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GEOG2057: Leisure and Recreation in Modern Society

Project assignment: Leisure and recreation services and their provision in space

Introduction

I have chosen cinemas as my subject of study from the website of Hong Kong Yellow Page (www.yip.com.hk). In this project, a statement for how cinemas related to leisure and recreation of Hong Kong will be explained. Then a spatial presentation of location of cinemas in Hong Kong Island will be carried out. Finally we will give some possible reasons for the spatial pattern we have observed.

Cinema's relevance to leisure and recreation

During lectures we were given the definition of leisure and recreation. Leisure is defined as “portion of an individual’s time that is not directly devoted to work and it implies freedom and choice for self-enrichment, relaxation or pleasure”. Recreation, on the other hand, means “social institution voluntarily chosen for intrinsic purposes and are pleasurable, but also discomfort, pain or danger.”

Hong Kong cinemas match with the above definitions in the following senses: Going to cinemas is a leisure because we see movie mainly to spare our time and to have enjoyment, except you are working as a movie commentator and your work is to see a movie. Furthermore, when we go to cinemas we are free to have choice. We can free to choose which cinema to go, which movie to see, and we are free to leave any time during the movie. Therefore Hong Kong cinema is a kind of leisure with relaxation, pleasure and freedom to choose as defined.

Hong Kong cinema is also a kind of recreation. We usually go to cinema with friends so it is a kind of social activities. When seeing movie we may not only pleasurable, but may also create discomfort and unhappiness. For example, when we are seeing a ghost movie we may have a feeling of fear. When we are having scenery of blood and thousands of death we may also feel discomfort. Therefore Hong Kong cinema is also a kind of recreation.

Going to cinemas therefore highly related to leisure and recreation in Hong Kong, not only it matches with the scholarly definition. When we are having spare time and

feel bored and consider what to do, one of the options we have is to watch movie in cinema to relax ourselves. It is a very popular form of leisure and recreation among Hong Kong people today.

Methodology

I intend to collect the information of cinemas in Hong Kong Islands through the homepage of Hong Kong Yellow Page as my primary source of data in this project. Nevertheless I find out that information in www.yip.com.hk is very outdated and incomplete. For example, the website indicates that there is a cinema in Wanchai called "Cathay Theatre". However it has already been closed down early this year. It even results in some items which are not cinema but cinema-related companies. For example, EDKO films Ltd is only a film production company. See table 2.

With such unreliability from the website of Hong Kong Yellow Pages, I try to find other web resources for the most updated and completed list of cinemas in Hong Kong island as possible. Finally I have visited www.centamap.com, which is a website containing newest maps with frequent update of Hong Kong. In this project I will primarily use the information in that homepage to illustrate my answers.

I have divided Hong Kong Island into four parts, using the division in that homepage. They are Central and Western, Wanchai, Eastern and Southern District respectively. Nevertheless I still exclude one cinema from it, the Hong Kong Arts Centre - Lim Por Yen Film Theatre, from my study because it is primarily used for major art film demonstration and it is not a kind of recreation general public usually go to enjoy popularly and socialize with their friends.

Spatial distribution of cinemas in Hong Kong Island

From table 1 and fig. 1 we can find out that most of the cinemas in Hong Kong Island are situated in north. Over 50 percent of them are in Wanchai district (totally 8 out of 16). There are also some found in Western district, Central and the Eastern district. And it is surprising to see there is only one cinema in Southern district.

Fig. 2 even shows a clearer spatial distribution of cinemas in Hong Kong Island. The distribution is very uneven and concentrated. 15 out of 16 cinemas are found within certain districts in the north of the island. We can see most of the cinemas are found in Causeway Bay. At least 5 of them (Golden Lee, JP Cinema, New York, UA

Time Square & Windsor Theater) concentrated within the same district. Other locations where cinemas cluster are Taikoo Shing and Wanchai. And some of them scatter in Central – Western District, North Point and Shaukeiwan. There is only one found in Wahfu in the south of the island.

Reasons for spatial distribution

Before we examine the reasons for spatial distribution of cinemas in Hong Kong Island, we better first divide Hong Kong cinemas into two groups. For the first group, they are situated in location where big shopping centers are found. Cinemas falling into this category are UA Pacific Place Theatre in Admiralty, Golden Lee Theatre, JP Cinemas Theatre, New York Theatre, UA Times Square Theatre, and Windsor Theatre in Causeway Bay, Cityplaza Cinemas and Kornhill Broadway Theatre in Taikoo Shing. These are location where big scale shopping malls such as Pacific Place, Time Square, Sogo Department Store, Cityplaza etc are found. These are the places where Hong Kong people tend to spare their time and spend money for recreation. Cinemas close to those locations are likely to generate a lot of income. People may go to see a movie before go home after shopping. They are also situated in locations where easy accessibility is found such as near to MTR station. And this explains the high concentration of cinemas in Causeway Bay. When we go to see a movie in cinemas, it costs us about \$50 per person to do so. We usually do not mind to pay more in transportation cost to do so. A good transportation network therefore guarantee and bring stable source of audience for the cinemas. Most importantly, Causeway Bay is situated very close to the commercial area in the west such Central and Wanchai, and residential area in the east and the south such as North Point, Chaiwan and Aberdeen. There are large amount of potential customers for cinemas in Causeway Bay. People off duties from work want to seek leisure to relax themselves can watch movies after shopping in Causeway Bay. During holiday, people can also go to Causeway Bay to see movies from their home very conveniently by various means of transportation such as MTR and buses. With the geographical advantages and large amount of potential customers, there is no wonder cinemas tend to locate themselves next to big shopping mall with good accessibility such as Causeway Bay and Taikoo Shing.

For the second group they are found in the residential area and old city core, in which accessibility is not a main factor of location. Cinemas belong to this group are Golden Palace Theatre and Queen's Theatre in Western – Central District, Imperial Theatre and New Imperial Theatre in Wanchai, Sun Kam Ming Cinema and Sunbeam Theatre in Eastern District, and Fortuna Theatre in Wahfu. Unlike to cinemas in the

first group, the primary purpose for the cinemas in these locations is to attract limited range of customers. They usually are smaller in scale, without modern decoration and cheaper in ticket price. For example, Sunbeam Theatre in North Point is to serve the Fujian people within the district. Besides popular films, traditional Chinese drama and opera are also available for the old local residents who enjoy it.

Most of the films shown in Golden Palace Theatre, Imperial Theatre, New Imperial Theatre, Sun Kam Ming Cinema and Fortuna Theatre are pornographic films, and there is rather limited attraction for these cinemas. The range of customer is narrow and therefore location in old city core and developed area is very ideal for this type of cinemas. With limited revenue from customers they can only afford the low rent in the old, developed area in city core. Accessibility is not the main factor of location. With limited financial resource most of them appear to be poorly decorated and maintained. They tend not to be concentrated, as there are no geographical advantages and it can only generate low level of income.

And we can see only one cinema in southern district of Hong Kong Island. The basic reason for the situation is that people going to southern district for recreation usually are to enjoy the beach, water sport and the natural beauty. They do not expect to have to see any movie so that cinemas are not found in those areas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cinemas in Hong Kong Islands are concentrated in the north. And Hong Kong cinemas are divided into two main categories. And there are different factors of location for each category. Cinemas locating near to big shopping centers are to serve people seeking recreation in all areas in Hong Kong so that accessibility is very important for them. The other type of cinemas target in narrow range of audience therefore they are situated in old city center to enjoy low rent.

Table 1: Details of cinemas in Hong Kong Island, using the data from www.centamap.com, accessed on 11th October 2001.

Central and western district
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Golden Palace Theatre Elegant Garden Commerical Complex, Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong. 2. Queen's Theatre 31 Queen's Road Central, Central District, Hong Kong 3. UA Pacific Place Theatre Pacific Place, Admiralty, Hong Kong. <p>Total count: 3</p>

Wanchai district
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cine-Art House Theatre Sun Hung Kai Centre, 30 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong 2. Golden Lee Theatre 99 Percival Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong 3. Hong Kong Arts Centre - Lim Por Yen Film Theatre[#] Upper Basement, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. 4. Imperial Theatre 29 Burrows Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong 5. JP Cinemas Theatre Paterson Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong 6. New Imperial Theatre 220 Wan Chai Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong 7. New York Theatre Causeway Bay Plaza II, 463-483 Lockhart Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong 8. UA Times Square Theatre Ground Floor, Time Square, Matheson Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong 9. Windsor Theatre Windsor Plaza, 311 Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong <p>Total count: 8</p>

Eastern district
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cityplaza Cinemas 5/F, Cityplaza I, Taikoo Shing, Hong Kong 2. Kornhill Broadway Theatre 4th Floor, Kornhill Plaza South, 2 Kornhill Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong 3. Sun Kam Ming Cinema Junction of Mong Lung Street & Factory Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong 4. Sunbeam Theatre 423 King's Road, North Point, Hong Kong <p>Total count: 4</p>

Southern district
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fortuna Theatre 4 Wah Lok Path, Aberdeen, Hong Kong. <p>Total count: 1</p>

Total number of cinema in Hong Kong Island: 16

[#] Hong Kong Arts Centre - Lim Por Yen Film Theatre has been removed from my study, since it does not serve the definition of recreation and social functions of cinemas in Hong Kong.

Table 2: A summary of “cinemas” found in www.yp.com.hk, accessed on 13th October 2001.

http://www.yp.com.hk/cgi-bin/x_list_e.cgi?class=Y13848&district=HK&engdesc=Cinemas&page=0

Name of the cinema	Telephone No.	Address
* EDKO Films Ltd	2529 3898	Admiralty Centre, Wan Chai
* Another Dimension Ltd	2849 5555	Manley Coml Bldg, Sheung Wan
# Cathay Theatre	2507 4744	Success Coml Bldg, Wan Chai
Cine-Art House	2827 4820	Sun Hung Kai Centre, Wan Chai
Cityplaza Cinema Ltd	2567 3111	Cityplaza Taikoo Shing, Shau Kei Wan
* Classics Cinema Ltd	2877 2483	Grand Bldg, Central District
Fortuna Theatre	2875 0729	World Fair Ct, Wah Fu
Golden Palace Theatre	2858 2087	Tung Wai Gdn, Sai Ying Pun
Imperial Cinema	2572 2558	King Dao Bldg, Wan Chai
Lee Theatre	2895 6923	Lee Theatre Plaza, Causeway Bay
New Imperial Cinema	2893 9612	Lee Cheong Bldg, Wan Chai
New York Cinema 1 & 2	2838 7380	Causeway Bay Plaza, Wan Chai
Queen's Theatre	2522 7036	Luk Hoi Tong Bldg, Central District
* State Theatre Property Management Office	2570 6241	277 King's Rd, North Point
Sunbeam Theatre	2856 0154	Kiu Fai Mans, North Point
UA Queensway	2869 0322	Pacific Place, Queensway
UA Causeway Bay	2506 2822	Shopping Arc Times Sq, Causeway Bay

Total entries: 17

* entries which are not cinemas but cinema-related companies

cinemas already closed down

Note: when comparing table 1 with table 2, the missing cinemas in Hong Kong Yellow Pages are (1) JP Cinemas Theatre; (2) Windsor Theatre; (3) Kornhill Broadway Theatre and (4) Sun Kam Ming Cinema.

Fig. 1: The choropleth map of cinemas in Hong Kong Island

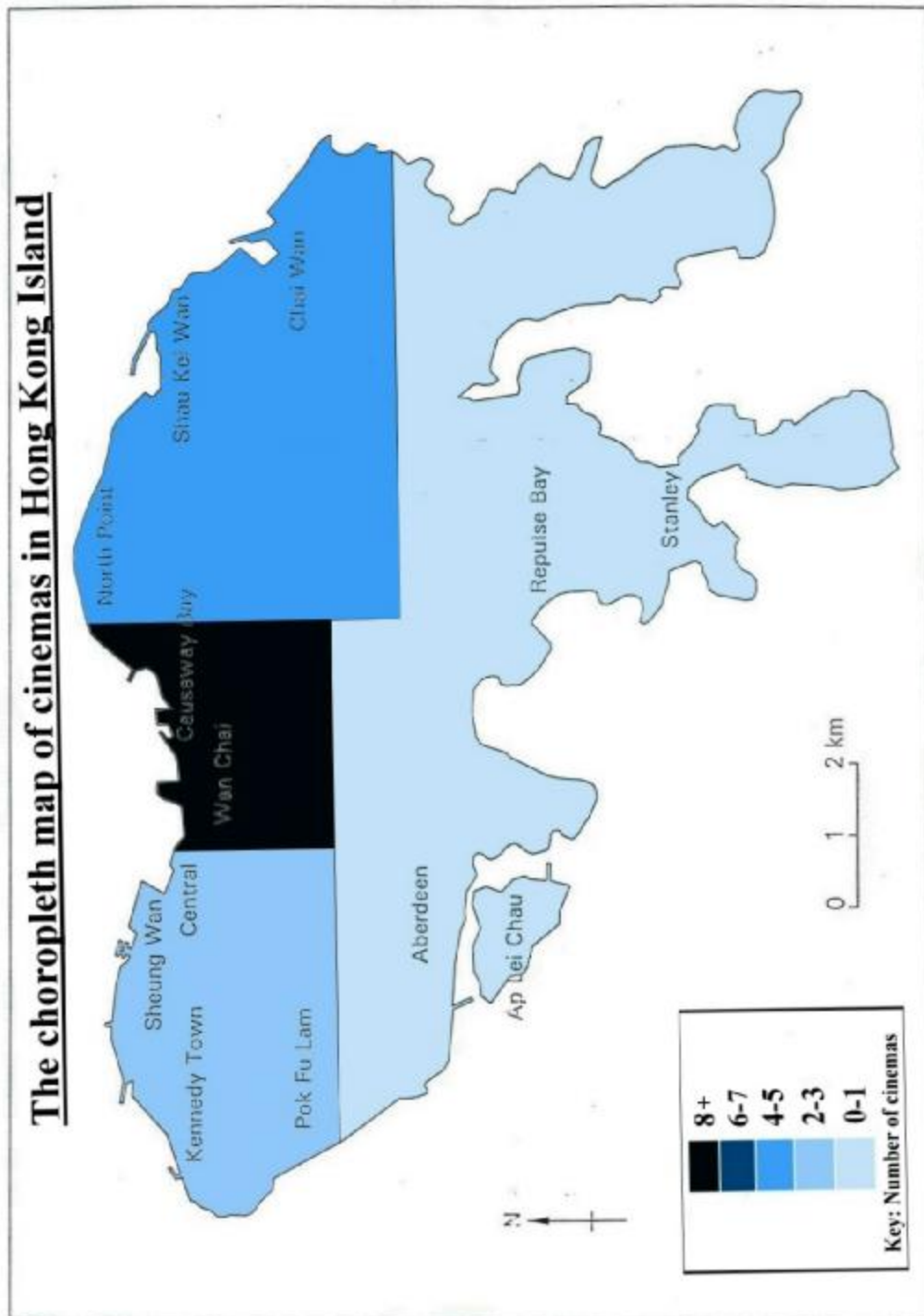


Fig. 2: The spatial location of cinemas in Hong Kong Island, plotted

