Urban Space for Intercultural Development—the cultural and ideological roots behind the development of the International Village retail complex in Vancouver, B.C.

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Kathleen Margaret Warfield
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APPROVAL

NAME: Kathleen Warfield

DEGREE: MA

TITLE OF THESIS: Urban Space for Intercultural Development: the cultural and ideological roots behind the development of the International Village retail complex in Vancouver, B. C.

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

CHAIR: Prof. Morley Lipsett

Prof. Alison Beale
Senior Supervisor, School of Communication, SFU

Prof. Nicholas Blomley
Supervisor, Geography, SFU

Prof. Kirsten McAllister
Examiner
School of Communication, SFU

Date: 9-2-2003

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Urban Space for Intercultural Development: the cultural and ideological roots behind the development of the International Village retail complex in Vancouver, B. C.

Author

(Signature)

Kathleen Warfield

(name)

9 Dec 2002

(date)
Abstract

This thesis examines two culturally influenced development approaches that were adopted in the design evolution of a mall in Vancouver B.C. Consequential to the growth of this multicultural and globalizing city has been the increase in professional planning cultures, an increase in culturally-influenced architectural and design norms, as well as a diversifying of consumer market sectors. Through an analysis of the International Village Retail Mall, a mall owned and envisioned by a major Hong Kong land developer, and designed and planned by a series of Vancouver and Toronto urban designers and architects, this thesis suggests that, at the end of the design chronology, through the transplantation of design and architectural norms, the mall favoured the specific market sector of Hong Kong Immigrant consumers and neglected to recognize the resident neighbouring consumer demographics. This thesis suggests that the approach adopted earlier on in the design chronology, the cultural flow approach, which recognized the complexities of these cultural market sectors, and design and architectural norms in a multicultural city, may have lead to the design and construction of a more successful and integrated retail complex.

Through this detailed study of the development process of the International Village mall, from 1989-1996, which employs methods including interviews and research in primary sources such as design “visions”, prospectuses and architectural plans, this thesis grounds intercultural communication theory in a practical application in order to understand the cultural complexity of multicultural city planning processes.
Just as the diverse cultural groups within cities interact and negotiate in order to integrate, so can norms of architecture, design, and retail planning. The case of the International Village illustrates that in a multicultural city such as Vancouver, the success or acceptance, of any development may be at least partly dependent on intercultural communication among the diverse cultural heritages and professional cultures of the developers, planners, architects and designers, alongside the recognition of the diverse market sectors of the city’s cultures.
Dedication

To my mom, my dad, and my brother, who, over many a scrumptious meal, taught me and my brain to dig deeper, always ask more, think laterally, and never be afraid to live life outside the box.
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I would like to thank my supervisors, Alison for her words of encouragement and Nick for helping tether my grandiose ideas and providing great editorial feedback. Thank you also to Graham McGarva and VIA Architects, Clifford Korman and Kirkor Architects in Toronto, Allen Farber, and Professor Gordon Mathews at the University of Hong Kong for offering so much valuable help with my research. Thanks sincerely to Jenn Sabean for being a caring ear to my brain purges and a dedicated “field assistant.” Thank you also to Aubyn Freybe-Smith for believing in me even when I sometimes didn’t. And finally thanks to me, for actually doing it.
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Chapter One
Introduction

1. Introduction

This thesis discusses two approaches to development projects for multicultural cities, which occurred throughout the chronology of the design and envisioning of the International Village retail complex in Vancouver B.C. Henderson Developments Corporation, a major Hong Kong land developer, purchased the land for the International Village in 1989. The architectural and design plans for the mall were originally sketched by a series of Vancouver and Toronto architects and designers, and the retail complex was constructed in Vancouver in 1996. The chronology of the design and architecture of the mall illustrates that both Henderson and the Vancouver architects and designers infused the vision for the mall with distinctive norms of retail design, architecture and market sector orientation that were partly influenced by their distinctive professional cultures¹. The case study of the International Village retail mall illustrates that although the early plans for the mall involved a consideration of the local consumer markets and the norms of design and architecture, the failure of the mall was partly a result of the final design plans which illustrated a lack of intercultural² communication resulting in an

¹ My thesis refers to “professional culture” which consists of cultural norms that regulate a company ideology which result from a blending of elements of employees’ professional lives and the culturally distinctive norms and customs of their private lives (in this case the professional cultures are those of the Hong Kong developer and the Vancouver architects and designers.) (Hofstede, 1984).

² In this thesis, intercultural communication refers to the interpersonal communication between people of different socio-cultural systems or subsystems (racial, ethnic, etc.), within the same socio-cultural system (Vancouver) (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 32).
insufficient consideration of the market and a lack of consideration for the character of the adjacent Vancouver neighbourhoods.

The cityscape of Vancouver could serve as a case study for understanding some of the cultural complexities of retail design and architecture in other multicultural cities. Vancouver is a culturally diverse city and it would be appropriately represented by a cityscape of diverse cultural styles. Just as cultures within multicultural cities establish their own unique but integrated, and distinct but co-existing identities, so do buildings. The visual aesthetics of a cityscape should be negotiated if they are dealt with by participants from different cultural backgrounds. An urban landscape displaying nothing but independent, isolated, and autonomous transplanted cultural styles does not reflect a communicative multicultural society and subsequently does not lead to a multicultural and integrated cityscape.\(^3\) A multicultural and integrated landscape requires open communication and negotiation and as such, in a multicultural city, intercultural communication becomes of paramount importance.

In Vancouver, the increasing involvement of land developers, architects and designers from Hong Kong and the Pacific Rim has introduced a variety of cultural norms of architecture, design and planning that have been transplanted from other geographical locations onto Vancouver's landscape. The communication and understanding of these culturally diverse styles and norms of all the parties involved in a land development may

\[^3\] Although I make observations about the method in which Henderson pursued their planning methodology, I am not making a cultural generalization that all Asian planning involves design transplantation. As I mention on several occasions through the thesis, my focus is on underscoring the uniqueness of every development venture in a multicultural city, alongside the importance of cultural communication and recognition within any multicultural land development.
result in a more unified, cohesive and interconnected cityscape; negotiated by all and accessible to all.  

This thesis holds two purposes: one at the overall level and one at the specific level of the case study. Through its detailed study of the visions, designs and architecture of the International Village retail complex, which employs methods including interviews and research in primary sources such as design "visions", prospectuses and architectural plans, this thesis illustrates two approaches to multicultural city developments. The case study argues that the failure of the mall may have been partly due to the lack of consideration of the professional planning cultures, architectural and design norms, and cultural market sectors of Vancouver and the adjacent neighbourhoods.

At the level of the case study, this thesis grounds intercultural communication theory, which emphasizes open communication and understanding, in a practical application for multicultural city developments. The case study also suggests that this communicative development approach, which recognizes the complexities inherent in multicultural city planning where different market sectors from diverse cultures are coming to occupy a shared urban space, may have lead to a more successful development project. This thesis provides a close examination of the process of developing designs for multicultural city projects, which goes beyond visual and economic analyses of the cityscape to include a consideration of how aesthetics and activities are integrated into the surrounding neighbouring areas in the city. This analysis offers insights into decision

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4 The False Creek North Official Development Plan (1990) states that the goals and objectives for developments on that site are "cohesion" and "integration". As such I use these terms to describe a successful development for that space.
making-processes for multicultural urban developments. These suggestions balance consideration for diverse and culturally distinctive architecture and design norms with a consideration of the resident, local character of the space of development.

Case Study Brief

In 1989, the early design visions for the International Village retail complex proposed the construction of a market square, which catered to the local cultures and consumer demographics of Vancouver. The International Village retail complex was to mimic markets such as Granville Island or Lonsdale Quay. The retail complex was not to be constructed until the mid-90's, however, and over that five year period, the retail design, market, vision, and architecture of the complex evolved away from a style that was familiar to local consumers, and incorporated more pronounced characteristics and norms of Hong Kong design and architecture.

A Toronto architectural firm, Kirkor Architects, put together the final architectural sketches and retail design plan. This was the plan carried through to construction. The style and vision of the final plans illustrated a transplantation approach to development which illustrated a transposition of Hong Kong retail design and architecture norms while giving lesser consideration to the local consumer demographics and cultures of Vancouver. The transplantation approach was further illustrated through the marketing that catered foremost to the tourists, high-income locals and local consumers of Hong Kong style malls and consume the retail and marketing norms of Hong Kong malls.

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5 As the case study of the International Village is an illustration of a transplanted Hong Kong mall, the term "Chinese consumer" refers not to the racially-specific population but rather to the local consumer population in Vancouver that would frequent Hong Kong style malls and consume the retail and marketing norms of Hong Kong malls.
Chinese goods in Vancouver. These markets, which represent the dominant consumer markets in Hong Kong, represent only niche markets in Vancouver. These target markets are not reflective of the general spending trends of the majority of Vancouver consumers, and they are especially misplaced for the consumer demographics of the surrounding neighbourhoods to the mall such as the Vancouver Downtown Eastside and Strathcona. The incorporation of multicultural architecture and retail design is beneficial to a multicultural landscape; however, to be cohesive and successful in Vancouver, the design should represent a balance of cultural distinctiveness with recognition of local consumer trends and demographics, as well as norms of architecture and design.

2. Acknowledgement of previous work

The literature review extends over two chapters. Chapters two and three both contribute to the aforementioned two levels of goals of this thesis: the goal at the level of the case study and the overall goal of the thesis. Chapter two discusses and frames the two approaches to developments in a multicultural city that are observed through the chronology of the International Village retail complex development. Chapter two contributes to the goal of the case study, by providing a literature review that elaborates a development approach that emphasizes intercultural communication and understanding of the architectural, retail design and marketing norms of the professional cultures of the development participants.

The overall goal of the thesis involves a detailed study of the development process of the International Village retail complex that grounds theories of intercultural communication in a practical example of land development in a multicultural city. These grounded theories are observed through the application of chapter three’s Hong Kong
historical framework to the design chronology analysis of chapters four and five in order to better understand the reasoning behind the final design and architecture of the mall from the vision of the developer.

Chapter two provides a review of literature relevant to the two development approaches illustrated through the chronology of the case study of the International Village: design transplantation and the cultural flow approach. Chapter two discusses examples of design transplantation in Vancouver, which involves the direct transplantation of design and architectural norms. Design transplantation is further discussed through examples such as Asian Malls in Vancouver suburbs (mainly Richmond), and the “monster houses” of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale. Chapter two then discusses an alternative approach to developments in a multicultural city—the cultural flow approach. This approach emphasizes open communication, understanding and sometimes negotiation. The cultural flow approach, which is derived from intercultural communication theory, is similar to the Co-operative Planning Approach, which was the planning approach adopted by the City of Vancouver in the early 1990’s. Chapter two, therefore, further explains the cultural flow approach to planning and developments, the root of Vancouver’s professional planning culture, by relating it to and elaborating a review of intercultural communication theory (Appadurai, 1990, p.295-310; Crane, 2002, p.7; Fred Casmir, 1978, p.246-254; William Gudykunst and Stella Ting-Toomey, 1988, p.17-31; and Y.Y. Kim, 1977, p.66-77).

Chapter three traces the history and expansion of malls in Hong Kong and discusses the meaning of retail consumption in contemporary Hong Kong culture (Abbas, 1994, p.447); (Lui, 2001, p.35-40); (Khan, 2003, p.4); (Lewis, 2003, p.3); (Nan, 1999, p.73). The
chapter then discusses and compiles a list of retail design and architectural features that are characteristic of contemporary Hong Kong malls in order to better understand the roots of the professional culture and the architectural and design norms of Henderson Developments, the Hong Kong developer of the international village.

3. **Background Information**

   a. **History of Site Acquisition**

   The International Village case study is a study of the development and construction of a retail complex by a Hong Kong developer on the east side of the downtown core of Vancouver, Canada. Chapter four also provides a profile of Henderson Developments, a history of the site acquisition, and a detailed description of the physical geography of the site. This information contextualizes the case study site within the multicultural cityscape of Vancouver and within the diverse consumer demographics of the adjacent neighbourhoods.

   In 1989, Lee Shau Kee, proprietor of Henderson Development, purchased and became sole owner of the site on which the International Village was constructed for $54 million. Henderson Development is an international corporation and one of the largest land developers in Hong Kong. In 1990, Henderson Development Canada, a subsidiary branch of Henderson Development Inc. (Hong Kong), commenced planning for the International Village retail complex with an initial investment vision of $500 million (Mackie, 1999, p.2). Construction began in the mid-90's and the complex was to be built on a fast track plan and completed in 24 months.
b. Description of Site

The entire International Village parcel of land is located on False Creek North and is geographically bound by Pender Street to the north, Quebec Street on the east, Pacific Boulevard on the south and Beatty Street to the West. The parcel is located to the south of historic Gastown, to the west of Chinatown, to the east of the Vancouver central business district (CBD), and to the north of the False Creek North shoreline.

Vancouver City Hall zoned the entire parcel of International Village land to accommodate a maximum of 1400 residential units. Family housing comprised 210 units and government housing made up 140 units. Retail use, services uses such as theatres, office uses, cultural and recreational uses, institutional uses, public utility, and parking facilities also comprised the zoning of the development. Developed in accordance with City of Vancouver bylaws concerning shoreline views and height restrictions, the space also included 4.21 hectares of planned park and green space (Vancouver, 1990, p.5; Michel Durocher, personal communication, April 7, 2003).
Henderson Developments subdivided the entire International Village land into sub parcels that were to be developed in phases over an extended period of time. An overall vision for the International Village, which detailed initial plans for the individual parcels of land, was proposed in 1989, but the initial designs were not permanent and they morphed and evolved over time.
The retail complex of the larger International Village parcel serves as the locale of the case study, and is located at 88 Pender Street at the corner of Pender and Abbott Streets. Pender Street borders the complex to the north, Taylor Street to the east, Keefer to the south and Abbott to the West.

The first parcel, developed in 1990, involved the construction of the Keefer Steps and the Paris Place Complex at the northeast corner of Abbott and Keefer. Henderson constructed the International Village Retail Complex in 1996 in the second phase of development.

4. Scope of Case Study


Chapters four and five of this thesis present a case study which chronicles the evolution of the retail design and architectural plans for the International Village retail complex. The retail design and architecture of the International Village mall began in 1989 and underwent several overhauls leading up to its construction in 1996. There was a great deal of communication between the Vancouver architects and designers, and Henderson Developments and the early plans illustrated a fair amount of consideration for the local market, character, and architectural and design norms of Vancouver. During the eight-year period, however, between the initial proposals in 1989 and the construction of the retail complex in 1996, the mall plans adopted more of the characteristics and qualities of Hong Kong design and architecture. The final design and architectural plans for the International Village were prepared by a Toronto-based firm (non-local) and illustrated the construction of a transplanted Hong Kong mall, that
catered to a specific consumer demographic (Chinese consumers and the tourist population of Vancouver) and gave secondary consideration to the market demographics of Vancouver and especially the neighbouring population.

In 1989, some of the early retail design visions suggested that the mall be a locally-focused complex that mimicked public markets such as Granville Island and Lonsdale Quay (Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 8, 2003). The cultures that were to be reflected in the architecture and the design of the mall were representative of the cultures that lived and flourished within Vancouver (e.g.: the Indian, German, Italian, and Portuguese communities.)

A group of Vancouver architects, Interville Architects, was contracted to pursue the design of the retail complex in 1990. Interville Architects worked directly with the City and the communities surrounding the complex, gathering information and conducting workshops. These early and negotiated designs reflect a cultural flow approach to developments. The cultural flow approach also parallels the planning approach of Vancouver's professional planning culture.

Interville Architects produced two design plans: one in 1990 along with an overall vision for the parcel of land, and a second in 1995. In the eight-year period leading to the construction of the retail complex several demographic shifts took place in the neighbourhood that made the initial 1990 Interville plans less feasible for development.\textsuperscript{6}

\footnote{These demographic changes will be explained further in chapter four. An example of a change was that the initial proposals for the International Village Retail space focused on developing a}
Furthermore, Henderson expressed their discontent with Interville’s earlier design explaining that the architects had not “achieved Henderson’s desired design vision” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003).

The revamped designs, produced by Interville in 1995, altered the locally oriented design and architecture of the original plans. The 1995 designs interlaced more obvious qualities of Hong Kong architecture and design. Furthermore, the target market for the mall no longer presented the local population of Vancouver as the primary target consumers. The target market instead was more global and appealed foremost to the high-income tourist population and the Chinese consumer population of Vancouver.

In 1996, still unsatisfied, Henderson contracted a separate architectural firm from Toronto, Kirkor Architects, to critique the work of Interville and make suggestions for change. Henderson felt that the Kirkor plans embodied more completely their vision for the mall and Henderson accepted the plans that emerged from Kirkor’s 1996 critique. Construction for the retail complex began in 1995 and continued through to 1998-99 (Jones, 2003). The final retail design and architecture of the mall illustrate numerous examples of transplanted Hong Kong norms and styles.

family-oriented environment, however, between 1989-1995 the space seemed to be evolving into a cosmopolitan entertainment-focused neighbourhood with the expansion of Plaza of Nations and the construction of GM Place (Graham McGarva, personal communication, April 7, 2003).
The final plans for the International Village mall also created a transplanted, consumer space that catered to the consumer demographic appropriate for the cityscape of Hong Kong, but which did not reflect the realities of the neighbouring resident cultures and consumers of Vancouver. This thesis argues that the International Village retail complex may have been more successful, and may have lead to a more cohesive multicultural cityscape, had it involved more communication between the developers and the local architects and designers and more consideration of the local consumer realities and character of Vancouver.

5. Summary of Chapters

The paper is organized into five chapters, which fulfil the two levels of goals of the thesis. Chapters four and five detail the case study and satisfy the case study goal of illustrating that the success or acceptance of a development in the multicultural city of Vancouver may be in part dependent on sufficient intercultural communication and understanding among the professional cultures of the developers, designers and architects as well as a consideration of the local consumer demographics of the cityscape. The first two chapters and the conclusions contribute to the overall goal of the thesis, which is to ground theories of intercultural communication in a practical application to illustrate the cultural complexities of design development in multicultural city projects.

The first chapter introduces and delineates the thesis statement and expands on the other chapters of the thesis. The first chapter also states the importance of this paper, and of the case study, and how they make connections among the domains of
intercultural communication studies, multicultural city studies, retail design and architecture.

Since the main part of this thesis is a case study of the retail complex of the International Village Complex, the second chapter is a literature review that provides an historical, political, and geographical framework for the case study. Chapter two discusses the two approaches to multicultural city developments: design transplantation and the cultural flow approach. These two approaches occur in the chronology of the International Village development from 1989 to 1996. Chapter two also discusses the history and expansion of malls on Hong Kong's cityscape. From this history, a list of retail design and architecture characteristics is assembled for later use in the chronology of the design process in chapters four and five.

The fourth chapter serves two purposes. The first section provides the history of the site acquisition as well as a description of the physical geography of the International Village retail complex, which includes maps and photos of the complex. The chapter also explains the subsequent purchase of the International Village site by Lee Shau Kee of Henderson Developments in the late 80's. This chapter will also provide a brief profile of Henderson Developments and their other retail complex pursuits in Hong Kong.

The second section of chapter four provides a chronology of the early designs and architectural plans for the retail complex from 1989 to 1996. The early designs illustrate intercultural communication and negotiation that reflect the cultural flow approach to multicultural city development.
The fifth chapter provides a detailed analysis of the final design plans of the retail complex at the International Village. Using the characteristics of Hong Kong architecture and design that were compiled in chapter three, this chapter will illustrate the Hong Kong architecture and design norms that are embedded in the final design plans for the retail complex. Chapter five also illustrates Henderson’s lack of consideration for the local design and architectural norms, which resulted in the construction of a transplanted cosmopolitan Hong Kong mall, and which also created a space that catered to a culturally exclusive consumer demographic of Vancouver.

The sixth and final chapter summarizes the major conclusions from the case study and lists the limitations that were encountered in the research process. It also discusses the broader implications of the case study and potential areas for further research. The conclusion also reviews the overall goal of the thesis, which was to ground theories of intercultural communication in a practical application in order to illustrate the cultural complexities of development projects within multicultural city land developments, and to potentially suggest some elements of a culturally attentive approach to development projects within multicultural cities.
Chapter Two
Theoretical Literature Review

1. Chapter Introduction
This chapter elaborates on and contextualizes the two development approaches that occur throughout the design and architectural evolution of the International Village retail complex: design transplantation and the cultural flow approach. Design transplantation involves the direct reconstruction of culturally distinctive architectural, design and marketing norms from one geography, to another geography. Design transplantation is reflected in the final design plans of the International Village, which illustrate the reconstruction of a Hong Kong style mall onto the cityscape of downtown Vancouver. Design transplantation, because of its lack of communication and negotiation between the numerous participants involved in a development, often results in the construction of a space that is inclusive to one cultural group but exclusive to another. In this case, the retail, marketing and architecture of the mall catered to the consumer demographic of Chinese consumers and the tourist population while creating a sense of exclusion for the local neighbouring community. This sense of cultural exclusivity will be discussed in more detail through other contemporary examples of design transplantation in Vancouver such as Asian Malls and the “monster” houses of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale.

This chapter then discusses a second and alternative multicultural development approach observed in the construction of the International Village retail complex—the cultural flow approach. The Vancouver Municipal Planning Department adopted the
Cooperative Planning Approach in the early 1990's. This approach, which has led to many successful land developments on Vancouver's cityscape\(^7\), emphasizes communication, negotiation and integration among the participants of a development process. As an alternative to design transplantation, the cultural flow approach emphasizes the importance of communication and negotiation, and may result in the development of a more diverse, yet cohesive, multicultural cityscape.

The cultural flow approach parallels the work of intercultural communication theorists such as Diana Crane (2002, p.7), Fred Casmir (1978, p.246-254), Arjun Appadurai (1990, p.295-310), William Gudykunst and Stella Ting-Toomey (1988, p.17-31), and Y.Y. Kim (1977, p.66-77). According to intercultural communications theorists, the cultural flow approach emphasizes negotiation and open communication, and is a method, which has been illustrated to produce successful "verbal" intercultural communication and negotiation. As it bears close resemblance to Vancouver's Cooperative Planning Approach, the cultural flow approach and intercultural communication theory are referred to to elaborate on the second multicultural development approach, and the larger Vancouver planning professional culture of Vancouver.

Chapter two contributes to the overall goal of the thesis by elaborating elements of a development approach that is attentive to the cultural complexities of planning within a multicultural and globalizing city.

\(^7\) Successful cooperative planning developments include the "rejection of extensive freeway systems, the redevelopment of the south shore of False Creek and the transformation of former industrial lands into town houses and apartments in the mid-1970s, and the creation of eight regional town centres such as Metrotown in Burnaby, Lonsdale in North Vancouver and Haney Town Centre in Maple Ridge" (Oberlander, 1997, p.247-249.)
a. Design Transplantation

Design transplantation involves the replication or reconstruction of architectural and design norms of one culture and geography onto another geography with a different history and culture. The phenomenon of Asian malls and “monster houses” are two examples of culturally influenced and transplanted styles, which illustrated a lack of negotiation between designers, architects and residents. This design transplantation resulted in the creation of some culturally autonomous spaces in which consideration for distinctive cultural expression was placed ahead of a concern for local integration and intercultural communication.

Design transplantation, and the creation of various diverse but autonomous and disconnected buildings, is an increasing phenomenon within and around the multicultural and globalizing city of Vancouver. In Richmond, a suburb of Vancouver with a very high immigrant Asian population, several different Hong Kong land developers have constructed “Asian malls” that cater almost exclusively to Chinese consumers. An Asian or Hong Kong Mall is “a retail shopping centre developed by Chinese-Canadian developers, and consisting of mainly Chinese-Canadian owned and operated retail stores and services” (Nan, 1999, p.2). These malls began to be developed in the 1980’s to accommodate the increasing consumer market of Chinese immigrants immigrating to Vancouver and the city suburbs. Examples of these malls include The Aberdeen Centre, Parker Place, President Plaza, and Crystal Centre (Nan, 1999, p.3).
The introduction of spaces to purchase Chinese-specific consumer goods made sense in Vancouver where entrepreneurial Pacific Rim immigrants have settled in increasingly high numbers since the 1970's. Changes in the 1975 Immigration Act marked a focus by the government on immigrants who had a certain amount of personal wealth or investment capital (Smart, 1994, p.99; Mitchell, 1998, p.736). There was also a focus at this time, not only with respect to immigration, to "develop closer ties between the peoples and institutions of Canada and the peoples and institutions of the Asia-Pacific region" (Canada, 2003).
Asian malls in Vancouver retail a mix of disposable income items as well as a large portion of day-to-day lifestyle "need" items. Although the design of Asian Malls was to act as a place of comfort and familiarity to new immigrants, some malls also created a sense of exclusion for non-Chinese local consumers. Jun Nan (1999) summarized the main economic and social functions of Asian malls. Some of the reasons why locals experience a sense of "exclusion" from the transplanted style of Asian malls can be figured from this list:

"Business and Employment Bases—Asian malls provide job opportunities for immigrants who do not have refined language skills that would allow them mainstream options. In the early stages of development, these malls also provide construction jobs.

Investment Tools—Asian malls allow investment opportunities for entrepreneurial Chinese immigrants.

Transitional Function—They provide a space in which Asian immigrants can settle in to and integrate with their new geography and environment.

Social Function—Immigrant businesses in these malls create a supportive network with one another.

Cultural Function—Asian malls allow a space to introduce different Asian business practices with local Vancouver-Canadian business practices" (Nan, 1999, 74-75).

A major function of Asian Malls is the creation of "social" networks in a new geographical environment. As such, the types of retail located in these malls are stores that serviced the same consumer needs of the Chinese population in Hong Kong. The transplantation of services that cater to the needs of Hong Kong locals provide services for the niche Chinese consumer population of Vancouver, but not necessarily for the broader demographic of resident consumers.

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Nan also stated that Asian malls also “provide job opportunities for immigrants who do not have refined language skills that would allow main stream options” (Nan, 1999, p.74). Some local consumers were alienated when some Asian malls, to foster a sense of comfort for the Chinese consumers, displayed a large portion of the mall signage in Chinese. Some stores also employed staff that spoke little English, which may also cause a sense of exclusion for non-Chinese speaking local consumers.

Asian malls in Richmond and other suburbs, such as Aberdeen Centre and Parker Place in Richmond, and Crystal Shopping Centre in Burnaby, also serve a transitional and cultural function for immigrants by recreating, as closely as possible, the retail orientation and design of local-oriented Hong Kong malls. These malls retail a mix of culturally specific “want” items (disposable income items) and “need” items (daily survival items). A review of Vancouver Asian Malls showed that common retail at these malls included: boutique fashion stores, hair and beauty, car accessories, electronic, audiovisual and computer services, and food services, both restaurants and grocery stores⁸. Several of these consumer goods, when compared with the Survey of Household Spending for Greater Vancouver Region (1990-2000), were not representative of the general spending trends of local Vancouver residents.⁹ The priority of Asian malls is to service the large and growing population of Pacific Rim immigrants in Vancouver and the resident consumer population is given secondary consideration. These malls, however,

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⁸ Information compiled from the retail prospectus’ of Aberdeen Mall, Crystal Mall, Parker Place Shopping Centre, and President Plaza.

with their culturally transplanted characteristics, create a comfortable environment for immigrants but perhaps an alienating environment for some local Vancouverites.

A second example of design transplantation is the construction of “monster houses” in Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy. In the mid 1980’s wealthy entrepreneurial immigrants from the Pacific Rim began purchasing large plots of land in the historic and upper-scale Vancouver neighbourhoods of Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy. Some original houses were replaced with huge and elaborate mansions that reflected transplanted Pacific Rim architecture and design norms. Although the size of the houses was not a transplanted element, as living space is much more expensive and limited in Hong Kong, the architectural and design elements of the exterior of the houses were reflective of transplanted styles. David Ley described the “monster houses” as:

“...large houses on a cleared lot, usually more than 4,000 square feet in area. The newness of the house, access to light through large windows unimpeded by vegetation, the alignment of doors, and other details of internal design, are inspired in part by the traditional metaphysics of feng shui” (Ley, 1995, p.191).

Some authors proposed that the “monster houses” introduced such culturally unique design aesthetics that they create a “rift in the spatial-temporal makeup of the community” (Brosseau, 1996, p.167). The monster houses emerged from a different cultural and geographic history and seemed misplaced among the predominantly British and colonial architectural styles of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale.¹⁰

¹⁰ Some authors argue that community dissent towards the “monster houses” was rooted in local racism towards the growing Asian immigrant community. While this point is recognized, my use of the “monster house” example concerns specifically and simply the process of negotiation in land developments.
Katharyne Mitchell also described the sense of alienation of monster houses as being a result of a break in the socio-economic fabric of the neighbourhoods: “The newly constructed houses contrasted vividly with older British-style residential architecture and provided a highly visible example of the economic-cultural changes then underway in Vancouver” (Mitchell, 1997, p.163).

The common consequence in these examples of design transplantation is the creation of a sense of exclusivity, autonomy and independence. This sense is part a result of the design transplantation approach, which places secondary consideration on the local heritages and professional cultures of the participants involved in a given development.

b. The Cultural Flow Model

The second approach to multicultural land development, which arose in the design chronology of the International Village case study, is modelled after Vancouver City’s Cooperative Planning Approach. This approach, which emphasizes community involvement, participation and open communication, is an approach that the City of Vancouver has adopted in many of their contemporary successful land developments. In this thesis, the second approach to multicultural planning is termed the cultural flow approach. Using Vancouver’s Cooperative Planning Approach as an example, this thesis elaborates on the cultural flow approach with reference to Intercultural Communication theory, which aims at establishing effective, mutual, and coordinated communication between people of different cultures. With illustration of the many past successes of the Cooperative Planning Approach in Vancouver, the cultural flow approach is proposed as an alternative to design transplantation as a means to negotiate a set of culturally diverse but cohesive design and architectural norms.
**Vancouver Planning Ideology**

In 1985 the City of Vancouver Planning Department adopted the Cooperative Planning Approach for the development of major downtown projects. There had been criticism of the lack of community involvement and the slow procedural pace of previous large developments in Vancouver. The Cooperative Planning Approach sought to remedy this issue by placing an emphasis on negotiation and communication:

"The process starts with a basic understanding of the site and its context...the developer's objectives and the interests and concerns of nearby neighbours and the general public.

"Throughout the process, issues are addressed as early as possible...this timely check-back confirms the direction of planning work.

"The process involved broad consultation through all stages and includes, for example, open houses, workshops, surveys and charettes...Public consultation is tailor made to each community's needs and the nature of the proposal" (Planning Department, 2000, p.1).

Vancouver’s Cooperative Planning Approach places an emphasis on understanding the history and context of the space of development, as well as understanding the motivations of the developer (which could be culturally influenced). The Cooperative Planning Approach emphasizes continuous communication and underscores the importance of community participation in the negotiation of a new development. The Cooperative Planning Approach also recognizes the variability of every development, the variability of every space of development, and the variability of the participants involved in a development project. In recognition of these multiple levels of uncertainty, the Cooperative Planning Approach hazards against generalizations or assumptions about development styles and norms. This approach runs contrary to the generalized philosophies of design transplantation, which, as illustrated, attempts to recreate culturally specific styles in varying geographies.
The City of Vancouver adopted a communicative Cooperative Planning Approach-like ideology for several of its successful development initiatives. A proposal for a Chinatown freeway in the late 1960's, and several proposals to add a third crossing of Burrard Inlet were overturned after community consultation demonstrated extreme reservations were voiced by a large majority of Vancouver citizens (Gutstein, 1975, p.152-168). Moe recently, Concord Pacific depended on several workshops, public consultation meetings and surveys for the development of Yaletown and False Creek North. The same processes were also used for the development of eight mini-city centres along the Vancouver SkyTrain route in communities such as “Metrotown in Burnaby, Lonsdale in North Vancouver and Haney Town Centre in Maple Ridge” (Oberlander, 1998, p.249).

The private architects, planners and the City used the Cooperative Planning Approach in the early stages of design and planning for the International Village, however, design transplantation was used in the final plans. The success of the Cooperative Planning Approach, which was experienced in other Vancouver urban developments, may have been achieved had Henderson chosen to maintain the initial negotiated multicultural planning approach.

**Cultural Flow Model**

The cultural flow model was an approach developed, which ensured cultural preservation and expression of all parties involved (Crane, 2002, p.7). Intercultural Communication theorists further expanded on the cultural flow model to elaborate a set of means of establishing effective communications between people of different cultures.
(Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey, 1988, p.32). Although this model is used mostly for communication, the cultural flow model could be applied to urban design, architecture and developments in a multicultural city such as Vancouver where intercultural communication between developers, planners, architects and designers of differing professional cultures is becoming increasingly frequent. A deeper exploration into the cultural flow approach will add depth to the previously discussed elements of Vancouver's Cooperative Planning Approach. This discussion will flesh out more characteristics of an approach, which has been shown to lead to multicultural, yet cohesive developments in Vancouver.

The Cultural Flow approach evolved from intercultural communication theory and parallels the Vancouver’s successful Cooperative Planning Approach. Arjun Appadurai (1990, p.295-310), Diana Crane (2002, p.7), Fred Casmir (1978, p.246-254), William Gudykunst and Stella Ting-Toomey (1988, p.17-31), and Y.Y. Kim (1977, p.66-77), argued that the cultural flow model of cultural globalization corresponded to a view of cultures as a network with no clearly defined centre or periphery. The cultural flow model placed less emphasis on power relations, as is the case with many of the other models of cultural globalisation, by giving equal significance to the cultural motives as is given to the economic motives of an individual or company.\footnote{As the notion of giving equal weight to cultural and economic motives, is innate in the definition of the cultural flow approach, this thesis will not discuss issues of class and power relations.}

The cultural flows model of cultural globalisation places an emphasis on negotiation, hybridisation, fluidity and evolution of cultures, and regional and national corporations. It
focuses on accepting that each cultural interaction is different and constantly changing and not necessarily comparable with any other given interaction. As such, the model suggests a focus on understanding as much as possible about context, history, present state, and future motivations of the participants within any cultural negotiation. Fred Casmir elaborated on the phenomenon of "third culture building" as the desired result of the cultural flow approach. Third culture building:

"move[s] away from the study of established, identified individual...systems (generalizations) within participating cultures or nations, to a model which focuses on the situational, interactional communication processes between individuals from various nations or cultures. I am advocating the conscious development of a multi-cultural systems-construct applicable to specific communicative interaction. It appears to me that this would allow us to see the communications process more readily as something different from, or consisting of more than its original component parts." (Casmir, 1978, p.249-250).

In third culture building, Casmir hazards against generalizations about communication processes in different cultures. He emphasizes that communication processes are influenced by numerous, and constantly evolving, external factors that extend beyond simply the histories of the involved cultures. Casmir’s theory applies to this thesis, which attempts to underscore the situational variability of any multicultural land development endeavour and the resultant necessity of a development approach that emphasizes continuous cultural negotiation, communication and understanding in every different case.

As referred to by Wichert, Y.Y. Kim elaborated on the cultural flow model with reference to the notion of "intercultural identity". Similar to third culture building, intercultural identity, “is used to identify an individual’s ability to grow beyond their original culture and
encompass a new culture, gaining additional insight into both cultures in the process” (Wichert, 2003). A development approach, which focuses on self-reflexivity and empathy may also result in more intercultural understanding.

Essential to the sense of unity and social cohesion\textsuperscript{12} that results from the cultural flow approach, Kim identifies that “communication is crucial; it provides the fundamental means by which individuals develop insights into their new environment” (Kim, 1977, p.68). Gudykunst also reinforced the importance of communication and understanding in intercultural relations: “Understanding involves the interpretation of incoming stimuli and the ability to describe, predict, or explain these stimuli, including others’ behaviour...Communication ultimately is based upon understanding and habits, intentions or affect” (Gudykunst, 1988, p.37).

The essential elements of the cultural flow model, which can be applied to a multicultural cityscape development approach, are: a focus on intercultural communication; the negotiation of design visions, and an understanding of the cultures, histories and heritages of all the parties involved in a development. These theories parallel Vancouver’s Cooperative Planning Approach, which, as discussed, was adopted in several successful contemporary land developments in Vancouver. These planning

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\textsuperscript{12} I often refer to cohesion as an important element in a multicultural cityscape. When I refer to cityscape cohesion I do not mean to suggest a uniform cityscape aesthetic. Cohesion in my thesis “involves a definition of who is in and who is not, to whom members of society owe solidarity and to whom they do not (Jensen, 2002, p.143.)” My use of cohesion is a sense of non-exclusive visual diversity (everyone is in no one out), which is a result of mutual recognition, identification and respect established among cultures through open intercultural communication.
elements may lead to the development and the production of a sense of cultural diversity, yet, cohesiveness.

This thesis proposes that any successful development or expansion of space in a multicultural city, such as Vancouver, is at least partly dependent on the successful negotiation and understanding that is achieved between the backgrounds and professional cultures of all the participants involved. This thesis suggests that the cultural flow approach may be an appropriate approach to multicultural city developments as it involves a situation-specific analysis that is attentive to the cultural complexities of the development history, context, vision, and professional cultures of all the participants in a development.
Chapter Three
Hong Kong Historical Literature Review

a. Hong Kong Retail Consumption

The next section provides a brief history of the expansion of malls in Hong Kong. This section then compiles a list of Hong Kong retail design, architecture and marketing characteristics. These characteristics will be referred to in Chapter five to illustrate how the final design of the International Village retail complex is infused with elements of Hong Kong mall design. In following with a cultural flow approach, this information will also help comprehend the origins of the design, marketing and architectural vision of the mall, as well as the professional culture of Henderson Developments. This chapter elaborates an informed framework of understanding for the case study, by elaborating on the history, context, and culture from which the design, architecture and marketing norms of the Hong Kong developer emerged.

The expansion of malls in Hong Kong emerged from a different history than the expansion of malls in North America. Malls were initially built to cater to transient and cosmopolitan tourists when Hong Kong was established as an Asian tourist hub in the 1960's. During that decade, Hong Kong, although a colony of Britain was the closest neighbour to communist China, and Hong Kong's "exotic appeal" established the country as a tourist hub. Shopping malls subsequently began to be built to cater to the growing tourist population. Patrick Mullins described "tourist urbanization" as a shift in urban
planning policy that occurred in the 1960’s as city planning in Hong Kong was refocused towards nurturing the growing tourist industry (Mullins, 1999, p.210).

Since the growth of malls in Hong Kong was initiated by non-locals and tourism, and not by the demands of the local population, then few locals could afford to shop in early malls. Tai-Lok Lui explained that prior to the early 1970’s Hong Kong citizens purchased little beyond daily necessities, and goods sold in malls, “were associated with a lifestyle beyond the reach of ordinary people” (Lui, 2001, p.30).

Consumer goods sold in early Hong Kong malls fell into two categories that were furthermore distanced from Hong Kong consumers: 1) high end global brand name products and 2) tourist goods that sold a processed and false "Chineseness". Lui explained the effects of tourist souvenirs on local Hong Kong citizens:

“In the eyes of the locals, these souvenirs were hardly something close to their own cultural experiences of Hong Kong. By going to the areas that overseas visitors frequented, Hong Kong people came to understand those others, but in the process of knowing others, the locals found it difficult to locate their own selves. They could not find their own identity in the tourist merchandise displayed on the shelves of these shopping centres in the tourist areas. The so-called Chineseness of the tourist merchandise was a “Chineseness” that the local Chinese felt unfamiliar with...this tourist merchandise became a source of alienation—reminding the locals, particularly the local young people, of their rootlessness of being Chinese but growing up in a British colony” (Lui, 2001, p.29).

In the 1960’s a new cultural identity emerged in Hong Kong. The identity was characterized by a new generation of younger cosmopolitan urban citizens gaining employment and contributing to increased household incomes. Many Hong Kong
households were multigenerational and with this shift in employment trends, for the first time, households acquired disposable incomes that could be spent on luxury items rather than exclusively on family needs. Lui described how malls, which were previously marketed entirely to the high incomes of the tourist populations, became integral and foundational in defining consumer trends of local Hong Kong citizens: “We can see how the shopping mall culture, which was shaped by the development of the tourist industry, subsequently began to develop into a cultural frame of mind focusing on commodity consumption and class/status identities built upon that basis” (Lui, 2001, p.25-26).

Gordon Matthews explained in detail the intertwining of retail consumption with culture and identity in Hong Kong:

“Consumption [in Hong Kong], as many thinkers today discuss, is not simply a matter of economics, but of culture; it is not simply a matter of exchanging goods, but more, of meanings and symbols. (...) If we define consumption in a very broad way as the process through which some goods, information, and ideas, are selected from among many others to be made a part of oneself and symbolically utilized, then consumption becomes no longer a matter only of meanings that are linked to goods; rather, consumption may become wholly a matter of meaning” (Matthews, 2001, p.288-289).

Consumption and shopping in Hong Kong are heavily integrated with culture and identity formation and malls, as centres of consumption, also act as centres of culture and identity formation:

“Indeed, the term “shopping” takes on a special meaning in Hong Kong as such an activity has developed from a functional necessity and a simple pastime into an integral aspect of the Hong Kong way of life, so much so
that shopping can be said to have become a quintessential characteristic of local culture” (Lau Sin and Yin, 1997, p.40).

As the local population with disposable incomes expanded in Hong Kong, the “types” of malls and the markets to whom malls catered also expanded. Malls in Hong Kong began catering to both the tourist population and locals, and malls in Hong Kong began to evolve into a sort of culturally hybrid space—a space that appealed to more than one culturally specific consumer population. Lui described the design elements of Ocean Terminal, the first mall built in Hong Kong in 1966, which was marketed to tourists but also appealed greatly to locals:

“Ocean Terminal was also a meeting point for young intellectuals [the new working class]. This, to some extent was a paradox. On the one hand, (...) young people found the tourist atmosphere and the artificial construction of “Chineseness” displayed in the shopping centre to be highly alienating. On the other hand, however, the equally artificial construction of a so-called Western and modern outlook in Ocean Terminal was found relaxing, permissive and even progressive” (Lui, 2001, 36-37).

Current Hong Kong retail design and architecture has evolved past a strictly dualistic cultural market. Malls in Hong Kong now cater not only to tourists but also to the different class divisions among local Hong Kong consumers. As Matthews explained, the design and architecture of modern malls is becoming increasingly diversified: “Hong Kong has many kinds of malls—malls for upper class expats, malls for middle-class Hong Kong Chinese, malls for working-class people” (Gordon Matthews, personal communication, May 6, 2003).
The two dominant types of malls in Hong Kong can be summarized as the early cosmopolitan Hong Kong malls, which cater to tourist and high-income consumers, and the local-oriented malls, which grew out of the cosmopolitan model, but which also cater the more specific wants of local Hong Kong consumers.

b. Types and Characteristics of Modern Malls in Hong Kong

Modern Hong Kong malls have design and architectural characteristics that are culturally distinctive to Hong Kong. These characteristics are compiled in the next section and used in Chapter five to illustrate how the final design plans for the International Village illustrate a transplantation of Hong Kong design and architectural norms.

Retail Design

Tourism, a colonial history, and the globalization of the city are major factors in the contemporary shape of Hong Kong mall retail design. As a result of the tourist influence in Hong Kong, merchandise sold in early malls was mainly international and brand name goods (Lui, 2001, p.38). This trend also emerged from the early influences of tourism on the consumption industry. In the 1960’s, tourism was oriented to jet setters and cosmopolitans who were more interested in an “exotic experience” rather than the real experience. This lifestyle aesthetic has become embedded in Hong Kong consumer lifestyle and is reflected in the retail design of cosmopolitan malls which trade in high-end, elite international designer labels. Tourists wanted a balance between the comforts and familiarity of international luxuries with the “mystery and intrigue” of the Far East.
The power of the tourist market furthermore influenced the economies and market values of various consumption spaces in Hong Kong. As a certain Hong Kong quarter became trendy and fashionable among the tourist population, these non-local consumers would bring in higher disposable incomes and subsequently influence the micro-economies of districts within the city. The popularity of the disco region of Lang Kwai Fong illustrates the creation of a space that became popular with the international population and subsequently stood apart from integration with the local population due to the tailoring of their services to the wallets of tourists (Cheng, 2001, p.243). This phenomenon was also reflected in the expansion of cosmopolitan malls that featured high-end retail and services catering to the wants and wallets of tourists.

Although the types of malls developed in Hong Kong have diversified, one of the dominant “types” of malls in Hong Kong is a style rooted in the influences of colonial tourism, and retailing high-end cosmopolitan and brand name goods and services. Two major shopping regions in modern Hong Kong are prime illustrations of this cosmopolitan-type of Hong Kong mall. Harbour City is located in the shopping district of Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. Harbour City is home to several malls including: Ocean Centre, Ocean Galleries, Ocean Terminal, the Hong Kong Hotel Arcade, and the new Gateway Shopping Arcade. The Harbour City mall complex contains elite retail stores such as Louis Vuitton, Salvatore Ferragamo and Gucci flagship stores, and the complex also markets their merchandise to both locals and tourists:

"Located in one of the most densely populated commercial districts in Hong Kong, Harbour City is not only surrounded by world class hotels, but also, nearby the only cruise liner terminal in Hong Kong. This prime site makes Harbour City the best place to entice shoppers both locally and from afar" (Leasing, 2003; Reiber, 2003, p.122).
Central is a second major shopping district of Hong Kong where the Landmark and Prince’s Buildings feature retail that caters to tourists and high-income locals. These malls “boast boutiques selling jewellery, clothing, leather goods and more, with names ranging from A Testoni, Bvlgari, Cartier, and Chanel to Christian Dior, Fendi, Gucci, Kenzo, Helmut Lang, Lanvin, Louis Vuitton, and Tiffany & Co. Central is also a good place to shop for Chinese imports and souvenirs, especially at the hip Shanghai Tang and the Yue Hwa Chinese Products Emporium” (Reiber, 2003, p.123).

Hong Kong-based stores have also adopted the “international influence” for retail outlets by reproducing international models of retail design and fashions for local consumers:

“From the design to the marketing strategies, the element of Eurocentrism is hard to ignore. Local fashion designers still very much emulate the designs of the “centre”, and the rate at which local fashion manufacturers copy catwalk style is efficient to say the least” (Chan, 2001, p.149).

The use of cosmopolitan and international images of places of consumption in Hong Kong retail design is also related to the country’s colonial history. Gordon Matthews argues that citizens of Hong Kong lacked a sense of ownership towards the physical territory due to colonization and as such, Hong Kongers did not develop a sense of economic responsibility or loyalty to purchase local goods and services until the country returned to China in 1997 (Yu and Albaun, 2000, p.1). Matthews explained,

“Until 1 July 1997, Hong Kong was one of the world’s last and wealthiest colonies, a colony of a distant country toward which most in Hong Kong felt little national sentiment. Hong Kong middle-class people have mostly been consumers in the global cultural supermarkets in recent decades, since no state has moulded them into patriotism and cultural nationalism” (Matthews, 2001, p.295).
Another element that has led to the proliferation of high-end retail in Hong Kong has been the city's continuing mandate and vision to strive towards development into a "world city". In 1990, the Territorial Development Strategy Review evaluated a government commission planning publication that was to serve as a comprehensive and coordinated guide to planning in Hong Kong from 1990-2001 (Environmental Protection Department, 1995). The Review focused on developing Hong Kong along its growing sectors of finance, business, information and tourism. As predicted by world city theorists Friedman and Sassen, however, recent results of this future-oriented mandate in Hong Kong have been the increased polarization of incomes (Sassen, 1991, p.284-293; Friedman, 1986, p.21-26).

"The polarization between the rich and the poor has increased sharply since 1971. The income of the highest income bracket and the lowest income bracket is, on average, 38 times that of the lowest" (Yeung, 1997, p.253).

The divide between the very high income and the very low income has increased and led to a service sector that specializes in amongst other things, the retailing of high-end goods.

As illustrated, no matter the increasing diversification of markets, Hong Kong malls, still retain strong elements of their cultural origins from influences of tourism and early international relations and these "mega malls have come to shape the experience of shopping for most Hong Kong people" (Lui, 2001, p.40).
As discussed, common elements of Hong Kong retail design include: the retailing of international and brand name goods, the availability of high end specialized services, use of images of international places of consumption, and, in certain malls, retail marketing that caters to tourists and high income locals before it caters to general local consumer trends.

**Architecture**

The colonial history and the globalization of the city have also influenced the architectural norms of contemporary Hong Kong malls.

The architecture of Hong Kong malls reflects the globalization of the city through the popularisation of globalized styles ahead of styles that are rooted in a Hong Kong architectural aesthetic. By generalizing and universalizing the architecture of malls, developers assure a space of comfort and security where tourists feel confident and comfortable spending their money. Elements of globalized architecture include the use of glass, aluminium, stainless steel, copper, titanium, and varieties of natural stone (Khan, 2003, p.1; Lewis 2003, p.2).

Akbar Abbas argues that Hong Kong architecture presents more “space” than “place.” Abbas suggests that “place” architecture is design that is rooted in heritage, history and culture (1994, p.442). It is embedded in a time and space or a history and geography. Placeless architecture, which is common in Hong Kong, is less spatially bound and more international, global, and universal. Abbas proposed a theory for the pedigree of “placeless architecture” in Hong Kong:
"Hong Kong continues to be a port in the literal sense of the word: a door, a threshold, a conduit through which goods, currencies and information flow a kind of nodal-point, an in-between state; therefore more of an international city than an international one. Globalization has not radically changed Hong Kong's port mentality. In contrast to international cities like New York, London or Tokyo, which are central for the production of goods and culture, Hong Kong is primarily a space of facilitation" (Abbas, 1994, p.447).

Hong Kong's role as an intermediary space rather than a culturally rooted place generates an architectural aesthetic that is flexible and malleable; able to conform and integrate with the influences imported and borrowed from many places and which appeal to many people (locals and non-locals). Placeless buildings are buildings that can be found “almost anywhere in the world. They seem to have just landed on their sites out of nowhere” (Abbas, 1994, p.454).

Hong Kong architecture is characterized, not only by its lack of “place” or geography but also by its lack of reference to time which leads to a lack of reference to heritage or history. Abbas explains that architecture which makes reference to geographically specific time periods, or moments in history, creates a reference in time, anchors a city, and gives the space a sense of heritage and a contextualized identity. Architecture that has been recontextualized—borrowed from specific histories or periods of other cultures—is also common in modern Hong Kong architecture and creates a hodgepodge of culturally diverse histories and time references:

“...the space of Hong Kong is a space of uneven development in a specific sense: a space transversed by different times and speeds, where change has no clear direction but is experienced as a series of
With an inability to anchor itself in the past, in a history, Hong Kong architecture often has a futuristic nature. Hong Kong architecture is often an attempt to be ahead of the race by creating a space or a mark on the landscape that no other place or person has yet created. Abbas also explained that Hong Kong's colonized history creates a sense of an occupied history where the result seems to be a forward looking orientation since the future is a place that has not been occupied and is free to be shaped as Hong Kongers want.

When Hong Kong architecture attempts to make reference to elements of culture or history, it often comes across in the form of nostalgia or decoration. With a history rooted in tourism and colonialism, and a lack of embedded local culture, references to history and culture in Hong Kong architecture become spectacles and pastiches of borrowed histories and cultures; one's that can be traded and sold, glorified and "shown-off."

This element of spectacular and commodified cultural reference is furthermore illustrated by the Hong Kong definition of "international." Hong Kong's definition of the term "international" is a selective internationalism. "People always boast about what an international city Hong Kong is, but this is hypocritical, since actually we only include those politically and economically strong countries as past of the "international", and treat other people as if they were invisible" (Gordon Matthews, personal communication, May 6, 2003). The Hong Kong definition of "international" is one that defines cultural
relevance according to a culture’s economic value and power, rather than by culture for culture’s sake. This is reflected, as mentioned, in the retail design of Hong Kong malls that present images of major tourist shopping hubs (e.g.: Tokyo, London, New York), to enhance the sense of internationalism.

Hong Kong architecture tends to lack references to a specific time or place, and as such architecture also tends to lack a sense of legitimacy and authenticity when it attempts to make reference to culture or history. As such, Hong Kong architecture tends to adopt a self-conscious need to “prove itself”. In addition to nostalgia and spectacle, Hong Kong architecture therefore also tends to be “capital and phallocentric. Placeless buildings do not look local, but they are highly vocal. They do not so much tell a story as make a rhetorical, usually phallocentric point: I am the tallest or the smartest or the most contemporary or the most expensive” (Abbas, 1994, p.455). The running contest to build the tallest and largest corporate tower in Hong Kong is representative of this egotistical attitude and is partly a result of the insecurity attitude towards cultural self-identification.

The architectural characteristics of modern Hong Kong malls include: the use of global architectural styles and materials; the theme of placelessness; the use of borrowed cultural images; a sense of timelessness resulting from a lack of historical references; a futuristic orientation; a sense of nostalgia and superficiality; a spectacular, phallocentric and entertainment orientation, and a reference to a selective internationalism.
Chapter Four
Case Study Part One—context, chronology and analysis of early designs

1. Context

a. Introduction for Early Design and Architectural Plans

Chapter four begins by presenting description of the site and demographics to contextualize the case study. This chapter also details the acquisition of the International Village lands by Henderson Developments. This chapter also provides a brief description of Henderson Development and their other retail endeavours inside and outside Hong Kong to illustrate the company’s history of constructing characteristically Hong Kong malls.

Through the use of interviews with architects, designers and planners, and through a close reading of design plans and architecture plans, this chapter then develops a chronology of the early visions of the retail design and architecture of the International Village retail complex. This chronology, from 1989 to 1996, reveals the evolution of the development approach for the International Village retail complex, which transformed from a locally conscious, cultural flow approach that exhibited an awareness of Vancouver consumers, towards a design transplantation approach that reproduced a transplanted Hong Kong-style mall. This chapter also contributes to the overall goal of the thesis by presenting a methodology that acknowledges the cultural complexities of
the planning and development process in a multicultural city. The chronology draws on the contexts and history elaborated in chapters two and three to ground theories of intercultural communication in a practical application.

b. History of Site Acquisition

In May of 1988, Concord Pacific Developments won the bid for the purchase of 204 acres (80 ha) on which the 1986 World Exposition had been held. The land parcel, which wrapped the North Shore of False Creek, was previously owned by BC Place Corporation, a crown corporation established by the B.C. provincial government in a privatisation initiative to deal exclusively with the sale of the Expo lands. Concord Pacific was a publicly traded Canadian land holdings company that was created in 1987 for the purpose of redeveloping the old 1986 World Exposition lands. At the time of purchase the key shareholders in Concord Pacific were Li Ka-Shing (President, Concord Pacific Developments), Cheng Yu-Tung (Chairman, New World Developments), and Lee Shau Kee (President, Henderson Developments Ltd).
The parties that made up Concord Pacific paid $320 million for the Expo lands. After the provincial government accepted the onus of payment scheduling and site remediation, however, the actual cost more closely approximated $125 million (Olds, 2001, p.320).

Lee Shau Kee, president of Henderson Developments Canada Ltd. subsequently purchased the single parcel of land located at the east end of Pacific Blvd. between Beatty and Quebec known as International Village. Lee purchased the parcel of land from Concord Pacific for $54 million (O'Brien, 1994, p.3).

1. Profile of Henderson and Shopping Mall Investments

Henderson Developments Canada is a sub-entity of the larger Henderson Land Group. Henderson Land Group is comprised of seven entities that are listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong: Henderson Land Development Company Limited, Henderson...

Although Henderson’s primary business ventures are within the Hong Kong land development market, the company also owns two major shopping centre investments in Hong Kong: the Miramar Shopping Centre and the Citistore chain of department stores. Miramar is the largest shopping mall on Nathan Road Tsim Sha Tsui, a major shopping district of Hong Kong. The upper-scale mall is “designed to appeal to tourists” and retails trendy and designer labels (Miramar Prospectus). Citistore is a chain of six large department stores in Hong Kong. These department stores cater primarily to middle class Hong Kong consumers but are currently planning to expand their retail offerings to higher market consumers:

“Our target customers in these districts are mainly middle income group in a household base. In the next stage, we have expanded our market to Tsim Sha Tsui and our target customers are [changing] from household family to white collars and office ladies. At the end of this century, Citistore has penetrated into a newly developed town with large base of middle class household - Tseung Kwan O (...) Recently, after the launch of "New Young Plaza", new Cosmetics and Accessories department at Tsuen Wan Store, we have developed a new market base of the young and office ladies” (Citistore Prospectus, 2003).

Henderson’s shopping malls cater to tourists and local Hong Kong consumers. The mall prospectuses’ present large, showy shopping centres that retail international-style
boutiques and have a focus on brand name fashions. In Hong Kong, the malls that Henderson develops and manages are characteristic of contemporary Hong Kong malls.

Henderson also owns one mall in Coquitlam, Henderson Centre, which was constructed just prior to the development of the International Village Retail Complex in 1996. Although Henderson explained that Henderson Centre was not to be an exclusively Asian Mall like the Aberdeen Centre or The Yaoshun Centre in Richmond, Jun Nan explained that the location of the mall meant that the consumer population in the immediate geography had to be “Asian in flavour” (Nan 1999). Nan explained that:

“The intention of this project is to serve the increasing number of new immigrants, especially those from Taiwan and Hong Kong in the surrounding area, particularly in Westwood Plateau. The shopping centre is trying to promote a mix of both “Asian” and mainstream tenants, and to encourage English as the main language to be used in the Centre. The regulation of the display signs in the Centre will ensure that non-Asian customers are not alienated” (Nan, 1999, p.76).

Although Henderson Centre attempted to market to the local English-speaking consumer population of Vancouver, Nan argues that the mall did fit the profile of a transplanted Hong Kong mall by catering retail to the cultural niche of middle class Hong Kong and Chinese immigrants (Nan, 1999, p.77).

The retail endeavours that Henderson has pursued in Hong Kong and Vancouver illustrate that the company has a history of developing traditional Hong Kong style malls that cater to the specific niche of Chinese consumers and incorporate Hong Kong retail architectural and design norms.
2. Description and Context of Site Development

The entire International Village lands cover 20.4 acres (8 ha) on the northeast shore of False Creek. The International Village is bound by Pender Street, to the north, Quebec Street on the east, Pacific Boulevard on the south, and Beatty Street to the west. The land is spatially located to the south of historic Gastown, to the west of Chinatown, and lies to the east of the Vancouver central business district (CBD).

Figure 3 International Village Boundary; Red dot indicates location of Retail Complex (Figure 1 from International Village CD-1 Guidelines.)
City Hall delineated the original development vision for the larger area of False Creek North (the parcel of land on which International Village is located) in the False Creek Policy Broadsheets on August 30th, 1988, which were refined and officially adopted by the City as the False Creek North Development Plan (FCNDP) on April 10, 1990. The result of the FCNDP was the creation of a list of “seven design principles” that would guide any development within that space. These essence of these guidelines was that any development on False Creek North should integrate with the city, complement and integrate with the setting and neighbourhoods, create neighbourhoods, and have a particular focus on children (Vancouver, 1990, p.10).

This case study focuses specifically on the International Village Retail Complex\(^{13}\) located at the corner of Pender and Abbott Streets. Pender Street binds the complex to the north, Taylor to the east, Keefer to the south and Abbott to the West. According to private and public development sketches and plans, the retail space is termed “Lot E”. Henderson scheduled the construction of the retail complex in the second phase of construction after the construction of the Keefer Steps and the Paris Place Complex\(^{14}\) at the northeast corner of Abbott and Keefer.

\(^{13}\) The International Village Retail Complex is sometimes colloquially referred to as Tinseltown after the name of the Cinemark cinemas located on the third floor of the complex.

\(^{14}\) The Keefer Steps were designed as a pedestrian walkway connecting Keefer to Cambie passing by the Stadium Sky train station. Paris Place is located at the corner of Abbott and Keefer and comprises predominantly of a residential tower and some commercial and office space.
3. History of Design Evolution

The early stages of the design and architecture followed a cultural flow approach to multicultural cityscape developments in several respects. Philip Boname envisioned the development of a culturally inclusive mingling space, which reflected the dominant cultures of Vancouver. Interville Architects worked directly with the City of Vancouver and with Vancouver citizens to negotiate a socially conscious vision for the mall. It was not until the second set of revamped designs, produced by Interville in consultation with Henderson, that the International Village mall began to show more obvious transplanted characteristics of a traditional Hong Kong-style mall.
a. Stage 1—Phil Boname and Stanley Kwok (Concord Pacific)

Although it was never sketched, drafted or carried out, one of the first concept plans for the International Village Retail Complex was brainstormed by Philip Boname of Urbanics Consulting, and Stanley Kwok of Concord Pacific. The original “merchandising concept” was to build a retail structure that reflected, but did not mimic Granville Island. The retailers would occupy small tenant lots that would be marketed to the diverse mix of Vancouver’s multiethnic population (Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, German, etc.) (Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 8, 2003). The retailers would be mostly smaller companies working with a “labour of love” philosophy and an enormous dedication to their product. The design would be “fine-grained villagery” (Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 8, 2003). The building was to be open concept with a retractable roof for use in the summer. The design was to be malleable and convertible (Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 8, 2003). This early vision has a small-scale focus and attempted to recreate a pedestrian oriented local community market feel.

Boname and Kwok imagined the consumers of the mall to be almost exclusively made up from the resident population of Vancouver and the marketing of the retail was to reflect that retail orientation. Profits from the tourist population would be secondary. The target consumers for this first plan for the retail space of the International Village would be a direct reflection of the internal ethnic communities of Vancouver and the retail design was to be a marketplace for the meeting and mingling of these cultural groups and communities (Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 8, 2003).
This first design was preliminary and it never evolved beyond drafts. Although the initial design and architecture of the building was modelled after Granville Island, a Vancouver tourist venue, the design reflected, as does Granville Island, the culture and nature of Vancouver and was marketed foremost to Vancouver citizens. At this early stage in the plans for the International Village retail complex, there was little example of culturally transplanted Hong Kong design, marketing and architectural characteristics.


In 1988, Interville Developments (a sub-entity of Henderson Developments Canada) drew up initial concept plans for the International Village with the help of a joint venture group of Vancouver architects and urban designers. This group adopted the title of Interville Architects and included architects from three well-known local Vancouver firms: Davidson/ Yuen/ Simpson, Downs/ Archimbault, and Baker/ McGarva/ Hart.

Interville Architects produced two design reports, one in 1989 and one in 1995. The two design reports were the Urban Design Report (Pacific Place, Vancouver B.C. (August 31st 1989), and The International Village Area Rezoning Report (March 22nd 1995). The Urban Design Report (1989) served two major functions: it parcelled the entire International Village lands into seven subunits for development (the retail complex at International Village was designated for 1.4 ha of land in sub parcel 4 (Lot E)); and it also presented the initial design and organizing principles for the development of International Village which reflected and corresponded with the guidelines set out in the FCNDP. The second document, The Rezoning Report (1995), was published five year
later and updated the initial report and development plans to correspond with several social, economic and political changes that had occurred in the first half of the 1990's.

This initial design proposal by Interville was evaluated and approved by the City of Vancouver and was published as The International Village CD-1 Guidelines in October of 1990. The City later published a second document, the CD-1 (265) International Village By-law No. 6747, which elaborated zoning provisions. The CD-1 guidelines respected the public design vision framework of the FCNDP and elaborated on the design parameters, architectural elements and planning objectives of Interville's proposals. Although the design, vision and development approach followed a cultural flow style, with negotiation and communication between both parties, these early plans were never adopted by Henderson.


Interville Architects made several comments on the architecture and retail vision for the International Village retail complex. The retail and commercial space should:

1. "Extend and enhance—not compete with—adjacent historic retail areas;

2. Add to the character diversity and ambiance of the historic area. As an attractive focus and destination place, International Village will aid in the revitalization of the surrounding precincts;

3. Be planned to provide early economic return, development momentum and the establishment of character for the area;
4. Be consistent with the scale and character of the surrounding area (International Village Architects, 1989, p.5)."

The Urban Design Report also provided details on how the design and architecture of the space would reflect the original development vision of the FCNDP:

"International Village design parameters are based on a commitment to contextual fit and the use of a building language informed by its historic setting. (...)"

"This has resulted in a rational architectural expression for International Village which references the skeletal, flat, rectangular, largely glazed frame of warehouse structures in Gastown, the more vertical proportioned by windowed and deep balconies, a perspective associated with the "Edwardian Commercial Style" buildings of Chinatown, and the bold neo-Classical Revival structures nearby, such as the Sun Tower, "Temple" banks and the CPR Station."

"The International Village building aesthetic seeks to recognize—not mimic—the architectural substance of previous built form. It avoids scenographic representation yet takes its dynamic from recurrent themes that are rooted in history and weaves them with new space programs and building expression" (International Village Architects, 1989, p.7).

Interville Architects elaborated a design for the retail complex, which paralleled the locally conscious initial retail design vision of Kwok and Boname. The architecture and design reflected the negotiated, culturally conscious, communication-rich cultural flow approach to development in several respects. Unlike the “placeless” character of Hong Kong architecture, the structure was not to simply copy the surrounding built form. Instead, it was to merge and adapt an integrated but unique personality—to develop into an anchored place with reference to history and local character. By planning for an
“early economic return” the retail complex was present focused as it was to be marketed to the immediate consumers of local neighbourhoods, not future consumers. Interville Architects explained that the design was not to have a spectacular, synthetic, extravagant or “scenographic representation.” The complex was to be a genuine and authentic integration of the surrounding neighbourhoods and architectural styles.

The initial Interville architecture and design vision for the International Village did not fit the profile of a traditional Hong Kong mall. This early design for the mall illustrated a local orientation and, unlike the “placeless spaces” of Hong Kong, the design attempted to connect with the time and place of Vancouver’s rooted history. The spectacular, nostalgic, futuristic, and phallocentric elements of many Hong Kong malls are also not apparent in this early stage of the design chronology. The Interville designs specifically warned against any spectacular or scenographic elements and the design emphasized integration, connection, equality and concern for heritage.

The design furthermore made no reference to marketing to any particular culture or ethnicity, as do many transplanted Asian malls in Richmond and the suburbs. The Interville design was aware of the demographics and geography of the local immediate consumer population of Vancouver at this stage of the design and architecture.

The first stage of development on the International Village lands, which involved the construction of the Paris Place residential tower and the Keefer Steps, took place between 1990 and 1995. By 1995 when the second phase of construction was to take place, the phase involving the construction of the retail complex, the demographics and landscape of the development site and neighbourhoods had changed. Henderson expressed that the early plans were no longer appropriate for the space, and they also expressed that the early plans had not entirely captured Henderson’s desired design vision (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003). As a result, in 1995, Henderson requested that Interville Architects produce a second updated proposal and design plan.

**Design and Planning Changes due to Demographic Transformations**

Interville Architects held a rezoning workshop in March of 1995 to consider the demographic changes that had occurred in Vancouver and, following a Cooperative Planning Approach, involved participation from local designers and architects, representatives from the City, and input from local citizens. The International Village Area Rezoning Report was released subsequent to the workshop and the Report revised the mall plan and vision to reflect the demographic changes.

The mall, which was previously to be open air, was enclosed and it adopted more commercial and retail space. The target market also became one with more of an “urban and entertainment” spirit. Market housing units increased by decreasing the average floor space, and the spatial allotment for non-market housing was shifted to a
later phase of the site development. The Rezoning Report illustrated the first steps towards a redefinition of the design vision along a more cosmopolitan globalizing nature—a nature characteristic of many contemporary Hong Kong malls.

Figure 6: International Village Rezoning Summary: Comparative analysis built form & urban design 1989 and 1995 (International Village Architects, 1995)

The initially published Urban Design Report (1989) was locally conscious and “was conceived as a single project to be built to suit the social and economic climate of the late 1980’s” (Graham McGarva, personal communication, April 4, 2003). Between the release of the Urban Design Report in 1989 and the rezoning, which occurred five years later, the neighbouring districts to the International Village site changed dramatically. GM Place was in mid construction and Interville Architects believed it “would serve as a major public destination in an emerging entertainment district” (International Village Architects, 1995, p.8). The Chinatown Parkade, housing 900 parking stalls, had been
recently built and was projected to greatly increase shopper access to Chinatown merchants (Graham McGarva, personal communication, April 4, 2003). The Woodward's building stopped service and was proposed for residential redevelopment, and B.C. Place Stadium was planning to expand its functions to include convention and trade shows and not exclusively sporting and music events (Graham McGarva, personal communication, April 4, 2003).

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In the early 1990’s, the National Housing Act (NHA) underwent several revisions and government funding for non-profit and low-income housing was greatly reduced. By 1993, federal funding for most of the major NHA programs, such as co-op housing, urban native housing and non-profit housing, were eliminated (Vancouver, 2003). The lack of funding, and subsequent lack of grants for subsidized developments resulted in a decrease in the incentive for social housing expansion. Social housing on Lot E of the International Village was shifted to a site of later development (Graham McGarva, personal communication, April 4, 2003).

Two housing trends led to a request for an increase in zoning for the number of market housing units on the International Village retail complex land. With the movement of social housing construction to a later phase of development, space became available for
an increase in market housing. A high increase in demand for urban condominiums led to another urban trend within the city, which was a decrease in the average size of high-rise living units. The market housing previously planned in townhouse form for the second and third floor of the retail complex was to be amassed into a residential tower to the southwest corner of the complex opposite Andrew Livingstone Park. This residential space was marketed to a more young, upbeat and cosmopolitan community of residents. The residential prospectus highlighted the “shopping scene”, “the café scene” and the “cinema scene.” The prospectus also mentioned the condominium’s location and proximity to the downtown entertainment district under the headline of “social scene” (Developments, 1999). At this stage in the chronology, the changes in the 1995 continued to illustrate a cultural flow approach to multicultural city developments with a willingness to negotiate with, adapt with, and consider local demographic changes.

Changes Due to Hong Kong Design Vision

Although these aforementioned demographic and social transformations contributed in part to the design and planning changes, several elements of the design evolution also began to reflect the cultural development vision of Henderson. Henderson had expressed that the early plans had not fully encapsulated their design vision and the other elements of the 1995 design plans incorporated new characteristics that mimicked traditional Hong Kong design.

Unlike the early Report, the revamped Rezoning Report made little reference to any specific local cultures that would be identified and reflected in the retail design. Instead of reflecting the “internal” cultures of Vancouver, as did the Boname/Kwok and 1989 Interville plans, the new retail image was globalized and catered to a less ethnically
specific clientele. The removal of reference to specific cultural roots and the 
generalizing and universalising of design and architecture, as explored in chapter three, 
is sometimes a characteristic of Hong Kong mall architecture and design.

As opposed to a more balanced split between residential and retail space, the plan was 
to “increase exposure and access”, focusing on developing the retail space into a “bold 
and lively Market Hall [that] is clearly celebrated as the activity centrepiece in the 
neighbourhood” (International Village Architects, 1995, p.8). Rather than creating a 
space that integrated with the surrounding districts, as described in the previous 
Interville plans, the retail complex took on a new form and was to stand out as the 
fulcrum for the neighbourhood. The suggestion by Henderson and the private planners 
that the new retail complex was to assume a role as the community focus point is 
reflective of the phallocentric and vocal style of some large-scale Hong Kong malls.

The space was to have an open market of sorts on the main floor similar to, but not 
imitating, the market-style of Granville Island. The plans also proposed shop front retail 
for the second floor, and a cinema for the third floor.

The design of the retail complex would continue to reflect the cultures of the surrounding 
districts and this was reflected in the design of the ground floor, Granville-island-like 
marketplace. In the revised Interville plans, however, the retail complex was also 
intended to serve as a “catalyst for the further vitalization of its immediate neighbours, 
Gastown and Chinatown” (International Village Architects, 1995, p.6). This was the first 
mention of a forward-looking design vision; a design vision that defined the retail
complex not as a static structure but rather as a mechanism for change and a panacea for social revitalization. This future oriented vision is demonstrative of colonial influences on elements of Hong Kong's architectural landscape. Lui explained that the theme of futuristic architecture is somewhat rooted in Hong Kong's lack of sense of history as a result of colonization (Lui, 2001, p.).

The design and architecture of the International Village, at that point, however, had not completely resigned all recognition of local Vancouver history and culture. Some negotiated elements and traces of a cultural flow approach remained. The architecture retained some historic references to the neighbouring districts. An old CP rail line cross-sectioned the building and was incorporated into the architecture to reflect the circulation routes of the shoppers. Similar to the 1989 Report, the Rezoning Report explained that the external architecture of the retail complex was to reflect the architecture of the bordering cultural precincts. The north Gastown façade, for instance, incorporated industrial elements, such as masonry elements and punched windows. The Rezoning Report repeated the element of "transparency," with the use of various glass elements, to reveal the interior activity, to project the space as a "gateway" to the International Village, and to imitate an open-air feeling in the atrium (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003).

The second Interville design plans conformed to the demographic changes that occurred in the waiting period between the first and second development phases of the International Village lands. The 1995 design and architecture, however, also altered the 1989 designs from a locally conscious design vision that was aware of the cultures and
consumers of Vancouver, to a design that illustrated some distinctive characteristics of Hong Kong architecture, marketing and design.

Henderson finally contracted Kirkor Architects, a Toronto architectural firm, to produce the final design plans for the mall in 1995. Kirkor produced the final plans and Henderson began construction in 1996. Chapter five discusses the final plan for the International Village retail complex, which illustrates a movement towards design transplantation and away from the cultural flow approach, which was represented in this chapter through the analysis of the early plans. The final plans discuss how the mall became a space that catered to a specific consumer demographic and gave secondary consideration to the realities of the neighbouring and local consumer demographics.
1. Final Designs: Kirkor Architects

   a. Introduction to Chapter: Final Stage of Development

This chapter analyses the final design of the International Village retail complex. The chapter illustrates that at the conclusion of the design chronology, the final plans produced by Kirkor Architects subscribed closely to design transplantation by displaying characteristics of Hong Kong design and architecture and catering to a niche consumer market. Compared to the two previous designs produced by Interville Architects, the design vision and architectural sketches proposed by the Kirkor Architects were much more globalized and cosmopolitan. This outward orientation of marketing and design, and turning away of concern for the immediate consumer demographics, created a more autonomous atmosphere for the mall rather than one connected with the surrounding resident communities. This case study analysis supports the goals of the thesis. First it presents, in practice, elements of a cultural flow approach to illustrate the cultural complexities of a development project in a multicultural city. Secondly it argues, at the level of the case study, that the success or failure of any development on a multicultural cityscape may be at least partly dependent on a successful negotiation between the backgrounds and professional cultures all the participants involved.
This chapter examines four sources of literature: an interview with Clifford Korman of Kirkor Architects, the Kirkor architectural sketches, the final retail marketing prospectus, and a review of media published before, during and after the construction of the complex. These sources highlight examples of transplanted Hong Kong design, marketing and architecture within the final design and architectural plans.

The media review provides positions and opinions from Allan Lai, president of Henderson, as well as Vancouver retail trend analysts, and Vancouver planners and architects. The media review also illustrates that other individuals involved in the Vancouver land development industry believed that the complex did not fit or coordinate with the culture, character and local consumer demographics of Vancouver.

b. Stage 4—Kirkor Architects: Final Design

Again, in 1995, similar to 1990, Henderson Developments did not approve the design and development plans proposed by Interville Architects. In 1994, while Interville Architects was working on the 1995 Rezoning Proposals, Lee Shau Kee approached a friend and colleague, Clifford Korman at Kirkor Architects, to provide a professional critique of the design and architectural plans produced to that point by Interville. Korman produced a nineteen-point critique that resulted in the passing of design and development responsibilities from Interville Architects over to Kirkor Architects. Henderson approved the new set of Kirkor design plans, which were completed in 1996, and construction of the retail complex was fast-tracked and cost approximately $70,000,000 (Jones, 2003).
Kirkor retained several of Interville’s original design elements in the 1995 proposal, but the language of the architectural plans and several elements of the design presented a complex with elements that corresponded to norms of Hong Kong design and architecture. The retail also targeted primarily the niche markets of Hong Kong consumers and the tourist population visiting Vancouver.

Korman explained that within any set of designs there are elements of, “what you see, what you think you see, and what you never see” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 14, 2003). The “unseen” is often the unstated vision that a developer has for a given space. Interville Architects had been unable to articulate the “unstated” design vision of Henderson, and it was not until Kirkor produced their globalized Hong Kong plans that Henderson expressed the belief that their design vision had been achieved (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 14, 2003).

Previous architects and designers, such as Boname and Interville, had proposed a local market that provided a space for social intermingling, and an architecture that incorporated the local heritage and history of the surrounding districts. In previous designs the identity of the space and target market was to reflect the cultures of the city, and the design and aesthetics of the complex were to be woven directly into the architectural fabric of the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Korman explained that the revised design and architectural plan presented by Kirkor was “one of a more defined global nature” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 14, 2003). The new design vision expanded and broadened the geographical
boundaries of the potential consumer market. Korman’s nineteen-point critique of the Interville plans focused heavily on increasing the ease of pedestrian use, and expanding and further developing internal and external open public spaces.

“This facility was only one component of a larger whole. Within this city all of these wonderful things could and would co-exist. This project was seen as a catalyst to bring about the critical mass of redevelopment needed to regenerate the neighborhood. The design was thus global in nature.” (Kirkor Architects, 1994).

The desire to create connections and extensions beyond local boundaries (globalizing) reflects the global nature of modern Hong Kong mall architecture and design.

Korman also envisioned that the International Village would act as a catalyst for the redevelopment and revitalization of the neighbourhood. The creation of an autonomous and revitalizing “mini-city” is characteristic of the future-oriented, competitive, ever-evolving, and “first-of-its-kind” nature of Hong Kong architecture. As previously discussed, however, a vision that is not discussed and coordinated with the local community is not conducive for the evolution of a unified and cohesive cityscape. The creation of the International Village as self-declared mini-city furthered the exclusivity of the space with the lack of local consideration and consultation. The “prescriptive” revitalization plan furthermore distanced the surrounding neighbourhoods who, through the revitalizing vision of the developers, were unwanted.

The Kirkor design philosophy balanced consideration for aesthetics and utility with recognition of the importance of financial viability and profitability. Kirkor adopted a
“multidisciplinary design approach creating design solutions to complex problems in the profit motivated commercially developed marketplace” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 14, 2003). The emphasis on economics had not been addressed as much in the previous designs. Hong Kong malls were first built in a period of growing global economics as well as in a time of an emerging nationhood from colonialism. As a reflection of this, modern Hong Kong mall design is often flexible, accommodating, and spectacular in attempts to draw in a large population of high-income consumers (Abbas, 1994, p.454). The revised architectural plans for the International Village replaced references to the local heritage and cultures of Vancouver with a priority in developing an adaptable economically focused identity that could evolve and harmonize alongside market shifts.

The new design was “very contemporary, light and airy”. Korman explained, “while the building had a strong skeleton, it was the onus of the tenants to provide the flesh, the theme and the more elastic identity for the space” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003). Akbar Abbas explained that “placeless” architecture and design, or design that is fixed neither in time nor space, is characteristic of the design and architecture of Hong Kong malls (Abbas, 1997, p.447). By placing the onus of identity formation on the tenants, rather than on the retail complex itself, the design, again, becomes flexible and adaptable and not tied to any specific place, culture, or time. The final design plans for the International Village reflected an atmosphere of placelessness, which is characteristic of some Hong Kong architecture.

The new design also “presented one foot in the past and one in the future” (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003). A Vancouver Sun article quoted Alan
Lai, President of Henderson Developments Canada, expressing the same philosophy “We didn’t want to build a mall of yesterday. We wanted to build the mall of the future. We want to be ahead of everybody” (Mackie, 1999, p.3). Modern Hong Kong architecture often lacks reference to history in attempts to sever ties to the memories of the country’s colonial history. The future orientation of the Kirkor designs, and of the vision of Allen Lai were indicative of the future orientation of modern Hong Kong architecture which focuses on the future as a “space” in which a unique and independent Hong Kong identity can be created.

Although the final plans retained numerous examples of Hong Kong architecture, the elements did retain some reference to a local heritage and history and should be mentioned. The brick exterior mirrored the architectural past of the industrial neighbouring Gastown, and the glass, transparency and steel reflected a forward thinking global image (Kirkor Architects, 1994). Glass and steel are also common construction materials of globalizing cities and reflect the globalizing elements of Hong Kong design (Lewis, 2003, p.3). The historic rail line that cross-sectioned the complex, was also incorporated in the design. The rail tracks approach two entrances of the building and are visually mirrored on a vertical 90-degree angle to form the framework for the glass-roofed centre spine of the complex (Clifford Korman, personal communication, April 4, 2003). The elements, however, in the scale of the entire complex were minor and secondary. Some elements of the architecture and urban design attempted to include a reference to local culture but the priority was on a dramatic, cosmopolitan Hong Kong mall design.
c. International Village Retail Marketing Prospectus

Before the grand opening of the International Village mall, Henderson published a detailed sales and marketing prospectus for the mall. The publication illustrated references to design transplantation that presented Hong Kong design, marketing and architecture norms in two ways: the retail design was characteristic of Hong Kong malls, and the mall marketed to high-income locals and, specifically, to the tourist and Chinese consumer populations of Vancouver.

The prospectus highlighted the futuristic design and the entertainment nature of the retail complex. The International Village was “retail and entertainment for the millennium” (Europa, 1995). Entertainment was further promised through the: “300,000 sq ft. of opportunities; taking retail to new levels; [with the] fashion boulevard bringing the world together; [and] shaping retail for entertainment” (Europa, 1995). Akbar Abbas described futuristic design and entertainment qualities as characteristic of Hong Kong malls. Again, Hong Kong’s lack of an independent and rooted historical identity, due to colonialism, results in a sense of a “placeless” and superficial space (Abbas, 1997, p.447).

Demographics for Success

The International Village retail prospectus presented a list of “demographics for success.” The list presents the profitable market demographics of the region of Vancouver. The demographics, however, also identify Henderson’s target consumer market, which are the immigrant Chinese population, the high-income population of Vancouverites, and the tourist population. The “demographics for success” stated:
• “500,000 people live within a five mile radius of International Village
• 80,000 people live within a two mile radius of International Village
• These households have an annual household income of $65,000
• Eight million visitors came to Vancouver in 1997
• 1997 retail sales in Vancouver approached the $20 billion mark
• [International Village is] part of a community that will eventually house over 10,000 residential units
• A major convention centre will reinforce Vancouver as the most desirable convention city
• The site is close to Vancouver’s international cruise ship terminal, which contributes millions of dollars to the city each year” (Europa, 1995).

Whereas previous retail plans oriented their marketing to the immediate consumers of the local Vancouver neighbourhoods, Kirkor and Henderson marketed the 1995 retail plans to a new more international and far-reaching population of consumers. The mall was marketed to a very liberal definition of “local” residents. The defined consumer market encompassed a 5-mile radius, which included Vancouver residents as far as North Vancouver and Richmond. The suburb of Richmond has the highest concentration of immigrant Chinese in all of British Columbia, which further illustrate the niche cultural marketing of the mall. These demographics for success also focused on the elite and cosmopolitan population of urban Vancouver by quoting a very high average income of the neighbouring consumers. The quoted average income is not reflective of the adjacent and large populations of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, nor is it reflective of the general average of Vancouver consumers (Colliers, 2000, p.3).

Had the design taken more of a cultural flow approach and considered the reality of the neighbouring demographics, the developers may have recognized the misplacement of the mall in that specific community of Vancouver for the time of its construction. The
International Village mall was built immediately to the south of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. In contrast to Henderson's marketing demographics, the average household income on the Eastside is $12,485 and the average family income is $22,686. The percentage of the population in low-income households is 80.9% and four out of five people on the Eastside are unemployed (City of Vancouver, 2003.)

Henderson's demographics for success furthermore emphasized the importance of the non-local and tourist population visiting Vancouver for business (with reference to the convention centre) and for pleasure (with its proximity to the cruise ship ports.) Kirkor's design plans expanded the retail market from local consumers to potential international consumers.

The demographics also reinforced the future orientation and revitalization of the vision, which catered to "a community that will eventually house over 10 000 residential units" rather than which does exist there currently (Europa, 1995).

**First floor: Analysis of the Marketplace**

The International Village retail-marketing prospectus presented a detailed colour image of plans for the three floors of the mall. Each floor reflected characteristics of Hong Kong design, architecture, and consumer marketing. The first floor was to be an open market with small, shop-front stores:

"It's the excitement of San Francisco, Paris, Hong Kong and Florence all in one stunning food market. Set beneath a 100-foot high glass covered atrium, colourful stalls and festive street vendors will greet shoppers along the market street that stretches an entire city block. From take-out fare to savoir-faire, people will flock to this market to take the flavours
from around the world. The vitality and excitement will create the ultimate shopping and dining experience in Vancouver” (Europa, 1995).

The Kirkor design vision was more spectacular than previous designs. The prospectus made reference to entertainment, festivities, and major international shopping cities like New York, Paris and Hong Kong. As explored in chapter three, due to Hong Kong’s colonial history, and their subsequent lack of an independent culture anchored in history, the architecture of contemporary Hong Kong malls sometimes attempts to create a sense of “place” through the use of borrowed and decontextualized international cultural images—often images of commercial hubs and tourist locales.

The prospectus marketed this first floor to a mix of local consumers, tourists, and Chinese consumers. Since the mid 80’s, Vancouverites have developed an environmentally conscious consumption attitude, which plays out in the consumption of tailored and customized foods and services (Colliers, 2000, p.2). Hong Kong malls, in attempts to cater to high-end shoppers and tourists, also retail customized services. Suggested retailers included a series of fresh food merchants such local produce vendors and specialty meat vendors as well as a pasta store and a bakery. The customs food services also catered specifically to the Chinese population of Vancouver by displaying visuals that made reference to Chinese consumption trends. Motifs included: chopsticks, traditional Chinese fruits and vegetables (e.g. durians, mangos, bok choy) and a butcher sign that illustrated a silhouetted row of BBQ ducks. The first  

15 These signs hung in front of storefronts that had not been rented in 2001. They acted as “coming soon” advertisements and listed the phone number for the Henderson leasing contact. (Photos were unavailable due to copyright.)
floor furthermore catered to the Chinese consumers of Vancouver by illustrating other potential clients such as a Chinese herbs store, an Oriental furniture vendor, and an Asian teahouse.

A section of the proposed merchants for the first floor also catered to tourist consumers by offering services such as currency exchange and photo finishing. The mall also accommodated the tourist market with nominal souvenir stores such as “pens and gadgets” and “crafts and candles.”

The references to international shopping locales, the inclusion of specialized services, and the use of culturally specific retail marketing motifs, reveals that the first floor design catered foremost to the local Chinese consumer and tourist population of Vancouver.

Second Floor: Hong Kong elite shoppers, cosmopolitans and tourists

The final design vision elaborated plans for the construction of an “International Fashion Boulevard” on the second floor of the complex. Consumption of designer fashion labels is not typical of the majority of Vancouver consumers. The plans for high-end boutiques and international brand name goods for the second floor of the retail complex display transplanted Hong Kong design and architecture norms. The high-end marketing of the space catered predominantly to a high-income minority of Vancouver.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\] I was unable to provide a copy of the retail prospectus as an appendix due to copyright issues.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\] This information was compiled from five years of Vancouver consumer report trends, 1990-1995, and published by Statistics Canada.
citizens, the tourist population and, in the manner of an Asian mall, the culturally specific niche of Chinese consumers.

The Fashion Boulevard offered exclusive high-end fashion retailers, many of which were to be the first flagship stores in Canada. The prospectus marketed the stores of the fashion boulevard to tourists:

"The Fashion Boulevard, a stunning collage of international styles and designs, provides a highly theatrical destination shopping environment. Over 50 units are available for lease. Retailers' storefronts will be set within the Boulevard's 22 ft. high ceiling. This spectacular designer promenade will draw shoppers from all over the world" (Europa, 1995).

Over the past 20 years Vancouverites have had a limited level of disposable income compared to other large Canadian cities and as such they tend to be frugal with their spending. A local Vancouver retail publication stated, "saving money is always fashionable and Canadian consumers are well known for their value shopping preference—the polite way of saying that we are cheap consumers!" (Royal LePage Advisors, 2000, p.3). Vancouverites also tend to invest what disposable incomes they have first and foremost back into their families rather than into high-end brand name luxury goods and services.¹⁸

¹⁸ This information was compiled from five years of Vancouver consumer report trends, the Survey of Household Spending (Statistics Canada, 1990-1995)
Due to the lack of disposable incomes among Vancouver consumers, retailers that tend to be most successful in the Vancouver region have been stores with low margins and high volumes (discount stores). For this reason, “the supermarket chains, green grocers, specialty stores and drug stores continue to do well selling necessities” (Royal LePage Advisors, 2000, p.3). These regional consumer trends illustrate that the proposed retail for the second floor of the International Village accommodated consumers that were not average Vancouver shoppers.

Another retail trend during the development period of the International Village was that, “the number of US and international retailers coming into the market [had] slowed. As a result, high-end retail demands in Vancouver [were] relatively moderate” (Royal LePage Advisors, 2000, p.4). This retail trend supports the misplacement of the fashion boulevard within the local consumer demographics of Vancouver. The market to which the fashion boulevard catered was beyond the fiscal boundaries of the average Vancouver consumer for the time. Given the aforementioned “demographics for success” listed in the retail prospectus, the retail marketing planned to depend heavily on the tourist population of Vancouver.

Elements of the retail design and décor of the second floor also mimicked the character of Hong Kong cosmopolitan malls. Henderson commissioned a Vancouver designer to construct an expansive wooden bulkhead that would form the upper border of the storefronts along the fashion boulevard. The façade “evoked 29 of the world’s most exciting fashion-oriented cities, countries or landmarks” (Collins, 1999, p.2). The bulkhead projected imagery of global and tourist cities and attractions such as the Statue of Liberty in New York, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Sydney Opera House, and Big Ben
in London, which were "just another part of the entertainment aspect of the whole complex" (Collins, 1999, p.4). The use of "borrowed" cultural images from different cities and the superficiality, spectacle, and entertainment experience of these cultural references are characteristic of Hong Kong malls.

The Kaleidoscope Food Fair, which was also located on the second floor, illustrated further catering to the tourist and immigrant Chinese population of Vancouver. The cultural references presented in the food fair added to the spectacle and superficiality of the other cultural references within the mall. The food fair served food with the "mystique and excitement" of their international places of origin. By marketing the "mystery" and "difference" of the diverse cultures, a distinction and exclusivity was created that is characteristic of an outside "tourist" perspective. The local culture is alienated by the reprocessed version of the original cultural reference in the same way local Hong Kong citizens were alienated by early Hong Kong tourist malls. The international exclusive exoticness also becomes the marketing point rather than, as presented within the earlier Interville plans, the inclusive comfort of the local multiethnic communities within Vancouver.

The prospectus also mentioned the inclusion of "the mystique and excitement of Dai Pai Dong" in the central food court area. Dai Pai Dong, a large Hong Kong restaurant chain owned by the Kampery Group, was to serve as the central focus of the food court. This element supports the theory that the food court on the second floor catered to, and attempted to recreate a comfortable shopping environment, for the culturally specific demographic of Vancouver's Chinese consumers.
Third Floor Theatre: “International” hybrid

The 12-screen multiplex cinema, located on the third floor of the mall, is an interesting study as it illustrates an example of a mix of local and Hong Kong marketing styles. The multiplex, which was to present an array of international films, illustrated an intercultural negotiation of the word international. Gordon Matthews argues that the Hong Kong definition of “international” often equates “American” or “Western,” whereas the North American definition of international is one based on cultural diversity (Gordon Matthews, personal communication, May 6, 2003).

Due to exclusivity rights held by two other downtown movie theatres, Cinemark at the International Village could not show first-run blockbuster movies. Instead the theatre showed international and independent films and stood as one of the only theatres in Vancouver that catered to that niche (Andrews, 1999, p.1). The theatres represented a North American definition of “international”, a more local one, which reflected the multicultural and diverse character of the population of Vancouver. Later, however, Henderson negotiated film rights to enhance the entertainment feel and theatricality of the retail design, and presented a Hong Kong definition of “international” by displaying blockbuster Hollywood films. Henderson estimated these films would “draw an estimated 1.2 million people every year” (Europa, 1995). This amalgamation of culturally distinctive interpretations of international is one of the few examples of attempted cultural negotiation apparent in the final design plans of the International Village.

The plans for the three floors of the International Village mall further illustrate distinctive examples of transplanted Hong Kong design, marketing and architectural norms. The
first floor marketplace revealed elements of Hong Kong design and marketing and catered to the cultural niche of Chinese consumers. The second floor fashion boulevard furthered the creation of an exclusive space by catering to specific demographics: Chinese consumers, high-income locals, and tourists. The third floor theatres illustrated one of the few remaining attempts at retaining some consideration of local consumers, through a cultural negotiation of the term international, but this local consideration was outweighed by the abundance of transplanted architectural and design norms.

d. Media Narrative

Early media coverage of the retail development revealed quotes and speculations by major players in the development of the International Village, which described the mall as misplaced, premature, and characteristic of transplanted Hong Kong design and architecture. The media also argued there to be a lack of recognition towards the realities of the neighbouring consumer population. The media literature fell into two categories. The first body of media commented on how the mall exhibited characteristics of Hong Kong design and architecture. The second body of media made comment on the niche marketing of the mall towards the Chinese consumer population of Vancouver. The media narrative adds further support that the success of the mall may have been partly dependent on communication, understanding and negotiation between Henderson's transplanted design and the demographic and cultural characters of the resident Vancouver population.

Mimicking Hong Kong Malls

Many articles published before and after the construction of the International Village retail complex were sceptical and critical of the appropriateness and suitability of the
Henderson retail vision (Greenwood, 2002, p.1). Vancouver retail consultant Blake Hudema questioned the "fit" and "timing" of the high-end marketing of the complex. Hudema addressed the focus on tourists and Chinese and the seeming lack of consideration towards the immediate local consumers:

"we have a large affluent Asian community that patronizes those [malls]. We have a strong tourist trade, which supports these (kind of shops)....it brings in a critical mass but it really doesn't have, at this time, a lot of complementary retail around it" (Mackie ,1999, p.2).

Several reporters and market analysts also questioned the phasing of the development and they labelled the mall as a development "ahead of its time" (Mackie, 1999, p.3; Phillip Boname, personal communication, April 4, 2003; Clifford Korman, personal communication, May 6, 2003). Alan Lai and Henderson Developments, however, were confident that the construction of residential units in the Europa Tower and in later phases of the development would provide the consumer population to feed the retail complex (Mackie, 1999, p.3).

"[The] International Village is really about the evolution of Vancouver. It will set the pace for the entire city. There is no other mall in Canada (like this), not even in the States. We are the leader, the forerunner in the mall concept. This is the first one" (O'Brien, 1994, p.1).

Allan Lai reiterated a future-oriented and precedent-setting design vision, which is characteristic of the development philosophy and of the quickly expanding landscape of Hong Kong.
Several critics also questioned the high-end retail proposed for the second floor of the mall. In a Vancouver Sun article, John Mackie commented on the “rich and upper-class” marketing of the mall. “Lai flew all over North America. He checked out the latest retail trends. And he came up with an A-list of high-end fashion retailers and designer labels. There’s even a store called Expensive” (Mackie, 1999, p.1). Mackie argued that this high-end retail marketing was not entirely appropriate for the geographical location in which the mall was constructed. As discussed in Chapter three, Lui and Cheng explained high-end retail was characteristic of Hong Kong malls because of the country’s roots as a cosmopolitan tourist hub (Lui, 2001, p.30).

A note should be made that some media praised the dedication of Henderson and their commitment and consideration towards land developments in Vancouver. The design of the International Village was strongly rooted in a desire to renew and revitalize the surrounding neighbourhoods (Mackie, 1999, p.4). The development of the mall, although conscious of costs, was not pursued simply in the name of profit. Pre construction assessments did not promise a high-yield return and so Henderson risked heavily with the development of the retail complex. Most of Henderson’s retail developments in Asia yielded a 5-year, 20% return whereas the International Village was projected to bring a return of merely two percent (O’Brien, 1994, p.3). The investment may have reflected a commitment to time and energy rather than a quick return and capital-first approach. Henderson was willing to invest the time to witness the eventual transformation of the neighbourhood, and Henderson aspired towards positive growth of the locality. Whether the revitalization strategy was a derivative of the future orientation of Hong Kong architecture, or whether it was intentional and a reflection of Alan Lai’s commitment and devotion to Vancouver is unsure. What is observed, however, is that
these quotes support the theory that the mall was "ahead of its time" which is characteristic of the future-orientation style of Hong Kong architecture and design.

**Catering to the Hong Kong population.**

A review of media literature also supported the theory that the retail design and marketing of the mall catered to the culturally specific niche of Vancouver's Chinese consumers. Trend analysts and critics saw the retail design of the complex as influenced by the culture of the developer in combination with the City's strong and growing immigrant population and market from the Pacific Rim. The International Village was:

"a new 20-acre village that would permanently bond Chinatown to downtown and may bridge Vancouver to the power centres of Asia...backed by Hong Kong cash, managed by first-generation Asian immigrants and designed and built by Vancouver talent, International Village is a robust example of Pacific Rim cooperation" (O'Brien, 1994, p.1).

Several authors raised the issue of the ethnic specificity of the retail marketing. The ground floor would have a "traditional Chinese market—think of an upscale Chinatown with parking—[which would] cover nearly a full city block with loading docks that would allow delivery trucks to drive directly into the central market to unload fresh goods for merchants" (O'Brien, 1994, p.3). The International Village mall "does have a large Asian component, and hopes to lure the Asian consumer back downtown. It will also offer 760 underground parking spots, with free parking" (for Chinese consumers commuting from Richmond or elsewhere) (Mackie, 1999, p.2).
The media review revealed mixed messages form Henderson concerning the cultural specificity of the mall marketing. Alan Lai recognized the Chinese attraction to the International Village development but he explained the intention was not deliberate, “at least 75% of our condominium buyers are Asian. We don’t try to market just to local Chinese but that is how it is shaping up” (Mackie, 1999, p.3). Lai recognized that often condominiums sold to overseas residents remain unoccupied for long periods of time, and he was later quoted as identifying the need for local residents in the International Village to build a creative and vibrant community. A different article later quoted David Ho, Interville Development’s former vice-president of sales and marketing, as stating that some of the marketing was in fact specifically aimed at Asians, “the marketing focus is on Asian Canadians of various ages living in the Lower Mainland” (Unknown 1994).

Current Affairs

Henderson is currently facing lawsuits from seven previous tenants for breach of lease, breach of fiduciary duty and misrepresentation. The mall, so glorified in the retail prospectus and promotional material, has never seen more than 35 of the available 150 commercial spaces leased at one time. The lease agreement stated that the mall would have at least an 80% occupancy rate at all times, but as this has yet to be the case, the lease is not binding and all present tenants are occupying their spaces free of charge (Allen Farber, personal communication, September 20, 2003). Given that Henderson was not making any profits from the mall at time of publication, and that since the opening of the mall the occupancy rate has never been above 30%, the mall may be considered a financial failure.
Henderson has developed numerous malls in Hong Kong and the design, the architecture and the retail marketing of the International Village illustrates numerous examples of the transplantation of norms from one culture and geography to another. The chronology and analysis of the design and architecture starting in 1989 and continuing through to the construction of the mall in 1995 support both levels of goals of this thesis. At the level of the case study, the chronology analysis demonstrates that the success and acceptance of a development project in a multicultural city may be at least partly dependent on the successful communication and understanding between the diverse design, marketing, and architectural norms of the professional cultures of the development participants. The chronology of chapters four and five support the overall goal of the thesis by presenting a detailed analysis that grounds the theories of intercultural communication and global cities, discussed in chapters two and three, in a practical and identifiable process that is attentive to the cultural complexities of the development process in a multicultural city.
Conclusion

1. Summary of Case study and Overall Goals

The growing movement of people and cultures globally has led to a mixing of cultural identities within different locales. The cityscapes of major cities, which, due to the concentration of job opportunities, often serve as the landing spots for immigrants, are becoming the canvases on which the mixing and blending of diverse cultures are being represented visually.

This thesis discussed an application of intercultural communication theories to an analysis of a multicultural land development between two professional cultural identities in the growing and globalizing city of Vancouver. The retail design, marketing and architectural vision of a Hong Kong land developer was analysed alongside the local character, culture and of the geography of Vancouver. The case study of The International Village retail complex discussed two approaches to multicultural development projects: design transplantation and the cultural flow approach. Design transplantation involves the direct and unnegotiated transplantation of culturally rooted styles of design, marketing and architecture from one geography, to another. The cultural flow approach emphasized intercultural communication and negotiation of culturally diverse design, marketing and architectural styles. Design transplantation, due to its lack of communication among the diverse participants of a development, often results in the construction of culturally autonomous spaces, whereas the communication
inherent in the cultural flow approach often results in the development of spaces that are more multicultural and diverse, yet cohesive.

The design plans for the retail complex evolved over a period of six years starting in 1989 with preliminary sketches that depicted the construction of a sort of locally mindful Granville-Island market. The early architecture and planning process subscribed to the cultural flow approach to multicultural development projects. The architecture incorporated references to the local heritage, was not imposing, and was characteristic of local styles. The development process subscribed to a cultural flow approach with the incorporation of workshops and the establishment of close working relationships between the local public, the designers, the architects, and the Hong Kong developer.

Between 1989 and 1995, however, demographic changes in Vancouver, and the inability on the part of Interville Architects to properly depict the design vision of Alan Lai, led to an evolution and transformation of the original retail design and architectural plans for the International Village mall. These mid-stage designs began to illustrate some transplanted elements of Hong Kong design, and the mall focused their marketing to the niche market of Chinese consumers and tourists.

Of the entire design chronology, the final design plans, drawn up by the Toronto-based architectural firm Kirkor Architects, depicted the most prominent elements of Hong Kong design, marketing and architecture. The adoption of the design transplantation development approach led to the construction of an autonomous space, one which retailed and appealed to the consumer niche of Chinese consumers and tourist.
population of Vancouver, rather than a communicative approach that integrated and acknowledged the spending trends and demographic character of the local Vancouver citizens.

a. Consideration of Thesis

The thesis presented the detailed analysis of the development of the International Village retail complex in Vancouver. This thesis suggested that the success and acceptance of a development project in a multicultural city may be at least partly dependent on the successful communication and understanding between the diverse design, marketing and architectural norms of the professional cultures of the development participants.

Through the analysis of the chronology of the various retail design visions and the architecture of the complex from 1989 to 1996, this thesis discussed two approaches to multicultural cityscape developments. The early, initial plans illustrated a large amount of local consideration. The eight-year period from 1989-1996 shaped a final design plan, however, that was imbued with transplanted Hong Kong design and architecture characteristics, which catered to a niche consumer market, and which gave secondary significance to the local identity of Vancouver. This discussion grounds theories of intercultural communication in a practical and visual case study that illustrates the detailed cultural complexities innate in the evolution of a development project in a multicultural city.
b. Contribution to Scholarship

A body of literature has been written concerning topics such as: globalizing architecture, retail space in different geographies, and the economic impacts of the large Asian migration onto Vancouver’s landscape. This thesis contributes to scholarship by using a detailed methodology, which grounds the theoretical fields of intercultural communications and cultural globalization within a practical application to the study of a multicultural cityscape. This thesis contributes to the emerging fields of multicultural city planning and cityscape development.

Rather than being a critical review of the failure of completed development projects to reflect the communities in which they are situated, I have attempted to study the development process itself. The case study analysis presents a methodology, which recognizes the cultural complexities involved in a development project on a multicultural cityscape. Chapter two of the thesis discusses the roots of the methodology I use in the case study, from intercultural communication theory, and chapter three discusses the history and context of Hong Kong planning which elaborate the context for the origins of the professional culture and development vision of Henderson Developments. The case study methodology I used showed that it is important to emphasize intercultural communication, negotiation and understanding for development projects within multicultural cities.

I wished to underscore the element of the cultural flow approach which states that the interaction that occurs within any given development project is dependent on so many
various and independent factors that each negotiation must be recognized as different and unique. My thesis suggests that an applied understanding of as many cultural variables as possible, among planners and developers, may result in the evolution of a more cohesive and unified multicultural cityscape.

Often the study of globalizing cities and the migration of cultures concerns power relations. While acknowledging this, I wish to reiterate that this case study, was not a study of cultural power relations, nor was it an attempt to illustrate the superiority of one retail design or architectural method over another. This case study, rather, was an attempt to illustrate an emergent phenomenon of globalization involving the interaction between diverse professional cultures and design, marketing and architectural norms for the development and expansion of multicultural cityscapes. This thesis specifically addressed the communication and interaction of the different retail design norms, architectural customs, and consumer demographics between Hong Kong and Vancouver.

This thesis presents design transplantation and the cultural flow approaches to development projects and suggests that the interaction and integration of design, marketing and architectural norms is a phenomenon that may continue as globalizing cities expand. Rather than critiquing and analysing the phenomenon of cultural blending, this thesis focuses on understanding the historical roots of culturally distinctive

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19 As mentioned, each development situation is different and one methodology may prove appropriate for one situation but not another. In this case study, design transplantation is not shown to be "wrong", rather, given an understanding of the visions of the development participants, it is shown to be perhaps inappropriate for the development of the International Village
land development approaches. I do not attempt to establish a generalized "right way" for multicultural development projects. Instead, this thesis aimed at understanding how different cultures, in a specific situation, arrived at their individual definitions of a "right way". The elements of intercultural communication and understanding, which are underscored by the cultural flow model, recognize the importance of past and present cultural factors. This holistic approach could lead to responsible future development projects in multicultural cities.

c. Contribution to Multicultural Development Project Approach

The thesis also suggests that the transplantation of design, marketing and architectural norms from different cultures may be inevitable in globalizing cities, but also that this phenomenon is constructive to the cityscape as it visually reflects the city’s diverse cultural identities and the dynamic its evolving character. The thesis, however, also suggests several important elements of cultural consideration that should be taken into account to produce a culturally conscious development approach. In globalizing multicultural cities, where this approach would be most appropriate, this thesis presents important cultural considerations for future multicultural city developments: consideration of the cultural heritages of the parties involved in a development (designers, planners, architects, developers); consideration of the micro consumer cultures of the city in which a development will take place\textsuperscript{20}; and comprehension of the architectural and design

\textsuperscript{20} In the case of Vancouver and the International Village, this would include the neighbourhoods of Gastown, Chinatown and East Vancouver and Strathcona.

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norms that arose out of the geographically specific histories of the cultures involved in the development.

A cultural flow approach to multicultural cityscape developments is an approach that is culturally conscious on two important levels: not only does the method require an understanding of the foreign or imported design, marketing and architectural norms, but the approach also requires the host culture, of the space in which the development will take place, to be aware of their own distinct design, marketing and architectural norms. Future developers, architects and planners in Vancouver would have to adopt a more self-reflexive planning approach to be able to negotiate and communicate their vision and motives to developers, architects and designers from other professional cultures.

By focusing on the culturally influenced character of design, marketing and architecture of all the parities involved, the eventual development may be one that has a richer distinctive and self-aware identity. The negotiation of cultural design, marketing and architecture norms will not dilute the unique characters of the original norms, but rather it may reiterate the fact that these norms are dynamic and evolving. Within any given culturally diverse city, and especially in globalizing cities, new cultures are constantly being negotiated and born from different interactions, different relationships, and in different forms. In the same vein, norms of design, marketing and architecture are also being negotiated, blended and reborn. This being recognized, multicultural cities may use this development approach to cultivate a cityscape that is on the one hand diverse and multicultural, and on the other hand, with an emphasis on blending, communication and negotiation, one that is also cohesive and unified.
d. Limitations

Fortunately there were few limitations in the research of this thesis. There was, however, one major setback. Numerous attempts were made to meet Allen Lai, president of Henderson Developments Canada to gain insight into the company’s development philosophy but due to the lawsuits surrounding the retail complex and the company’s extremely busy schedule, a meeting was never realized.

Most of the literature that referred to Hong Kong architecture, retail design and malls was published in Hong Kong and ordered from the library and several contacts at the University of Hong Kong. One intercultural limitation that arose during research was the availability of English translations of several documents. Another limitation was the costliness of importing some dissertation documents that would have proved useful to the research of this thesis.

Furthermore, as a result of issues of copyright and intellectually property, images and photos of the interior of the International Village retail complex and other Hong Kong malls were limited in availability.

e. Future Research
Throughout the research and writing of this thesis, this project proved to be a boiling pot of ideas for further research. The evolving landscapes of multicultural, globalizing cities would be a fascinating topic to pursue on a larger scale. Similar case studies to this thesis would be interesting to compare with Vancouver's relationship to Hong Kong. It would be of particular interest to study cities of the Pacific Rim, including Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau, Tokyo, and Taipei where colonialism played a large factor in their histories and subsequently in the design and architecture of their cityscapes. Conducting a comparative study of the development of these Pacific Rim city landscapes and the influences of large migration of their populations onto landscapes of other multicultural cities might also be a valuable area to pursue. This type of study may aid in assessing the validity of the application of a cultural flow approach of the expansion of multicultural globalizing cityscapes. It may also raise recognition of the importance of an historical, present and future-oriented planning and design vision. This vision is one that acknowledges the diverse cultural characters of all the participants of a development, which, when considered, may lead to the development of a culturally representative urban cityscape.
June 12, 2003

Ms. Katie Warfield  
Graduate Student  
School of Communication  
Simon Fraser University

Dear Ms. Warfield:

Re: Urban Spaces for Intercultural Development —  
The Cultural and Ideological Roots Behind the Development of the  
Europa International Village in Vancouver B.C.

At the May 26, 2003 meeting, the Research Ethics Board reviewed your above-titled ethics application. The Board asked that you inform your subjects if the owner/developer is aware of your study prior to you obtaining their consent. Please confirm that your have revised your protocol as requested.

Wishing you continued success with your study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director  
Office of Research Ethics

c: A. Beale, Supervisor
Appendix B

Ethics Form 2 - Informed Consent

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Form 2- Informed Consent By Participants in a Research Project or Experiment

The University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This research is being conducted under permission of the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board. The chief concern of the Board is for the health, safety and psychological well-being of research participants.

Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which you were treated in this study, please contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604-268-6593.

Your signature on this form will signify that you have received a document which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents describing the project or experiment, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project or experiment.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information on research materials. Materials will be maintained in a secure location.

Title: Urban spaces for Intercultural development - the cultural and ideological roots behind the development of the Europa International Village in Vancouver, B.C.
Investigator Name: Katie Warfield
Investigator Department: Communication

Having been asked to participate in a research project or experiment, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the information documents, describing the project or experiment. I understand the procedures to be used in this experiment and the personal risks to me in taking part in the project or experiment, as stated below:

Risks and Benefits:
The main subject of our interview concerns a cultural approach to the design, architecture, and development of the Europa International Village Complex located at 500 Abbott Street, Vancouver, B.C., and questions may concern the following: $ The cultural elements reflected in the design and architecture of the ”International” Village $ The details behind the vision of creating an “international” retail space. $ The marketing of the retail complex. $ The market trends and research that led to the design and promotion of the mall with an “international” theme. I understand that Katie Warfield will make notes of our discussion and give consent/ do not give consent (please circle one)

http://dore.admin.sfu.ca/forms/FMPro

11/6/03
to Katie to record our interview by audiotape. I understand that she will keep her notes and drafts of any articles or conference papers she may write in a secure place in her office at Simon Fraser University, and that these will be securely disposed of by December 2004. I understand that Katie will send me copies of any publication or conference papers resulting from our interviews.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with the Director of the Office of Research Ethics or the researcher named above or with the Chair, Director or Dean of the Department, School or Faculty as shown below.

Department, School or Faculty: Chair, Director or Dean:  
Communication Dr. Catherine Murray  
8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, V5A 1S6, Canada

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:  
Katie Warfield 301 West 15th Ave. Vancouver, BC V5Y 1Y3 (604) 742 0440

I have been informed that the research will be confidential.

I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study of this kind.

What The Subject is Required to Do:  
The subjects contacted will be asked to partake in informal interviews concerning their professional and expert knowledge regarding the design, development and construction of the Europa International Village Complex located at 500 Abbott Street, Vancouver, BC. The interview format will be informal, however, participants may be sent some general questions in advance if they so request.

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