

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT

This chapter provides the background context for the problem, the setting, and the issues related to shopping environments, all of which establish the background for this dissertation. From the previously stated problem, globalization has influenced the appearance of new shopping developments and poses a threat to the viability of traditional shopping environments. The problem affects local economy, retail businesses, and built environments in Bangkok, Thailand as a part of the affected locales. Furthermore, the problem affects cultural identity and relationships between people and the place they live, and among local people. This dissertation addresses the problem of globalization with specific regard to traditional shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand. To begin, it is necessary to provide the background of the problem as it affects the setting, as well as other issues relating to the setting such as the design and previous study. This context chapter provides the background for the problem, the research setting, design and study issues related to the setting, and the approach to the problem.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the problem of globalization on different aspects of a shopper's life including local economy, retail businesses, physical environments, and sense of place. The second section provides historical backgrounds on developments of shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand and describes literature related to shopping environment designs, related urban design theories, and previous studies on shopping environments. The third section discusses the preservation issue of ordinary vernacular environments as applicable to shopping environments and the approach to the problem of preserving shopping environments from the environment-behavior research field.

I. The Problem of Globalization

The following section discusses the problem of globalization. This research discusses those aspects of a globalizing economy that affect media, retail businesses, and the built environment. These are discussed in terms of how the effects of globalizing economy influence local economies, retail businesses, commercial developments, and individuals' senses of place. It provides this research the background of the problem that traditional shopping environments are facing in the wider context of globalizing economy.

Globalization has brought the world closer together, not physically, but through greater contact. This has increased the potential for cultural conflict as well as opportunities for cultural understanding. Globalization is connecting people regardless of their different geographic and cultural backgrounds. Globalization affects the way that people live through worldwide media made possible with today's technology. On the upside, qualities of life in some places were improved with the rapid and widespread distribution of works, technologies, and product consumption (Zwingle, 1999). People are exposed to cultures other than their own and are exchanging views on different aspects of life. This phenomenon may diversify one culture, while creating a more uniform global culture. People in the world now can live the same lifestyles and consume the same products. This aspect is reflected in many aspects of life especially culture and tradition. On the down side, many indigenous cultures are being influenced by new, dominant global cultures. Although this process tends to bring the world together, it also shrinks it down to a small number of uniform international cultures. Many cultures and subcultures have disappeared and many are about to become extinct (Davis, 1999).

Globalization is seen by some scholars as having negative effects in developing countries (Dandekar, 1998). Its effects penetrate local economies and homogenize various aspects of everyday life. Scholars such as Dandekar (1998) question how one nation can preserve its historic and cultural identity, embodied in the physical environment, without sacrificing its integrity for picturesqueness and for tourism. Culture is fluid and somehow always changes. To preserve one's culture, it is better to understand and appreciate, as well as to properly incorporate, the new rather than to freeze it in time. One way that a locale can preserve its own culture is to continue the appreciation people have for their culture into the new globalized context. To operate in this changing context requires an understanding of the influences a globalizing economy poses on different aspects of the locale. Problems of globalization are addressed as they affect local economy, retail business, physical environment, and sense of place.

1. The Problem of a Globalizing Economy on Local Economies and Retail Businesses

A globalizing economy also has effects on local economies and retail businesses. A globalizing economy affects local economies and retail businesses, e.g., shopping environments, as they are parts of local economies and retail businesses. The problem of a globalizing economy's effect on local economies and retail businesses is discussed in the following paragraphs.

A globalizing economy has opened trade boundaries for international retail businesses. International corporations in various forms, multinational firms, chains, or franchises branch out from their origins toward smaller markets all over the world. These international chains operate in larger-scale retail businesses and spaces and address customers from wider market areas than local retailers do. These international chain businesses have impacts on the structure of small local businesses and communities.

In the retail system, international chains destroy the structures of local businesses by centralizing retail and distribution systems, resulting in more competitive pricing and more distributing power over small local businesses. The power to control the production and distribution of products was transferred from large numbers of local retail businesses to small numbers of large business corporations (Korten, 1995). Large centralized retail businesses have their own lines of manufacture, distribution, and retail outlets. Unable to compete, small local businesses cannot survive and tend to disappear. Small local manufacturers also lack retail outlets for their products.

When markets are dominated by large companies outside of local communities, traditional money paths are shortcut and are rapidly drained out of the local community. Local people lose their control over the circulation of currency and products (Douthwaite, 1996). Instead of one family buying from another retail family, which also buys from another manufacturing family, all families now buy from large centralized companies, which have their own entire distribution systems that are outside of the community. Local money does not circulate within the community, but rather drains out rapidly toward the large corporations.

When intra-community trade activities are removed, local transactions and interaction among people are also removed. Relationships between people disappear. In general, the standardized and uniformed retail system not only reduces the diversity of businesses and products but also reduces the relationships among local people. The standardized forms of retailing, distributing, and manufacturing products remove many of the face-to-face relationships and interactions among people.

To study shopping environments in the context of a globalizing economy, it is necessary to understand their effects on local economies and retail businesses. Traditional shopping environments are trade locations within local economies, and outlets of small local retail business, while modern shopping environments dominate several local economies, and are outlets

of large retail businesses. Preserving traditional shopping environments can also help prevent the problems of a globalizing economy on local economies and retail businesses.

2. The Problem of Globalization on Place and Physical Environment

Globalization also has an effect on the physical environment and the relationship of people to place. Shopping environments are places as well as built environments. This dissertation addresses shopping environments as places and built environments; therefore, the problem of globalization on shopping environments is related to this dissertation, and therefore requires discussion. The following paragraphs discuss how globalization affects places and built environments, resulting in the lack of a strong sense of place and unsustainable developments.

A globalized economy results in standardized and uniform mass production and mass marketing in a culturally homogenized world (Korten, 1995). Due to the globalization process, products, services, and their distribution become uniform all over the world. New commercial developments are similar in their functions, tenants, interior organization and decorations, and characteristics of exteriors and landscapes. These new commercial developments cannot be identified by their cultural or contextual characteristics. They tend to be built in an international style. The rapid spread of international-style environments results in non-cultural specific places. These new developments tend to be developed within self-contained spaces that are isolated from local community and pedestrian systems.

In everyday life, people need to have a place in which they feel that they belong, which they can go to on a daily basis, and in which they can spend time (Rose, 1995). Having this place for a long time creates a “connectedness” between people and their local place. Place is comprised of three components—static physical setting, activities, and meanings (Relph, 1976). Places that have been used by people for a long time provide familiar physical characteristics, activities, and meanings to people who regularly use them. The long-term relationship between place and people establishes identities and meanings with physical environments that create “sense of place,” which is the ability to recognize places and their identities (Relph, 1976). A sense of connectedness also contributes to an increase in people’s willingness to care for that place.

When local people are socially and physically disconnected from a place, they can neither recognize nor identify the activities and meanings of that place. When places cannot be culturally identified or distinguished from others, they lack a strong sense of place, resulting in a place that

lacks identity and become placeless. Placelessness can be described as the physical characteristics of nonplace—culturally unidentifiable environments that are similar anywhere. The phenomenon of new developments of modern shopping environments contributes to increasing placelessness and the loss of cultural identity.

Globalization also has an effect on the physical aspect of built environments. The new global-style developments are not sustainable. They require large pieces of land, which are rare in the central city, resulting either in the loss of a large amount of open space in the city, or new developments spread outside the inner city, thus creating urban sprawl (Hough, 1990). The new sprawl of commercial developments is often environmentally insensitive due to the large amount of impervious surface over what was often a previously green area. These developments are neither pedestrian friendly nor connected by pedestrian systems of the community. These developments consume vast amounts of green space and energy through the use of large air-conditioned spaces and automobiles.

To study shopping environments in the context of globalization, it is necessary to understand their effects on both social and physical aspects of built environments. Traditional shopping environments are places which people normally use and connect with, while modern shopping environments are new developments that can create the problems discussed above. Preserving traditional shopping environments will help prevent the problem of losing a strong sense of place as well as limit the number of unsustainable developments in Bangkok, Thailand.

3. Modern Shopping Environments and Placelessness

The following paragraphs discuss how modern shopping environments relate to the problem of placelessness. The physical characteristics of modern environments and their creation processes have contributed to the current problem of places that are not culturally relevant. Modern shopping environments not only pose a threat to traditional environments; they also create the problem of placelessness. This problem is discussed in this dissertation, which attempts to study traditional shopping environments together with modern shopping environments. The following paragraphs discuss how modern shopping environments are related to the problem of placelessness by virtue of their physical characteristics and the way they are created.

Tomlinson (1999) argues that globalization affects built environments by weakening the tie of culture to place. This phenomenon of “deterritorialization” is the result of globalization. In the case of shopping environments, malls have the same chain stores as every other mall (Tomlinson,

1999). Deterritorialization leads to nonplace, which is a place with no relational or historical concern with identity (Tomlinson, 1999). Real place, on the other hand, is a place in which the link between the present and the past, the old and the new, is still visible, and where the link between place, memory and identity is preserved in routine interactions (Tomlinson, 1999).

Traditional shopping environments in Thai society create a strong sense of place that Thai people can identify with. Thai traditional shopping environments are “authentic places” providing cultural identity, memory, and history of the local community through the repetition of everyday activities and interactions. On the other hand, modern shopping environments that have emerged in Thailand have no relationship to Thai culture, thus contributing to placelessness and the loss of cultural identity.

Modern shopping environments tend to be designed without connection to or concern with local culture, climate, history, and reality of place. Most of these environments are located on a series of isolated lands without pedestrian connections to the surrounding communities, which would bring social contacts (Hough, 1990). The reasons that modern shopping environments contribute to placelessness can be described as:

- Mass culture and mass production
- Other directedness
- Corporate design and global archetype

Mass Culture and Mass Production

Shopping malls were developed for commercial purposes, driven by mass production and mass culture, and created in terms of stereotypes. Mass media—television, movies, and the Internet—now play an important role in the rapid spread of global culture and lifestyles. Everybody now receives the same message, develops the same taste, consumes the same products and lives the same lifestyle. This is reflected in the uniform need for the function of shopping environments and the uniform taste for the characteristics of shopping environments.

Mass production is the underlying rationale for shopping malls. Mass production and distribution are efficient in producing and distributing large amounts of products for large markets. Mass production makes the price of products more affordable to a wide range of consumers. The products in malls are mass-produced from all over the world in response to uniform need. The products are displayed in the same fashion everywhere as a result of uniform taste. Similar

products can be purchased anywhere with similarly low prices. Mass production of building materials makes it possible for every mall in the world to use the same materials in construction and decoration, resulting in similar-looking buildings and decorations.

Other-Directedness

Relph (1976) argues that places can be created with other-directedness attitudes that contribute to placelessness. Other-directedness refers to creation by third parties or someone who has no relationship or involvement with what they create. Shopping malls are created in this manner. Two different aspects of other-directedness are detachment in the creation process and western influence. Each aspect is discussed further below.

Detachment in the Creation Process

Developers and designers create shopping malls from the perspective of others—outsiders who have no personal relationship with the places that they provide. They create places in a way that is not related to their personal, direct experiences with places. Creation is achieved objectively, with some degree of detachment in dealing with the problem at hand (Relph, 1976). In the case of modern malls, the program is developed objectively, according to the expertise of the developers. Mall design is created objectively from designers' drawing desks or computers. Every member of the creation team works on his or her part in a non-direct, objective, third person manner. They use representative materials such as a proposal, plans, and drawings as media, to deal with the problem at hand. However, in the environment of traditional Thai markets, all sellers set up their own personal spaces and organize their own displays; thus making collective attempts to create a desired environment as they see fit, and with first-persons hands-on experience.

Western Influence

In addition to the above described “other” creative process, western styles are also highly influenced by the use of western prototypes for design, and western specialists, who are influenced by western education. All shopping malls were designed following western prototypes. Shopping malls, particularly enclosed malls, were developed in the United States and were repeated elsewhere as a prototype, including in Thailand. Second, some of the large malls in Thailand were designed or planned by western specialists. Developers often hire shopping development specialists to plan and sometimes to design shopping malls. These specialists not

only introduce their expertise in retail planning but also in the stereotyped characteristics of western shopping malls.

Third, many Thai architects were educated abroad. It is common for Thai architects to study abroad in the United States or Europe. They not only gain professional knowledge, but they also become familiar with and bring back to Thailand western design styles. Fourth, the curriculum of architectural education was designed with the influences of western architecture in mind by early architects educated from Europe. The very first schools of architecture were founded by architects who graduated from England and France in the early 1900s (Horayangkura, Indharavichit, Chantavilaswong, & Inpangtang, 1993). Therefore, Thai architecture students learn to design in the same way as their western peers. Moreover, most of these schools' faculty members were, at some point, educated abroad (Horayangkura et al., 1993). These influences of western-style architecture are reflected in the physical environment of modern shopping environments, which are not related to Thai culture and tradition.

Corporate Design and Global Archetype

Another aspect of placelessness is the result of corporate design, which comes from the attempt of corporations to present their architectural properties in a standardized design, often for marketing purposes (Jacobson, 2000). This concept of global archetype involves the use of certain basic, standardized schematic design elements that have proved to be practical and recognizable, and thus are repeatedly used all over the world. The archetype may be specific to certain companies such as branches of a bank, or an insurance company. These companies, especially those that operate internationally, use standard building characteristics for their properties, which are similar all over the world. This practice also includes the extension of business through branching, franchising, and chain business, all of which apply a similar strategy. All of the above reasons lead to the use of global archetypes. The archetype may also be specific to a building type, such as a shopping mall. No matter where it is built, a shopping mall is always developed using the global archetype of the American enclosed shopping mall.

These modern commercial environments become common to the people. The economic success of these new environments poses a threat to traditional environments, which are becoming less viable. If these new shopping environments replace traditional environments, the sense of place will disappear, resulting in a vast landscape of nonplace. Characteristics of traditional shopping environments that are related to Thai culture and tradition will also disappear, resulting in the loss

of an aspect of cultural identity. To preserve the sense of place and this aspect of Thai culture and tradition, it is necessary to preserve traditional shopping environments. Although new developments are inevitable, it is still possible to learn from traditional environments to prevent the creation of new developments that contribute to urban sprawl, placelessness, and the loss of cultural identity.

The problem of modern shopping environments and placelessness suggests that we need to look closer at shopping environments with regard to how they evolve and are created. Particularly in the case of the modern shopping environment, the creation process and the purposes of development can create the problem that this dissertation examines. This dissertation deals with the issues of traditional and modern shopping environments. The evolution of traditional shopping environments and the emergence of modern shopping environments are discussed in more detail in the following section.

II. Backgrounds of Shopping Environments: Evolution, Design, and Related Studies

This section describes the context of shopping environments. First, it provides an historical overview of the development of traditional and modern shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand. Secondly, it provides an overview of issues about shopping environments in general. These issues include design of shopping environments, related design theories, and previous studies on shopping environments.

1. Historical Background of Shopping Development in Bangkok, Thailand

The historical background of shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand can be described by the evolution of traditional shopping environments and the emergence of modern shopping environments. Traditional shopping environments are environments that developed within Thai communities over time. Modern shopping environments emerged due to the introduction of a new trade system from outside the country, and the adopted prototypes of physical environments. Each of these aspects is discussed in more detail below.

The Evolution of Traditional Shopping Environments

As previously discussed, traditional shopping environments have a long-term relationship with Thai people. This dissertation proposes preserving important aspects of traditional shopping environments, including this long-term relationship. This relationship is evident in the way that traditional Thai markets have evolved in Thai society. The following paragraphs discuss the evolution of traditional Thai shopping environments in detail. The evolution process is discussed in terms of original types and contemporary types.

Original Types

Traditional shopping environments or markets started from direct trade between manufacturers and customers. This trade took place both in the water and on the ground (Wongsapak, 1984). Floating markets resulted from gatherings of boats selling products in the canals at the time when canals were the main transportation routes in Bangkok. The locations were canal intersections where customers passed and shopped by boats. On-ground markets were categorized by the products sold. Manufacturing markets were the places where manufacturers sold products directly to customers at the manufacturing sites. Manufacturing markets sold specific products made at manufacturing locations. These products normally involved craftsmanship in such materials as gold, ceramics, and paper (Chiwakun, 1982).

The most popular on-ground markets were food markets, which were comprised of dry and fresh markets. Dry markets sold dry food and other convenience products, while fresh markets sold fresh foods such as meats, vegetable, fruits, and related ingredients (Chiwakun, 1982). Originally, these food markets temporarily gathered in certain crowded public places at specific hours, such as the early morning. Later, they became permanent. Structures such as roofs on posts were constructed and the hours of operation were extended throughout the day. Some markets provided low platform structures, or stalls, so that products were displayed closer to the customer's eye level. Many of these traditional markets still exist and provide services to their customers (Chiwakun, 1982).

Contemporary Types

Contemporary traditional shopping environments are traditional trading places in a variety of settings. The major types include fresh markets, weekend markets, and pedestrian walk vendors. Fresh markets usually consist of several stalls or small stores selling fresh products under single roof structures. Almost every residential community has a fresh market. People still depend on fresh markets for daily food preparation. The food products offered in fresh markets are

considered to be fresh and of good quality. The prices of products in fresh markets are relatively low compared to modern food outlets (Chiwakun, 1982).

Weekend markets are usually temporary, outdoor markets comprised of small retailers setting up their product displays on the floor, stalls, or tables, with temporary structures such as tents or umbrellas. Large-scale weekend markets that open regularly have permanent structures such as roofs on supports. These markets are set up on specific days, normally weekends and holidays. The product selection varies, ranging from fresh, dry convenience products, to clothes and other specialty products (Lee, 1998). The price range of products at weekend markets is even wider, depending on the types of products. The prices of simple convenience products are low, while the prices of some specialty products can be high (Lee, 1998).

Pedestrian walk vendors are not considered a market. They are gatherings of a number of vendors setting up casually on high-traffic pedestrian walks where space allows. In some places they are temporary and hour-specific, while in other places, they are almost permanent and are open all day. They sell their products to walking pedestrians in a temporary setting using stalls or carts and umbrellas. Pedestrian walk vendors are convenient and accessible. Customers can shop or eat right off the pedestrian walk. The products range from cooked foods to low-fashion clothes. The price range of pedestrian walk vendor products is relatively low. In general, all traditional markets are convenient by location. They offer low-price, fresh and convenient products at low and negotiable prices. Sellers normally make their own products or receive their products from manufacturing locations. Most Thai families still shop at traditional markets (at least for daily food) and at weekend markets (for specialty products).

The historical background of traditional shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand provides a backdrop of the traditional shopping environment as discussed in this dissertation. How Thai markets evolve and relate to Thai people provides the rationale for the assumption about the relationship between Thai people and Thai markets in this dissertation. How modern shopping environments emerged in Thailand is discussed in detail below.

The Emergence of Modern Shopping Environments

As discussed in the previous section, modern shopping environments can create the problem of placelessness in the city. Since this dissertation addresses the problem of modern shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand, it is necessary to discuss how modern shopping environments emerged in the Thai context. The following paragraphs describe in detail the

emergence of modern shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand. The emergent process is described in three periods: the beginning of western influence, the contemporary types, and the situation of the past decade.

Modern shopping environments in Thailand started from the growth of existing traditional retail businesses and the introduction of western retail businesses. At large and crowded locations, retail businesses expanded from traditional fresh markets into shophouses developed around the markets. These shophouses were one to four-story row-houses. The building type was influenced by the Chinese businesses style; storeowners typically lived upstairs and did their business downstairs. This approach resulted in the development of shophouses around fresh markets selling dry products in response to expanded businesses from the markets (Chiwakun, 1982). This characteristic can be considered the phase of early shopping development.

The Beginning of Western Influence

Western retail businesses and department stores were introduced in the Bangkok business district in the first half of the 1900s (Wongsapak, 1984). These early department stores were opened in a shophouse building occupying a couple of units. The department store business introduced a new style of retail sales: various products displayed in a large retail space. They offered luxurious imported products with fixed pricing (Wongsapak, 1984). These new type of businesses led to the adoption of a new type—the shopping center—where several retail spaces were provided in centrally developed structures anchored by large businesses. The earliest centers were situated in groups of shophouse developments with provided parking spaces. They were neither fully enclosed nor anchored by department stores. The early centers were anchored by large fresh markets or movie theaters (Wongsapak, 1984).

Contemporary Types

The current type of modern mall, the enclosed shopping mall, originated in the United States, and appeared in the late 1960s. Early enclosed shopping malls were located in the central city; they targeted high-income customers with luxurious and imported products (Wongsapak, 1984).

These shopping malls had large stores with wide walkways and common spaces within decorated and air-conditioned environments. In the early 1980s, malls were promoted as one-stop shopping places. Shopping malls were developed into a complex that included department stores, a large number of retail stores, entertainment centers, and large parking structures (Wongsapak, 1984).

These complexes tended to be developed further outside the business district, due to their size and

land requirements. The targeted customers were mid to high-income people from all over the city, in addition to those living in the areas.

The Past Decade

In the mid to late 1990s, mall spaces reached the saturation point and became oversupplied. In addition, the economic decline in the late 1990s resulted in changes in shopping mall spaces. Oversupplied and vacant spaces were rented out to small retailers. The rental spaces included common areas to make up for diminished income resulting from receding rental prices (Krungsri Ayudhaya Bank, 1997). The conditions of these small retailers using stalls and vender-style carts resembled the characteristics of traditional markets. These conditions not only occurred in shopping mall spaces but also in the renovation of small buildings into shopping spaces. These spaces responded to lower income customers, and added a new range of characteristics situated between those of modern shopping malls and traditional markets.

The way that modern shopping environments emerge in Thailand also provides an assumption for the relationship between modern shopping environments and the Thai people. The emergence of modern shopping environments in Bangkok indicates that they were imported and implanted into the Thai context. This fact helps define the problem of modern shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand for this dissertation. Further issues about modern environments, and their design, are discussed in detail in the following section.

2. Design of Shopping Environments

This section discusses literature related to shopping environments in general. As the above section mentioned, traditional and modern shopping environments are different in their development backgrounds. The physical forms and characteristics of current shopping environments are affected by the design process and related design theories used in the design of shopping environments. The design process and related theories provide an understanding of the rationales behind shopping environments' physical forms and characteristics as well as the possibilities for the future design of shopping environments. This section discusses how shopping environments are designed and what design theories are related to the design of shopping environments. The following discussions include shopping center design, related design theories, and characteristics and elements of shopping environments and public spaces.

Traditional shopping environments emerged from the needs and behaviors of people over time. They are not designed environments. There is no specific design theory or strategy for traditional

shopping environments. Traditional marketplaces were always described by the literature as important elements of places and public spaces. However, there are specific strategies for developing, planning and design of modern shopping environments. These strategies were developed in retailing and marketing disciplines; the design of the modern shopping center, as discussed by Maitland (1985), is also related to urban design theories.

Shopping Center Design

The design of the shopping center (or the enclosed shopping mall) was initiated by Victor Gruen in 1951 at Northland Center in Detroit, Michigan (Hill, 1992). The first design by Gruen was intended to create a community life environment or outdoor activities within an enclosed space. Gruen introduced the concept of pedestrian place to the machine of consumption (Hill, 1992). The prototype is the enclosed mall with stores around a central court, which is supposed to look natural and lively, and which is intended to act as the center of the community. A decade later, this design scheme became a prototype, and was used repetitively. Most of the following malls became minimal in the design of the spaces, and they were not convincing as natural or outdoor experiences. Maitland, (1985) commented that like the general modern city concept, shopping centers created the problem of inversion and introversion in development patterns and ambiguity in the character of public space.

Development handbooks provide standards for development, planning, and design of shopping centers (Casazza & Spink, 1985). These standards guide their development and design, and may also help standardize the characteristics of shopping centers. The layouts and plans suggested are more or less typical. The major designed area seems to be the public space, whose form is left to the designer; however, the design of the public space is also influenced by the prototype. There is almost a formula for the design and planning of a shopping center: that is, anchors connected by large number of retail stores with common areas in between and a series of public spaces. The layout can be adjusted to be linear, rectangular, or radial depending on the land size and shape.

Maitland (1990) provides insight into contemporary types and designs of shopping centers. These include the development of schematic layout comprised of major department stores as anchors, and a large number of retail stores, connected and accented by common spaces. Shopping centers are planned according to type, retail style, and physical form. Market size and location indicate possible types of development such as neighborhood, community, regional, and specialty shopping center (Casazza & Spink, 1985). Retail styles such as discount, fashion, or

luxury suggest decoration and design, and physical forms such as open, enclosed, vertical, arcade, or atrium center also inform building type and design (Maitland, 1990).

The design of modern shopping environments is intended to represent a public space; however, when the original design became the prototype and was used everywhere, the design lost its original objective of creating a public space and community center. This concept is not evident in today's shopping environment in Bangkok, Thailand, where the prototype has been implanted. This aspect brings up a concern of this dissertation: to address the design process of current modern shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand.

Related Design Theories

The intention to create a public space and community center is the major objective of urban design, as is always discussed in urban design theories. Design of shopping environments is also influenced by some of these design theories, especially urban design theories. Related design theories provide the implications for the design of shopping environments and the physical elements of public space that can be found in this dissertation. The following paragraphs discuss some of the design theories that are related to, or have implications for, shopping environments.

The design of shopping centers is always intended to represent traditional environments such as city, street, square, and public space. This aspect can be seen in the decoration of the central court as outdoor public space, comprised of pavement, trees, and street furniture. This concept and design can be traced back to urban design theories on structure of the city or large-scale place. Maitland (1985) argues that the sequence of inner mall walk and public spaces in shopping centers is similar to that of traditional cities. The “deep structure” of shopping centers is represented by a series of nodes and paths that match both the pattern and scale of the system of nodes and paths in traditional cities (Maitland, 1985).

Maitland (1985) argues that the nodes and paths system of shopping centers is similar to the system of streets and public spaces from urban design theories such as Lynch's *The Image of the City* (1960) and Alexander's *A Pattern Language* (Alexander et al., 1977). Lynch says that imageability is created by the system of paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks that provide memorable images of the city for people (Lynch, 1960). This idea is also similar to the ideas about series of streets and public spaces in Alexander's *A Pattern Language* (1977). In *A Pattern Language*, Alexander provides prescriptions for patterns, or examples of solutions for specific designs. The patterns are derived from analysis of the characteristics of traditional cities, places,

and buildings. Patterns such as pattern 30—activity nodes, pattern 14—identifiable neighborhoods, and pattern 31—promenades, which demonstrate the structure of paths and nodes, are related to the structure of walkways and common spaces in shopping centers (Maitland, 1985). However, there is no generalization of this deep structure into design implication and there is no evidence that the system’s similarity to the traditional city is recognized by its users.

Maitland (1990) also suggested urban design principles for the design of appropriate shopping centers, such as variety of use, integrated pedestrian network, meaningful exterior façade to the context, and no disruption of pedestrian movement by vehicle. However, none of these seems to be implemented into the current design and development of shopping centers. Typical enclosed malls are usually single-used, isolated from city center and pedestrian system, surrounded by a sea of parking, and almost impossible to reach by walking. Therefore, the development and design of shopping malls have not seriously implemented the appropriate urban design theories discussed above. Current shopping malls do not play an appropriate role in the urban design context. The attempt to use shopping centers to renovate cities in decline failed because it addressed economic value while the social interaction and traffic density of the real city were neglected (Maitland, 1990). The most successful developments tended to be those that used an inner city location and were integrated into the existing environment, such as Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston.

These urban design theories are helpful not only in the design of shopping centers. They can also be applied to traditional shopping environments. In fact, they are derived from the observation and analysis of traditional environments, marketplace included. The idea of imageability by the elements, such as nodes, paths, edges, landmarks, and districts (Lynch, 1960), can help provide legibility by helping people comprehend traditional environments. This principle is intended for a large-scale environment; however, it can be applied in a small-scale context of traditional shopping environments, where existing conditions are difficult to understand.

Some of Alexander’s patterns can also be applied to traditional shopping environments. These patterns deal with the large-scale structure of stores and elements related to public/shopping places. These patterns are pattern 19—web of shopping suggesting distribution pattern of stores; pattern 30—activity nodes suggesting the structure and order of space elements; pattern 31—promenade suggesting wide shopping pedestrian streets; and pattern 32-- shopping streets describing the characteristics of traditional shopping streets (Alexander et al., 1977). These

patterns have proved to be effective; they can be applied to achieve more attractive and effective conditions of traditional shopping environments.

Other patterns deal with the smaller-scale specific aspects of traditional shopping places. These patterns are pattern 46—markets of many shops describing variety and flexibility of stores configuration; pattern 87—individually owned shops deals specifically with a variety of products by a variety of individually owned stores; and pattern 93—food stand describing the importance of food stands and vendors (Alexander et al., 1977). All of the above patterns deal intensively with the structure, configuration, characteristics, and elements of shopping place derived from traditional environments. Although many of these patterns already exist in traditional markets, they are still useful and informative for maintenance and improvement. Each of the patterns, as suggested by Alexander, links to other related patterns and can be applied together to achieve the desired effects.

The structures of public spaces, and the pattern languages that are related to shopping environments, indicate the structures and elements derived from traditional spaces. These structures and elements are perceived and preferred by people over time. This dissertation addresses the perception of, and preferences with regard to, shopping environments, which involve these structures and elements.

Characteristics and Elements of Shopping Environments and Public Spaces

Traditionally, public spaces and marketplaces are closely related. One might be a part of another, as is so in public markets in Europe. Furthermore, in the contemporary context of public spaces in a big city (such as New York), the marketplace is still mentioned as playing an important part in the viability of public space. Since the characteristics of these public spaces and the elements of marketplaces still exist in today's shopping environments, they are addressed in this dissertation. The following paragraphs discuss in detail the characteristics and elements of marketplaces in public spaces as mentioned in the previous studies. .

Studies on public space also describe shopping environments or marketplaces as an important part of successful public spaces. Examples of these investigations are studies conducted by Whyte (1980) and Lennard and Lennard (1984). Whyte (1980) conducted a study of urban public spaces in New York City and concluded that the success of these spaces in attracting people depends on these spaces' characteristics and elements. Lennard and Lennard (1984) described

the socialization aspect of European public spaces in relation to important elements such as theatrical quality and traditional markets. Both of the studies categorize characteristics and elements appearing in successful public spaces in relation to traditional markets, such as:

- Sitting elements such as benches, chairs, steps with possible choices and adjustability to facilitate rest, socialization and comforts.
- Aesthetic and comfort elements such as trees and water accompanying sitting areas, and providing pleasant and restful experiences.
- Retail elements such as traditional markets provide variety and activities for public spaces. Food vendors, surrounded stores, cafés, and open restaurants attract people and support socialization.
- Theatrical quality, comprised of gathering people, performers, and activities, provides a festive atmosphere and entertainment for the public.
- Accessibility and visibility of elements and activities invite people.
- Landmark elements such as a clock tower, sculpture, or fountain at a focal point create an aesthetic experience.
- Gathering elements such as an amphitheater-like slope and gallery provide venues for theatrical quality.
- Enclosure elements such as shelters, arcades, and walls provide intimacy and comforts.

Triangulation and integration of elements and public space in the center of the historic city enhance the experience of being in public. In addition, marketplaces also help maintain and create relationships between people in the markets. All of the above qualities and elements are essential in public space as well as in shopping environments. Public space and traditional markets also have mutual relationships. Including a public space in shopping environments is also an attempt that modern shopping environments tries to achieve. The elements of public space such as sitting areas, foods, trees, and water always appear in the designed modern shopping environments. Theatrical qualities can also be found in shopping malls, as described by Gibian (1997); multilevel spaces and galleries in an enclosed modern mall allow users to take a

spectator role. This spectator role can be taken in the shopping environment as well as in traditional public spaces.

The previous discussion on characteristics and elements of marketplaces is a concern of this dissertation. These characteristics and elements also play an important role in the context of shopping environments in Bangkok. This dissertation addresses a variety of aspects of shopping environments informed by the existence of these characteristics and elements by their current appearances and possible implications.

III. Previous Studies on Shopping Environments

This section discusses previous studies related to shopping environments. To identify the niche for research on shopping environments, previous studies related to shopping environments are reviewed. The studies are discussed by their usefulness and relevance in this context of traditional and modern shopping environments. The studies are categorized into three categories of approach: descriptive, analytical, and environmental-behavior.

Previous studies related to shopping environments were conducted with different purposes and in different disciplines. These studies provided different sets of information with different level of implications and usefulness. Rapoport (1999) comments on the usefulness of different types of studies of vernacular environments; he says that the most common but least useful type of study is the descriptive or illustrative type. However, he admits that this type is important as a basis for other types of studies. Next in the line of usefulness are classification and analytical studies. The most useful type according to Rapoport (1999) is environment-behavior studies, which provide information from both people and the environments. The following paragraphs discuss the previous studies on shopping environments in the following order: descriptive approach, analytical approach, and environment-behavior approach.

The Descriptive Approach

This approach relates the design, physical characteristics and relationships of particular shopping environments to their contexts. The first group in this approach addresses issues related to characteristics and experiences of physical environments. A study by Forsyth (1997) provides an alternative to the American prototype of the modern shopping center. Contrary to stand-alone regional malls in the sea of parking lots, the passage downtown mall in Australia is a compacted

enclosed passage mall, which was integrated into the context of downtown transportation and pedestrian systems.

The other studies describe experiences in shopping environments, such as studies by Rybczynski (1994) and Guterson (1993). Rybczynski views shopping malls as mundane architectural settings of everyday life, and comments that food courts provide a different experience from cafeterias or restaurants due to the lack of hierarchy normally found in restaurants. This characteristic reflects the lack of spatial hierarchy and ritual, which are attributes of modern vernacular spaces (Rybczynski, 1994). Guterson (1993) describes his experience at the Mall of America in Minnesota as a feeling of getting lost in the space with no relation to time and outside contexts. This description is parallel to the characteristic of non-place or placelessness (Relph, 1976; Tomlinson, 1999). A general problem of the shopping mall, Guterson states, is that shopping malls recognize people's need for public and social life but respond by offering pseudo public spaces. These spaces lack an authentic aspect of public life: the emphasis on social interaction (Guterson, 1993). Although their implication is limited, this group of studies provides this dissertation an understanding of problems of shopping malls, such as lack of hierarchy and authenticity of public place.

Other studies, which have emerged from marketing and business disciplines, describe certain types of shopping centers, and development trends. The types mentioned are the emerging of a power center (Solomon, 1993), the return of strip retail and strip mall standards (Knack, 1992; Leinberger, 1985), the adjustment of the shopping center to the context of the neighborhood (Lassar, 1995), recommended shopping mall characteristics to downtown redevelopment (Lagerfeld, 1995), large-scale shopping center development opportunities (Eppli & Shilling, 1995), and renovation trend (Building Design & Construction, 1993). These studies only inform certain aspects of the existing conditions and developing trends of shopping environments.

Although descriptive approach is the least useful, an intensively conducted descriptive study that provides in-depth knowledge on the subject can be very useful as a basis for other types of study. Of all descriptive studies, Crawford's study "The World in a Shopping Mall" (1992) provides the most complete picture of large-scale shopping malls, where everything is being offered under one roof. She starts by describing one of the largest enclosed shopping malls, West Edmonton Mall and discusses historical background, development and retail strategies, and differentiation of shopping malls in general. Moreover, she draws on the concepts of consumerism, public life in relation to shopping malls, and the connection between shopping and larger contexts (Crawford,

1992). This study is the most useful in its group since it provides a wide range of information on various aspects of large-scale shopping malls.

The Analytical Approach

This approach to the study of shopping environments includes analytical studies on shopping environments using certain philosophical or theoretical frameworks such as semiotics or aesthetics. Gibian (1997) describes and analyzes a shopping mall based on semiotics. Gibian describes elements and activities in an enclosed downtown shopping center (Eaton Center in Toronto) in terms of phenomena such as spectacle, the ride, and the water work. The spectacle phenomenon is described as activities in which shoppers take the role of spectators observing others' activities in open spaces, or products displays. The rides are described by the people mover elements such as elevators and escalators. Gibian (1997) calls the use of a water fountain in the open space of the mall "the water work"; he describes its flowing in and out as an analogy of the mall economy. Gibian's work, although not providing implications for design, provides insight into an aspect of meaning in built environments and activities of shopping malls.

Bergren (1998) analyzes the design and characteristics of Horton Plaza, an open-air shopping center in California, using a philosophical analogy. The design of Horton plaza is described by Bergren as providing pleasure for shoppers based on Plato's philosophy. Pleasure experience in the center is described as being provided by the interaction of design elements. This study provides information related to certain aspects of perception. First, pleasure, if experienced by shoppers, can be observed by hedonic or affective judgments such as preference. Second, certain aspects of pleasure, according to Bergren, were derived via the use of bent paths and the promise to reveal more information if the shoppers were to explore further. This aspect is similar to the description of "mystery" by (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1983). This study provides a different aspect of meaning in designed environments, which is comparable to a perceptual study.

As mentioned by Rapoport (1999), these works following analytical approach are more useful than the descriptive approach in that they provide few implications or little generalization for the future study or design. These implications include analyzed aspects of characteristics of shopping environments such as spectacle role, the ride, and pleasure that also refer to users' experiences. However, these works were conducted by experts in a subjective evaluation manner. This type of evaluation is vulnerable to the criticism that the description criteria and described experiences may be irrelevant to the real experiences and perceptions of users. Layman users may not have

enough philosophical or theoretical knowledge to read the environment in the same way as the expert. This criticism provides justification for this dissertation's use of the environmental-behavior approach. In the context of public building where large numbers of people are concerned, users' perceptions and evaluations are important information in providing physical characteristics.

Environmental-Behavior Approach

This approach to studying shopping environment deals with the relationship between shopping environments and customers' behaviors. This approach is the most useful because it not only describes the physical aspect of shopping environments, but also concerns users behavior in relation to environments. Therefore, it is more relevant to the scope of this dissertation. Most of these studies were based on a marketing perspective, which characterizes customers' patronizing and purchasing behaviors. Other studies deal with spatial behaviors such as pedestrian movement and wayfinding. The last group of studies deals with perception of the physical characteristics of shopping environments. Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

Patronizing Behavior

Sommer, Wynes, and Brinkley (1992), based on social facilitation theory, used unobtrusive observation methods to compare time spent in store and load size of lone and group shoppers at supermarkets and discount stores. They found that groups spend a longer time in the store and bought larger loads than lone shoppers. Women and older shoppers also spent more time in the store and bought larger amounts of products than men and younger shoppers (Sommer et al., 1992). This study provides theoretical relevant variables to be included in this dissertation regarding preference in shopping environments. This study has proved that variables such as shopping companion, gender, and age are significantly related to shoppers' behaviors, and thus may influence preference.

O'Neill and Jasper (1992) evaluate different models of consumer spatial behavior in the context of the environmental-behavior paradigm. They conclude that many of the models predicting spatial behavior were based only on isolated psychological or environmental variables. Models such as the gravity model deal with patronage behavior by distance and center size without using customers' personal information. The constraint model incorporates person-based characteristics; however, it focuses on limitations. The preference model examines consumers' preferences as a predictor of patronage and spatial behavior, but ignores environmental variables. The cognitive

representation model examines the influence of cognitive process and perceptions on consumers' decision making. Finally, the affective model focuses on affective responses or internal emotional state influenced by atmosphere and influence spatial behaviors.

Reviewing several models, O'Neill and Jasper (1992) suggest useful variables for spatial behavior research related to spatial cognition and wayfinding. The recommended variables are patronage (the most useful) following by personal or demographic variables, and perception of center size and distance. Preference is a useful predictor of patronage, and is related to spatial cognition and wayfinding. The relationship between preference and wayfinding is also emphasized by Kaplan and Kaplan for studies of physical characteristics of outdoor environments (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1995). The other variables influencing customers' spatial behavior within the center are psychological profile and customers' emotional responses to the environment. The link between environmental features and affective responses, different social groups, and social imageability are related to the social function of these environments. Frequency of patronage and customer knowledge (familiarity) are also effective variables in spatial behavior research in shopping environments (O'Neill & Jasper, 1992).

The implication from this study for this dissertation is that an effective model should include environmental, psychological, and customers' characteristic variables. Environmental variables are the physical characteristics of shopping centers. Psychological variables are customers' responses such as preference; and customers' characteristics variables are the individual backgrounds of customers such as socio-economic or demographic information.

Consumer Patterns, Orientation, Wayfinding, and Leisure

Another group of studies deals with shopping patterns of consumers. Eppli (1998), studying consumer shopping patterns, reveals that the effect of location, comparison shopping, and department store image are important in estimating shopping center patronage and retail sales. Lorch & Smith (1993) study the effect of downtown enclosed shopping centers on surrounding downtown retail businesses. They find that the enclosed downtown mall acts as an anchor attracting people downtown. However, by doing that, the mall also monopolizes business and, moreover, captures passing customer from outside pedestrians. This group of studies is less relevant to this dissertation. They focus on the effect of shopping centers on users' shopping patterns, while neglecting the physical characteristics of the environments and the customers' responses to the characteristics.

Dogu and Erkip (2000) study spatial behavior affecting wayfinding and orientation of customers in the shopping mall. They identify legibility as an important aspect of understanding the environments. Building configuration, visual accessibility, circulation system, and signage are suggested as significant factors by this literature; however, only signage is found to be statistically significant in the study. They also find significant gender differences in frequency of mall visiting and accuracy in identifying direction. Females visit malls more frequently, but males are more accurate in identifying direction. This study is relevant in terms of wayfinding behavior, which is influenced by legibility. Legibility is also believed to influence preference (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1983). Therefore, this study suggests that wayfinding may also influence preference.

Gerhard (1998) conducts a study dealing with the leisure function of retailing in the context of a changing society in which leisure plays an increasing part in everyday life. The purposes of the study are to prove that certain shopping activities function as leisure; the study discusses leisure shoppers; and where leisure shopping takes place. The research was conducted in Edmonton, Canada, where several large shopping centers, including the largest (West Edmonton Mall), serve a wide range of customers. Using a questionnaire, Gerhard proves that certain shopping activities can be categorized as more leisure-oriented, whereas others are more commercially functional.

According to Gerhard, the leisure components of shopping are found to be the motive for coming to the mall. Studied components include length of stay, purchasing activity, amount of money spent and the number of stores visited. Recreational and economic shoppers are found to exist within the shopper population. Recreational shoppers like shopping, and define it as part of their leisure time. They visit shopping malls frequently, and are interested in the malls as a whole. They tend to be females, teenagers, and elderly people. Economic shoppers, on the contrary, shop less often and regard shopping not as a leisure activity but as a necessity. They tend to be male, middle-aged, with higher income and children. Gerhard also finds that recreational shopping takes place more frequently in large regional malls, while economic shopping occurs more at discount stores, super stores, and department stores in the malls.

Gerhard's study is relevant to this dissertation. It reveals the important aspects of shopping: recreational and economic. This study also differentiates between recreational and economic shoppers as well as activities. The results, especially the characteristics of the two types of shoppers, may not be generalizable to other populations. However, this study provides implications for this dissertation by validating two different aspects of shopping as well as the characteristics of the two types of shoppers and their activities. Moreover, it provides a range of

variables related to leisure shopping, such as purposes, length of stay, money spent, purchasing activity, browsing, and frequency of visit. These variables are included in this dissertation as measurements of shopping behaviors.

Perception of Physical Characteristics of Shopping Environments

Studies of perception of physical characteristics of shopping environments are the most relevant type for this dissertation. Few studies focused on shoppers' perceptions of physical characteristics of shopping environments. The following studies use non-visual and visual methods in soliciting shoppers' perceptions and preferences with regard to shopping environments. Non-visual studies include the work of Uzzell (1995) and Oppewal and Timmermans (1999). Studies using visual methods to deal with physical characteristics of shopping environments and people's perception include the work of Kent (1989) and Woods (1995). Each of these types of study is discussed in more detailed below.

Uzzell (1995) conducted dimensional analysis of an enclosed shopping mall and shopping streets. He found that shoppers evaluated enclosed shopping malls and shopping streets differently. Shopping malls were evaluated by social, physical, and spatial needs before shopping and management aspects of these environments. On the contrary, shopping streets were evaluated by comfort, management, and retail respectively. Uzzell concludes that shoppers evaluated malls not by retail performance, but as social places that satisfy psychological needs and preference. He also notes that this study was commissioned by the mall owner, and that the management responded to the study's results by commercializing the public spaces and switching their advertising strategy from retail qualities to recreational qualities of the spaces.

Uzzell's study provides the implication for this dissertation that shoppers perceive different types of environments, shopping malls and shopping streets differently. Shoppers evaluate the two types differently using different hierarchies of criteria. It may also be true in Bangkok that people perceive and evaluate traditional and modern shopping environments with different hierarchies of criteria.

Oppewal and Timmermans (1999) study the effect of various shopping centers' design and management attributes on consumer evaluations of the public space appearance in the shopping center. The study was conducted using a hypothetical combination of attributes in order to solicit stated preference; it analyzed these variables by using conjoint analysis. This study found that the level of maintenance, the attractiveness of window displays, the number of street activities,

and the amount of greenery have significant impact on the pleasantness rating. Nevertheless, this study uses shoppers' reactions to hypothetical combinations of characteristics of shopping centers, which may not be similar to shoppers' reactions to a real environment. Moreover, this study depends on shoppers' imaginations of the evaluated environmental characteristics and the interactions among the elements used to evaluate the provided choices. Each shopper may have a different image of the environment that they evaluated.

However, this study by Oppewal and Timmermans is relevant to this dissertation, since the type of setting is similar. It also provides the implication for this dissertation that the level of maintenance, the attractiveness of window displays, the number of activities, and the amount of greenery have significant impacts on the pleasantness rating. These significant issues may also influence preferences for shopping environments in Bangkok; therefore they are a concern of this dissertation.

The studies that use visual media in the evaluation of a physical environment can be found in the studies by Kent (1989) and Woods (1995). Kent used 45 color slides taken from several shopping malls as stimuli to solicit the preference rating of student respondents. The main objective was to prove the relationship between mystery, a component of the preference framework introduced by Kaplan and Kaplan (1983), and preference. The scenes were rated for mystery by a panel of experts and for preference by student respondents using the same 1-5 Likert scale. The two ratings were then correlated. The result showed that mystery correlates moderately high with preference. This proved that mystery could be used to predict preference. However, mystery was rated by a panel of experts, while preference was rated by users. Therefore, this result only accounts for prediction of users' preference by experts who rated mystery, since it might be possible that their ratings may not be the same. However, this study provides a basis for this dissertation by validating the application of Content Identifying Methodology to the interior environments of enclosed shopping malls.

Woods (1995) conducted a study to identify factors that influence preference and price expectation for commercial landscapes and storefronts. This study examined environmental factors extracted from respondents' ratings of 49 color slides taken from various open-air shopping centers. The slides were factor analyzed, and the important factors were identified for both preference and price expectation. Respondents' verbal survey was used to help interpret the resulting dimensions from the factor analysis. Woods found that: 1) there is a positive relationship between preference and price expectation; 2) commercial landscape and storefronts

convey messages to shoppers; 3) façade articulation, variety of elements, enframement and focal point, landmarks, shelter, prospect and refuge, and temporal factors are important factors that influence preference and price expectation. This study by Woods provides the most relevant and useful methods and variables for this research and will be discussed in detail in the literature review chapter.

Ranging from the least to the most useful and relevant, some of the above studies provide a number of useful variables for this research in shopping environments. Others also provide approaches, models, and specific methods. However, information provided from the previous studies cannot adequately be used to answer the posted questions in this dissertation. Therefore, a specific study is required on shopping environments in Bangkok, Thailand.

IV. An Approach to Preserve Traditional Markets as Vernacular Environments

This section describes how this dissertation is important in providing information for preservation of the traditional shopping environment. It addresses the preservation issues related to vernacular environments leading to an approach to the problem, which is the focus of this research, and discusses the approach to the problem of preserving traditional shopping environments from an environment-behavior perspective.

Preservation of Shopping Environments as Vernacular Environments

Traditional Shopping environments are not a frequently studied topic. Vernacular environments are ordinary, everyday Environments. Traditional Shopping environments are vernacular environments, but are a form of common rather than high-style culture. Traditional shopping environments fit into cultural environments characterized as subjects in preservation literature as vernacular architectures (Rapoport, 1990), cultural landscapes (Rapoport, 1992), everyday landscapes, ordinary landscapes, and traditional cultural properties (Parker, 1993).

Ordinary vernacular environments are not considered historic places because they do not meet criteria such as association with cultural practices and beliefs, association with historically significant figures, embodiments of a type or period of construction, sources for information about history, tangible place, integrity of relationship and condition, age, or as objects that are aesthetically beautiful or historically significant (Ashworth, 1997; Parker, 1993; Sebastian, 1993; Sellars, 1990). However, these environments are culturally relevant to long periods of people's

activities and everyday life and can probably tell stories about conditions of everyday life from the past through the present.

Although they are culturally valuable, these environments may not need to be preserved the same way as historic buildings or monuments. They are dynamic places that are significant less for their built forms than for their activities and meanings. They are ever changing and fluid; therefore, they cannot be frozen in time. Relph (1976) and Canter (1977) provide a similar definition of place as having three components—physical setting, activities, and meanings. The preservation of traditional shopping environments relies more on the preservation of activities and meanings, which depend on relationships among people. What should be done is to preserve these important activities and the meanings of these environments, and their relationship with local people. These important elements and relationship are related to people's behaviors in these environments, which can be understood via an environment-behavior approach to research.

Environment-Behavior Approach

As discussed in the previous chapter, the environment-behavior approach is the most useful approach for studying shopping environments. This section discusses further about how the environment-behavior approach is appropriate for the preservation of a vernacular environment.

Studies in environmental preservation and vernacular environments have typically been conducted by experts. Rapoport (1990) suggests that environment-behavior study can provide a framework for identifying important factors and an approach to the problem of traditional markets, since the current problem is related to the relationship between people and these environments. Their significance lies more on how people think and what they consider important in the environments than on the specific information about physical environments. A model of environment-behavior interaction not only allows cumulative findings and predicting, but also makes sense of a large variety of findings (Rapoport, 1990). Specific reasons for using environment-behavior study are discussed in terms of perceptions and differences of people. Each of these aspects is discussed in detail below.

Perception

The importance of an environment derives from people's perceptions. Since the physical structures of ordinary environments are not historically or aesthetically significant, the significant aspects of these ordinary vernacular environments seem to rely on what lies in people's heads

such as concepts, meanings, perceived activities, and relationships. The perceptions of these environments are related to the schemata that people have for this type of environment. These schemata are shaped by tradition and culture. Meanings are also derived from how people perceive these environments and associate the features of the environments with their schemata (Rapoport, 1990).

Preservation is also about perception (Roth, 1995). An environment needs to be perceived as important in order to be preserved. How we preserve an environment also depends on our perception. Different perceptions may lead to different preservation choices (Sellars, 1990). Rapoport (1990) suggests that people react to environments in terms of meanings that the environment has for them. The meanings are derived from the associations that people have with the characteristics of the environments. These meanings tend to be associated with latent rather than specific aspects of the environments (Rapoport, 1990). Therefore, concepts, meanings, and relationships that people have with these environments can be studied from people's perceptions of the environments.

Differences

Preservation of cultural environments is more about people than the physical environments themselves (Roth, 1995). In the past, vernacular environments have been studied mainly by experts using analyses of the physical environments based on certain criteria. However, people's perceptions can be very different from the experts' (Rapoport, 1990). Several studies have shown the differences between perceptions of lay people and design experts (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1995). Therefore, people in the community that value these environments should have the expertise to determine the significance of the environments in order to determine if and how the environments are affected, and to determine how to treat the environments (Downer & Roberts, 1993; Parker, 1993).

Traditional environments are functional types; they should not be determined solely by experts or by their aesthetic or stylistic properties, or even their possibility of telling the past (Parker, 1993). Rapoport (1990) suggests that function can be viewed as people's understanding of how an environment works. Which aspects of these environments, and how these environments should be preserved, should be determined according to the perceptions of those who use the environments.

However, there are differences among different groups within the public. Consensus or differences in perception among people can be used to determine whose perceptions should be considered when discussing preservation. According to Rapoport (1990), vernacular environments are culturally encoded, and can be decoded by certain groups of people who share traditional and cultural rules. The cues for meaning in vernacular environments tend to be subtle; because the models and elements used in design and communication of vernacular environments are widely shared, they can be easily understood (Rapoport, 1990). When decoding is easy, understanding the environment is almost subconscious. Environment-behavior study can be used to understand people's relationships with these environments, both at conscious and subconscious levels (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1983).

This environment-behavior approach provides implications for this dissertation. This approach can account for which important aspects of traditional environments to preserve, as well as what people think and like about the environments. Further, such an approach acknowledges the differences of perceptions and preferences among people.

Preference Study

It is important to identify what are the important factors regarding traditional shopping environments to people, and how they perceive and prefer these important factors. To identify these important factors calls for public evaluation of these physical environments. Rapoport (1990) suggests that meanings of these environments are conveyed through physical features—fixed, semi-fixed, and non-fixed features—especially the latter two. People evaluate the environments based on an overall affective response (Rapoport, 1990). Overall affective response or judgment can be measured easily by using a preference rating. Preference is an easy judgment, the result of acquired knowledge, innate reaction, and cognitive processing (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1983). Preferences can be used to answer questions about both magnitude and patterns of reactions, which also reveals something about underlying perceptions (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1995). For the purpose of identifying preference and perception, a preference study can be conducted to identify the preference dimensions that reveal people's patterns of perception, and to compare the magnitude of preferences for different environments of different subgroups of the public. A detailed discussion of the preference study approach will be described later in the literature review chapter.

Examples of Preference Studies for Preservation

The following paragraphs discuss preference studies used for the purpose of preservation of the environments. There are few preference studies used in preservation; however, some can provide examples of preference studies aimed at finding people's attitudes toward environments for preservation purposes.

A study by Kline and Wichelns (1998) measured heterogeneous preferences for environmental preservation programs and the roles that they play in shaping individual preferences for policy alternatives. The authors concluded that individuals held different attitudes as to why land should be preserved. Differences in individual goals can result in disagreement regarding the types of land and land attributes to preserve. These results will help policy makers and program administrators to apply preservation programs that will fit people's attitudes and purposes, and to distribute appropriate funding (Kline & Wichelns, 1998).

Another study by (Gimblett, 1990) used a preference study for the purpose of preserving landscape scenery by illustrating the viability of a preference model for predicting preferences for rural landscapes in Indiana. The author interpreted from a dimensional analysis that there was a high amount of agreement among the respondents in terms of what is preferred in landscape and what constitute the attributes of the preference framework, mystery, coherence, and complexity, except for legibility. From further analysis, he concludes that the preference model can be used to predict landscape preferences in rural Indiana. Furthermore, preference can be enhanced by increasing involvement components of preference framework, mystery and complexity, respectively (Gimblett, 1990). A preservation plan can then be developed based on predicted preference of people.

Okada and Togashi (1992) conducted a preference study for residential landscapes of mountain village and urban dwellers. The resulting information could be used to preserve the currently changing Japanese rural landscape. The preferences of mountain village and urban dwellers for residential landscapes are compared to find out whether the residential landscapes of the mountain village will change in the future. Factor analysis of the residential landscapes and residential exteriors showed a distinction between respondents' perceptions of traditional Japanese, and other western styles, of architecture. The results showed that more mountain village dwellers prefer traditional environments than the urban dwellers. However, more of the younger generations prefer western-style environments. The authors concluded that the future changes in rural landscapes will depend on whether or not the younger generation will turn to

preferring traditional styles like their previous generation when they mature (Okada & Togashi, 1992).

The above studies confirm that preference studies can be used to identify preferences and perceptions of people to aid in implementing the appropriate preservation strategies and specific actions for the preservation of traditional shopping environments in Bangkok. Preference studies can also be used to identify the differences in perceptions and preferences of different groups of people who have different backgrounds, and who may have different attitudes and purposes toward preservation of the environments.

Summary

As a result of a globalizing economy, the developments of modern shopping environments pose a threat to the existence of traditional shopping environments. Moreover, the development of modern shopping environments also creates problems for local economies, retail businesses, and sense of place. The way that modern environments are developed and designed contributes to environments that lack a sense of place and do not encourage face-to-face interaction among people and relationships between people and their environments. These factors lead to environments that promote placelessness and the loss of cultural identity.

In response to the problem, it is necessary to preserve the important aspects of traditional shopping environments as a cultural legacy. To do that requires understanding of what people think about their shopping environments. As an ordinary vernacular environment, traditional shopping environments are taken for granted and are not protected under historic preservation tools. Although they are culturally relevant, they cannot be preserved as they are. They need to be viable in the new globalizing economy.

The significance of traditional shopping environments as ordinary vernacular environments lies in their cultural relevance, which is determined by continuation of activities, meanings, and relationships between people and these environments. Traditional shopping environments can be preserved by identifying the preference and perceptions of people for the environments using an environment-behavior approach. Specifically, preference studies can be used to identify the factors that influence preferences and perceptions concerning traditional markets as ordinary vernacular environments. Identified important factors, including environmental, psychological,

and socio-economic factors, can be used to provide implications for the preservation of traditional shopping environments.