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CREATING HERITAGE TOURISM THROUGH CHRONOTOPES: FOCUSING ON HIROSHIMA ELECTRIC RAILWAY IN JAPAN

Hideto Fujii

Graduate School of Commerce, Meiji University, Tokyo, Japan
hidefujii@meiji.ac.jp

Abstract

Heritage tourism leads to the re-evaluation and re-organisation of heritage to attract tourists. Heritage railways provide a sound development environment for heritage tourism because they have an inherent value to pass on to the next generation. This paper analyses heritage tourism, among other things, heritage railways in Hiroshima, Japan, as a case study and shows how the matrices of time and space, called chronotopes by Bakhtin, of the built environment of the place are essential to creating the reality that tourists favour. The implication of this study is as follows. First, the concept of the chronotopes offers the landscape the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships. Second, this chronotopic thinking also indicates another perspective to previous social and business studies regarding heritage tourism. It gains an advantage over them in the created reality of landscape.

Keywords

Chronotopes, Heritage Tourism, Heritage Railways, Landscape, Reality

1. Introduction

Chronotopes signify the matrices of time and space in human experiences. Bakhtin (1895-1975), one of the twentieth century's most influential social philosophers and cultural theorists,

defines the chronotopes as a “primary means for materializing time in space, (and it) emerges as a center for concretizing representation, as a force giving body” (Bakhtin 1981) to the story. This paper aims to understand the interaction between heritage sites and their surrounding areas in terms of heritage tourism, adopting the chronotopes as a methodology.

The definition of heritage tourism refers to experiences related to historical sites consisting of heritage and tourism (Zhu 2021). Academic discipline plays a vital role in analysing and explaining heritage tourism. Nevertheless, we can see the different perspectives towards heritage tourism if we compare social studies and business studies. While social studies explore heritage, business studies delve into tourism. Therefore, we must apply both fields to grasp heritage tourism accurately. This duality means that heritage tourism needs socio-cultural and commercial aspects in conducting research.

It seems that most of the previous studies on heritage tourism do not incorporate a chronotopic way of thinking into their research as a methodology. However, Ooi (2002) employs the chronotopes to analyse cultural tourism or event tourism. Therefore, this paper owes much to Ooi’s approach because his investigation relates to heritage tourism in socio-historical and planned event viewpoints. As an example of heritage tourism based on the chronotopes, we focus on the relationship between Hiroshima Electric Railway’s atomic-bombed trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome, indicating how the chronotopes function behind landscape to attract tourists.

2. Research Objectives

An essential point in the development of heritage tourism research is to reveal the relationship between heritage sites and their surrounding areas. Although much previous research has delved into heritage tourism, creating an analytical view of this relationship seems lacking. Hence, this paper concentrates on limiting the discussion to the methodology useful for studying heritage tourism. An excellent place to start is with the matrices of time and space, called the chronotopes by Bakhtin. The chronotopes connect the actual world as a source of representation to the world represented and enable us to elucidate the constituents of an event when tourists visit tourist attractions (Clark and Holquist 1984). Second, it is necessary to consider the context in which it occurred for detailed research of the chronotopes.

This paper takes Hiroshima Electric Railway (HER) as a case study because a few atomic-bombed HER trams regularly run near the Atomic Bomb Dome. This setting means that both the atomic-bombed trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome have similarities in time and space. Our

particular integrated sense of time and space shapes our understanding of reality. By adopting the chronotopes as a methodology, this paper indicates the meaning of the atomic-bombed trams combined with the Atomic Bomb Dome. It shows the effectiveness of the chronotopes grasped from the rolling stock and the landscape in terms of sustainable tourist attractions (Williams and Lew 2015).

3. Literature Review: Heritage Tourism, Heritage Railways, and Landscapes

Heritage tourism will be considered in terms of the chronotopes because it is related to the history of tourist resources (Morson and Emerson 1990). It is helpful to differentiate heritage from history for in-depth research. While contemporary society determines heritage worthy of passing on to the next generation, ordinary people generally perceive history through their five senses and understand it under the influence of education, and historians record it accurately. The judgment of that society, including ordinary people and historians, collectively sets up the concept of heritage. On the other hand, history originates from the typical personal and socio-cultural values of those who live in contemporary society. Even if heritage and history are composed of slightly different concepts, they have exact temporal and spatial dimensions in common.

The natural environment of the living affects the personal and socio-cultural values, and education also influences them. The diverse value of today determines heritage that contains natural, societal and cultural dimensions as a whole. Therefore, heritage is the modern-day use of history based on society's judgement in particular. Heritage includes tangible resources such as buildings, objects, or documents representing an authentic past or intangible resources like cultural performance. Heritage tourism thus will be explored by a wide range of disciplines such as archaeology, geography, sociology, history, management, and marketing. Each domain has its research method and theory, so heritage tourism study contains several ways of thinking.

Heritage tourism consists of a cultural or temporal field, a place-related or spatial field, and a business-related or product-oriented field. It is important to note that heritage tourism lies in the three's partially interrelated and interlocking areas. A cultural or temporal field and a place-related or spatial field in the chronotopes of heritage can research a theme separate from a business field. Social studies take on such areas; examples of this are archaeology (Smith 2006; Harrison 2013), geography (Lovell and Bull 2018), sociology (Alsayyad 2001; Corsane 2005), and history (Logan and Reeves 2009; Lowenthal 2015).

On the other hand, a business-related or product-oriented field of heritage tourism is directly concerned with dealings. Business studies tend to delve into those areas without fully applying the insights of social studies to their inquiry; business administration (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Stiefel and Clark 2020) and marketing (Conlin and Bird 2014; Park 2014; McCormick 2017) provide examples of this. While there are many studies on heritage tourism, the mutually-linked relationships remain unknown in previous studies; moreover, there has been little evidence regarding chronotopic thinking about tourism commodities. Hence, we use social and business studies to grasp the landscape through the chronotopes with tourism commodities.

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) in the UK defines heritage railways as “lines of local interest, museum railways or tourist railways that preserve, recreate or simulate railways of the past; or demonstrate or operate historical or special types of motive power or rolling stock” (ORR n.d.). Therefore, heritage railways have a relationship between tourism and tangible cultural heritage. In other words, they constitute three fields equivalent to heritage tourism: preserved rolling stock as a cultural or temporal field, a cityscape or natural scenery as a place-related or spatial field, and railways as a business-related or product-oriented field.

A cityscape or natural scenery must be consistent with preserved rolling stock to harmonise heritage railways visually. The landscape generally refers to a specific object's authentic and refined elegance with an adequate historical or social explanation. It also indicates “the external world mediated through subjective human experience” (Cosgrove 1984). Tourists desire to look at the well-balanced historical and traditional landscape of urban or rural areas with heritage railways that operate within such a surrounding environment in terms of heritage tourism. Briefly, there is a need for consistency between heritage railways and railway corridor landscapes. Considering the chronotopes create the landscape's reality, heritage railways must keep historic rolling stock and the railway corridor landscape consistent in time and space. Heritage railways need collaboration with the local government and landowners managing areas along the lines—their endeavour to make the chronotopes effective forms positive impressions on tourists.

4. Methodology: The Bakhtin's Concept of the Chronotopes for the Use of Social Sciences

In the literary work, M. Bakhtin revealed the structurally motivated concept of time and space, calling it the chronotopes. Mathematics initially used the chronotopes, and Einstein's Theory of Relativity employed part of them later. However, as to Bakhtin, the meaning of the Relativity Theory in itself is of no significance. He is just borrowing the term for literary analysis as a metaphor. Bakhtin also uses Kant's idea of time and space to define his concept of the chronotopes. Kant insists that time and space are necessary forms of cognition, beginning with elementary perceptions and representations. While Kant takes the chronotopes as forms of the most immediate reality and perception, Bakhtin thinks of them as his most immediate reality in terms of the actual events of human life (Bakhtin 1981; Steinby and Klapuri 2014) .

What is essential to Bakhtin is the fact that the concept of the chronotopes presents "the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space)" (Bakhtin 1981). In other words, the core concept of the chronotopes lies in the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships in abstract formulation, being a way of seeing time in the spatial world (Danow 1991). Without the chronotopes, the readers of literature would not recognise the social and historical dimensions of texts appropriately because the chronotopes are not transcendental categories but forms of the most immediate reality like actual events (Bakhtin 1981; Renfrew 2015). Cultural codes embedded in literature in the novel determines the chronotopes, indicating that the chronotopes are equal to cultural time and space. The chronotopes, therefore, allow us to realise artistic aspects of events in time and space.

As a specialist in studying the meaning of literature, Bakhtin emphasises that the chronotropic function is the basis of understanding the historical and space-related development of genres of the novel. Similarly, the chronotopes help comprehend the temporal and spatial emergence in the internal form of the word (Steinly and Klapuri 2014). Bakhtin asserts the word's temporal setting when he indicates "the word lives, as it were, on the boundary between its context and another, alien, context" (Bakhtin 1981). This liminality of a word shows us how dialogue occurs dialogically by a successive context from one speaker to another. In addition, Bakhtin offers the word's spatial setting when he notes "as a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other" (Bakhtin 1981). This duality of language points out a communicative space between two speakers. Language is also conceived chronologically through a dialogical process (Todorov 1984).

The concept of the chronotopes is essential in understanding history dialogically as it is responsible for both time and space (Morris 1994). A chronotopic analysis provides a clue to solving historical subjects. The chronotopes help figure out the interaction between text and its socio-historical context and between the text and its historical referents. This function enables social scientists to use the chronotopes as an analytical tool in taking historical perspectives. While Bakhtin was concerned with social studies, he did not explicitly adopt the chronotopes as a methodology for social studies (Bakhtin 1986). Social scientists, therefore, have carefully transferred and employed Bakhtin's concept of the chronotopes into respective fields of social studies due to the similarities and the differences between text and society in their functions (Bell and Gardiner 1998; Brandist and Tihanov 2000).

5. Case Study and Analysis: The Relationship between Hiroshima Electric Railway's Atomic-bombed Trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome

As a case study of the interaction between heritage railways and heritage landscapes in Japan, this section looks at Hiroshima Electric Railway (HER) and the Atomic Bomb Dome. HER established its tram operator in November 1912. Since then, this company has provided tram services running through Hiroshima city. There are various types of active rolling stock of HER because HER holds traditional rolling stock of its own and impressive one operating once by other companies in mainly Japan. This variety of rolling stock shows why trams of HER are called a historic tram museum in operation. Cross-checking those rolling stock against the definition of heritage railways, the rolling stock of HER corresponds to heritage railways or heritage sites. While most preserved trams of HER, including atomic-bombed trams, are in operation, a few are in a tram shed for the exclusive use of events (HER 2012).

Sixty-three trams operated on August 6, 1945, when Hiroshima city suffered from the atomic bombing. Four atomic-bombed trams manufactured in 1942 survived this incident: No.651, No.652, No.653, and No.654. Due to minor damage, No. 651 and No.652 regularly operated after short-term repair. No.653 and No.654 suffered severe damage. Nevertheless, they resumed operation a year after a major repair. Although No.653 was temporarily retired in June 2006, it started running again in June 2015 for the 70th anniversary of the Atomic-bombing commemorations after being restored to its original condition. Since then, No.653 has been in service for private use only. In addition, it runs every summer along the same route the first tram

took when it resumed the service in a limited section. No.654 was retired in June 2006, being moved to a transportation museum in Hiroshima city the following month to conserve it.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial was laid out by Hiroshima City from 1949 to 1964 to remember the miseries of war in perpetuity. No.651 and No.652 have been operated mainly during the morning rush hour, making stops or passing by the Genbaku Dome (the Atomic Bomb Dome) in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Figure 1). Located on the north side of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, the Atomic Bomb Dome is one of the few surviving structures left standing after Hiroshima's commercial centre suffered from the atomic bombing. The Atomic Bomb Dome, the skeletal remains of a building, was initially designed in 1915 by Czechoslovakian architect Jan Letzel (1880-1925) as part of the Hiroshima Prefectural Commercial Exhibition to promote the sale of goods produced in the Hiroshima prefecture. World Heritage Committee registered it as one of the World Heritage Sites in 1996 based on a reminder of humankind's destructive ability and a symbol for world peace (Dougill 2019; Zwigenberg 2014).

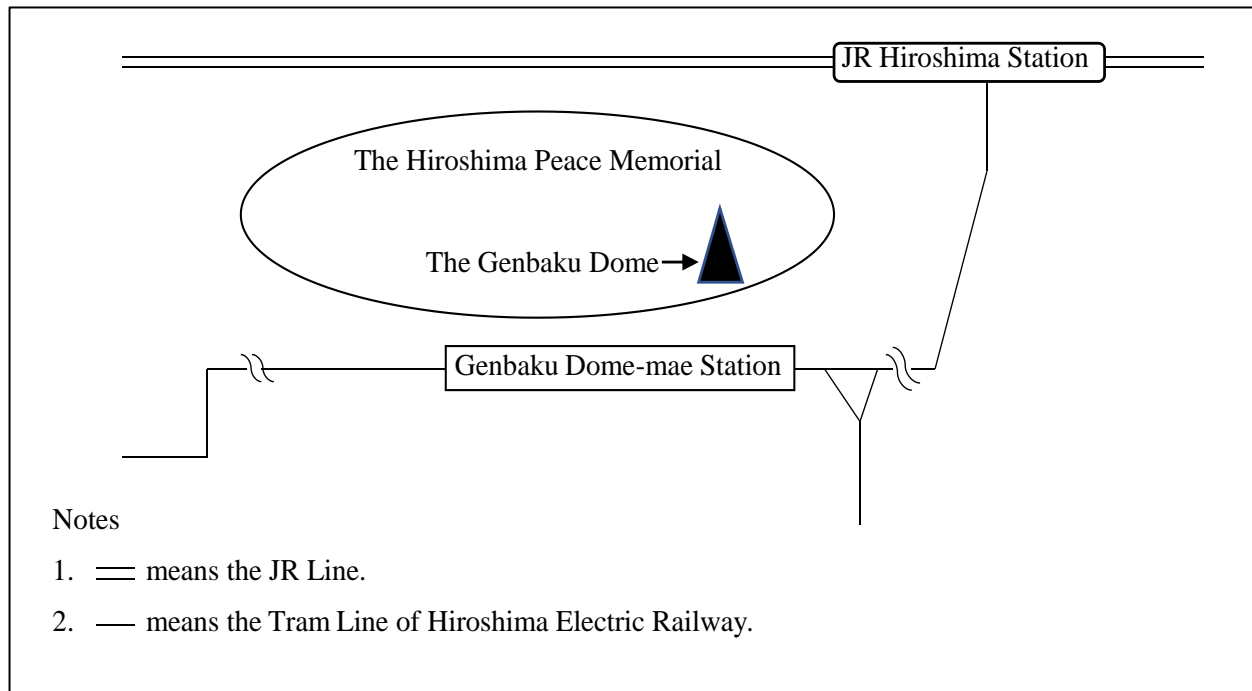


Figure 1: *Tram Route Map of Hiroshima Electric Railway and the Atomic Bomb Dome*
Source: (Illustrated by the author)

Regarding heritage tourism, it is necessary to relate HER's trams to the Atomic Bomb Dome because some rolling stock owned by HER is equivalent to heritage sites, and the Atomic

Bomb Dome creates a part of the heritage landscape. Not to mention, HER is responsible for the tourism product. That is to say, these three fields constitute heritage tourism: preserved rolling stock such as No.651 and No.652, a cultural cityscape or historic urban scenery such as the Atomic Bomb Dome, and HER as a producer of transport services. The interaction between HER's heritage trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome reveals and remembers the memory of the atomic bombing to tourists visiting there, creating the consistency of time and space (Figure 2). Figure 2 is a simple formulation that the temporal and spatial location of heritage trams and the Genbaku Dome (the Atomic Bomb Dome) in 1945 corresponds to 2020, showing the chronotopic concept.

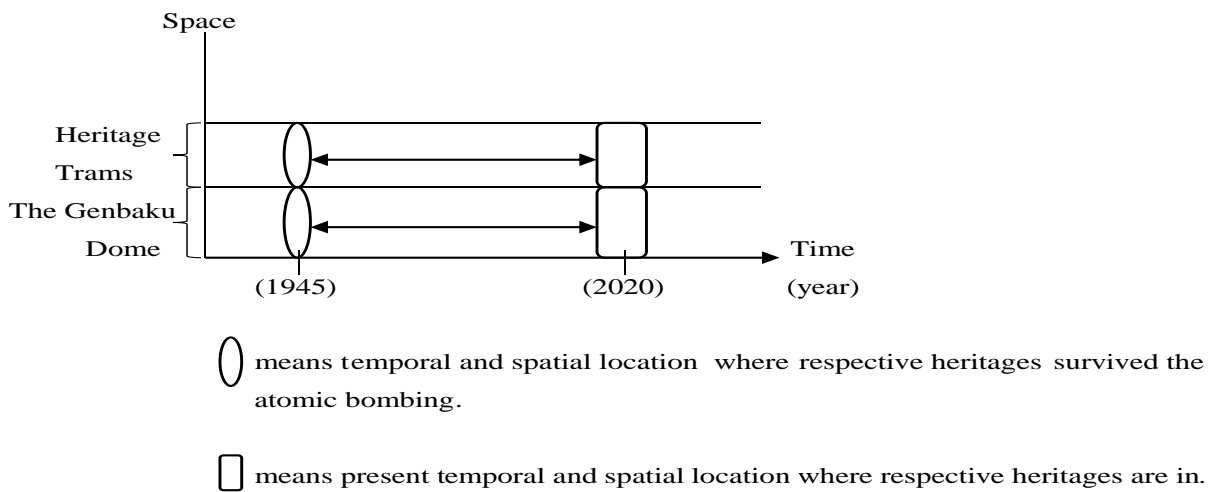


Figure 2: *Chronotopic Logic of Heritage Trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome*

Source: (Illustrated by the author from Ooi (2002))

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The matrices of time and space exist in the meaning of the chronotopes, and they originate from the novel form. In other words, an author of the novel must describe the characters and the scene in a chronotopic manner because a human being lives in historical existence. A human being's relationship to time and space makes the world real. The chronotopic description of the novel allows the readers to understand the scene-setting of the story with a reason as it reveals the artistic imaging of human life. The chronotopes help make the historical perception of human life possible.

As the symbol of the atomic bombing, the dark side of Hiroshima has turned into an object that appeals to the visual sense of tourists (Zwigenberg 2014). Considering the chronotopic

understanding of the interaction between HER's heritage trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome, it is not surprising that they create visual harmonisation to attract tourists. The chronotopes between HER's heritage trams and the Atomic Bomb Dome show transforming, rebirth, progress, and grief and loss in Hiroshima to tourists. However, it tends to lose its attractiveness because the number of atomic-bombed trams or heritage railways and their operating hours are limited. Nevertheless, Hiroshima must invite broader perspectives from foreign tourists as a city of world heritage in a former state after the convergence of the covid-19 pandemic.

The area surrounding the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, including the Atomic Bomb Dome, has been managed by the landscape-control guidelines by Hiroshima city since 1983. Although they do not have official enforcement regarding building design details, those who own the buildings near the Hiroshima Peace Memorial voluntarily follow the guidelines to keep the visual impression chronotopic. This manifestation of will contributes to making the landscape by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial homogeneous under the status quo. Furthermore, it might orient the tourists to the future-making practices because the past event in Hiroshima provides an idea of the peaceful life in the future for them, revealing that the meaning of heritage lies in "the historical configurations in cultural, social, and practical relations with time" (Harrison et al. 2020).

The chronotopes present the consistency of time and space, showing the time as the fourth dimension of space. This awareness of interrelation between time and space leads the tourists to think of the landscape on a real-time basis, helping make an image of the landscape in the future because the chronotopes urge tourists to understand the history of the landscape dialogically. Dialogue takes time to work due to its open-ended system. Therefore, the chronotopic way of thinking in heritage tourism contributes to sustainable landscape development through the dialogue between tourists and tourist resources. Heritage is not a thing as a set of values and meanings. Still, it is a socio-cultural practice with various values and understandings constructed and regulated in the past, present and future (Smith 2006). It is worth remembering that this recognition sustains heritage tourism.

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