SINO CENTRE: SHOPPING CENTER AS A CULTURAL SPACE

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MAY 2015
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Abstract

The research explores an organically formed cultural space, a shopping centre at the heart of Hong Kong's busiest commercial district that has developed into an alternative model of popular cultural consumption under a disappearing ownership model - fragmented ownership. Within the context of the current land development policy in Hong Kong, this ownership model creates a shelter for the small scale, non chain shops to survive under the tense competition with the international chained brands and still be able to operate in the shopping malls. Using Sino Centre as a case study, it represents a shopping mall under fragmented ownership and, at the same time, act as a cultural space that caters to diversified tastes of consumers. Besides the ownership model, the research will further look into the ecology within Sino Centre as a cultural space and the consumption patterns of the popular cultural products offered in Sino Centre while comparing with the highly standardized corporate own shopping mall in the same geographical location, the Langham Place in Mong Kok district.
Acknowledgement

We take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to our supervisor, Dr. Vivian Lee, for her valuable advice in over ten times of consultation sessions, guidance, carry and support at any time of preparing this final year project.

We are grateful to the shop owners and staffs in Sino Centre and all the respondents of our questionnaires for their valuable time and patience in responding to our inquires during data collections. Their contributions form the basis of this study.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our families and friends for their company and care.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Modern urbanites shop everyday, ranging from daily necessities to luxury products. Shopping centers are found everywhere in Hong Kong, from community mall to large-scale shopping centers. Shopping is no longer an activity to meet physical needs, but also for pleasure and gratification.

Recently, some small-scale shopping centers were closed down, while some were redeveloped by the major land developers. They were either replaced by a brand new shopping center or rented to large scale chain stores. Either way the diverse outlooks of small shopping centers are fast giving way to more or less identical, if not homogenous, chain store operations. More Hongkongers begin to be aware of the issue. With the increasing expectations from the customers and in this highly competitive environment, how could one shopping center withstand the inevitable wave of redevelopment and remain successful in the market?

Cultural products are often found in shopping centres. Customers can obtain gratifications and form a community through purchasing their desired cultural products. They see the shopping centre as a platform for cultural consumption. In most cases, we associate shopping centers as commercial space for retailing. But is it possible to analysis a shopping center as a cultural space?

Objectives of the study

This study will provide an insight into the cultural space operating under the fragmented ownership model in Hong Kong by using Sino Centre as case study. We define Sino Centre as not just a shopping centre, but also a cultural space. Sino Centre is an example of fragmented ownership that was once a common property ownership model in Hong Kong before the 80s. However, now it is seen a fading model in Hong Kong, in contrast to the sole ownership model encouraged by the current urban planning policy in Hong Kong. Most of the shopping malls nowadays are owned by major properties developers such as Sun Hung Kai Properties or MTR Corporate Limited. The stores inside these malls are highly standardized and mostly rented by chained international brands.

Sino Centre is an exceptional case of shopping malls under the current situation - it is one of the few malls in Hong Kong which is still under fragmented ownership, other examples would be Kwai Chung Shopping Mall and Sincere Podium (also know as Sin Tat Plaza). Kwai Cung Shopping Mall mainly offers trendy fashion items while mobile phones and accessories can be found in the Sincere Podium. Both malls offer space for the small scale, non-chain shops to do businesses. These malls have different specializations, like clothes and

1 The concept of cultural space will be discussed in chapter 2.
2 Urban planning policy refers to the implementation of Comprehensive Development Area in the late 1970s, will further explain in Chapter 3.
electronic gadgets. This study focuses on Sino Centre, which located in prime location and has a longest history of fragmented ownership. It has witnessed years of changes in Mong Kok and still remain popular.

Sino Centre also offers a favourable environment for the consumption of popular cultural products. It is able to provide all the conditions vital to the survival of the small, independent and non-chain stores which sell popular cultural products so it is worth to be studied. Three main types of popular cultural products can be found in Sino Centre, namely popular music CDs and idol goods, second hand CDs, and figures, comics and games (FCG), will be discussed.

Sino Centre demonstrates an alternative mode of cultural consumption. It is an organically formed cultural space that facilitates diversified consumption patterns of popular cultures. The shops in Sino Centre offer a wide range of choices of the aforementioned cultural products that cater to the specific needs of consumers and thereby develop and sustain the taste community. Moreover, the intimate connections between suppliers and customers in Sino Centre seldom exist in large-scale, homogenized shopping malls in Hong Kong.

**Research Questions**

1. Why is Sino Centre a cultural space?
2. Why is Sino Centre a favourable environment for cultural consumption?
3. What is the consumption pattern(s) of popular cultures in Sino Centre?
4. How does Sino Centre facilitate regional popular cultural flows?
5. Can Sino Centre be an index of popular trends and fashion in Hong Kong?
Chapter 2 - Conceptual framework and Methodology

Conceptual Framework
This part explains key concepts and the analytical framework adopted in the study. First we will introduce the fragmented ownership of Sino Centre as a fading model of shopping mall in nowadays Hong Kong. Shopping centre theories will be introduced to analyse the set of geographical, operational and social conditions that make SC an unique shopping centre in Hong Kong.

We see Sino Centre as not only a shopping centre, but also a cultural space. We will identify the three main types of cultural products offered in Sino Centre and then look into the cultural consumption patterns of the visitors in Sino Centre. We would like to further establish the significance of Sino Centre as an unique shopping mall that offers a favourable environment for non-chain shops offering popular cultural products.

Shopping center theories provide a general framework to analyse the spatial characteristics of Sino Center. Incorporating cultural studies concepts and theories, it provides a concrete framework for analysing data collected from qualitative and quantitative research. The method adopted will be further explained in the next chapter.

A) Shopping center theories

Shopping centers are described “as planned retail developments comprising various retail outlets which are under one freehold ownership and managed and marketed as unit.” ³

Three major components can be extracted from current scholarship: Location, customer mix and tenants allocation. It helps to analysis the successfulness of shopping center by understanding the tenants profile and how they utilize the physical characteristics of the shopping center, and how external environment influences the customer constitution.

Location

Location is the first important component of a shopping mall. It explains how external environment and physical characteristics affect the development of the shopping center. For this purpose, site analyses are conducted to study the geographical, historical and infrastructural context of the specific shopping center.⁴

Customer mix

Customer is the second component in studying shopping centers. The role of the customer is not only to purchase or visit the shopping center, but play an active role in

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the value creation process of the shopping center, which also influence the development of the shopping center indirectly.

Customers’ shopping values can be used to explain the behaviours of irrational shopping by understanding the entertainment related to the “shopping experience”. Four major shopping types, namely convenience shopping, comparison shopping, specialized shopping and impulse shopping, can help to categorise the consumption behaviours of the customers through their shopping habits. By understanding customer’s shopping type, it helps to allocate the tenants in suitable location in order to utilize the space.

Tenant allocation

Tenant allocation is the last composing element of shopping centers. It connects closely with the previous elements, as it has an important role in facilitating customer traffic within the shopping center. Allocating the tenants in appropriate location will help to optimise the physical space of the shopping center.

In previous research, it finds that only 11% of customers will walk through the whole shopping center and impulse shopping tends to occur on the lower levels of the shopping centre.

B) Cultural space

Cultural space does not have a general definition as it is subject to many factors and subjective elements. However, the concept of social space as elaborated by Henri Lefebvre can help illuminate the meaning and nature of cultural space. According to Lefebvre, “space” is produced no matter how it is produced and what kind of society it is in. To him, a social space “contains and assigns appropriate places to social relations of reproduction and relations of production”. Social space contains many social relations because it produces social relations and is reproduced by social relations. Besides, it is supported by social relations. The function of a social space depends on the “spatial practice”, which “embrace production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation.” It “ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion.”

References:

11 Lefebvre (1991). The production of space
12 Lefebvre (1991). The production of space
The notion of social space by Henri Lefebvre enables us to see that the formation of cultural space is similar to the production of social space. In fact, cultural space is a further development of social space. Foucault’s idea of space gives us insight on what makes a cultural space. According to Foucault, space is “a social constructed with the social itself being spatially organized.” It is noted that human activity should be included in space as “human interaction is situated in particular spaces that have a variety of social meanings.” Moreover, spaces are “emotionally charged places” as people have a wide variety of activities with different cultural meanings in them.

C) Cultural consumption

Cultural Consumption is a 'ritual activity in which people consume to communicate with other consumers, and shifting accumulations of these acts cultural consumption constitute the making of culture.' According to Pierre Bourdieu, the patterns of cultural consumption are used for the purposes of marking and maintaining social distinction. Collecting is one of the manifestations that demonstrate the dynamic of cultural consumption.

Culture of collecting - Why people collect?

People collect out of passion. According to Jean Baudrillard, collecting itself is a regressive behavior, which means that people see collecting as a way to escape from reality since collecting objects enables them to develop their autonomy. People indulge in collecting because this practice “does not seek to still a desire, yet it can bring about a reactive satisfaction that is every bit as intense.” The satisfaction is returned by the behavior that generates internal passion, which “lends this regressive behavior its sublimity”.

Psychologically, people feel pleasant in the activity of collecting as this activity “balances two stimulus found in any pleasurable activity.” These stimulus are supplied by collectors when they discover that the size of their collections could be expanded continually and their collections are recognizable.
“Passion, focus and commitment”\(^{22}\) are the features that differentiate collecting from normal consumer behaviors. According to Russell W. Belk, majority of collectors have passionate emotion, which is a main characteristic that distinguishes collecting from other examples of consumption. Besides, collecting is a ‘rule-governed game’\(^{23}\). Collectors “gain a sense of mastery and competence”\(^{24}\) if they can make a good collection by learning the rules. Individually, expanding the collection means expanding the “sense of self”\(^{25}\) to the collector. Moreover, collecting boosts the self-esteem\(^{26}\) of the collectors if they “success in competition with other collectors.”\(^{27}\)

Furthermore, “a sense of fellowship with fellow collectors”\(^{28}\) is developed among the collectors through “actual interaction or tacit sense of community.”\(^{30}\) According to Pierre Bourdieu, “taste is what brings together things and people that go together.”\(^{31}\)

Collectors who have similar interests form a taste community as they share certain cultural capital. This community is semi-open which means that people could be part of the community as long as they acquire knowledge.

**Fan culture**

Fans, are conceived as the passive and pathological victims of the manipulations of the culture industries\(^{32}\). According to Joli Jenson, fan is assigned to specific cultural consumption activities that is not just established by the object of consumption but also in how the object is said to be consumed\(^{33}\). Fan culture is about the the public display and circulation of meaning production and reading practices. They make meanings and committee with other fans through mass media and develop a 'poaching' to an art form.\(^{34}\)

**Popular culture**


\(^{23}\) Belk (1995). *Collecting in a consumer society*

\(^{24}\) Belk (1995). *Collecting in a consumer society*


\(^{27}\) Belk (1995). *Collecting in a consumer society*


Popular culture, also regarded as pop culture, is generally recognised as the vernacular or the mass culture at the point in time. It is produced by industrial techniques of mass production and marketed for profit to a mass public of consumers. According to Brummett, popular culture involves the aspect of social life of the mass and is determined by the interactions between people in the everyday society. Identities and communal bondings are forged through consuming similar popular culture items. In the nowadays, popular culture is mostly informed by the media. Examples of popular culture are popular music, daily fashion, entertainment, television, etc.

D) Shopping center as a cultural space

Sino Centre is not only a shopping mall but also a cultural space. The “spatial practice” in Sino Centre decides that it is a collecting point of popular cultural products plus collectibles. Geographically, it can be easily accessed. Historically, fragmented ownership enables many independent shops to survive in Sino Centre. These shops mainly supplies pop-cultural products. Some provides collectibles like second hand CDs. These characteristics produce many relations between shop owners and customers who favor in these products. In other words, Sino Centre becomes a place where these commercial activities take place and where these people gather. Yet, this shopping mall has an emotional dimension - Sino Centre is also an “emotionally charged place”. This is embodied in the close connections between customers, shop owners and staff. In short, because of the “spatial practice” in Sino Centre, emotional element is found in this shopping centre.

On the other hand, the visitors of Sino Centre are usually collectors who have accumulated certain cultural capital through the consumption of specific kinds of products. Moreover, meaning is constructed through these human consumptions. People have developed an impression that when they want to find something rare or interesting, Sino Centre is the place they should visit. Regarding to this impression, taste communities are formed and found in Sino Centre. Individuals in the community develop a “sense of fellowship through collectibles”. This community is a semi-open community that requires certain cultural capital, which is the knowledge of the cultural products they consumed.

To summarize, Sino Centre is not simply a shopping mall but a cultural space as the “spatial practice” outlined above enables the production of the close connections between the

38 Delaney (2007). Pop Culture: An Overview
40 Baker (2004). The Sage dictionary of cultural studies
customers and shop owners and staff. Visitors with similar tastes unwittingly form a taste community in Sino Centre. On the surface, the customers and shop owners are performing commercial transactions. In fact, they are undergoing an exchange of their cultural capital at the same time. Therefore, a cultural space is formed through “spatial practice”.

**Methodology**

This part presents the research methods used to address the research questions of the study. A mixed method research is adopted to help understand the demographics, people’s consumption pattern and perception towards Sino Centre.

A) Quantitative questionnaires

Quantitative questionnaires are useful to gather a larger number of responses and quantifiable data in objective manner. The questionnaires were distributed nearby Sino Centre and through online platform. The targets were mainly visitors of Sino Centre.

Total of 154 valid questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire consists of 13 questions. It was mainly designed with multiple response questions, where respondents were asked to state their preferences for each question. Nominal data was also collected in order to understand the respondents’ statuses and analysis their consumption activities. The sample and result of questionnaires are included in the appendix.

B) Qualitative semi-structured interviews

In semi-structured interviews, questions and instructions can be prepared ahead and conducted by several interviewers in the field. Interviewers are able to ask follow-up questions, while the respondents can express their answers freely in their own terms. So, it provides reliable and comparable qualitative data.

The targets of semi-structured interviews were the owners or staff of the shop inside Sino Centre. During February to April 2016, 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Prior to the interview, each respondent was asked for their consent to interview. All responses were either recorded in tape or written notes. The interview questions, respondent details and their response summary are included in the appendix.

C) Qualitative observation

To understand the demographics, trends and consumer behaviors in Sino Centre, qualitative observations were conducted during February to April 2016. Observation were made and recorded immediately for further analysis. 4 main aspects were observed during each field trip, i.e. age of visitors, time spent in single shop, specialization of goods, relationship between staff/owner and customers, and changes of display and adverts inside Sino Centre.
Chapter 3 - Sino Centre: What makes Sino Centre Different?

This chapter will first examine the background and historical development of Sino Centre. Then it will discuss what makes Sino Centre different from other shopping centers and become a favourable environment for the consumption of popular cultural products. Our analysis consists of three parts: locational factor, urban planning and ownership model, and people’s impression towards Sino Centre.

*Sino Centre* was built in 1979 by Sino Group. It is a 23-storey commercial building located at 582-592 Nathan Road. B-2/F are currently used as shopping mall, where most stores located. The size of each floor is around 4800 square ft. and is divided into around 40 individual small stores. Visitors can access these floor freely by escalators. Higher level, i.e. 3-21/F, are used for office units, while some changed into upper-floor shops nowadays. These floor can only be reached by elevators on the ground floor. Visitors need to check their desired shop beforehand or the shopping guide next to the elevators.

Shops in Sino Centre offer diversified products for different visitors. Watches, CDs (both first hand and second hand), games, figures are products that agglomerate and commonly known for selling in Sino Centre. But there are also small amount of miscellaneous companies like travel agency, music school, domestic helpers agency opened up in Sino Centre.

Despite that Sino Centre has already been established for 37 years, the property transactions in Sino Centre remain active in recent years. The rent per square ft. ranges from HKD 30 at higher levels to HKD 37 at lower levels. The selling price for each shop units in past 6 months is around 11,000 to 13,000 per square ft. for both upper and lower level units.

Development of Sino Centre

Before the construction of Sino Centre in 1979, the site had been used for entertainment and retail purposes, i.e. the Ming Yuen Amusement Park (明園遊樂場) in 1950s, Lung Wah Restaurant (龍華茶樓) and Chung Kiu Chinese Products Emporium (中僑國貨公司) in 1960s.  

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43 Basement, ground, mezzanine, 1st and 2nd Floor
45 In Hong Kong, buildings aged 30 or above are required to participate in the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme to inspect the building conditions and make necessary repairment, which reduce the investor incentive to purchase.
In 1979, the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) started service. Mong Kok was one of stations in
the initial proposal submitted to the Legislative Council in 1968. Along with the rapid
development of the Nathan Road, Sino Group saw the potential of the site and developed the
land as a new shopping center.

In the 1980s, shops inside Sino Centre can be classified into 4 main types: CD stores,
philatelic Shop, needleworks, real estate and travel agency. At that time, Sino Centre was
one of the main exchange platform for stamps collectors. Philatelic shops were opened up
on mainly 1-2/F of Sino Centre. In early 1990s, most of them were closed or moved to Ho
Mong Kok Shopping Centre because of the change of ecology in Sino Centre. The shop
owners prefer to agglomerate with shops selling similar products, i.e. old coins, vintage toys,
in other shopping centre specialised in vintage goods.

According to Mr. Choi, the owner of Sky Music who has been visiting and working in Sino
Centre frequently since late 80s, he mentioned there were lots of needleworks shops in Sino
Centre. The shop owners did not only sell tools and materials there, they also ran needlework
classes inside their shops. Since the early stage, Sino Centre has become a platform for the
lovers of different culture to communicate and exchange specific types of cultural products.

In the 1990s, more stores selling popular cultural products moved in, including popular music
CD, Japanese fashion, comic, gaming, and figures. CD stores started to open up in Sino
Centre, e.g. Sky Music started in 1990. 1990s is the golden period of Cantopop, Sino Centre
became the centre for selling Pop music CDs and Idol goods. The term “Sino Index” were
introduced and used as an index of popularity of Hong Kong stars.

On the other hand, illegal activities started to occur in Sino Centre, like porn selling and
pirate issues. Sino Centre, along with SimCity (星際城市), Sin Tat Plaza (先達廣場), Ho
King Commercial Building (好景商業中心), were the 4 major porn selling sites in Mong
Kok. In 2000s, there were more than 30 stores selling porn VCDs/DVDs in these shopping
centres. Most of the stores are located at 2/F of Sino Centre. With the frequent clearance by
the Hong Kong Custom and their cooperation with Sino Group, most pornselling stores in
Sino Centre were forced to close down in 2004. Similar to pornselling, piracy became

48 Travel agency in Sino Centre usually only offers service for booking ship tickets, yacht or villa.
http://www.metrohk.com.hk/?cmd=detail&id=114366
50 Choi. (2016, February 29). Interview with Mr. Choi from Sky Music [Personal interview].
http://std.stheadline.com/archive/fullstory.asp?andor=or&year1=2000&month1=3&day1=14&year2=2000&mo
nth2=3&day2=14&category=all&id=20000314a07&keyword1=&keyword2=
serious in mid 90s, and affected the profit and operation of CD store selling real copy. Along with the pornselling stores, pirate CD/VCD stores were also cleared by the custom in their operations during 2000s.

Today, Sino Centre is known as a ‘trendy space’, a retail center for a retail center for popular products like pop and second hand CDs/DVDs, figures, comics and games, and miscellaneous items like phone accessories, travel agencies. The ecology of Sino Centre will be further explained in the next chapter.

**Location**

Sino Centre is sited in Nathan Road, Mong Kok and enjoys geographical advantages and convenient traffic. Mong Kok is one of the most congested and prime shopping and residential district in Hong Kong. Its development can be traced from the colonial period.

In 1860, the Convention of Peking was signed. The British Colonial Government gained control of the Kowloon Peninsula. They carried out reclamation project in order to build road connecting Tsim Sha Tsui to Boundary Street, Kowloon Peninsula started to urbanise. So, the old Mong Kok Village (芒角村) was demolished and replaced by factories, roads and residential buildings. In 1904, Sir Matthew Nathan, the then Governor of Hong Kong, put strong emphasis on the development of Kowloon Peninsula. Under his governorship, the Kowloon-Canton railway was constructed and Nathan Road was widened. It brought in more residents, population flow, and provided a ground for the rapid development of Mong Kok.

Nowadays, shops in Mong Kok mainly cater to the consumption needs of the lower and middle-class. As there are many places for entertainment and trendy shopping malls concentrated in Mong Kok, it becomes a favourite destination of teenagers during their spare time. Hence, the term “MK-style (MK is the short form of Mong kok) emerges to describe the way how people dress, style their hair, move and speak. This style usually suggests a strong passion for foreign culture, e.g. Japan.

Because of the external environment, Sino Centre gathers diversified popular cultural products which are usually consumed by teenagers. And it soon becomes the concentration spot of Japanese popular cultural products and trendy goods, earning it the reputation of being the “Akihabara” of Hong Kong” or “Miniature Harajuku” in Hong Kong.

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54 Choi (2016, February 29). Interview with Mr. Choi from Sky Music
57 Akihabara is located in Tokyo, Japan. This area is famous for its deep influence by the otaku culture. The streets are covered with anime, manga images and advertisement, and cosplayers handing out leaflets on streets. And maid cafés can also be found in that area.
58 Harajuku is also located in Tokyo, Japan. Similar to Akihabara, this area is internationally famous as a center of Japanese youth culture and fashion, for example Lolita and Aristocrat style.
Nathan road is the main thoroughfare of Kowloon. It lines up different tourist attractions and shopping malls from Tsim Sha Tsui to Sham Shui Po. As a major road in Hong Kong, it offers a wide range of transportation options for visitors. Both tourists and local visitors from different districts can travel easily to Sino Centre. With the lower time cost and shorter travelling distance, it attracts visitors with different background and habits into Sino Centre to look for their desired products.

Urban planning and ownership model

In the 1970s, Hong Kong entered a new phase in urban planning and development. Comprehensive Development Area (CDA), a new urban development control tool, was imposed. CDA means comprehensive development of the whole land zone. Fragmented ownership is no longer a preferred model of ownership. So, Sino Centre becomes one of the few shopping centres still adopting the fading model of fragmented ownership.

In the case of Sino Centre, the Kowloon Development Company Limited purchased more than 50 stores’ ownership from Sino Group with 145.6 million Hong Kong Dollars in early 00s. In last few years, Kowloon Development Company Limited began to sell some of their shops’ ownership to other parties, like Shall Take Limited.

Currently, the largest proportion of Sino Centre’s ownership belongs to Kowloon Development Company Limited. The company holds a total of 51 shop units from basement floor to 1st floor, which occupies 965/3935 shares (24%) of and in Kowloon Inland Lot 7051, 7052, 7053, 7054, 7055, 7056 under government lease.

A) Comprehensive development area

The new urban planning model “Comprehensive Development Area” (CDA) is a form of development control tool similar to other land use zonings on the Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs).

The CDA was first introduced into the OZPs in 1976 as ‘Other Use (Comprehensive Redevelopment Area)’. The main purpose is to facilitate comprehensive development design

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62 The 51 shop units owned by Kowloon Development Company Limited comprises: 29 shop units on the basement, 17 shop units on the ground floor, 2 shop units on the mezzanine floor and 3 shop units on the 1st floor of Sino Centre.

and avoid haphazard piecemeal redevelopment, by requiring a sole development agency to submit a master layout plan of the entire zone.\(^{64}\)

The master layout plan needs to include a full set of information and is submitted for the approval by the Town Planning Board (TPB) established under the Town Planning Ordinance. For example, information about\(^{65}\):

1. The nature, position, dimensions, and heights of all buildings to be erected in the area
2. The proposed total site area and total number of flats and flat size.
3. The details and extent of Government, community, public and recreation facilities, like parking facilities and open space
4. Report on environmental, traffic, and Drainage and sewerage impacts

**Impact of CDA**

Under the principle of comprehensive development, the land area for each land sale increases. When land area increases, the investment cost increases and no longer to be afforded by small scale developers. With the financial strength of larger scale developers, they are able to integrate more projects and resources in developing the site, thus form a megastructures. Megastructures refers to constructed modular units that are capable of great or even ‘unlimited’ extension.\(^{66}\) As the land becomes privately owned, the developer commercialises the space, while the community says to the space reduces.

In the shopping mall constructed under the CDA, in order to secure profit and ensure population flow, developers tend to allocate lots of anchor stores in these malls. Anchor stores usually refer to store with reputation, chained shops or department stores.\(^{67}\) So, these shopping malls become homogenised by corporatised management and increasing standardisation of product categories and service, which limits consumer choices.

For instance, Union Square\(^{68}\) is a commercial and residential real estate project on West Kowloon reclamation area, one of the largest scale comprehensive development project in Hong Kong, occupying 13.54 hectares. The plan integrated seven

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\(^{68}\) The project is contracted to four main developers, Hang Lung Group, Sun Hung Kai Properties, Wharf Holdings and Wing Tai Asia, all organized by the Hong Kong SAR government through the coordination of the MTR Company.
commercial and residential projects\textsuperscript{69}, one of them is to construct a large scale shopping mall - the Elements, opened in 2007 with a total retail area of 1,000,000 square feet. The tenants can be classified into 3 main categories: fashion, dining and entertainment (cinema and ice rink), most of them are high-end products and chained stores, which detected from the daily need of the community. The shopping centres are flooded with chain stores and lack of distinguishing features, except they are large and new.

The CDA expends the uniqueness from the shopping malls, as they are flooded with anchor stores. Under this development model, there are no longer “community malls”, which cater the needs or offer choice to community, but replace by large scale malls.

B) Fragmented ownership

A fragmented ownership structure implies that the property is owned by two or more owners. According to CAP 545 Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance Section 3, the person has to own no less than 90% of undivided shares in a lot to be eligible to make an application for redevelopment.\textsuperscript{70}

Fragmented ownership may impose difficulties in the execution of renovation and reorganisation projects, mainly caused by the unwillingness of some property owners to engage in discussions. In the case of most shopping malls, the retail sale and lifespan of the malls will decline due to the lack of new excitement and new environment.\textsuperscript{71} However, Sino Centre demonstrates the advantages of fragmented ownership in terms of providing a favourable environment for the consumption of popular cultural products and facilitating a diversified consumption patterns of popular culture.

\textbf{Advantage of fragmented ownership}

Under this early model, the building was owned by more than one party, which made redevelopment difficult. Although it seems a disadvantage, however in Hong Kong context, once it is redeveloped, there is high possibility that it will become another large scale shopping mall dominated by chain stores. The fragmented ownership acts as a shield to protect small-scale and local community shopping malls from being redeveloped so the small tenants can continue to run their businesses there. This is especially important to Sino Centre. Sino Centre, as the concentration spot of popular

\textsuperscript{69} The 7 projects are The Waterfront, Sorrento, The Harbourside, The Arch, Elements, The Cullinan, and International Commerce Centre.

\textsuperscript{70} CAP 545 Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance, § 3 (2002).

Original sentence: “the person or persons who owns or own, otherwise than as a mortgagee, not less than 90% of the undivided shares in a lot may make an application.”

culture, it closely follows the cycle of rise and fall of different popular cultures. Most of the stores there are neither chain stores nor anchor shops.

The fragmented ownership also maintains the heterogeneity of Sino Centre, as it provides a less controlled environment for cultural consumption. Tenants are able to move in or move out quickly through different property agencies. So, tenants are able to agglomerate organically and attract target customers. According to the principle of minimum differentiation, by agglomerating, retailers compete on many non-price factors and these non-price factors prevent a lower price competitor from becoming a monopolist. It helps to maintain the business equilibrium within the shopping mall.  

Agglomeration provides a favourable environment for small scale store to promote themselves. When large number of tenants selling similar product within Sino Centre, it construct the image and people’s perception towards the shopping mall. They believe they can find their desired product there, as shop selling similar products are agglomerated there.

People’s impression towards Sino Centre

After 37 years of establishment and the agglomeration of tenants, people have a strong impressions towards Sino Centre, no matter whether they have been to there or not. From our questionnaires, 38% of respondents describe Sino Centre as a landmark. There are 2 main reasons:

First, 31% of respondents think that Sino Centre is well-known by most Hong Kongers. It is a landmark of Mong Kok and Nathan Road. In the questionnaires, few of the respondents indicate that they will use Sino Centre to indicate their location to others as they think Sino Centre is well-known among Hong Kongers, even some of them have never been to Sino Centre in recent years. There are a few Cantopop songs include Sino Centre in their lyrics, for instance Nathan Road (彌敦道) sung by Ken Hung73, New Town (新地市) sung by goldEN74. It is a popular song broadcasted through TV and radio programme. It further promotes Sino Centre to people who never been to there.

Second, Sino Centre gathers trendy and diversified goods which are usually consumed by teenagers. It is the only place where they can find those cultural products. This impression especially attracts customers to do comparison shopping at Sino Centre.75 This type of customers have a targeted product in mind, but do not have full knowledge about its brand. Even it requires extra efforts (time cost/travel cost), they tend to choose Sino Centre which

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73 Lyrics: “一經信和暴雨瀉 沿著長龍又不想 貼近些……”
74 Lyrics: “如可不一樣 信和的黑膠音色更響……”
75 Levy & Weitz (2008). Retailing management
accommodates more retailers selling their desired type of products, as it would reduce the risk of not able to find their targets.

From the questionnaires, 40% of respondents think that Sino Centre is a concentration spot of popular culture and/or non-mainstream cultural products. When typing Sino（信和）in Google search engine, a few suggestions are provided (Figure 1). Most of them are related to the choices of cultural products offered inside Sino Centre, like CD, figures, PS4 (games). Moreover, when newspapers report Sino Centre, most of them introduce Sino Centre as “Japanese culture centre” or “centre of popular cultures”, it further solidifies people's’ impression towards Sino Centre.

Figure 1: Search suggestions provided by Google when keyword Sino (信和) was inputted.

Summary
The above analysis explains why Sino Centre has been able to maintain its uniqueness and remain successful in the market over the last three decades.

From the locational aspect, Sino Centre enjoys the geographical advantages for situating in Nathan Road, Mong Kok, which increases the accessibility of Sino Centre and able to attract potential customers more easily.

From the aspect of urban planning and ownership model, fragmented ownership acts as a shield to protect the heterogeneity of the shopping center by providing a less controlled environment for the consumption of popular cultural products.

All these favourable factor shape people’s impressions towards Sino Centre, which further suggest the uniqueness of Sino Centre and attract new customers to the shopping center. So,

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Sino Centre demonstrates a favourable environment which facilitates the diversified consumption patterns of popular cultural products
Chapter 4 - Ecology of Sino Centre

*Sino Centre* is comprised of CD stores, comic, game and figure store, consignment stores, electronic accessories stores and other non-chain stores selling tawdry items. According to our questionnaires, 25% visitors of Sino Centre often look for CDs and idol goods, 21% for figures, 20% for games, 15% for comics and 5% for second hand CDs. Therefore, we would like to focus on these three types of popular cultural products, i.e. CDs & Idol goods, second hand CDs and comics, games and figures (CGF), in order to investigate the ecology of Sino Centre.

**CDs & idol goods**

The first impression of Sino Centre for most of the Hongkongers should be the CD stores. They have been involved in Sino Centre since the 80s. Either go up or down the escalators at the entrance of Sino Centre, the first shop appears to the visitors would be Sky Music on 1/F or Echo CD Centre on B/F, the 2 “giants” among other CD shops in Sino Centre, both located at the prime locations. Most of the CD shops locate at the B/F and 1/F of the mall.

A) Location

Since the 80s, LP, cassette and CD stores began to start their businesses in Sino Centre. Internet is not yet popularised back to the time, music lovers had to go to Sino Centre to buy LPs or cassettes of their favourite singers or musicians. CD stores gradually moved into Sino Centre since the 90s. From local hits to underground music, Sino Centre offered broad and diversified choices and became a major gathering point for music lovers and CD “hunters”.

Since the rise of Cantopop in the 90s, Sino Centre became the centre for selling Pop music CDs and Idol goods. Acknowledging the significant position of the Sino Centre, the term “Sino Index” was introduced in the 90s ranking the best sellers of idol goods in Sino Centre. The index indicated the popularity of Hong Kong pop artists.

However, piracy became more critical in 90s which seriously affected the ecology of CD stores in Sino Centre. Along with the decline of Cantopop, “the sales volume dropped seriously in 1997.”

Moving towards the 00s, due to the frequent clearance by the custom and the rise of illegal download in internet, most of the pirate CD stores were closed or moved out. Only the CD stores which sold legal copies and have rooted in SC survived.

Nowadays, Sino Centre is still the most well-known place for purchasing CDs in Hong Kong. Comparing to the 1990s, the demand of CD/DVD has dropped significantly. Because of the historical position of Sino Centre, people, whether locals and tourists, will thought of Mong
Kok immediately when they want to purchase CDs. Sino Centre is seen as the only place where these small scale/independent CD shops can survive and operate even under a high rent pressure and declining market. However, they cannot survive in other districts in Hong Kong due to the low familiarity and population flow.

B) People

Customers
As a place offering highly specialised goods, the majority of customers are regular customers. According to Mr. Choi, the owner of Sky Music, 40% of the customers are frequent customers. One of the significant sources of customer is high school students. They usually come to search for specific targets, such as goods of specific singer, genre or country. The rest of the 60% are one time and walk-in clients. The proportion between regular and new customers depends on whether the occasion of CD release.

Some die-heart fans will collect every CD of their favourite singers, even if they are no longer famous, in order to show their continued support. They define themselves as 'fans' and usually look for Southeast-Asian, Japanese, Malaysian and Cantonese singers. If these singers hold concerts in Hong Kong, they will drop by Sino Centre and buy CDs during their trip.

Connections
Sky music has broad connections to both local and asian musical industries such as the main CD distributors and record label companies. Sky Music can directly contact them to look for specific CDs or goods.

Sky Music has staff scattered in several East Asian countries including Taiwan, Korea and Japan. These staff are responsible for purchasing for customer's individual order. They will purchasing specific goods for Sky Music's customers such as concert tickets, joining fan clubs to purchase fan-club produced goods. Occasionally, they will help search for products that cannot be obtained through distributors or retailers.

Vinyl records & second hand CDs
The technology of CD was risen in around 1980s and spread to Hong Kong in 1990s. Before that, Vinyl record was the major way to circulate pop songs. At the beginning, people had to bring the master tape to Japan and West Germany for CD production. The outputs were little and every CD and vinyl records were precious and limited. Meanwhile, Hong Kong pop music boomed since 1960s to 1990s. Buying CD and Vinyl records were very common for fans to support their beloved artists.
Although most of the people use phone and Mp3 to listen music, all the CDs produced in the 1980s are still valuable in the second hand market. Secondhand CD, it is a byproduct of the music industry\textsuperscript{77}. Some die heart fans of Cantopop still collect Vinyl records and CDs of pop stars in the old time.

A) Location
While Hong Kong's popular music industry is suffering from the piracy issues like free download online, second hand CD and Vinyl Record remains its popularity. Sino Centre is one of the famous places for reselling and purchasing Vinyl records and second hand CD. As described by Mrs. Cheng, an old staff of Classical Music Gallery (古典發燒廊), Sino Centre is the ‘mainstream’ of selling second hand CDs.

In late 90s, internet was popularized in Hong Kong. Piracy issue and porn stores were everywhere in the Sino Centre. In 2004, all these kinds of stores were swept and second hand CDs stores merged into Sino Centre.\textsuperscript{78} On the first few floors of Sino Centre, there are 8 stores selling second hand CDs and Vinyl records while more stores are located on the upper floors. The stores on the lower floors mostly function as collecting CD while the upper floor ones are for reselling. People usually walk floor by floor and look for the second hand CDs. As for Vinyl records, they are mostly sold inside the upper floors. Some Vinyl records are sold together with the second hand CDs such as Classical Music Gallery (古典發燒廊). Different stores in Sino Centre provide different types of music. For example, Classical Music Gallery (古典發燒廊) sells classical music, Music Life sells mainly Jazz and foreign second hand CDs and Music Castle (音樂堡壘) sells both classical and Cantopop secondhand CDs. Most of the Vinyl Records are purchased from Japan and Britain. The range of music genres diverse from classical musical to popular songs of 1990s.

‘The sales of Vinyl record per day is unpredictable because a single Vinyl Record could be very expensive’, mentioned by Ms Cheng. It costs from several hundreds to over ten thousands. The older the Vinyl record is, the more expensive it is sold. Some people would purchase glass Vinyl records purely for collection. In the recent 5 years, more people are interested in Vinyl records as more industries produce Vinyl records players. As for second hand CDs, the most high-valued second hand CDs are the albums of Alan Tam, Teresa Tang, Danny Chan, etc. Most of them are 80s pop stars. Some special edition albums cost for several thousands.

B) People

\textbf{Customers}


\textsuperscript{78} Apple Daily (2014, March 29). 【執剩兩間】信和一度淪為四仔天堂
There are many new visitors as Sino Centre attracts different kinds of customers. 79 However, most of the customers who purchase a Vinyl record or second hand CD are regular customers. They usually visit the stores with targeted singers or albums and are familiarized with where the products are placed in the store. Since the Individual Visit Scheme in 2003, many mainlanders come to Sino Centre to look for CDs released in the 80s.80 ‘They were not capable to buy it in the 80s so now they come to Hong Kong for the second hand one.’ said by Mr Chung, owner of a second hand CD store.81 Among the ‘frequent customers’ of Vinyl record, they are mostly middle-aged people and students studying in Music-related subjects. They are music lovers and know how to appreciate Vinyl records. Meanwhile, The owners of these kind of stores are usually lovers of CDs too. Friendship is developed between store owners and customers based on the shared interest.82 Sometimes, customers would ‘whatsapp’ the owners for searching uncommon/ limited editions of secondhand CDs.

Connections

Vinyl record stores source goods from factories and their customers while second hand CD stores source goods mainly from their clients. People bring their CDs/Vinyl records to the owner. The owner will then check and decide whether they accept the second hand CDs by considering the year of release and the featured singers. Therefore, the customer of Vinyl record/CD can also be the supplier. The goods are recycled until they are collected by their devotees.

Comics, games and figures

Sino Centre is known as the gathering point of comics, games and figures (CGF) shops in Mong Kok. They are usually very specialised in terms of the type of product they sell - the comic stores will seldom sell (or only sell a few) figures or games. The same situation can also be applied to the shops specialised in selling figures or games. The comics, games and figures are usually spinoffs from the Japanese and American manga and animations. The shops in Sino Centre provide great variety of these cultural products imported from the manufacturers. As the staff of Novelty Outlet (精品 Outlet), Mr Fung, mentioned, the comics, games or figures lovers will immediately think of Sino Centre if they have to look for targeted products.

81 AM730. (2014, March 4). 物以罕為貴 港初版CD炒價近萬元
A) Location

The comics, games and figures stores have been doing their businesses in Sino Centre since the 80s. Some of them even have branches within Sino Centre. The shops, especially for those selling figures and games, do not just located at the shopping mall on B to 2nd floors of Sino Centre, many of them have branches on the upper-floor commercial units. They are separated at two levels to differentiate customers and products to be sold.

The products sold in the shops at the shopping mall are usually most up-to-dated and latest models. They are strategically placed there in order to attract first time customers and walk-in clients. They tend to stay for short time in the stores so their first impressions of the shops are important. These shops are usually smaller in size comparing to the shops on the upper floor. Greater variety of choices are provided on the upper-floor shops and therefore require larger space. These shops mainly serve their frequent and loyal clients who have already known the shops and have been purchasing comics, games or figures from them for years. As pointed out by the staff of the CGF shops, up to 50% of the customers of their shops are frequent customers and they will prefer to spend longer time at the shops to look for their targets and chat with the staff or shop owners.

B) People

Customers

According to the interviews with the staff of the CGF shops, there is a wide combination of backgrounds of their clients, from students to businessmen, amateur collectors to professional collectors. Most of the customers have specific targets to look for when they visit the CGF shops in Sino Centre. They are usually fans of a certain series of cartoon or animations and are collectors of the related figures, comics or games.

The age range of their customers is mainly between 20 to 50 year old. The senior customers usually have greater consuming power comparing to the younger customers. Besides looking for the newly launched game or or the latest volume of comics or figures, the senior customers would also look for products related to the cartoon and animations which they have watched in their childhood. If they cannot find the products in the store, they will place orders to the shops to look for the products for them. The shops will then send order to the manufacturers or even look for the requested products in the overseas markets.

The customers will compare between shops for not just the price of products, but also the variety of choices of products, the efficiency of the shop to gain most up-to-dated

products, the “completeness” of collections of the customers’ target and the knowledge of the shop owners and staff.

Connections
The CGF shops have great network with the overseas manufacturers (e.g. Bandai, Marvels or Nintendo), publishers, suppliers and distributors of the cultural products. They act as the retailers of the products. Some larger scale CGF shops will even have office and staff in Japan or Northern America to assure that they can get the latest products in time as well as look for specific products for the customers in the overseas.

Observations
According to the concept of human ecology84, a space could be analysed through the spatial and temporal interrelationships between human and their economic, social and political organisations85. Sino Centre is formed by non-chain retail stores which offer different kinds of cultural products e.g. idol goods, CDs, games, etc. By identifying the players, networking and human activities such as cultural consumption patterns, we could understand the ecology of Sino Centre and its spatial relationship with the people.

A) People
Customers and retailers are two major players in Sino Centre. There are three kinds of customers: regular customers, walk-in clients and mainland visitors. More than 50% of the customers for second hand CDs and Vinyl records are regular customers and mostly middle-aged people; Around 50% customers of comics, games and figures are frequent customers. In the case of CDs and idol goods shops, 60% of their customers are walk-in clients.86 As Sino Centre is famous for its concentration of pop-cultural products, it attracts many new clients to walk floor by floor.87 Meanwhile, the third type of customers is the mainland visitors under the Individual Visit Scheme since 2003. They usually look for Cantopop CDs in the 80s. As for retailers, they usually rent a shop or upper-floor office unit in Sino Centre as non-chain shops.

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84 Human ecology is a branch of sociology dealing with the relationships between people and their environment. It focuses on the interaction between the human social system and the rest of the ecosystem. The social system is everything about people, their population and the psychology and social organization that shape their behaviours. The social system is a central concept in human ecology because human activities that impact on ecosystems are strongly influenced by the society in which people live. Values and knowledge form our worldview as individuals and as a society. Social organization, and the social institutions that specify socially acceptable behaviour, shape the possibilities into what we actually do. Like ecosystems, social systems can be on any scale - from a family to the entire human population of the planet. From Marten, G.G. (2001). Human ecology: Basic concepts for sustainable development (pp.1-2). London: Earthscan Publications.


86 Choi (2016, February 29). Interview with Mr. Choi from Sky Music

87 Cheng (2016, February 29). Interview with Ms Cheng from Classical Music Gallery
B) Networking
The interrelationship between customers and retailers has fostered a close community. Friendship is developed based on mutual interests. The customers can also be sources of supplies the pop-cultural products, e.g. second hand CDs. Shops in Sino Centre offer customized service for the customers. If customers cannot find their targeted goods in the store, they can place customized orders. This makes people confident that they will get what they want in the Sino Centre.

In order to handle customized orders, shops in Sino Centre have broad overseas networks with the manufacturers, publishers, suppliers and distributors of cultural products. For instance, CD stores in Sino Centre have connections with both local and Asian CD distributors and record label companies. Some shops also have staff located in different countries. For example, some larger scale shops recruit staff in Japan and North America, where the companies like Nintendo and Bandai Namco Entertainment situated. Industry networks and connections of the shops have secured the flow of popular cultural products closely corresponding to popular trends. Shop owners will go on online forums to carry out market research and predict the popular trends before stocking the pop-cultural products. While they are making the cultural products accessible in Hong Kong, they are creating a desire to collect.

C) Human activities - cultural consumption patterns
When looking into the human activities in Sino Centre, there are mainly two types of cultural consumption patterns. The major cultural consumption pattern in Sino Centre is comparison shopping. This type of customers have a general concept of products they desired but do not have full knowledge about the brands. They tend to choose shopping centre that accommodates more retailers. According to the questionnaires, 120 out of 154 interviewees visit Sino Centre randomly without a specific targeted cultural good. Sino Centre offers board choices for different kinds of cultural products and meets the needs of this kind of customers. For example, there are more than 15 stores for both CDs and Vinyl records lovers while there are around 25 stores that sell comic, games and figures. The heterogeneity of Sino Centre makes itself popular for comparison shopping and people can search for trendy pop-cultural products in this paradise of popular cultures.

The second type of consumption pattern identified in Sino Centre is specialized shopping. This type of customers aim at specific products and do not accept replacement. Nearly 23% of interviewees visit Sino Centre for specific cultural products such as magazines, figures and CDs. 45% of them regard Sino Centre as their first choice for purchasing these products. Loyalty is developed towards the brands and the retailers. Taking Cantopop fans as an example, they state themselves as Dieheart Fans (樂迷). They collect every CD of their favourite singers, no matter they are still famous or not. At the same time, they are also

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88 Levy & Weitz (2008). *Retailing management*
89 Levy & Weitz (2008). *Retailing management*
dieheart customers of the retailers in Sino Centre that offers their targeted products e.g. *Sky Music*.

D) Summary
Sino Centre is a space for consuming pop-cultural products. It allows different cultural consumption patterns, such as comparison shopping and specialized shopping, to take place, an important social function the “paradigm shopping malls” cannot fulfill. Together with the shops’ broad connections with overseas cultural industries, especially those in the East Asian region, it is highly responsive to global popular cultural trends. It offers broad choices that meet specific needs together with customised services. A close community is organically formed between customers and retailers. Friendships and loyalty are developed and formed the taste community.90 Sino Centre is a favourable environment for alternative cultural consumption of pop-cultural products.

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Chapter 5 - Comparison between two ownership models

This chapter will compare shopping centers under two different ownership models, fragmented ownership and concentrated ownership, in terms of product range, customized services, and consumption pattern. It aims to emphasise the fragmented ownership model of Sino Centre and distinctive characteristics. A large-scale shopping center in the same district, the Langham Place, is chosen for comparison.

Langham Place is located in the very heart of Mong Kok. People could easily access this shopping mall through the exit C at Mong Kok MTR station. It was built in 2004 and opened in 2005. Champion REIT owns the 13 storey shopping mall. Customers control and tenant allocation are implemented in Langham Place.

Product range

A wide variety of products can be found in Langham Place. According to Langham Place official website, it provides “a myriad of international and local fashion brands, exclusive food and beverage outlets and a cinema.”91 In contrary to Langham Place, the products found in Sino Centre ranged from popular cultural goods like games, figures, comics, CDs to second hand CDs. The shops in Sino Centre tend to focus on one particular type of pop-cultural products yet offer broad choices for the customers. They do not just offer latest released products but also overseas special editions, novelties and second hand products. In short, the product range of these two shopping mall is different. Both of them target on the mainstream market as they both provide latest popular products. Yet, Sino Centre considers demands of the niche like second hand CD markets. Therefore, its product range is an advantage to its competitive edge.

Customized services

For Sino Centre, it provides personalized services, which especially suit the needs of collectors who want rare products. When the customers place orders for specified goods, the shop owners search the goods along the supply chains outside Hong Kong. On the other hand, with their regional connections, they are able to get latest products earlier than chained shops in large-scale shopping mall. For example, Sky Music, a popular music shop on the M/F of Sino Centre, sold the album of Korean girl group TWICE on the same day that the album is officially released in Korea. (Figure 2) The shop owner conducts market analysis mainly based on the forums and people responses in order to predict the trend and decide what products they should order next time. For Langham Place, the retailers import popular cultural products from the suppliers directly. They are not ready to sell the products until the logistic procedures are finished. In short, the arrival of stocks in Sino Centre is much earlier

than that in Langham Place and therefore the collectors are able to look for tailor-made service in the Sino Centre.

Figure 2: Sky Music sold the album of Korean girl group TWICE on the same day that the album is officially released in Korea.

**Consumption pattern**

Sino Centre has wide product range, especially for the second hand CDs, which cannot be found in Langham Place where most of the shops are international brands to satisfy the mainstream market. The chain stores in Langham Place would not sell second hand products as the market is relatively small and the sales is unpredictable for profit making. Therefore, the needs of the consumers for second hand CDs cannot be satisfied by this kind of shopping mall. The shops in Sino Centre are able to meet their taste by offering great variety of choices for the second hand CDs, ranging from albums of local popular singers in the 80s to classical music albums or vinyl records imported from Japan or Europe. In addition, the shops offer customized service to search for specific products on behalf of the customers. The shops’ broad networking makes their customers trust that they can find products that are rare and difficult to get hold of. In return, customers will develop loyalty to the shops and even build connections with the shop owners in Sino Centre.
Moreover, the fragmented ownership of Sino Centre enables many non-chain shops to survive. It follows that the shops owners who run the same businesses would gather unwittingly. There is no tenant allocation in Sino Centre so their shops scatter on different zones of the shopping centre. The customers tend to perform specialized shopping in Sino Centre. Compared to Sino Centre, Langham Place has the Leasing Department as a gatekeeper to filter the shops which are not potential lessee. Besides, it implements tenant allocation and customer traffic control. Therefore, the distribution of shops are under control. As a result, the customers are more likely to perform impulsive consumption in Langham Place. In short, the consumption pattern in Sino Centre is different from that in Langham place because of its product range and customized service.

Summary

Sino Centre is different from the large scale shopping mall like Langham Place because of fragmented ownership, which enables many independent shops to survive. It indirectly differentiates its product range from Langham Place. On the other hand, the shops in Sino Centre are able to make full use of their own advantages like regional connections so they can offer customized services for their customers. Without Leasing Department like Langham Place, Sino Centre is without tenant allocation and customer traffic control. Thus, the consumption pattern in Sino Centre is different from that in Langham Place.

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Chapter 6 - Conclusion

Sino Centre, as a shopping mall, offers a favourable environment for consuming popular cultural products with a set of conditions fulfilled. Geographically, it is located in Mong Kok which is a densely populated and prime shopping district in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, Sino Centre has a strong social connection. An intimate relationship between retailers and customers is created and friendship is developed in the process of human interactions. The fragmented ownership structure of Sino Centre favours the survival of non-chain stores and sole proprietorship. They have more flexibility to offer diverse cultural products that cater to a specific taste community. The customised services and regional connections with East Asian cultural industries developed by small shop owners create a reputation that people would get what they want in Sino Centre. Unlike paradigm shopping malls with concentrated ownership structure such as Langham Place and Elements, Sino Centre stands out as a vibrant yet overlooked shopping center that has preserved uniquely “human” qualities that are increasingly marginalized in Hong Kong’s shopping culture.

'Place influences both production and reception, and consumption influences place'.93 The significance of Sino Centre is not only to provide alternative choices for the consumption of popular cultural products, but is also a disappearing example of shopping mall under fragmented ownership, which was once a common model in Hong Kong before 1970s. Contrary to nowadays comprehensive development area which is flooded with anchor chain stores, Sino Centre inherits an old model of shopping mall which nowadays gives shelter to small-scale stores and allows people to get closer with one another. It is a cultural space where people develop their social and cultural networks and form taste community through cultural consumption. It is a complement of paradigm of shopping malls and offers living spaces for heterogeneous cultural practices. Under the inexorable urban renewal, this study recognises the value of Sino Centre as both shopping mall and cultural space. Further research on land use and its influence to the ecology of a cultural space is needed to study the cultural landscape of Hong Kong and the factors that shape the cultural preferences of Hongkongers.

Congratulations, you’re done (with us)

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire sample

你好！我們是城大文化及文化產業管理系的四年級生，現正為畢業論文進行有關信和中心的資料搜集。如果你曾到訪過信和中心，希望你可以花一點完成問卷。問卷不會耽誤你太多時間，大約只需3分鐘。謝謝你！所有資料只用作學術用途。

We are a group of final year students of Culture and Heritage Management at the City University of Hong Kong. We are now conducting research for our Final Year Project. If you have been to Sino Centre before, please kindly help us to fill in this questionnaire. The survey will only takes around 3 minutes. Thank you so much for your time! For academic purpose only.

第一部分 Section 1
1) 請問最近1年你有沒有到訪過信和中心？
   In previous year, have you ever been to Sino Centre?
   a. 有Yes
   b. 沒有No (請到第五部分 to section 5)

第二部分 Section 2
2) 平均每月到訪信和中心多少次？
   How often do you visit Sino Centre in a monthly average?
   a. 2次或以下 Less than two times
   b. 3 - 5 次 times
   c. 6 - 10 次 times
   d. 10 次以上 10 times or above

3) 為什麼到訪信和中心？
   Why do you visit Sino Centre?
   a. 採購特定的商品 Looking for specific products
   b. 純粹行逛 No specific target, simply shopping (請到第四部分 to section 4)
   c. 取貨 Collect delivery (請到第四部分 to section 4)

第三部分 Section 3
4) 你採購的特定商品是什麼？
   What are the specific products that you are looking for at the Sino Centre?
   __________________________________________________________

5) 信和中心是你的首選採購地點嗎？
   Is Sino Centre your first choice for purchasing these products?
   a. 是 Yes
   b. 不是 No, 請列明 Please Indicate: __________________________
第四部分 Section 4
6) 你最常到信和的哪些店铺？
What kind(s) of shop at the Sino Centre do you visit most often? (可複選 Multiple selections accepted)
   a. 唱片舖 CD/DVD
   b. 二手唱片 Second-hand CD
   c. 明星週邊商品 Idols related goods
   d. 模型 Figures
   e. 電子遊戲 Games
   f. 漫畫 Comics
   g. 其他 Others

7) 最主要採購來自哪裡的商品／流行文化？
Where do the cultural products that you mostly consume at the Sino Centre come from? (可複選 Multiple selections accepted)
   a. 香港 Hong Kong
   b. 台灣 Taiwan
   c. 日本 Japan
   d. 韓國 Korean
   e. 歐美 Europe/America
   f. 中國大陸 Mainland China
   g. 其他 Others

第五部分 Section 5
8) 你會怎麼形容信和？(最多選擇兩個)
How would you describe the Sino Centre? (Please select 2 choices at most.)
   a. 創新 Creative
   b. 獨特 Unique
   c. 潮流指標 Trend Marking
   d. 地標 Landmark

9) 為甚麼會選擇這個（這些）形容詞？
Why will you describe Sino Centre with the above word(s)?

個人資料 Personal Particulars
10) 年齡 Age
    a. 10 - 19
    b. 20 - 29
    c. 30 - 39
    d. 40 - 49
    e. 50 - 59
f. 60 +

11) 性別 Gender
   a. 男 Male
   b. 女 Female

12) 教育程度 Education Level
   a. 小學 Primary education
   b. 中學 Secondary education
   c. 大專 Tertiary education
   d. 碩士或以上 Master degree or above

14) 收入狀況 Income status
   (如果你是全日制學生，而有兼職工作，請選擇「兼職人士」。If you are a full time student working part-time/freelance job, please select "Part-time worker").
   a. 零收入人士 No income
   b. 全職人士 Full-time worker
   c. 兼職人士 Part-time worker

-完 END-
Appendix 2: Statistics from questionnaires

Total: 150 collected, 154 valid
Consist of 3 compulsory questions, 6 follow-up questions, 4 questions for personal particulars

Section 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In previous year, have you ever been to Sino Centre?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60% (92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (Jump to Section 5)</td>
<td>40% (62)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often do you visit Sino Centre in a monthly average?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than two times</td>
<td>88% (81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5 times</td>
<td>10% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10 times</td>
<td>2% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why do you visit Sino Centre?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No specific target, simply shopping (Jump to Section 4)</td>
<td>61% (56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for specific products</td>
<td>38% (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect delivery</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the specific products that you are looking for at the Sino Centre?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>18% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figures/Models</td>
<td>18% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant-film</td>
<td>9% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic gadgets and accessories</td>
<td>9% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>9% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idols good</td>
<td>6% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board games</td>
<td>6% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>6% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories (e.g. Earrings)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily goods</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Magazine</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is Sino Centre your first choice for purchasing these products?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends on situation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langham Place</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online store</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho King Commercial Building (好景商業中心)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dragon Centre (西九龍中心)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trendy Zone (潮流特區)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyle Centre (旺角中心)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hysan Place (希慎廣場)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMV</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 4

What kind(s) of shop at the Sino Centre do you visit most often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figures</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>(36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD/DVD</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>(29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idol goods</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second hand CD</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boutiques</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board games</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic gadgets and accessories</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Products</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consignment store (格仔舖)</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameras</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porn and adult toy</td>
<td>1% (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watches</td>
<td>0.5% (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specific</td>
<td>0.5% (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Where do the cultural products that you mostly consume at the Sino Centre come from?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>42% (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>16% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>14% (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>11% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe/America</td>
<td>8% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>3% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specific</td>
<td>3% (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 5**

**How will you describe Sino Centre?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landmark</td>
<td>38% (73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>31% (59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend marking</td>
<td>17% (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>9% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5% (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Why will you describe Sino Centre with the above word(s)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentration spot of popular cultural product</td>
<td>40% (63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-known by Hongkongers</td>
<td>31% (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long History</td>
<td>7% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversified</td>
<td>7% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much similar type of shopping centre in Hong Kong</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing special</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Personal Particulars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>(64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-29</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>(65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or above</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>(78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>(76)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary education</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>(85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>(56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master degree or above</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>(68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time worker</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>(47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time worker</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 3: Interview Summary and Transcript

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Store Name (Shop No.)</th>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Recording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 Feb 2016</td>
<td>Kobakoya (105)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Feb 2016</td>
<td>「精品」Outlet (1104 &amp; 117-118)</td>
<td>Mr. Fung</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Feb 2016</td>
<td>古典發燒廊 (704)</td>
<td>Ms. Cheng</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Feb 2016</td>
<td>Sky Music (M14-M15 &amp; 1206)</td>
<td>Mr. Choi</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mar 2016</td>
<td>b+c mix (120)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mar 2016</td>
<td>一代滙集 (219 &amp; 221)</td>
<td>Ms. Leung</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mar 2016</td>
<td>SATIF (M38)</td>
<td>Mr. Lee</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Mar 2016</td>
<td>Game Studio (134B)</td>
<td>Ms. Cheung</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary:

- **People**
  - Shop owner: fans of J-pop, start the business
    - only sell idols goods of artist in Johnny's Entertainment Group
  - Staff: fans of J-pop
    - when they watch shows in Japan, they will help to purchase idol goods back to HK for sales in shops.
  - Customers: usually only buy goods of specific stars
    - mainly young girls
      - better sales volume after CNY

- **Sales volume decline in recent years**

- **Source of product:**
  - cannot make order to distributer or record company
  - need staff to queue up in person to purchase
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref No.</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>29 Feb 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shop Name</td>
<td>「精品」 Outlet</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>1104, 11/F [Branch: 117-118, 1/F]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee</td>
<td>Mr. Fung (Staff)</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Figures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**F: Mr. Fung, I: Interviewer**

I: 請問你地係咪老細？
F: 唔係呀，我地冇老細。
I: 你係度做左幾耐？
F: 好短，半年眾。我地都係最近搬黎呢度。
I: 點解會搬左黎信和？之前係邊到？
F: 我地總店係深水埗。
I: 咁呢邊生意係咪好？
F: 其實成棟野都係賣玩具嘅，姐係好多人一提到玩具一定係信和，所以呢邊一定係會好。
I: 你地多數d figure係邊度居多？
F: 日本居多，美國個d係少啲，仲有d係本地生產個d嘅。
I: 有本地生產嘅咩？
F: 唔係，本地牌子，生產個d都係大陸既。本地個d呢排即係啲。
I: 你地通常係熟客多定walk in多？
F: 兩邊都…我地有分店既其實信和呢度都，下面就一定係生客多，但係上黎呢度…
I: 哦，姐係你地有地舖？
F: 係呀，但係上黎呢一間就一定係…因為我地係樓上冇乜人會上黎，同埋因為有預定貨品嫁嘛。啲預定貨品個d就會上黎呢度拎嘅。都可以叫做係熟客既都，因為有早知嫁嘅。
I: 姐係你地樓下係邊一層？
F: 一樓嘅，大堂上兩層，好細係角落頭。
I: 姐係熟客先多d上黎呢度，係咪都係熟客為主，如果係信和既話？
F: 擺訂個d就係係，但係你話行街個d就都有生客既，但主要收入來源都係靠…
I: 熟客？
F: 糧嘅，訂貨個d。
I: 幾多歲為主？
F: 好大嘅，20以上嘅。
I: 20以上好多歲嘅。
F: 好大嘅，你去到五十幾都會有。係呀，但係就應該無。就少見既係個d。
I: 可唔可以爆下你平均消費幾多呀？
F: 計我開單，如果係平均一張單，我諗應該6,7百度啦。
I：姐係買一至兩件？
F：幾件夾埋啦，因為有d可以好貴，你見個後面個d 4000幾蚊，但有d可以幾廿蚊咁，但平均番每張單都700蚊600蚊。
I：你覺得信和係咪作為figure唯一一個係香港既市場？
F：唯一一個呀，又唔係既……
I：或者係比較主要既market。
F：又唔係唯一啦，Figure你……但係係旺角係中心嘅，姐係賣玩具。你旺角有幾度嫁嘛，我頭先講，現時點，信和或者係表面兆萬都好多玩具賣，但係係旺角呢一個區都係。係啦呢區啦。
I：跟住信和就係比較上多人認識d既。
F：係啦，信和就係較為多舖既旺角市場啫。
I：你地開幾點呀？
F：12點9。
I：乜野時刻最多人？
F：放工，旺角一定係放工時間。
I：通常買野都係番工……
F：放工就黎攞貨嘅，買野行街個d咁。
I：係係上班族多過學生。
F：係呀，學生係有既，少，就下面會多d靈。係下面d舖同上面d舖d貨差唔多？
I：下面新貨會多d靈，因為我喺野其實係叫outlet嫁嘛，所以就會攞d平既貨咯。
F：可唔可以講到樓下熟客同walk in 既比率有幾多？唔度，例如幾多成比幾多成？
I：下面個度我谂，熟客係得兩成左右啦，上面就真係50 50，因為有陣時每日條數會係訂客係多過現金客數，上面係50 50，係下面就係一定係……
I：係係好多時都會幫d人代訂嘅？
F：唔係代訂，唔係我地自己有開個d……
I：代理
F：係啦，個d就有得訂既。不過可能係熟客個定義係我唔知點樣啦。姐係如果你話要有傾有講，個d嘅就冇，說真係好少數。
I：係熟口熟面就好多？
F：熟口熟面就好多。
I：可唔可以影相嫁？
F：可以，因為我呢d都有條上網。
I：上網？
F：係呀，我地有facebook。
I：係係你地bendai (Figures牌子) 就直接同bendai訂咁樣？
F：香港代理啫，但我地唔同品種都會有。
I：我以為你地係似係個邊有人幫你地買。
F：我地兩個都會有。
I：係係你地代理又有代購都有？
F：係呀。係係我地唔係同香港既代理商攞貨
I：咁係咪姐係我想要咩你都揀到嫁？
F：又唔係既。

I：Sorry呀，仲有兩個問題，好快。第一個就係，通常你一個月有幾多單生意？大約個數。
F：啲，我都唔知啲。
I：咁，每日呢？呢度同樓下有冇好大分別？
F：差唔多，兩間都係差唔多。如果計琴日(28 Feb Sunday)，開左102張單。
I：係咩每日都差唔多有咁多單？
F：每日都係差唔多。其實琴日係叫少嫁啦。
I：下，琴日叫少呀？咁200叫唔叫多呀？
F：200就好多嫁啦。
I：姐係每日100-200中間？
F：100鬆d啦。100-150啦你預。
I：最後一個問題就係，比如你係呢d舖頭到做啦，你見唔見到姐係d貨係咪換得好快？
姐係你見唔見到個潮流興乜野？見唔見到個trend？
F：冇嫁其實。係個d大廠，比如話好似Bendai呢d，佢出乜野個期就興乜野。姐係其實就係個生產商sell乜。
I：姐係佢sell乜，個排就興乜。
F：因為姐係其實佢出咩都係有人買既。姐係好似最近，之前d叮噹姐係多啦A夢呢d，
有人會覺得佢會出到個d玩具，依家出都好多嘅人買嫁。但係你舊個d好似隔離個d超人咁，
60 70年代既野，好多年前既野，都係有好多人買嫁都，所以佢乜都有人會買。
I：姐係佢出乜你就跟佢入乜？
F：係呀。姐係呢排佢出多左番番之前冇出過玩具或者出過好少既，就拎番出黎再出。
I：姐係你見到連figure都有復古trend？可唔可以咁講？
F：其實都係嫁。姐係係for咗個個年代既人，可能個個年代既人開始有錢有能力啦。
咁就出番個個年代既野。
I：係咁，都唔差，以前冇錢，依家大個有錢就買番。
F：係咁。
I：我見你地真係好多Bendai。
F：係呀，主要係Bendai既多。
I：我地都差唔多啦，唔該囉！

== 完結 End (17’55”) ==
C: Ms. Cheng, I: Interviewer

I: 首先，我地想問你間舖頭係信和中心大概幾耐呀？
C: 呢間舖？咁咩信和開咗耐咪有咁耐嘅。
I: 嘿
C: 定係還是你講我地呀？
I: 你地
C: 哦，我地。我地就幾年姐。我以為你問我間舖有幾耐。
I: 係你地姐。
C: 係啦，所以我就要問清楚。我地幾年姐。
I: 都好耐啲，幾多年呀？
C: 五年。
I: 呢個問題有啲難啲。知唔知點解老闆會係呢度開二手店？
C: 咁又唔係，點會唯一啲。
（客人：集中點黎咁嘅，呢度買佢嘅）
C: 因為姐係同行嘅，走上落落，舖舖都掛。姐係你地嘅青年人呀，走上落落買野，姐係會睇嘅呀。
I: 你覺得信和係咩姐係香港黎講唯一一個二手CD既集中地？
C: 唔講咁嘅，點會唯一啲呀。
I: 只係比較主流⋯⋯
C: 呢個係比較集中既舖舖
I: 同埋比較多人認識d既？
C: 咁通常個d人都係巡樓咁，巡樓由一路咁行，行落黎，姐係有就會睇下，睇埋咁解嫁姐。
I: 咁比如黎既人係熟客多定就咁行t⋯⋯
C: 我地做熟客多
I: 你地做熟客多。咁姐係通常有冇話比如呢間舖頭熟客同埋walk in既人幾多成比幾多成啲？姐係有冇一個大概？
C: 咁樣如果正常黎講就應該walk in既人多既。但係你做唔做到生意就唔一定嘅。因為姐係順黎，姐係順住落黎行咁睇呀嘛。有d望下就走啦咁樣。姐係唔係姐心中所想既野，係就行番出去嫁嘅。
I: 咁姐係比如你一個月大約有幾多生意？姐係點講呢，幾多單？
C: 搗多單啲？
I: 好難估計？
C: 係呀，好難估計。
I：姐姐每个月都唔同，差好远？
C：係呀。唔同嫁，你可以好多又得，好少又得。你可以一日有生意都得。
I：但譬如當中有幾多成係熟客？姐姐如果你做到生意既話。
C：幾多成呀……
I：大概幾多成到呀？大概得嫁啦。
C：佢地係一半以上既。姐姐係做到生意既，應當係熟客多d既。
I：通常熟客黎係咪已經有一個特定既目標？
C：佢地係有個目標啦。
I：姐姐佢地黎會問下有冇呢樣野？姐姐係唔同既話。
C：佢地自個熟客，自己識黎睇嫁啦。係呀，佢地知道，佢地要買d乜佢地知道係邊度嫁啦，d熟客就。
I：佢會唔會話透過你地去揀d新既CD，或者真係係嫁既CD。姐姐本身冇，叫你地去揀既。
C：我地呢度係做售舊野呀。
I：佢地會唔會叫佢地係幫手揀佢地想買嘅碟？姐姐如果呢度冇既話。
C：姐係我地舖頭冇呀？
I：如果呢度冇既話，係啦。
C：佢會……佢會whatsapp老細，叫老細揀啦。d熟客就會係佢咁啦。
I：姐係佢地同老細已經係……
C：有溝通嫁啦。
I：有喱溝通。
C：有喱溝通，係呀係呀。
I：哦，姐係老細唔係佢地咁。
C：因為我地係做售舊野嘅嘛。
I：姐係我地舖頭自己個d野黎揀係呢度得？
C：佢要老細係度先至收。收唔收要佢揀主意。佢對呢d先熟悉，我地唔係咁。
I：呢d舊既唱片黎自邊到多？
C：我地係做售日係日本，日本入貨既。係啦，日本，英國都有既。
I：姐係佢地唔係人地回收番黎，係係係入貨番黎跟住賣？
C：我地係做售入貨，邊有咁多回收呀香港。我地係做售英文嘅，古典嘅。我地中文係好少嫁。
I：係咪日版會特別好嫁呀？
C：都唔係嫁。因為姐係唔係d經驗所知呢，佢地要求好得意嫁。姐係好像西德呀個d咁樣，係好耐既野黎嫁。
I：後面鄧麗君個d全部都係日本嫁嘅。
C：咁個陣時，吖鄧麗君係日本個個流行同埋個個銷量係高呀嘛。
I：佢有冇話如果舊野呢，大約邊一個年代既碟係依家或者一直係黎都賣得最好呀？或者最多人揀呀？
I：佢嘅確係越舊越好啦。比如，好似唔知九幾年先至有CD嫁炸嘛。佢之前係黑膠嫁嘛。所以佢睇下我地係舊到係係Beats呀，貓王個d都有。我地唔係係最多嫁嘅。同埋若果正常黎講我地呢間舖係九龍呢邊呢，我地地勢係最大，貨量最多。
I：你地有冇分店嫁？
I：冇，我地之前都有講過買過下個d音響個d野，不過我地依家都冇。
I：咁點解冇再賣既？
C：當時因為可能因為我地搬過黎呢度，吸收左d新既客啦，咁所以做下d廣告。同埋我地又搵左d特別d既，姐係罕有d嫁啦，難搵d嫁啦，CD好黐膠都好啦，比其他一般個d公司呀。
I：通常熟客呢，有冇話乜年紀為主？
I：咁應當係中年以上就會比較多，佢地會識得去欣賞。但係都係靚既，或者係後生，好似係學生咁，個d係呢方面既學生，姐係識得黎呢度搵搵係既野。
I：佢地d消費力高唔高？
C：學生就冇咁高。熟客就會高d，姐係已經有一定既年紀呀，或者所謂既江湖地位呀。都唔係話普通既客。有d好似係幾千蚊既又有，幾百蚊隻又有，過萬既亦都有。
I：冇冇感覺呢五年多左人買黐膠碟呀？
C：好似係有少少多左。
I：因為我見好像黐膠碟突然之間興番，黐膠機又好似⋯⋯
C：可能依家有d廠出番黐膠機啦，就係俾d比較簡單d，姐係靚既，姐係唔可以去試去認識呢樣野，多左d渠道。
I：唔會會覺得呢一種，姐係所謂復古帶黎既一個熱潮啲？姐係d人好似突然對d舊野有一種好大既⋯⋯
C：都有關既。
I：可唔可以問下通常最貴既一隻CD可以去到邊同埋最平既一隻會去到邊？
C：CD呀？
I：姐係係你地度賣，CD或者黐膠。
C：CD幾千蚊一隻都有，黐膠就係貴個隻三萬，單一隻碟三萬。
I：可唔可以透露下係邊係一隻黐膠唱片？
C：個隻呀，係舊時個d呀，賣左啦我地。咁好似係我地依家呢套鄧麗君都三萬啦。呢度一隻下，一套係有八隻。
I：我係想問佢係唔係全新嫁？
C：唔係全新。全新就唔係咁咁珍貴。
I：keep得咁新既。
C：但係好似個度個隻咁啦，個隻玻璃CD萬六蚊。黃色黑色呢一隻。呢個人买有兩隻碟，一隻係玻璃既，一隻係普通嘅既。
I：玻璃？
C：個隻就係細用黎收藏嫁姐。唔係聽既，聽既係又一隻。有一隻係普通嘅既，但係呢d又係限量既。
I：通常呢d熟客黎搵黐膠咪有個好特別既係搵搵邊隻？姐係比如話，每次黎都係搵搵個個人。
C：唔一定搵搵個個人既，唔一定既。
I：佢地有冇話排呢個個人，好多人番黎搵佢？
C：冇呀
I：冇，姐係搞嘅CD比較少係咁樣既？
C：我地主要係因為係做個個古典嫁啦，所以跟本上係搵搵d指揮家呀，或者作曲家呀個類。佢地自己有聽開邊d。
I：你覺得信和競爭大唔大呀？姐係都好幾間CD舖。
C：我地自己黎講就唔覺嘅。因為我地⋯⋯
I：曲種唔同。
C：係啲，曲種唔同，同埋我地做發又唔同，同埋我地既客路又唔係話咁普通嘅。
I：嗯，咁我地差唔多了。唔該瞓你，希望唔會嚇親你啦。
C：唔會唔會，你地成日都有d人想上黎呢度影相呀，或者係做一d廣告呀，或者係做d雜誌呀。不過老細⋯⋯
I：係咪唔影得相嫁？
C：影都可以，姐係話做廣告呀，做雜誌呀我地都（搖頭）。
I：咁你介唔介意我係呢度影一張全境？
C：影啦影啦。
I：唔該瞓你呀。
== 完結 End (10'44") ==
C: Mr. Choi, I: Interviewer

I：我地有幾題問題想問一問你既。
C：好呀，請講呀。
I：因為我地做緊一個project係關於信和，研究緊信和同潮流文化既關係。首先我地想問下Sky Music係信和度開左幾耐呀？
C：1990到啦
I：噚，1990呀。咁姐係你地係，可唔可以講係第一批入黎信和開關於流行音樂或者流行文化既舖頭？
C：都唔係嫁，都有d前輩係度。
I：但係你地就⋯⋯
C：我開信和，但係我行信和個陣已經有人係度。
I：OK，咁點解當時你會揀係信和信和度開舖？
C：噚，都好成行成市嘅，其實信和本身一開始。我認識既信和個時已經係好多CD舖係度。咁我應該成行成市既地方先至可以招聚到一班買碟既人。
I：我地上網既時候其實有好努力搵番信和既歷史，但我地發現網上面好少Coverage，姐係好少講述番關於信和既歷史特別係七八十年代。姐係近期都少，之前就更加冇講過咁樣。你可唔可以將你認識既係講俾我地聽？
C：我認識既，我初初接觸信和。我其實係80都尾先接觸信和，個陣時好多賣郵票嘅，炒郵票嫁啦。仲有賣個針織嘅，有d舖頭有d姐姐係度開班授徒咁樣。
I：姐係冷衫織野個d？
C：係咗，都算嘅。仲有雪糕呀都試過嘅。同埋明星相嘅，個排80年代尾至90年代初明星相好hit嫁嘛。漫畫個d嘅。仲有租屋個d，租屋個d就真係咁多年都長存嘅，到今天都仲係度啦。我認識既就咁上下啦。
I：個時有冇翻版碟？
C：翻版碟主要都係你九十年代初嘅，個時好迅速地一間兩間三間四間，成層咁嘅。
I：核住好迅速咁就冇曬。
C：都可以咁講嘅，因為佢係信和走鬼，日日信和度走鬼。「砰拎bang lang」拉閘嘅。海關黎充工d貨嘅。充工完冇幾耐佢地又一批貨咁咩，再上過架，又開工。
I：咁到咩年代就真係冇曬，因為下面好似就唔覺見有。我地中學個時樓下都有賣個d台劇呀，韓劇係翻版。
C：其實依家都有一兩間，個門面係好正版，買d卡通呀日劇之類既。眼望落去就都堂皇嫁，唔係咁覺得係翻版既。咁同埋係妹嘅，海關係咁嘅，佢地唔會好主動做野，所以佢地都好安定咁係度生活緊。
I：我想問下呢啲比如Sky Music依家多數既貨品係咪都係日本、韓國同台灣？
C：韓先啦。
I：韓流最多？
C：韓日台港咁排。
I：咁你地開左咁耐係咪好睇到個個潮流既轉變㗎？
C：咁算係啦，係最前线嘅人。
I：明白，通常⋯⋯點問好呢，一個月你地粗略估計有幾多單生意呀？
C：咁呀，好難答你嘅，呢個唔好意思呀。
I：咁你地開左咁耐係好睇到個個潮流既轉變㗎？
C：都算係啦，係最前线嘅人。
I：明白，通⋯⋯咁話好啲呢，一月你地粗略估計有幾多單生意呀？
C：咁呀，好難答你嘅，呢個唔好意思呀。
I：唔緊要。咁熟客多定walk in多啲？
C：四六啦，四就熟客啦。
I：姐係樓下都係？樓下個比例。
C：係啲。
I：咁話熟客買得多d，生客少d定係？
C：都其實係睇住當時有乜碟出，冇話必定係熟客多定生客多d既。真係根據當時。
I：咁比方話，有冇話呢個熟客黎親都係買番同一個人既野？係好啲好特定既target咁黎買既。
C：部分啦，有d好死硬淨係買廣東碟，就算個個歌手幾咁唔唔紅，總之有出就會見佢黎買。都幾⋯⋯佢同我講佢自己係個樂迷黎，真係樂迷黎，姐係會儲廣東歌既。
I：姐係佢地都認識左好多唔同地方既樂迷，係呢度。
C：少少啦，少少啦。東南亞多d啦，日本呀，馬來西亞個d，有時⋯⋯
I：姐係佢地都會黎到香港特登過黎舖頭到買？
C：比如香港有show既，黎開睇show既，咁就梗係會過黎睇下啦。
I：就會過一過黎。
C：掃下碟啦。
I：明白，我想問一樣野就係係點解你地可以做到，我想要乜碟，我黎到呢度就可以搵到既？
C：盡量做啦，都失敗過既，有d客搵得好刁鑽。咁我地真係盡量搵，叫當地既同事搵搵搵搵，當地既公司搵。搵唔到，姐係本身供應商冇啦，咁就試下落d街舖呀，出去周圍搵搵搵搵，盡量搵嘅。
I：佢係你地又唔係做番好貴。
C：係啲，我地都算係好客氣。
I：咁其實佢地網絡好大嫁嘅。每一個地方都有人脈係個度。
C：冇既，都係主力個幾個地方，台灣、韓國、日本。都係呢幾度。
I：冇話覺得⋯⋯

I：咁我地想問係信和咁多個黎都係保明星有關既野或者同一d個人喜好興趣有關既野啦。個人喜好，可能個陣時興計數既野，或者郵票都係啦。姐係興趣根住變左收藏，姐係係呢個當中，你地有冇見到信和其實好似見證左潮流既轉變？或者應該嘅講，我黎到信和，去到你間舖頭度就會見到依家最紅係乜野。
C：呢個都係，其實我都係擺d最hot最hit既係當眼處姐。入黎見到就係最紅既野，剛剛新出就會放係個度。
I：佢最近又多左好多好似黃金咁，好多電子⋯⋯電子產本，配件。
C：係一啲配件多啦，電子產品就唔係好多。格仔舖仲多。6-8年到啦，多左好多。都係一雞死一雞活啦。
I：你覺得個d對你地有冇影響？姐係會唔會話帶左多d人過黎？
C：帶到多d人既。姐係依間成個信和健康左好多。因為都曾經有一段時間好多三四仔嫁嘛。女孩子就麻麻地整意過黎啦。咁清曬啦，依家就好好多。
I：但係三四仔個陣時係90年代定80年代尾？
C：90年代……
I：姐係海關黎就翻版四仔一次過掃？
C：係嘅。
I：係咪有人告發？
C：用黎交功課嫁走，上黎一轉實有野，抽到野俾呀頭睇，多少都有d。
I：但係個陣時你會唔會覺得買正版野生存有d難？隔離賣緊翻版我買緊正版。
C：係啊，真係咱嫁。真係隔離個個就係買緊翻版，咁我就見到佢地一箱一箱貨咁走，姐係生意呀，總之隔離就好好生意呀。自己就比較零落d啲啦。咁隔離個d人，咁其實佢地都係打工嫁姐，佢望住我都有d唔好意思。
I：有時真係賣同一樣野就……
C：係啊。
I：你地依家有幾多間舖頭呀？
C：一間啦。
I：姐係呢度唔係舖頭？
C：曾經當啦，但依家佢見到依家舖同埋做d電腦工作啦。
I：可唔可以講到幾多成係代理，幾多成係代購呀？
C：唔係好明。
I：姐係唔係直接幫個個唱片公司代理香港個唱片權。
C：我地唔會做代理。因為本身唱片公司自己已經代理左個artist既所有野。
I：咁個零售上面你地係係好似其中一個渠bindValue去做。
C：姐係唔係直接幫個個舖，一個係唱片公司，之後俾d貨批發商，批發商俾d貨我地嘅。
I：佢係你地係三層既connection係有？
C：係嘅。
I：會唔會多左好多叫你地幫手代購？姐係唔一定係唱片。
C：乜都訂嫁啦，演唱會d週邊野呀。咁d人去演唱會，想買又唔想排隊咁，咁我地咪去排。或者依家有時唔想買d fan club版本既野，但又要入左會先得既。
I：佢係你地又會做到既？
C：盡力啦，都係個句。
I：我地大至上係咁好多問題。我想買呢黎買野既客人大概個年齡層係幾多，姐係按照好多定上年紀既人多？
C：學生多d既。因為信和，雖然係個老場，但係好多年經既野。因為一直都係買緊d比較潮d既野啦，所以就會學生多d。一係就到個d四、五十買hi-fi個d，買黑膠呀，試音碟個d。
I：佢係你覺得今次今日係信和競爭大唔大呀？
C：大，絕對大。
I：但係你仲係覺得呢度係最適合既地方去賣……
C：係呀，因為區區自己有市場，有時我難突然自己去一個區開，其實姐係得死嫁炸。姐係買CD既人得幾個點嫁炸嘛，唔會突然間去深水埗，行下睇下有冇CD舖先，唔會嫁嘛。一谂到CD舖就信和、灣仔。
I：明白，差唔多啦，唔該囉你。
==End (13’34”)==
● 最受歡迎產品：BL comics
  ○ Other goods in store: comics and 精品
● Customer are mainly young female
● Quantity for each purchase:
  ○ Varies: some buy a set, some buy 1 chapter
● No pre-order / purchase by order service is provided
● Will predict the trend and the popularity of new items
  ○ Based on own experience
    ■ Update information through internet (staff is fans of comics)
  ○ Based on the author of comics
    ■ People will follow and support a specific author -> predict the next book wrote by the author will be popular
● 1000 comics per day
  ○ Can reach 3000 per day in previous years
● Sales decline in recent years
  ○ Comics are available online -> less people consume hard copy
    ■ Usually, customer already read the comics online before buying the hard copy
  ○ Still some supporter continues to buy hard-copy
    ■ Reason: to support the industry. If not, there will not be a new episode.
● Peak season/month: New year and summer
  ○ Less in May and June
  ○ Reason of new year: pocket money
  ○ Publisher usually launch new books/series in long vocations

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From a fan perspective:
● Will closely follow the trend and consume new product (keep 住 追)
● Buy 2 sets of favorite comics
  ○ collect japanese version, read hong kong version
  ○ Collect associated goods
  ○ Usually purchase online
● Only favourite would buy the whole series and related goods
  ○ Either all or none
Ref No. 6 Date 14 Mar 2016

Shop Name 一代滙集 Location 219 & 221
Interviewee Miss Leung (Staff) Category Comics

- Product available in store: Comics and 精品
  - Comics: sell Hong Kong version only
  - Current hit: one piece
- Seldom offer pre-order, or purchase by order service
  - Only sell product available in store
- Branch: opposite the store
  - Open for 10 years till today
- Sales decline in recent years
  - People usually buy/read online
  - Sell around 100 books per day
    - Can reach 1000 books per day in peak seasons
- Nowadays, buyers usually is the collector of the comics series
  - Some follow author
  - Some follow the content
  - Some collect it once a new episode is published
- Mainly, old customers 熟客
  - 50 old /50 new
  - Age range: 10-40
    - Above 30: will buy more, higher purchasing power
- Sales will increase when new episode or product is on stock
- Source of the items
  - Distributor and publisher
- Staff is the fans of comics
Ref No. 7  Date 14 Mar 2016
Shop Name SATIF  Location M38
Interviewee Mr. Lee (Staff)  Category Games

- Work for 3 years
  - Sino Centre: Not much difference, no big changes
- Mainly sell Playstation games
- Customer age range: 10-40
  - A few of the customer aged 50-60
  - Younger customers buy more
    - Esp. during new year: have pocket money
  - Older customer will think twice and consider more while purchase
- Walk in customers more than old customers
  - 80% walk in customers
- Peak season: after new year
  - promotion / sale of the product
  - Young customers: have pocket money
  - Working class: receive bonus
- Sell around 30 games disc per day
- Shop originally located at 2/F of the mall
  - Moved to M in this year
    - Reason:
      - More population flow in this floor
      - More similar good in this floor
      - Games lover more concentrate on this floor
- Branch located in Shatin and Tuen mun
  - Sino Centre are not always the best selling branch, depends on time and season
- How to decide with one to 入貨
  - Obtain information on internet, view other’s comments
  - Depends on the cost(來貨價)
    - Even the game is popular, if the cost is high, will purchase less stock.
- 5-6 years of experience
- Mainly sell games, photographic paper, 精品
- Customers: students and working class
  - Student: interested in photographic paper
  - Working class: interested in games
- 20-30 transection per day
  - If there are new product come out on that day: more transections
- Decline of sales in recent years
  - bought 40 disc for stock, if it is predict to be hit
    - Now only purchase 20 of each item
    - More reserve, as don’t know when the stock could be sold
  - Sell photographic paper in recent years
    - Increase number of potential clients
- Why choosing Sino Centre?
  - Before: good population flow and low rent
  - First priority while thinking of games
- Changes in Sino Centre
  - External environment: Mong Kok
    - The umbrella movement, 2016 Mong Kok civil unrest
      - Less tourist will come to Sino centre
  - Increasing rent: expensive, not affordable
    - store/ shop change frequently
      - From games to 格仔舖 to 手機殼
      - Less comic shop compare to previous years
  - No longer the first / sole priority while people thought of games
    - People may go to SSP to search for games
      - Some may avoid MK because of different incident in MK
        - People can buy product in other area, not necessarily MK
- Peak Season: summer and christmas
  - Student are having vocation, will come to shop in Sino Centre
  - Mainland tourist
- Mainly old customers
- How to predict trend?
  - Through observing which items receive most number of pre-orders
  - The character involved in the game, e.g. 初音 is a hit
• Mainly Japanese version

• Setting of price: Highly fluctuate price (海鮮價)
  ○ The difference in one day could reach 10%
    ■ When there are more inventory: the price will be cheaper
    ■ When there are shortage, the price will raised
  ○ Affect by store in larger scale
    ■ For instance, the original price is 300, the larger scale shop may sell it in 200
      • Need to follow their price, if not, no one will buy it from her store
  ■ Understand the current price by
    • Words from customers (下間賣緊幾錢嘅)
    • Observe people's reaction after hearing the price
      ○ 10 people ask about the price, but no one return to buy, means the price is set higher than others

• Some customers buy the game for collection purposes
  ○ Due to the econ. Downturn, less customer will collect now
    ■ They will sell the old disc, and get money for the new games

• Some customers will ask for specialise good
  ○ If available, they will buy it no matter how expensive is it.