ekinaka: navigating Shinjuku from within

With the beginning of the 21th century and the complete privatization of the JR East group, the Station Renaissance project triggered the development of the inner areas of Tokyo major stations, exploiting their potential as shopping facilities. Unlike other terminal stations, no specific format was created by JR East for Shinjuku, although the South entrance gates and the JR west-east underground passage present a relatively developed *ekinaka,* as it is observed in the next section. Odakyu and Keio Railway's *ekinaka* facilities, on the other hand, are located outside and nearby the gates within the station building, rather than inside of them, as in the case of Odakyu Marche inaugurated in 2018 at the underground entrance of the Odakyu station and Keio's south gates. This flexibility of the term *ekinaka* as inside and around the gates, within the station building, and also as underground and above-ground facility at the same time, is exemplificative of the hybridization of the different spaces within the station, in their different purpose and structures. The next sections offer an analysis of two different *ekinaka* in the context of Shinjuku, through the case of JR East and Keio Railway. While JR East *ekinaka* has been selected because of the company's role in the development "within the gates", Keio Railways, which has been broadly explored so far in the context of Shinjuku, presents the most hybrid combination of the three macro-spaces explored in the thesis.

JR East Ekinaka

JR Shinjuku South entrance presents a wide concourse within the south and the south-east gates resembling an inner square in its shape and shopping facilities, and connecting all the JR platforms that are located on the underground floor. The shopping area features three convenience

stores, a pharmacy, an accessory shops, a standing soba restaurant, a café, a bookstore, two bento shops, a cake shop, two supermarkets, and an average of three food stands and pop-up stores with seasonal products (i.e. clothing; event-related promotional products as in the case of the 2019 Rugby world championship; regional premade food and sweets). The configuration of the stores in the JR *ekinaka* reflects the constrictions posed on the passenger, who is invited to enjoy and make use of these spaces while commuting, but not encouraged to spend an unnecessary amount time in the concourse. To give an example, the *ekinaka* café, which is the Japanese popular chain Doutor Coffee, presents two tiny corridors at the entrance of the shop, featuring seatless counters on glass walls, with five seats placed on the furthest corner, and a wide smoking room. The few seats in the non-smoking area are located on the only wall with no window, which is nearby the toilet. The corridors, moreover, are organized so that traffic can split in two ways with two separated cash registers, and the menu is noticeably limited when compared to other Doutor cafés outside of the station. An example is the lack of the breakfast set, a typical feature of the store, which morning rush hours makes impossible for the store to serve efficiently, as an employee explained. Despite the wide space of the concourse, moreover, there is no waiting room or seats in the area besides the café's smoking room and few no-smoking seats, which emerges more clearly when people are found waiting seating on the floor next to pillars or nearby shops. Although the all configuration of the square, in this sense, allows passengers to window-shop or purchase goods, it is still a traffic-oriented area for passengers coming from the underground platforms to the gates. The floor, finally, features a supermarket which, although technically part of the Lumine 2 shopping center building, it is only accessible from within the gates.

Another space that presents shops within the gates is the underground passage that links JR West and East exits, where the constant construction works have contributed to the association of Shinjuku to the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona (Nishimura, Introduction). At the time of the fieldwork,

the passage had a New Days Kiosk (the JR East group convenience store), a tiny shop specialized in chestnuts resembling the configuration of a temporary stand, the JR East owned Beck's Coffee, and a few vending machines. Overall, especially in the case of the south and south-east plaza-like area, the JR *ekinaka* offers the commuter shopping facilities that feature daily necessities while minimizing the disruption of pedestrian traffic. For the transferring passenger this can replace shopping around the station building or in the residential area, or create an environment where to detach oneself from the packed trains of the rush hours, and thus the routinized experience of commuting, in a buffer space between home and work.

The more recent Miraina Tower station building, opened in 2016 as new JR south exit, on the other hand, is a more clear example of how the station has conceptually transformed into a multi-functional space. The structure features a railway station, a bus terminal, the NewWoman shopping center and an office building, interconnected with the southern terrace and some major Japanese stores such as Takashimaya, Tokyu Hands, and Nitori. In addition, the Miraina south exit has recently been the site for the experimentation of a new type of leisure and working space within the station, Station work, a booth placed in the area of *ekinaka*, and thus accessible only from the inside of the station. The one square meter booth can be only opened through IC cards, and it features a desk, a monitor, an HDMI cable and WIFI connection. Also in this case, the booth has different purposes and it is meant by JR as a space for people who need to work or want to relax without leaving the station, or just have some private time while waiting (JR Station Work n.d.). As in the case of the shopping experience offered by the *ekinaka* facilities, these cubicles are another reflection of how the railway company has created spaces for the individual within the station, which not only resemble the city but also replace it: although access to the booth is restricted by the opening hours of the station, there is not conceptual difference between Station Work and the Japanese style internet or manga café room, which is a common facility in the city.

Keio Railway

With an average of 800.000 daily passengers (Japan Private Railway Association 2019, 52), Keio railways connects the western side of Tokyo to the city business centers via Shinjuku station, where it features the highest volume of people transferring during peak hours via JR Lines and the Marunouchi Subway Line (Shinjuku City Office 2017, 27). The company, as explored in the previous chapter, has a long established tradition in the transportation system, in tight relation with Shinjuku since 1917. The gates to Keio lines in Shinjuku are currently located in the West and South Entrance of the station, while a new platform shared with Toei Shinjuku line has a dedicated entrance in the New Keio South Concourse. The gates of the west entrance are connected to the station's west underground square, which links the Keio passengers to Tokyo Metro, Odakyu and JR lines too. The south gates, on the other hand, can be reached in different ways, from the Keio Department Store, the New South concourse, and the JR South Entrance. While the west gates bring the passenger outside of the station to the west underground passage, the south gates are optimal for transferring to JR Lines, since the two companies are connected through a short underground passage.

Considering only the area inside of the gates as *ekinaka*, and excluding the vending machines, the only shop in the station is the Keio Railway convenience store, "K-shop". Unlike JR, however, to reach the south gates from outside the station the passenger is forced to go down an escalator and walk by the Keio *depa-chika*, the bento and *omiyage* basement floor, and the Keio supermarket, which is located right in front of the gates. Both are part of the department store which blends in the structure of Keio station. The bento and omiyage specialized floor is in the traditional style of the department store, presenting different specialized brands in a myriad of colors and products, that costumers are often invited to try. While one side of the floor is completely dedicated to pre-made meals, *bento*, the other one presents different types of sweets, from the Japanese confectionery to western cakes and chocolate products. Given the price and the nature of the gifts,

which can be also pre-ordered for family or business events, the absence of a consistent younger crowd on this floor is not surprising. The *depa-chika* floor functions as an intermediate step between the exit and the gates, while creating a recreational moment for the commuter. Between the south gates and the supermarket, moreover, a small inner plaza with tickets machines features a flower shop, different food stands, and an area for events. These vary from the promotional activity to the seasonal stand, and appears to inevitably draw people's attention because of their strategic location. A passage on the first basement floor, finally, connects Keio's south and west gates, featuring a sequence of high-end brands' stands selling food-related gifts. These spaces are thus outside the gates, although still part of the southern side of Keio station in a way that differs from JR again. In fact, the area inside of the gates is rather small, and the volume of traffic on the platforms during rush hours could not be managed with more shopping facilities. This does not apply to all Keio stations, which presents more or less developed *ekinaka* as "within the gates", but in the case of Shinjuku, due to Keio Railway's late transfer to its current location during the post-war period and later redevelopment of shopping facilities and platforms, the structure of Keio *ekinaka* has come to be around the gates and in a hybrid combination with the department store, which becomes a centralizing area.

The JR South entrance, overall, is one of the most complex areas of the station, where passengers have access to different lines and are presented with a playground of facilities: the JR south concourse described above, the Odakyu Railway's "Mylord" shopping center and the above-ground passage of "Mosaic street" which cuts the station from south to west and offers shops and restaurants, a transit area with access to JR East Lumine on the south-western side of the entrance, and an articulated path to Keio railways which implies walking by the basement floors of the department stores to reach the gates. *Ekinaka* as area around and inside the gates, but within the station building, appears to be the most dynamic type of space, an explosion of colors and signs,

between shops and railway companies' different lines, functioning as a threshold and as continuum between the station and the city, while reproducing the complexity of infrastructures of the latter, offered by the railway company.

Conclusions

This thesis has explored how the Japanese major railway station has been decontextualized from its primary function of node in the transportation network, and shaped into a hybrid of leisure and consumption by private railway companies, through the reproduction and integration of urban spaces. As it has been documented, from their very inception Japanese railway companies have shown a prompt response to social and urban change, adapting and generating, on the other hand, new waves of urban development in the strategic context of *ensen kaihatsu*. The planning and construction of new spaces for the passenger within the station, moreover, has shown a shift throughout the 20th century from *outside* to *inside* the gates, as emerges in the transition from terminal department store to *ekinaka*. The development of these shopping-oriented areas has widened the idea of space and time in the station, releasing it from the constrictions of the waiting room, the platform and the timetable, to turn it into a place for people to spend and organize their time in different ways, while moving between dynamic but regulated paths of consumption.

On the other hand, because of the phenomenon of *ensen kaihatsu*, the idea of the major station as entertainment destination has to be contextualized as part of a trajectory constructed by the railway company for the individual, whose commuting routine in the city is strongly based on the railway system. In this sense, the station becomes a playground for the commuter, led by the railway company through the labyrinth of shopping facilities that have come to characterize it. The three specific spaces of the terminal department store, *ekichika* and *ekinaka* described in the second chapter interact in dynamic ways when reintegrated in the station and blend together into its transition areas, as shown in the case of the Shinjuku south entrance, metaphorically resembling the boundaries between different activities and spaces in an actual playground which are not necessarily defined. Another factor that contributes to this interconnected experience of the station

is the use of IC cards, that functioning as ticket and method of payment create a continuity between commuting and consuming. Born as the common currency of the station, but now extensively used everywhere in the city, are another example of the mutual influence between the two.

Major railway stations of Tokyo, which function as starting, arriving, but primarily as transferring nodes in the railway system (Metropolitan Traffic Census 2015, 55), are the most eloquent reflection of this development. In the case of Shinjuku, although the area was first located at the outskirts of the city, the extension of Keio and Odakyu's former lines to the station, with the consequent construction of a new ridership, created the premises for to the development of the area during the 1920s, enabling again the transformation of Shinjuku into a strategic terminal of Tokyo during the post-war period. As the third chapter has shown, the 1960s and the 1970s were the most significative years for the redefinition of the station, when Odakyu Railways inaugurated its first terminal department store as a place for "everybody", followed by JNR and Keio Railways, although the idea of public forum that almost formed during this years was ultimately swept away by the contradictions within the private nature of the station and its subsequent regulations. The creation of these different consumption-oriented spaces on the many layers of the station, recently integrated by the new JR East *ekinaka* facilities, is behind the perception of Shinjuku as a complex city within the city, where the constant construction works suggest that this evolution is still ongoing.

Although this thesis has aimed to introduce the idea of the railway station playground as the development and interplay of these urban spaces in the frame of private companies' *ensen kaihatsu* strategy, it did not explore the specific ways passengers, or costumers, negotiate and interact with them, which could be the object of further research. Again, different stations of Tokyo have different historical backgrounds, and are located in different social contexts. While Shinjuku has been mostly associated with an idea of entertainment, other stations might be associated with the ideas of "work" and "office". In other cases, again, railway companies have developed specific concepts for *ekinaka*.

This shows that every station in Tokyo has its own specificity, which can serve as another starting point aimed at exploring how the station-playground differs in other contexts.

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