PSEUDO-PUBLIC SPACES
IN CHINESE SHOPPING MALLS:
Rise, Publicness and Consequences

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree.

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Abstract

Shopping malls in China create a new pseudo-public urban space which is under the control of private or quasi-public power structure. As they are open for public use, mediated by the comingling of private property rights and public meanings of urban space, the rise, publicness and consequences of the boom in the construction of shopping mall raise major questions in spatial political economy and magnify existing theoretical debates between the natural and conventional schools of property rights. In particular, (a) how have pseudo-public spaces emerged in China, and why does this particular urban space grow so rapidly; (b) to what degree pseudo-public spaces are public, and how they affect the publicness of Chinese cities; and (c) what are the economic, socio-spatial, and environmental consequences of their rise?

Using a trans-disciplinary spatial political economy framework and original data collected in selected Chinese cities, this thesis finds that (1) the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China is a conventional process driven by a series of major institutional fixes and reforms which have significantly changed the relations between the state, capital investors, and the public in China after the country's turn to neoliberalism; (2) Chinese pseudo-public spaces are generally less public than publicly owned and managed public spaces. However, at the same time, the rise of pseudo-public spaces does not necessarily result in what many western urban scholars call the 'end of public space' in Chinese cities; and (3) the rise of pseudo-public spaces is intimately connected with the economic restructuring, spatial transformations, massive evictions, growing inequality, and rising pollution levels in China. The rapid growth of pseudo-public spaces, as a result, threatens to undercut any progress that Chinese cities purport to have made.

These findings stand the 'doxy' of existing literature on its head and provide insights that can help to better understand –and ultimately transcend the 'doxa' of urban development in China. In turn, apart from enriching theoretical and empirical debates, these findings also have the potential to inform urban policy in China

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Publications from the Thesis

Journal Articles:

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Wang, Y. 2017, 'A Critique of the Socio-Spatial Debate and the Publicness of Urban Space', *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, forthcoming (SSCI).

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Wang, Y. & Chen, J. 2016, '国外城市空间公共性评价研究及其对中国的借鉴和启示 [Methods of Assessing Public Urban Spaces and Their Implications for Research in China]', *Urban Planning Forum [城市规划学刊]*, no.6, pp. 72-82 (CSSCI).

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Chapter One

The Problem

1.1 'Sorry, we're closed'

On May 13th, 2017, *The Economist* magazine published an article with the above caption, which referred to what the magazine called 'the carnage in American retailing'. Shopping malls in the U.S. have dramatically reduced in size, number, and patronage. The footprint of American mall has shrunk by 11.5 per cent, while sales plummeted by more than 23 per cent since 2006. It is predicted that 800 department stores will be closing down soon. As more and more Americans shop online and overseas, jobs are being lost both in the retail sector and in auxiliary industries such as finance and commercial property development (*The Economist* 2017a, pp.54-56).

The situation in China is the exact opposite to what the Americans are experiencing. China is now the fastest growing shopping mall market in the world. In 2014, China, a single country alone, contributed half of the world's newly opened shopping malls (*XinhuaNet* 2015). Shopping malls are springing up in many Chinese cities. According to CBRE (2017), a global commercial real estate service and consulting company, among the top twenty cities in the world for shopping mall completions in 2016, ten of them were in China, and seven of those ten Chinese cities were among the top ten (see Fig 1.1, above). What is more, when it comes to the overall floor area of shopping mall under construction, Chinese cities also dominated the world's top ten by the end of 2016 (see Fig 1.1, below), which means the number of shopping malls in China will continue to rise in the upcoming years.

Fig 1.1 Top 20 cities in the world for shopping mall completions in 2016 (above) and top 20 cities for shopping mall under construction by December 2016 (below) (square metre)
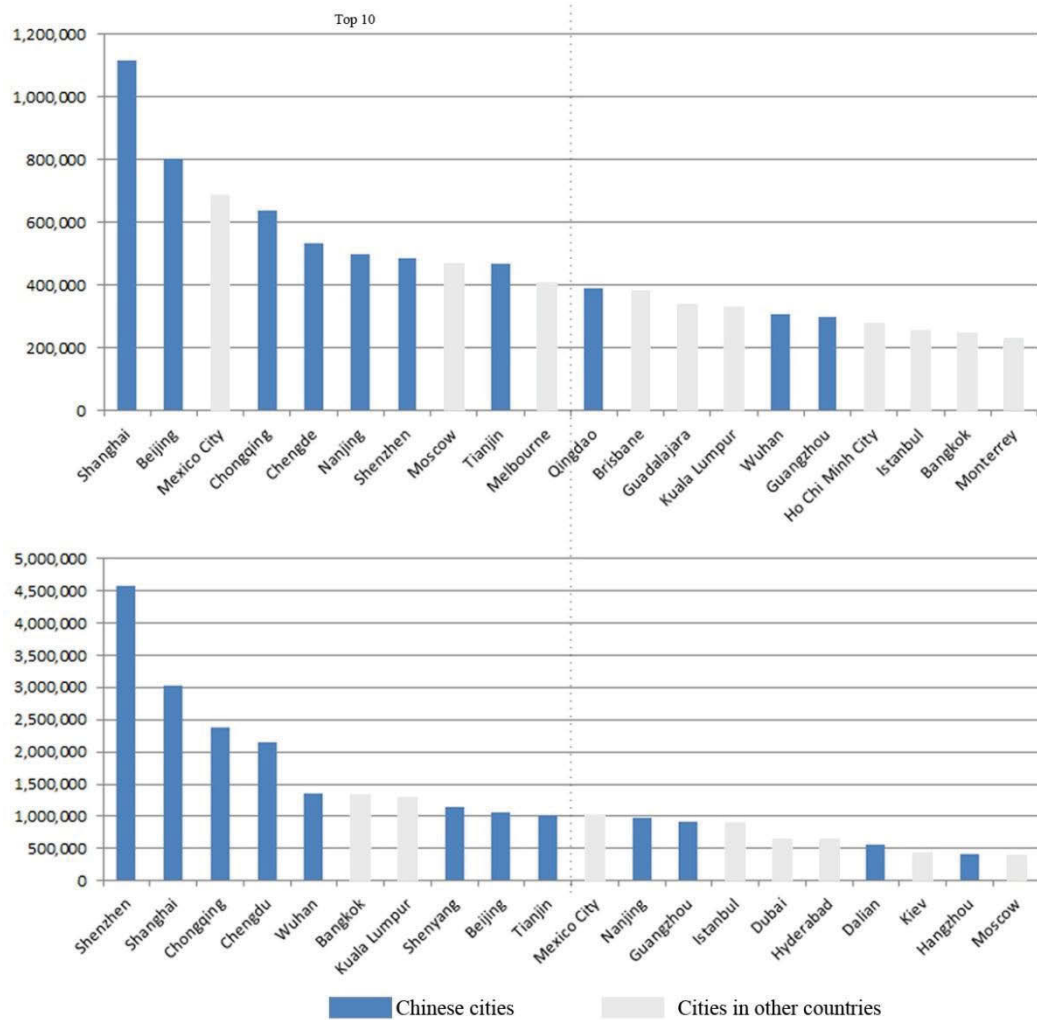
Source: based on CBRE (2017)

The expansion of shopping malls is part of what is called the 'new urbanism' in China (He & Lin 2015). Four features of this socio-economic transformation require particular emphasis. First, the increasing level of urbanisation in China is unprecedented. In 1982, the share of urban population in China was only 21 per cent; now, according to the 'National New-type Urbanisation Plan' released by the State Council of China on 16 March 2014, more than 53 per cent of the Chinese population is urbanised (see Fig 1.2). The equivalent journey took the U.K. 100 years to make and the U.S. 60 years to complete (*The Economist* 2014), but China only took 33 years for this journey. In 1949, China only had 69 cities. By

2015, approximately 600 new cities had already been built in the country (Shepard 2015). The size of urban areas in China, as a result, doubled from 20,214.2 km² to 45,565.8 km² during 1996 and 2012. At the same time, the population density of urban area surged from 367 persons per km² to 2,307 persons per km² (National Bureau of Statistics of China 1997, 2013).

Fig 1.2 China's urbanisation level from 1982 to 2012, and predicted level in 2020
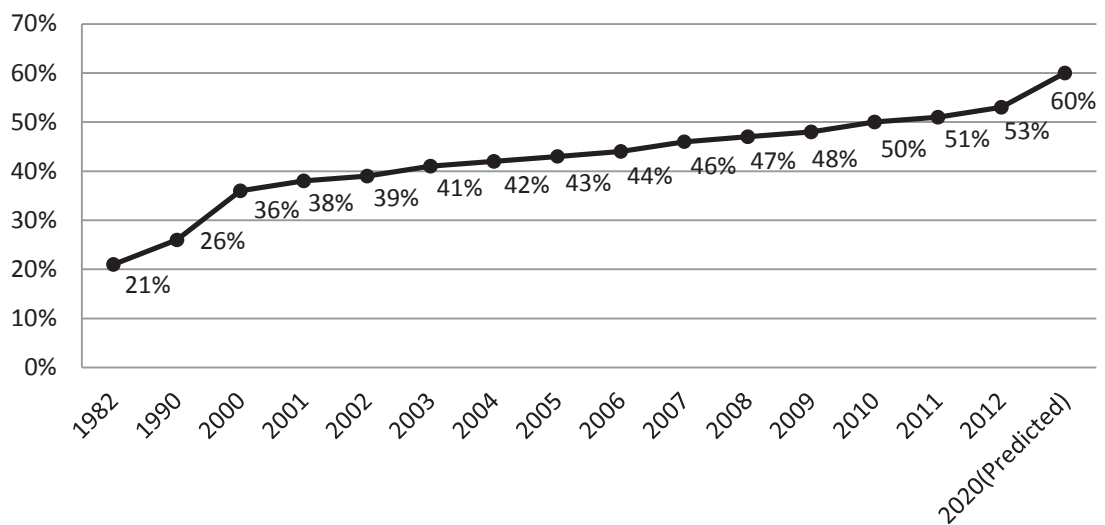
Source: based on Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party & The State Council of P.R. China (2014)

Second, the annual investment in real estate development in this process is dramatic. In 1996, real estate investment was only 843,983 million Yuan; now it is over 22,364,545 million Yuan, an increase of more than 25 times. From 2010 to 2014, the amount of investment in urban construction in Wuhan, a relatively small Chinese city (only 38.7 per cent the population of Shanghai), alone has been comparable to the U.K.'s entire expenditure on urban infrastructure in the same period (*BBC News* 2014). However, the story of Wuhan is just a tip of the iceberg (see Fig 1.3). In 2013 alone, the local government of Chongqing, another inland city and the youngest directly-controlled municipality in China, spent 296.2 billion Yuan on infrastructure and 301.3 billion Yuan on real estate development. Both are dramatically higher than Wuhan. Meanwhile, the total investment of

Shanghai, which invested 104.3 billion Yuan in infrastructure and 282.0 billion Yuan in real estate development, is 20 per cent higher than Wuhan (*China Business News* 2014). At the national level too, a 19.8 per cent increase of real estate development investment occurred in that year alone[①]. Because of these huge investments, China is building cities as well as real property development at a tremendous speed and mind-boggling scale. It is estimated that China has built a new skyscraper every five days in the past few years (*BBC News* 2014). Between 2000 and 2014, 66 skyscrapers which are taller than 250 metres were completed in China, while, in the U.S., the figure was only 12 in the same period (*The Economist* 2014).

Fig 1.3 Investment in infrastructure and real estate development of some Chinese cities in 2013

	Wuhan	Chongqing	Shanghai	Zhengzhou	Guangzhou	Changsha
Infrastructure	130.1	296.2	104.3	97.3	130.0	82.9
Real estate development	190.6	301.3	282.0	144.5	157.97	115.4
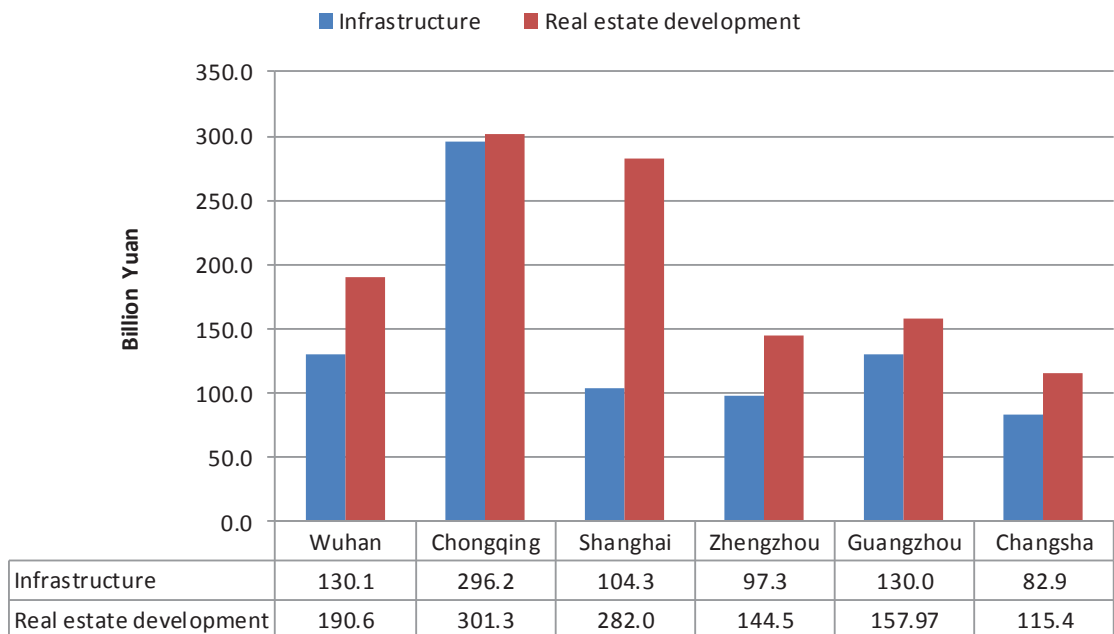
Source: Based on *China Business News* (2014)

Nevertheless, China seeks to further advance its urbanisation process. Urbanisation serves as a 'gigantic engine' for China's economic growth, says Keqiang Li, the prime minister of China (Xie 2012). So, as shown in the official urban development plan, China's

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[①] According to the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China (See: http://data.stats.gov.cn/)

urbanisation level is being directed to reach 60 per cent by 2020 (see Fig 1.2).

It is now accepted that the massive urban growth in China is heavily driven by neoliberalism (Harvey 2007; Xu & Yang 2010b), which is the third feature of the new urbanism in China. One core feature of Chinese neoliberalism is the marketisation of urban land. According to official data, during 2005 and 2012, about 19,746 km² land in China was sold to land developers[1]. Meanwhile, speaking of the expenditure on urban construction, development and management, Hao Peng, the Director of Urban and Rural Construction Commission of Wuhan, said only a small part of the investment is from the government (*China Business News* 2014). His statement can be supported by the official data, which show that 54 per cent of infrastructure construction financing is from non-government sources (Chen 2013) and, in 2013, up to 83.17 per cent of the fixed assets investment[2] was from non-government sources[3]. The next decade is very likely to witness a further increase of these ratios, because the central government has recently expressed its strongest support for the market, declaring the market force must play a 'decisive role' in China's future growth at a plenum of the Central Committee in late 2013 (Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party 2013).

Fourth, in addition to the sheer size and level of urban population, investment, and marketisation, Chinese urbanisation is also taking place within distinctive political-economic and social-cultural contexts which are not only different but also qualitatively differentiated from what pertains in the West (Hassenpflug 2010). David Harvey (2007, p.120) describes this fourth feature as neoliberalism 'with Chinese Characteristics'. For example, in comparison with the West, Chinese urbanisation has more concentrated decision-making power, fewer landowners with whom to negotiate, and hotter speculative property markets in which there are great income disparities between existing and potential residents (Abramson 2008). These conditions make it easier to consolidate

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[1] Based on data released by Ministry of Land and Resources of China (See: http://data.mlr.gov.cn/)

[2] 'Fixed assets investment' refers to the investment in construction projects and real estate developments whose planned total investments are no less than 5 million Yuan. (Explanation offered by National Bureau of Statistics of China. See: http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zbjs/201310/t20131029_449538.html)

[3] Based on data released by National Bureau of Statistics of China. The non-government investment includes: foreign investment, self-raising fund, private investment, social collected fund, and donation.

land in China. As a result, urbanisation in China appears to be typified by megaprojects. The large scale project-lead urbanisation has created unprecedented building and population densities and absolute scale of urban changes in large Chinese cities which pose, what Miao (2001, pp. 3-4) describes as special challenges to prevailing 'Western' notions of urbanity and the public realm by concentrating development decisions in the hands of an increasingly global and speculative class of investors and their designers (Abramson 2008; Marshall 2003; Olds 2001).

In contrast, Western societies have had a longer experience of the market economy. Indeed, as Harvey (2014) points out, the private property rights which presuppose a social bond between that which is owned and a person who is the owner and who has the rights of disposition over which she or he owns serve as the foundation of any market transaction. The Western societies, as a result, have a long tradition of being apprehended and organized by distinguishing things that are public and things that are private (Benn & Gaus 1983a; Edward 1979). Meanwhile, the social bond between individual human rights and private property lies at the centre of almost all contractual theories of government in the West (Harvey 2014). However, China is experiencing a transformation from a public ownership-based centrally planned economy to what Le-Yin Zhang (2006) calls a 'market socialism' economy in recent decades. Predictably, this process has resulted in Chinese society and cities developing relatively ambiguous property rights (Harvey 2007, 2011a; Zhu 2002; Lai & Lorne 2014). It was only in 2007 that the first Property Law was implemented in China to clarify what rights people exactly have on their private property. But most of these efforts are focusing on macro-scale issues including property structure, rural-urban land conversion, and land compensation (National People's Congress of China 2007). By contrast, at a micro-scale, everyday rights to get access and use the streets, plazas, and other urban spaces, namely 'the publicness of the city', remain unclear (Flock & Breitung 2016; He & Qian 2017; Wang & Chen 2016).

Meanwhile, in non-Western traditions, the urban streets have much less political significance than in the West (Qian 2014). For instance, before modern times, the public debates in China usually happened in some indoor spaces such as teahouses and guilds,

rather than on the streets. Only in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, when the Treaty Ports were established at several Chinese cities after the Opium Wars between China and Britain, did political campaigns and debates begin to occur on the streets. Chinese urbanism has also been hugely influenced by western style of urbanism. Increasing openness to external engagement, the rise in the influences of westerners and others in China, and China's own aspiration as a global power all contribute to the social interactions between China and the rest of the world. These differences, understandably, can result in a special cultural understanding of the publicness of the city, and unique institutional and legal arrangements to deal with its relation with urbanisation in China.

These four features of the new urbanism in China have collectively led to the rise of new urban spaces in Chinese cities, especially shopping malls. However, only little research has been done about those new forms of urban space and, as a result, the dynamics and political economy of the production of these new urban space and the socio-economic implications brought about by them remain unclear (He & Lin 2015). In 2015, a special issue in *Urban Studies* was devoted to the study of such spaces. The editorial of this special issue summarises China's new urban spaces that have already been studied in the mainstream research such as hi-tech and eco-industrial zone (Walcott 2002; Zhang et al. 2010), new CBD and commercial space (Gaubatz 2005; Marton & Wu 2006; Yang & Xu 2009), new residential space featuring western-style single family housing and gated communities (He 2013; Pow 2007; Wu & Webber 2004; Xu & Yang 2010b), cyberspace and new public space shaped by the internet and communication technologies (Puel & Fernandez 2012; Yang 2003), and new immigrant communities (Li, Ma & Xue 2009; Lyons, Brown & Li 2008). On this basis, this special issue seeks to update existing studies by adding studentified villages in the city (He 2015), urban planning exhibition halls (Fan 2015), and underground residence (Huang & Yi 2015) to this list. However, the issue misses the most controversial of such spaces: pseudo-public spaces. Meanwhile, as part of the 'Dialogues among Western and Chinese Scholars' series, the journal of *Modern China* published a special issue (Vol. 37 No. 6) in 2011 focusing on the new urban development experiment in the particular Chinese city of Chongqing. This special issue, however,

completely overlooks the rise of pseudo-public spaces and its consequences in Chongqing.

More recently, in 2017, *Urban Studies* published a virtual special issue to take stock of progress in Chinese urban studies to date. Apart from identifying four well-established research areas, namely (1) globalisation and the making of global cities; (2) land and housing development; (3) urban poverty and socio-spatial inequality; and (4) rural migrants and their urban experiences, He & Qian (2017, pp.828-9), in the editorial of this special issue, also highlighted three emerging new research frontiers of urban China studies which are 'not yet well represented in the journal or elsewhere, but of potentially great significance in the further comprehension and theorisation of Chinese urbanism': (1) urban fragmentation, enclaves and public space; (2) consumption, middle class aestheticisation and urban culture; and (3) the right to the city and urban activism. As Nicholas Jewell's (2016) recent book, *Shopping Malls and Public Space in Modern China*, makes clear, the rise of shopping malls is intimately connected with these three research themes. Jewell's book, however, mainly tries to provide insight into the evolution and transformation of shopping mall as an architectural typology through looking into China's architectural modernity. The main aim of his book, as Jewell (2016, p.4) himself makes clear, is to offer 'a richer set of ideas about what a shopping mall may be.' However, from a spatial political economy perspective, the following important questions have not been answered yet: why shopping malls can emerge and expand rapidly in the particular socio-political and economic context of China? How does the rise of shopping malls affect the publicness of Chinese cities? And what are the economic, environmental and socio-spatial consequences of this process for Chinese cities? To answer these questions, this thesis focuses on pseudo-public spaces in Chinese shopping malls.

1.2 Shopping Malls and Pseudo-Public Space

The shopping mall is a building typology that is deeply rooted in Western modernity. Its origin can be traced back to the 19th Century. The period between 1820 and 1840 saw the construction of fifteen retail arcades in Paris (Koolhaas, Chung, Inaba & Leong 2001). Those arcades significantly changed the social life of Paris. Walter Benjamin (2002) recognises those arcades as the precursor of a fundamentally new kind of space, an indoor dream world of seductive commodities, or, in other words, a dream world of mass consumption. Spatially, thanks to technological progress in iron and glass that enable previously unimagined structures and roof spans, the arcade project 'originates and is defined as a glass-covered passageway that connects two busy streets lined on both sides with shops', as described in the *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping* (Koolhaas, Chung, Inaba & Leong 2001, p.230). The spatial structure of the arcade was fully manifested by the Crystal Place –an iron-glass structure built in London to house the Great Exhibition of 1851- which provided an immense space in which to gather vast crowds under a single roof for the purpose of viewing goods. The iron-glass structure exemplified 'the open display of commodities in a spectacular environment pre-empted the modern shopping experience' and, in this way, generated a new architectural prototype (Koolhaas, Chung, Inaba & Leong 2001, p.229).

After the 1851 London Great Exhibition, the spatial structure of the Parisian arcade and the barrel-vaulted ceiling, garden-like interior and sensory stimulation that emerged in the Crystal Palace became popular models to build retail spaces. However, it takes approximate one hundred years for the shopping mall to take its definitive shape. By the 1940s, American cities faced oppressive congestion in the downtown as well as the spectre of endless ribbon development on commercial highway strips (Hardwick 2003). Against this backdrop, Victor Gruen, concerned about the damage caused by cars and looking for an antidote to suburban sprawl, published an influential book: *Shopping Towns USA* in 1960. Gruen sees the shopping malls as the means to provide America's car-dependent suburban population with some of the benefits and amenities of urban life. He argues that the

pedestrian mall should be built in suburbs with ample automobile parking around them. Importantly, in his book, Gruen (1960) proposes some far-reaching shopping mall design principles.

Gruen's key design principle and the most significant innovation is the 'dumb-bell' structure of the shopping mall. This architectural form consists of a single internal shopping street (an arcade) with two large 'anchor stores' at either end of the route. The route is lined with a string of smaller shops. The 'anchor stores' are usually a branch of a national chain of department stores, whose appeal lies in the diversity of goods that they sell and in the assurance of quality possessed by their brand name. The 'anchors' act as 'magnets' to draw customers past the smaller shops. In this way, as Kim Dovey (1999, p.126) reminds us, 'new mall structure generated high pedestrian densities with high rental value. This added value lay in the potential to seduce the passing consumer into impulse consumption'. Although it is hard to find an example that is built following the dumb-bell principle in its pure form, the manipulative control over the pathway from the car park to the anchor stores remains evident in most shopping malls built in the U.S. in the second half of the 20th century (Dovey 1999). In this sense, Gruen's book served as the benchmark for the evolution of the shopping mall, assuming an almost biblical significance for architects, planners and developers and involved in their design and construction. By the end of the 1980s, as a result, the mall in the U.S. had become as much a standardised product as any of the commodities sold within it (Jewell 2016).

In the late 1980s, the 'classic' American suburban mall began to occur in the city centre (Crawford 1992). However, when built in the city centre, a significant problem in the structural characteristics of the shopping mall is that if the mall is built with 'plentiful and free parking' it will lead to, as Jewell (2016, p.19) reminds us, the 'zone surrounding the mall reinforce a language of exclusion' and the mall is inconvenient to access by foot. According to Gruen (1960, p.74), 'the exposure of all individual stores to the maximum amount of foot traffic is the best assurance of high sales volume'. Less pedestrian accessible, therefore, means less profitable. To solve this problem, parking lots for shopping malls have been built underground.

In China, as we shall see later in Chapter 3, commercialised urban spaces mainly began to emerge after the 1990s when the state abolished its job and housing allocation systems. As a result, shopping mall began to spring up much later in China than in the West. Yet, the shopping mall as a new building typology has expanded rapidly in Chinese cities. Once built in the suburbs, the shopping mall is dominantly feature of contemporary Chinese city centres. As a result, the shopping mall in Chinese cities, especially those built in recent years, are typically surrounded by open spaces, rather than parking lots. The focus of this thesis is those outdoor open spaces in and around Chinese shopping malls.

Although those spaces are publicly accessible and resemble public spaces, they are designed and managed for seeking profit and manipulated to serve paying customers. Various concepts have been coined in existing academic literature to describe this particular sort of urban space, including: pseudo-public space (Dovey 1999; Mitchell 2003), Privately owned public space, or POPS[1] (Kayden 2000; Németh 2009); semi-public space (Gehl & Svarre 2013), ambiguous space (Cuthbert & McKinnell 1997); contracting-out public space (De Magalhães 2010); liminal space (Goss 1993; Zukin 1991); pseudo-place (Goss 1993); 'dead' public space (Sennett 1992); and publicly accessible space (Németh & Schmidt 2007, 2011). Among those concepts, the term 'pseudo-public space' refers to a kind of urban space which is not but pretends to be 'public space', while other concepts such as 'semi-public space' or 'dead public space' do not lay emphasis on the pretence. However, the pretence is important for this research. It is the pretence that makes people not only see those spaces as public places but engage with them in a public way. The public use and private ownership combined, as a result, lead to those spaces becoming the key places where capitalists, the public, and the state meet in the urbanisation process under neoliberalism. Those spaces, therefore, are potentially the source of tensions and

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[1] In existing literature, especially in the Western literature, 'privately owned public space', or POPS, is the most used concept to describe this particular sort of urban space. However, in China, the land market is built upon a leasehold basis. As a result, the developer or property owner of a commercial complex or shopping mall/centre does not actually 'own' the land. Instead, he or she only owns the buildings on the land and the interior spaces of the buildings. As for whether the developer or property owner owns the open urban space on the land leased to him or her, which is the focus of this research, there still have controversy (Wang 2007; Lu 2006; Liu 2000; Li 2006). Therefore, to describe what I am researching in this thesis, the concept of 'privately owned public space' is ambiguous. For this reason, although this concept is most used in the Western literature, it is not adopted to describe the research object of this work which carried out in the Chinese context.

contradictions. For this reason, 'pseudo-public space', rather than other concepts, is chosen to describe the focus of this thesis. I use the term 'pseudo' to refer to a hyper commercialised space which pretends to be public[①].

The distinctions among the urban public realm, the pseudo-public space, and interior space of a commercial complex or shopping mall/centre can illustrate the peculiarities of the pseudo-public space in the Chinese context. Based on on-site observation of the urban area of the shopping mall Taikoo Li Sanlitun (south block) in Beijing and its surroundings, Fig 1.4 maps these three different types of space in this particular urban area. As Kim Dovey (1999, p.160) reminds us, the pseudo-public space is a mixed form of 'public meaning and private control'. The design, manipulation and use of pseudo-public space thus potentially have significant impacts on the publicness of Chinese cities. It raises key questions in spatial political economy related to debates on the source of property rights: whether it is private or public? Whether private property rights generate better outcomes for cities? Or whether pseudo-public space is a third way with superior potentials?

[①] Importantly, in using the notion of 'pseudo' in this thesis, I do NOT assume that an idyllic world existed in times past during which everything was perfect and purely public.

Fig 1.4 Sanlitun Village shopping mall in Beijing (below), its ground floor plan (left above), and a mapping of public realm, pseudo-public space, and internal space of the shopping mall in this urban area (right above)

- - - Jurisdiction of the property owner

Pseudo-public space

Internal space of the shopping mall

Urban public realm

The photo below was taken at this point

Source: (Above) based on on-site observation & (below) photograph by the author, 2014

Existing studies have not addressed these questions systematically, although there is no shortage of conjecture on the issues. For instance, Harcourt claims in an editorial piece in *Development*, a journal of the Society for International Development, that the new form of urbanisation in China completely obliterates the space for people. In her words:

> The city (Beijing) was about empire, wealth and power, not a city designed to sustain ordinary Chinese lives. The car choked streets, the pollution, the sprawl and the iconic rather than people-centred buildings were clear in their messages (Harcourt 2011, p.291).

However, this kind of claim does not make a careful distinction between the different spaces that have emerged under China's new urbanisation. Just as critically, this observation can lead to a neglect of analytical precision which, in turn, can frustrate empirical verification. Similar problems plague other studies (e.g. Miao 2011; Sun 2006) which assume that all the spaces under China's new urbanism are either public or private, without distinguishing them from the pseudo-public space, as a more recent category.

This thesis presents a corrective that views pseudo-public spaces as a particular kind of urban space which is neither public nor purely private. Doing so is important because it is now being increasingly widely recognised and accepted that urban space has become a mixture of private and public realms and it is more and more difficult to make a sharp categorisation between these two components (Madanipour 1995; Németh & Schmidt 2011). As Staeheli & Mitchell (2008) remind us, in modern society, it is no longer the reality that urban space is a site of only public or private activities. The concept of 'pseudo-public space' in this study refers to: *open spaces within, around, or next to large scale commercial complexes or shopping malls/centres, which lie within the jurisdictions of the property owners of the commercial complexes or shopping malls/centres and, therefore, maintained, managed and controlled by the property owners or developers, but at the same time they are physically merged with the surrounding urban public realm (such as streets, square and plazas, or public parks) and publicly accessible* (as illustrated in Fig 1.4). This particular kind of urban space provides us lenses through which a closer reality of how China's new

form of urbanism influences the political-economic, social and environmental experiences in Chinese cities can be seen. The rest of the chapter (a) highlights the key property rights debates about urban space; (b) specifies the research aims and approach; and (c) provides a compass for the entire thesis.

1.3 The Ongoing Debates

In property rights research, there are fierce debates on space and property and how they should be held, as commons, as public, or as private property. The debates started as far back as 2000 years ago, but they are unsettled. Richard Schlatter's (1951) book: *Private Property: The History of An Idea* gives a historical account of those debates. Obeng-Odoom (2016a) provides a summary and update of these long historical debates in property rights studies which serve as a point of departure in this section. According to Obeng-Odoom (2016a, p.10), since they were originally invented by the Greek philosophers, the debates have been mainly focused on three issues, namely whether:

- Private property is natural or conventional;
- Common property leads to better use of resources; and
- Private property is more suitable to a good society and the nature of humans.

Based on their attitudes toward the above three issues, scholars participant in the debates can be generally grouped into the 'conventional school' and the so-called 'natural rights school'. The conventional school argues that private property is conventional not natural, that is, naturalised rather than primitive. As defined by the work of Plato, the defining feature of this school is the more general sense of community and the commons and not particular distinctions (Obeng-Odoom 2016a). Its advocates, such as Plato, Socrates, Cicero, and Seneca, believe that the common form is the norm, it is negated into a private form and hence it needs to be negated back to the norm. The lower classes, in this commons system, are all co-owners or part owners of the commons and there is no discrimination among the

status of humans, so all humans are free and hence freely and equally join in the utilization of the commons (Obeng-Odoom 2016a). From this conventional perspective, the cause of the ills of society is the enclosure of the commons. This orientation can be exemplified by the argument of early Christian writers such as St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, and St. Chrysostom who claimed that private property, which was only instituted after the fall of the two earliest human beings in the Garden of Eden, was sinful, and owning property in common is more consistent with scriptures and a good society (Schlatter 1951). For this reason, the conventional school claims common property is more consistent with the primitive nature of humans and the equality of society than private property. In their book *The Open Fields*, Orwin & Orwin (1967) provide detailed technical analysis of how the commons in history were effectively managed. More recent advocates are Duchrow & Hinkelammert (2004) whose book *Property for People, not for Profit* is quite representative.

In contrast, in terms of the natural rights school, sometimes called the 'new property rights school' (Cole & Ostrom 2012), Schlatter (1951, p.9) argues that 'opponents of private property are foolhardy dreamers' (cited in Obeng-Odoom 2016a). The advocates of the school, made up notably by Aristotle, the Roman lawyers who canonized the views into Roman law, Jeremy Bentham, Roman jurists Hermogenianus and Gaius, and English jurist William Blackstone, argue the institution of private property is natural and common property leads to a dissipation, rather than better use, of resources. In their view, private property is a better way to use resources. Therefore, they claim that creating a private property system is the best way to organize the commons, and private property in the commons was primitive, natural, or completely developed in the original state of humans. In the twentieth century, a restatement of this view occurred in an influential work by Garrett Hardin published as: *The Tragedy of the Commons*. Hardin (1968) argues that the commons tend to be mismanaged because people are individualistic, selfish, and profit-oriented. According to Hardin, because individuals acting in rational self-interest, holding property as commons leads to all members in a group use common resources for their own gain and with no regard for others. This, as a result, will lead to all resources eventually be depleted.

Following Hardin, a number of studies have been done to attack the commons. Much of these works have been done by new institutional economists, such as Alchian & Demsetz (1973). While there are important differences in the details of their arguments, among them there is a consensus that the privation of the commons evolves naturally and is a preferable way to organise the commons and society milieu. For example, Demsetz (2000) and North (1990) argue that individuals behaviour constrained by private property rights regimes and coordinated by markets could generate aggregate benefits. Both of them, therefore, suggest that it is important to implement secure property rights to avoid open access or common-pool losses and to provide individual incentives for investment and trade underlying general economic growth (Libecap 2016).

However, Hardin's influential argument has also been challenged by some scholars. Most notably, in her well-known book: *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Elinor Ostrom (1990) tries to explore enabling conditions for human group action to avoid common-pool losses. In this work, Ostrom identifies a series of factors that contribute to long-term sustainable outcomes of commons management and, on this basis, argues that commons can be managed by small local groups rather than by private ownership or by central governments. Ostrom's argument offers a vision of self-governance that lay between private property and big government. In this sense, the commons, as described in the editorial of a recent special issue of *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* (Vol. 75, No.2) that tries to refresh and expand our understanding of commons, 'challenges notions of property rights understood in a narrow legal sense and proposes instead property rights understood in terms of complex social relations' (p.274).

Apart from the debates around privatisation of the commons, a more explicitly urban-focused literature, also polarised along the conventional-natural rights school lines, has developed. The privatisation of urban public space is the focus of this body of work. Chris Webster (2007) has done much influential work which suggests the privatisation of urban public space is a spontaneous process to limit usage caused by congestion. Webster (2007, p.88) argues that when the population size is small, 'all cities have similar spaces' which are non-rival and non-excludable. As time goes on, public spaces in the city will

become congested by rising visitor numbers and increasing housing densities. As a result, the usage of some spaces will inevitably become rivalrous. Those spaces then may have been designed physically and institutionally to be non-excludable but they are becoming subject to rivalrous uses. If the quantity of users keeps going up, at some point, competition over resources and facilities in those spaces will become too intense to maintain a good social order. To solve the problem, alternative means of constraining competition between users will be applied. For example, users might be charged as a way to exclude others and hence control numbers. Market-based approach fundamentally changes the nature of commons, making urban space excludable. So, 'a progressive delimitation of property rights and a fragmentation of ownership that has a physical correspondence in the densification of economic activity and land use' have to be introduced to organize the conflict (Webster 2007, p.90). The assignment of individual rights, as a result, leads to urban public space become private domain which is excludable and rivalrous.

However, others argue the privatisation of urban public space is a conventional process. John Punter (1990), drawing on his observation of the changes that occurred in British cities in the 1980s, claims that the privatisation of the public realm in the U.K. during that period is caused by a series of post-war planning polices and the rise of a right-wing ideology and politics. The post-war planning policies, Punter argues, brought the death of the street of the city centres by emphasizing segregation (unmixing retail and office uses, and confining institutions to campuses), open planning (creating formless 'amenity space' through the application of daylight indicators and floor space indices), and vehicle circulation (free flow road systems and linked parking provision).

Since 1973, planning has tried to recover a sense of civic values. However, this process of reversal has been slowed down by central governments unsympathetic to all forms of planning and determined to erode local autonomy as a means of disarming political opposition. As a result, planning policies to improve the quality of urban public spaces have been 'starved of both legal and fiscal teeth' (p.9), which leads to the declining quality of public spaces. So, not only the size of public space declined, the quality of the remaining public space has also deteriorated. Meanwhile, as the privatisation of the public realm has

been 'a hallmark of Thatcherism' and an essential part of the development of capitalist cities, property investors and developers have been invited to invest into urban public space to improve its declining quality. However, the weakening of planning controls has given the developers more power to shape and control the urban environment to their own ends. The shift of power toward the developers, as a result, leads to the public realm a place that, Punter argues, 'excludes all but the credit card' (Punter 1990, p.16).

More recently, Xu & Yang (2010b) claim that the privatisation of urban public realm is caused by the rise of neoliberalism around the world since the late 1970s. They argue a crucial consequence of neoliberalism is the retreat of state power from the public realm, which leads to poorer maintained public facilities and social order in the city. The poorer social public order results in a higher crime rate. This increases city residents' feelings of insecurity of conducting daily urban life in the public realm. Meanwhile, the poorer maintained public facilities produce considerable demands for high quality excludable facilities, such as private schools. And, at the same time, the rise of modern urban planning leads to large scale urban blocks with single residential use can be particularly zoned out in the city, which allows a single residential developer get the ownership of a whole urban block. As a result of all the above drivers, gated community, as a typical kind of privatised urban space, begins to become increasingly seen in various countries and regions since the late 1970s to provide a smaller group of community where its residents can feel safe and exclusively enjoy better quality facilities.

As for whether the privatisation of common and public spaces is able to lead to better use of resources in the urban space and more suitable to a good urban environment, urban scholars' attitudes have also been largely polarized in the Western literature. On the one hand, some criticise that the privatisation of public spaces advances private interests at public expense (Mitchell 2003). This, they argue, leads to a privatisation of people's lives, the 'end of public space' and 'the fall of public man' (Sennett 1992; Sorkin 1992); to a 'public pacified' by cappuccino' (Atkinson 2003; Zukin 1995); to an erosion of 'community spirit' (Putnam 2000); and to increasingly strengthened private social control in the city (Davis 2006; Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998; Mitchell 1995; Sorkin 1992).

On the other hand, there are optimistic voices arguing that the relationship between public spaces and city life is dynamic and reciprocal, as new forms of public life require new urban spaces (Varna & Tiesdell 2010). They believe the privatisation of common and public spaces is not merely helpful for sharing the financial burden for urban development with local authorities. It is also positive for city making because it results in better maintained facilities and creates positive image to the city and its lifestyle so as to draw visitors and investors to the city (Németh & Schmidt 2011; Wansborough & Mageean 2000). For example, in one of their recent papers, Lai & Lorne (2015), using Coase Theorem, prove that, by establishing rules that enable and promote market transactions and illuminating the operation of the market's spontaneity, private property rights contribute to enhancing urban economic growth.

Similar debates characterise the new urbanism and the new urban spaces it creates in the Chinese context (e.g., Miao 2007; Xu & Yang 2010a, 2010b; Yang 2006; Zhou & Zheng 2009). Existing work in Chinese literature broadly discusses various publicness-related urban issues in the Chinese context including the emergence of gated community (Xu & Yang 2010b), private management of urban space (e.g., Wu & Li 2007; Zhang & Yu 2010), the privatisation of public space (e.g., Hu 2007; Miao 2007), physical design and the decline of public space (e.g., Xu & Yang 2010a), public life in urban space (e.g., Yang 2006), consumption culture and city development (e.g., Jiang & Zhang 2009; Zhou & Zheng 2009). Amongst all these studies, attitudes toward the privatisation of public spaces also range from more pessimistic (conventional views) to more optimistic (natural rights views).

Among the scholars who write from a conventional perspective and hence criticise the privatisation of Chinese public spaces (Miao 2007, 2011; Sun 2006; Xu & Yang 2010a; Yang 2006; Zhou & Zheng 2009), Sun (2006) is one of the most influential. Based on observation of the public life in public spaces of Lujiazui area in Shanghai, Sun points out that the international bidding and global financial centre aimed urban regeneration and development strategies have resulted in the emergence of large scale complexes and shopping malls in this area. This process has resulted in public life retreats from urban

public spaces into buildings. However, he further argues, the publicness of the 'public spaces' inside those buildings are not real, as their nature of profit-seeking only allow them to serve for particular groups.

Based on this observed reality, he points out that there are great disparities of understanding of public space, common land ownership and management system, and the role of government between China and the West. He then concludes that mechanically adopting western models with on regard to those disparities is the key reason for the decline of public life in Lujiazui area. Sun's (2006) work contributes to drawing Chinese scholars' attention to the disparities between China and the West when considering the publicness of urban space. However, the limitation of his work is that he fails to realise that the publicness of urban space can be a hierarchy. As he describes, almost all the people can at least get access to those complexes and shopping malls, even though they are not privatised urban spaces. Therefore, even shopping malls and complexes can still be seen as having certain degree of publicness. In this sense, it remains to ask to what degree they are public, other than simply conclude they cause the decline of public life.

Other scholars, look from a more natural rights or new property rights school angle, are more optimistic about the privatisation of public spaces in China (Liu 2007; Sun & Yang 2012; Wang & Wang 2002; Wu & Li 2007; Zhang 2005; Zhang & Yu 2010). For example, Tingwei Zhang and Yang Yu's (2010) work in *Urban Planning Forum*, one of the most influential urban planning journals in China, has been heavily cited by advocators of the privatisation of urban public spaces. In this work, they introduce the western concept of 'privately owned public space', or POPS, to Chinese academics, and argue that the private sector should be involved more in the production and management of Chinese urban public open spaces in the globalization era. Similarly, Liyan Wu and Bo Li (2007), through an analysis of the evolving development models of urban public space in recent decades, claim that, because it can make the public use of urban space more efficient and adaptable, the private management of urban public space can be positive for public use and private management of public space is an inevitable trend in China.

So, the existing literature is caught in a never-ending dichotomous debate on public and

private space with some notable contributions on the commons. When it comes to the pseudo-public space, this particular kind of urban space still has not received much attention in the Chinese literature (Chen & Ye 2009; Zhang & Yu 2010). While, much work on the blurring of the private and the public can be found in Western research, including the implications of the privatisation of public spaces and to what degree the privatised urban spaces are public (Akkar 2005a; De Magalhães & Freire Trigo 2017; Madanipour 1995; Mantey 2017; Németh & Schmidt 2007, 2011; Van Melik, Van Aalst & Van Weesep 2007), in the research on the new Chinese urbanism, pseudo-public spaces have received little attention. Indeed, empirical attempts to assess the degree of publicness of privatised urban spaces in China can hardly be found in existing literature.

1.4 Research Aims and Questions

This thesis aims at extending the debates in property rights research. It does so by developing the notion of pseudo-public space both analytically and empirically in the particular context of China. The thesis probes the rise, growth and publicness of pseudo-public spaces in Chinese cities, and seeks to clarify the socio-economic and environmental consequences of such spaces in urban China.

Specifically, the thesis seeks to answer three interrelated sets of research questions, namely:

(1) How did pseudo-public space, as a particular kind of privatised urban space, emerge in China; and why has it expanded so rapidly in Chinese cities?

(2) To what degree are pseudo-public spaces in contemporary China public; and how do pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of Chinese cities? and

(3) What are the economic, socio-spatial, and environmental consequences of and responses to the rise of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls in China?

To address these questions, the thesis draws on multiple sources of evidence collected,

among others, through fieldwork and from statistical compendiums, interpreted within a broad trans-disciplinary spatial political economy framework. Answering these questions is important for both theory and practice. In terms of theory and the theoretical debates in property rights, answers to these research questions can help to nuance the terms and concepts of the arguments and break their dualist, dichotomous, and simplistic nature. Answers to those questions stand the 'doxy' of existing literature on its head and provide insights that can help to better understand –and ultimately transcend the 'doxa[①]' of urban development in China. By examining the emergence, growth and evolution of pseudo-public spaces, this thesis also makes a contribution to urban policy in China. By revealing what institutional and legal arrangements have been put in place in China since the late 1970s, how they lead to highly privatised urban space in the massive urban development in China over the past three decades, and how they impact the publicness of Chinese cities, policy makers can better identify the drivers of change and continuity, determining which instruments can achieve what ends. Meanwhile, by giving more attention to the pseudo-public space, this thesis nuances the current debate around (sub)national governance in China (e.g., Shieh & Friedmann 2008; Yu, Chen & Zhong 2016), as it provides some answers to the question: does private sector management of urban spaces (through pseudo-public spaces) create prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable cities? So, this thesis is both important and timely.

1.5 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is comprised of six chapters. This chapter has been introductory in nature. It has contextualised the questions that the thesis seeks to address, while providing a map for the rest of the thesis.

The next chapter tries to explore how we can make sense of the effects of urbanisation under capitalism on the transformations of public space. The chapter problematises two

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[①] The term '*doxa*' refers to what is taken for granted in any particular society. The *doxa*, according to Bourdieu (1977, p.164) is the experience by which 'the natural and social world appears as self-evident'. It is used to describe what falls within the limits of the thinkable and the sayable, that which 'goes without saying because it comes without saying' (p.167). (also see Dunn 2009)

influential bodies of work represented by the work of Lefebvre and Harvey that grapple with the question of space. The chapter, on this basis, develops a trans-disciplinary spatial political economy framework to guide the rest of the thesis. I also describe how, guided by this framework, I collected and analysed data in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three addresses the first set of research questions. Drawing on local chronicles and other historical sources of evidences, the chapter investigates the rise and transformation of pseudo-public space in China. The chapter analyses the production of Chinese urban space in Mao Zedong's era (1949-1979); probes how Chinese urban space has gradually become highly privatised since the late 1970s; and studies how the privatisation process leads to the emergence and rapid expansion of pseudo-public space in the country. The evidence lends some support to the conventional school in property right research by showing that, instead of a spontaneous process, the privatisation of Chinese urban space is a process pushed forward by a series of major institutional fixes made after the country's turn to neoliberalism.

It is within this context that Chapter Four seeks to answer the second set of research questions of this thesis by looking into the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in China. The chapter presents and discusses case studies of pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces in two selected large Chinese cities: Shanghai and Chongqing, making this chapter the first empirical assessment of the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in the particular context of mainland China. The evidence is overwhelmingly that, in selected large Chinese cities, the levels of publicness of pseudo-public spaces are noticeably lower than urban public parks and plazas which are owned and managed publicly. However, at the same time, empirical evidence from Shanghai and Chongqing is not consistent with the claim that the public realm is 'ended' because of the rise of pseudo-public spaces. In this sense, this chapter problematises the long-standing debate between the conventional and natural rights school of property economics.

What all these complexities mean for economy, society, and environment is taken up in Chapter Five. To this end, Chapter Five examines how the rise of pseudo-public spaces is connected with widely discussed urban problems such as gentrification, dispossession and

urban environmental degradation. This chapter shows complex interlinkages between the rise of pseudo-public spaces and the key urban problems in China. On this basis, the chapter contests existing policy suggestions that attempt to address urban problems in China through administrative and neoliberal fixes without looking at the property-basis of the current problems.

In concluding the thesis in Chapter Six, I highlight the key arguments of the thesis, summarise the contribution of this research to the existing literature and theory, discuss limitations of this work, and offer directions for future research.

Chapter Two

Understanding Spatial Transformation

It is the theory which decides what can be observed.

—Albert Einstein, quoted in *Unification of Fundamental Forces*

2.1 Introduction

To answer the research questions of this thesis, it is necessary to ask how we can understand spatial transformation and its consequences. The dominant approach is to view cities as separate from social and economic structure (Obeng-Odoom 2016c; Stilwell 1992). As Charles Gore (1984) points out in his book, *Regions in Question*, the dominant approach has three problems: (1) spatial separatism: neglect of the spatial context when explaining social, political and economic changes; (2) methodological individualism: analysis or explanation of spatial phenomena only focusing on the behaviours of individual human beings while ignoring social provisioning; and (3) methodological nationalism: over-reliance on the fundamental importance of national policy by confining the study of social processes to the geographic boundaries of a particular political unit without considering the world system.

Similarly, in *Social Justice and the City*, David Harvey (1973) argues that the dominant approach to weld sociological and geographical work together has three weaknesses: (1) individuation: analysing a set of individuals which make up a population but neglecting the gap between 'substance language' and 'space-time' language (p.38); (2) confounding: failing to recognise the acute inferential problems which may arise from confounding spatial with sociological effects; and (3) statistical inference: lacking in a

metalanguage in which statistical significance in both a sociological and spatial sense can be discussed simultaneously. As a result of those weaknesses, as Harvey points out in the book, 'we cannot set up any general methodological framework for working at the interface (between sociological and geographical work)' (p.37). That is to say, according to Harvey (1973), a framework that is capable of analytic elaboration and susceptible to empirical testing for answering certain socio-spatial questions can only be built up in a given context. The present chapter, for this reason, intends to build up an analytical framework to guide the empirical investigation in the particular context of this research.

Since the beginning of modern times when early finance and trade capitalism emerged, capital has been playing an active role in not only shaping and reshaping the material urban space but also dramatically changing our social life in the city (Habermas 1989). This significant process has drawn much scholarly attention. Much research (e.g., Harvey 1973, 1990; Lefebvre 1991; Marx 1967a, 1968; Polanyi, 2001) has been done to explain how social power of capitalists shapes space and how space itself influences social power. Space and its changing nature have also been broadly discussed by political philosophers (e.g., Arendt 1958; Habermas 1974, 1989, Young 1990); political economists (e.g., Harvey 2006, 2008, 2011b); legal researchers and legal geographers (e.g., Blomley 1998, 2013; Bottomley & Moore 2007; Layard 2010); urban designers and planners (e.g., Webster 2002, 2007); and sociologists (e.g., Low 2006; Zukin 1991, 1995, 2010).

In these studies about space and economic structure and transformations of urban space, a socio-spatial binary persists. On the one hand, there is an influential group of scholars led by Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas, who argue that space itself possesses inherent social-economic and political characteristics. On the other hand, there is another large body of work that insists that it is social processes that shape urban space and confer on its features. This body of work is most commonly associated with the work of the urban scholar David Harvey. In Harvey's theories of space, capital circulation and accumulation are the most powerful forces shaping urban space. Under these processes, urban space tends to be designed, managed and used to facilitate and support capital accumulation, rather than to cater for the demands of civil society (Harvey,

1973, 2006, 2008). Besides, there is also a small group of urban political economists such as Frank Stilwell (1992, 2000) and Franklin Obeng-Odoom (2013, 2014, 2016c) who posit a socio-spatial dialectic, an interaction between the two, as a way of collapsing the binary.

A common feature of all these three perspectives is that they all consider space as a social construction. That is, space is an intrinsic part of the superstructure that interacts with the means of production (such as rules, customs, and norms), but is also part of the means of production (including factory sites and land for agriculture). However, all these studies tend to look mainly at macro-economic, political, legal or social themes. These studies, in Cuthbert & McKinnell's (1997, p.300) words, are 'rare on the ground'. Although, as we shall see later in this chapter, they are helpful for understanding the driving forces behind the genesis and evolution of the new kinds of urban spaces emerging in urban process under capitalism and can provide useful insights for analysing their influences at macro scale, but they struggle to provide empirical tools to examine the publicness of those urban spaces and our everyday use of them. In other words, their key problem is that these studies do not problematise the 'publicness' or 'privateness' of space. They simply consider 'public' or 'private' space without probing the degrees of publicness or privateness. However, in practice, as Kurt Iveson's (1998) heavily citied article shows, even the term of 'public' can mean many things, and any definition of 'public' can yield very different understandings of the nature of contemporary public space. So, the publicness of urban space is never monolithic and, therefore, the lack of nuance in the debate is limiting.

The Australian geographer, Kurt Iveson, has alluded to this problem in the literature. His book, *Publics and the City* (2007), is particularly critical of this binary. In this book, Iveson calls for a 'clearer appreciation of the multidimensional nature of the public/private distinction (of urban space) and its various applications across different realms of social life' (Iveson, 2007, p.14). While substantially moving the debate forward, as shown by many reviews (e.g., Hubbard, 2007; MacIndoe, 2009), the ideas of 'public' and 'private' as separate are still frozen in Iveson's book.

In recent times, a number of studies have tried to understand the nature of newly emerging public spaces (e.g., Carmona 2010a, 2010b; Cybriwsky 1999; De Magalhães 2010;

Koskela 2000). Many of such studies seek to provide a foundation for 'more pragmatic research' (Németh & Schmidt 2007, p.283), and focus on developing empirical tools (e.g., Akkar 2005a; Madanipour 1995; Németh & Schmidt 2007, 2011; Varna & Tiesdell 2010; Van Melik, Van Aslst & Van Weesep 2007). This body of work, as I will show later in this chapter, offers us helpful insights for analysing the publicness of emergent public spaces and how they influence our daily activities in the city. However, the main focus of these studies is the 'outcome' of urban process driven by capitalism. They tend to ignore the drivers of the analogues patterns of urban development, namely how new forms of public spaces emerge and why transformations of urban public space occur in the urban process under capitalism. So, these new studies suffer what Charles Gore (1984, p.19) calls 'spatial separatism'.

A new theoretical framework, therefore, is needed to systematically analyse the complexities and peculiarities of the rise, evolution, and consequences of new forms of public space in a particular political, economic and social context in the urban process driven by capital's logic. In his book *Adam Smith in Beijing*, Arrighi (2007) develops a Smithian theoretical framework to investigate China's economic renaissance under capitalism and the implications of this process. However, he does not go far enough to discuss how we can understand the impacts of the country's economic ascent on the publicness of its urban space. Meanwhile, an attempt to clarify the confusion of publicness in social research has been done in the context of South Korea (Yang 2015), but its focus is the public value in social services, rather than offering a framework to understand pseudo-public spaces. Understanding the relationships established between property and the people who inhabit, use, and create property lay at the heart of the publicness of urban space, so, Layard's (2016) recent work showing how public space is produced through property relations is very helpful. Yet, an analytical framework that can guide empirical studies is still missing in this work.

The present chapter aims at closing this gap. By seeking to provide a theoretical framework within which the empirical investigation of pseudo-public spaces in China can be analysed, this chapter makes an important contribution to the study of spatial

transformation. The chapter argues that the emergence and rise of a new kind of public space and its consequences cannot be systematically studied by theories within existing disciplinary silos or disputes about socio-spatial relations in isolation. Trans-disciplinary theoretical lenses are needed to overcome the long-established dyadic line of thinking that remains the conceptual avatar for most research on space. I develop a dialectical framework that draws on the ideas of David Harvey; Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja; Jürgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt; and an eclectic collection of scholars, but ultimately transcends them. This framework is broad enough to encompass the intersectionality of a range of spaces such as public, private, and commons and their degrees of publicness, privateness, and commonness.

The rest of the chapter is divided into three sections. The next section navigates some of the existing influential frameworks in order to build a more comprehensive approach for understanding spatial change in China. On this basis, section two presents a theoretical framework to analyse the rise, publicness and influences of new urban spaces in China. Then, section three shows how the framework can guide empirical research.

2.2 Urban Space: From 'Public Sphere' to 'Arena of Capital Accumulation'

2.2.1 Urban Space as the Public Sphere

Henri Lefebvre is regarded as a highly influential Marxist urbanist. His work highlights the importance of urban space in the process of what he calls 'the reproduction of social relations of production' (Lefebvre 1991, 2003). Lefebvre separates himself from others who write about cities by emphasising the spatiality of economic processes. He (1975) once stated that:

> Some chose other ways to thread through the complexities of the modern world, for example, through literature or the unconscious or language. I chose space … I dug deeply into the concept and tried to see all its implications (p.218).

It is worth noticing that Lefebvre not merely writes about economic processes from a spatial

perspective, but he also puts space first to 'see all the complexities of human existence, especially cities, through assertively spatial lenses' (Soja 2003, p.272). For him, the rationality of space 'is itself the origin and source –not distantly but immediately, or rather inherently- of the rationality of activity' (Lefebvre 1991, p.72).

Following Lefebvre, Edward Soja (1989, 2003) also chooses to put space first. For Soja, space is not 'derivative' but an encompassing viewpoint through which practical and theoretical sense of the complexities of the (post)modern world can be made (Iveson 2011). As Soja (2003, p. 275, emphasis and italics in original) himself clearly states:

> To be sure, it is widely (and almost unavoidably) acknowledged that things take place IN cities, but with a few prominent exceptions (the old Chicago School and the writings of Henri Lefebvre come immediately to mind), rarely have social theories recognised that *cities in themselves have a causal impact on social life*, that the historical development of human societies does not just take place in cities but is also, in significant ways, generated FROM cities.

In both Lefebvre's and Soja's work, the notion of social relation is central to their understanding of space. Space, as Lefebvre (1991) emphasises repeatedly in *The Production of Space*, is not a thing but rather a set of social relations. Social relations, as Lefebvre (1991) has made clear in his book, remain abstract and unrealised until they are concretely expressed and materially and symbolically inscribed in lived space. Then, how can we understand this process? Soja's (2003) *Writing the City Spatially* suggests that the real and imaged, material and symbolic, geographies or spatialities of urban life in ancient Greece can be a point to departure.

In this sense, we can learn from Hannah Arendt's well-known book: *The Human Condition*. There, we learn from Arendt (1958) that even in the original, primitive condition, social relations in urban space were not equal. In ancient Greece, the public and private lives were separated by the 'household' and 'political' realms, and only the people who were set free from productive labour were 'not to be subject to the necessity of life or to the command of another and not to be in command oneself' (p.32). They were, thus, recognised as free citizens, and deemed as 'the public'. Only they were allowed to participate in

political life in the political realm, political rights were highly restricted to this privileged social class. This sort of political realm -which was constituted in discussion among 'free citizens' as well as common action such as the waging of war or competition in athletic games- in ancient societies, ancient Greece in particular, offers an important prototype of the public sphere (also see Smith & Low 2006). Arendt characterises the public sphere as 'self-government among distinct and equal individuals freed from the bonds of necessity' (Lopes 2015, p.15). On the other hand, other social groups, including women, slaves, and the throng of common people were excluded from the public sphere and confined to, in Arendt's (1958, p.38) term, the 'shadowy interior of the household'. In Arendt's account, the private sphere, households and economic units, was characterised by relations of domination and governed by necessity (Lopes 2015).

Fast forward to the modern age, in which Jürgen Habermas (1989) tells us the social order was reshaped by the emergence of early finance and trade capitalism. His scholarship sheds light on the institutional transformation of bourgeois society, which is driven by both commercial and bureaucratic forces as illustrated by structural changes of the public sphere (Ebner 2015). In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Jürgen Habermas (1989) claims the traffic in commodities and news created by early capitalist long-distance trade enabled merchant companies to open up new markets for their products. However, unlike the local markets which existed in the towns from the beginning, the markets for foreign trade which resulted from political efforts and military force were considered as 'institutional products' and need strong political guarantees. As such, Habermas argues, the nationalisation of the town-based economy began, which gave rise to the modern state. Moreover, in order to meet the increasing financial needs, the modern state was established largely based on taxation. On this basis, local administrations were then brought under the control of the state. As the monetary flow takes the shape of taxation, money began to drive the evolution of the modern state. One result is, as Alexander Ebner (2015, p.375) reminds us, the state 'no longer follows liberal prescriptions on safeguarding the institutional order of the market system, but actually becomes an active part of the economic process'. This process leads to the elimination of the estate-based authorities while creating room for the

sphere of public authority, namely the 'public sphere' in modern sense.

In this public sphere, there emerges the realm of social interaction which interposes itself between household and political realms (Benhabib 1992). This process leads to the rise of 'the society' which Habermas (1974, p.52) describes as:

> A private realm occupying a position in opposition to the state, stood on the one hand as if in clear contrast to the state. On the other hand, that society had become a concern of public interest to the degree that the reproduction of life in the wake of the developing market economy had grown beyond the bounds of private domestic authority.

The rise of the society blurs the boundaries between the economic activities in the household realm and political life in the public realm (Benhabib 1992). The household economy and relevant activities, including housekeeping and all matters pertaining in the household realm, then rise into the public sphere. So, social groups that used to be confined to the 'household realm' such as women, workers, non-white, and non-Christian can participate in the political life, and they thus can be deemed as 'the public'.

The extension of the scope of 'the public' has led to the emergence of the public sphere which, according to Habermas (1974, p.49), is:

> A realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body.

In Habermas' view, the public sphere is a theatre where citizens debate and deliberate on their common affairs under the constrains of an 'ideal speech situation' (Lopes 2015, p.15). These constraints include:

> Each participant must have an equal chance to initiate and continue communication; each must have an equal chance to make assertions, recommendations and explanations; all must have equal chances to express their wishes, desires and feelings; and finally, speakers must be free to thematize those power relations that in ordinary contexts would constrain the wholly free

articulation of opinions and positions. Together these conditions specify a norm
of communication that can be named that of egalitarian reciprocity (Benhabib
1992, p.89).

In this sense, the public sphere makes the city a form of sociality, as a potential site for the construction of utopian dreams of a nurturing social order. Forming public opinion is an important prerequisite of public sphere. This is because, according to Habermas (1974), through forming public opinion within public sphere, citizens can transmit the needs of bourgeois society to the state in order to transform political into 'rational' authority.

As for the way to arouse public opinion, Habermas (1974) argues that it should be the 'public discussions' about the exercise of political power. Similarly, Ackerman (1980) believes legitimation in a democratic society can result only from a 'public dialogue' which is a way of talking about power. Ackerman (1980, p.4) describes public dialogue as:

Whenever anybody questions the legitimacy of another's power, the power holder must respond not by suppressing the questioner but by giving a reason that explains why he is more entitled to the resource than the questioner is.

Apparently, to achieve the widest-reaching democratization of political decision-making processes through 'public discussion' or 'public dialogue', it is imperative to make the citizens accessible to debate, reflection, and action in public sphere, that is, in Habermas' (1989) term: 'public participation' which is fundamental to democratic governance.

Further, Habermas (1989, p.27) argues that public participation makes public sphere 'the sphere of private people come together as a public'. It can be seen from this argument that the public sphere has a geography. In city settings, urban space, especially public space, becomes the place where people come and form a public (Smith & Low 2006). In this process, four key features of urban space as the public sphere can be identified.

First of all, accompanied with the extension of 'the public', the scope of 'public space' has correspondingly experienced a significant extension. In political thoughts, public space is no longer a space in any topographical or institutional sense. Instead, it is seen as a sort of space that can emerge whenever and wherever in the city (Benhabib 1992). For instance,

Arendt (1958) believes public space exists in the place 'where freedom can appear', and the freedom emerges from 'men acting together in concert'. Meanwhile, Habermas (1989) argues that public space comes into existence anywhere and anytime all affected by general social and political norms of action engage in a practical discourse to evaluate their validity.

Second, the emergence of many new social groups into the political realm results in public space which is no longer a place of political and moral homogeneity. As Habermas (1989) puts forward, in modern society, public space is not a space of competition for acclaim and immortality among a political elite (also see Arendt 1958). Based on this understanding, Arendt (1958, p.41) emphasises the diversity, or 'individuality' in her own term, of the activities in urban public space:

> [Public space was] where everybody had constantly to distinguish himself from all others, to show through unique deeds or achievement that he was the best of all. The public realm, in other words, was reserved for individuality, it was the only place where men could show who they really and inexchangeably were.

Besides, Young (1990) argues the idea of 'equality' in modern political life is not the elimination of differences. Instead, those differences among various social groups should be tolerated and treated equally in public space in modern society.

Third, both Arendt and Habermas believe the basic defining characteristic of the public sphere is the type of interaction established therein (Lopes 2015). Although Habermas (1974) admits that in a large public body, communication requires specific means -such as newspapers, radio and television- for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it, Kohn (2004) argues that the public discussion in political life still largely relays on face-to-face debate, as the interaction via e-mail or other media do not allow citizens to ask questions and challenge answers. As a result, as Kim Dovey (2001, p.55) reminds us, 'public space as a site for free speech and political resistance has not been replaced by the mass media.' Besides, Watson (2006) argues that public spaces in modern society have become places of protest and for the expression of minority interests. In this sense, the public participation has turned the urban public space into the most vital physical place for

reasoning and voicing citizens' political views where Harvey (2006) claims all citizens have rights to access and being there.

Finally, the equality of public participation requires openness of the public space. According to Young (1990), successful public spaces must be universally accessible, and must contribute to democratic inclusion by encouraging interaction between acquaintances and strangers. However, for the political philosophers, the openness not merely means physical accessibility, but, more importantly, refers to accessibility to the events and information in the public sphere. This can be supported by Habermas (1989) who argues that we call events and occasions 'public' when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs. Besides, John Rawls (1999) points out that a basic connotation of publicness is openness which guarantees all the members in the public sphere are aware of the expected boundaries of the behaviours of their own and others', and what behaviours are accepted in political life.

The above discussion sketches a picture of urban spaces as the public sphere. However, it is only one side of the coin of how urban space is understood. The other emphasises social production. As a result of the rise of capitalism and neoliberalism, cities increasingly become places where capital circulates and accumulates. These processes have brought significant transformations to the characteristics of public spaces and the roles they play.

2.2.2 Public Space as Commodity

Putting space first makes Lefebvre significantly different from David Harvey who tends to choose social processes, rather than space, as his primary interpretive viewpoint. Harvey first outlined this approach in his book: *Social Justice and the City* (Pahl 1974). In this book, Harvey (1973, p.13, italics in original) argues that cities are shaped by capitalists in a way that yields profits for them and alienates others, and asserts:

> Space is neither absolute, relative or relational *in itself*, but it can become one or all simultaneously depending on the circumstances. The problem of the proper conceptualization of space is resolved through human practice with respect to it. In other words, there are no philosophical answers to philosophical questions that arise over the nature of space –the answers lie in human practice.

This book, as Obeng-Odoom (2013, p.48) points out, sets the foundation of 'a continuity of thought in Harvey's theory'. Different from Lefebvre, Harvey sees the urban process as somewhat subordinate to production processes (Stilwell 2017). Harvey (2005, p.213) himself admitted his continuing reliance on insights from this early book in one of his more recent papers by stating that 'in *Social Justice and the City* I took what I still hold to be a fundamentally correct position with respect to the social construction of space'. Then, in Harvey's theory, how do social processes driven by capitalism shape urban space?

Harvey answers this question in his 1978 contribution to the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* and an earlier work published in 1975. In those works, Harvey clearly demonstrates that his understanding of 'urban process' under capitalism is based on seeing it in relation to the theory of accumulation. He (1975, p.9) interprets accumulation as 'the engine which powers growth under capitalist mode of production'. This phenomenon, as Harvey (1975, p.10) points out, produces the crisis that 'a mass of commodities on the market with no purchasers in sight'. Therefore, to resolve this crisis, Harvey (1975, p.9) emphasises the importance of the creation of fresh demand and the existence of market by pointing out:

> The process of accumulation depends on the existence of a market to absorb the increasing quantities of commodities produced. If uses cannot be found for goods or if an effective demand (need backed by ability to pay) does not exist, then the conditions for capitalist accumulation disappear.

Failure in doing so, Harvey (2001, p.26) maintains, can lead to the consequences of 'massive devaluation of both capital and labour'. Moreover, devaluation can sometimes lead to physical destruction and even war.

In this sense, fresh room for accumulation must exist or be created for capitalism to survive and, Harvey (1975) argues, the only way to create fresh room is 'expanding'. Harvey further points out creating new markets and opportunities for profitable investment is a crucial way for expanding (Harvey 1981). Here, the geography –namely spatial organisation (or reorganisation) and urbanisation, as main ways to create new market and

investment opportunities- plays an important role. As Harvey (2001, p.28) explains, urbanisation is central to this process, because it is:

> As foci of investment to absorb surpluses of capital and labour … and as the necessary fixed capital of an immobile sort to facilitate spatial movement and the temporal dynamics of continued capital accumulation.

Creating new market and investment opportunities through urbanisation leads to the accumulation process of capital becomes a crucial force shaping and organising urban space. To better explain this process, Harvey (2001) coins the notion of 'spatial fix'. In Harvey's theory, the term 'spatial fix' has two meanings. One highlights geographical expansion, and the other emphasises geographical concentration. Primarily, this notion is developed to describe the expansion of the geographical size of the market (Harvey 1975, 1978). Using this concept, Harvey reveals capitalism is addicted to 'fix' (here, it means 'resolve') its inherent inner crisis through geographical expansion much as it is addicted to technological change and endless expansion of economic growth. Clearly, geographical expansion has played an effective role in creating new markets and more social needs to absorb the excess products though the globalization process in recent decades.

However, at the same time, expansion has also inevitably increased the physical distance between production of products and their realisation in the market. This leads to the introduction of the spatial concentration meaning of 'spatial fix'. The increasing physical distance has become one of the fundamental crises for capitalism growth (Harvey 2014) because, although a large number of technological and organisational innovations have been designed to speed things up, longer distance typically means longer time and slower speed for capital circulation. Therefore, instead of motion and mobility of capital, we can see in Harvey's recent works the notion of 'spatial fix' is more often used to describe the particular problem of 'fixity', namely 'the idea that something (a thing, a problem, a craving) can be pinned down and secured' (Harvey 2001, p.25). Harvey (2001, pp.25- 28) describes this process as:

> Capital has to fix space (in immovable structure of transport and

communication nets, as well as in built environment of factories, roads, houses, water supplies, and other physical infrastructures) in order to overcome space … The 'spatial fix' … is in part achieved through fixing investments spatially, embedding them in the land, to create an entirely new landscape (of airport and of cities, for example) for capital accumulation.

In the process of being pinned down in urban space, capital is mainly invested into what Harvey calls *fixed capital* and *consumption fund*. According to Harvey (1978, p.106), *fixed capital* is 'used to aids to the production process rather than as direct raw material inputs'. A part of fixed capital is enclosed within the production process, and the other part 'functions as a physical framework for production' which Harvey (1978, p.106) calls the *built environment for production*; similarly, *consumption fund* 'functions as aids rather than as direct inputs to consumption'. Some items of it are directly enclosed within the consumption process, while others 'act as a physical framework for consumption' which in Harvey's term is the *built environment for consumption* (Harvey, 1978). It can be seen from the above definition that the built environment, for both production and consumption, services as the physical framework for capital circulation and it is the place where accumulation happens.

By providing a physical framework on which capital can accumulate, the main goal capitalists want to achieve is to shorten the turnover time. As mentioned, expansion leads to long distance trade which separates production and realization by a long time interval inevitably leads to a long turnover period and slows down the circulation velocity (Harvey 1975). The longer the turnover time of a given capital, as Marx (1967b) argues, the smaller is its yield of surplus value. The turnover time of a given capital, according to Marx (1967b), equals to the production time plus the circulation time. Therefore, any reduction in circulation time can enhance the accumulation process and create fresh room for capital accumulation (Harvey 1975). So speeding up 'the velocity of circulation of capital' contributes to the accumulation process (Harvey 1975). To overcome the spatial barrier and speed up capital circulation, Marx (1973, p.593) introduces the concept of 'annihilate space with time' which he describes as:

While capital must on one side strive to tear down every spatial barrier to intercourse, … to exchange, and conquer the whole earth for its market, it strives on the other side to annihilate this space with time … the more developed the capital … the more does it strive simultaneously for an even greater extension of the market and for greater annihilation of space by time.

Harvey (2001) sees 'the annihilation of space by time' as a fundamental law of capitalist development. He argues, in order to minimise the circulation time and costs, activities of production and consumption are thus located within a 'rational' distance and with respect to each other. Capital therefore organise production and consumption within concentrated urban space, and a large proportion of capital which flows into the built environment is then absorbed in concentrated urban areas (Harvey 1975, 1978).

By introducing 'spatial fix', Harvey reveals the strong connection between how the accumulation of capital is manifest and how the 'spatial fix' gets pursued in urban settings. Generally speaking, urban space is a key site for both 'seeking to resolve the crisis tendencies of capitalism accumulation' as well as 'pinning down of large amounts of capital in place through the production of fixed and immobile capital in built environment' (Harvey 2001). Bentley (1999, p.66) offers a more plain summary of the role built environment plays in this process. He states:

Built environment is involved in the accumulation of capital at two related levels: first as a commodity which is itself produced directly for profit, and second as a physical setting which affects the profitability of the production, distribution and exchange of other commodities of all sorts.

And, it is important to notice that capitalists' efforts of organising this 'physical setting' is mainly oriented towards overcoming spatial barriers. As a result, urban space is produced to create fresh room for accumulation on one hand, and, on the other hand, to geographically concentrate production and consumption within a 'rational' distance for the sake of speeding up circulation. The city, in this way, becomes an arena of capital accumulation.

In sum, three key requirements for capitalism to survive in the urban process can be identified from Harvey's theories of space. First, the existence (or creation) of market to

allow capital be fixed in built environment; Second, the existence (or creation) of new demands or social needs to provide fresh room for capital accumulation and expansion; And third, the ability to concentrate spatially to speed up capital circulation.

2.2.3 Neoliberalism in the City

In previous subsections, I have discussed how two highly influential bodies of work grapple with the question of space. One led by Lefebvre, Soja, Arendt and Habermas who would have us believe that space itself is imbued by complex instrumentalities. The other led by American-based urban scholar David Harvey who would rather we start our analyses from social processes and how they shape and reshape urban space. Besides them, there is a small group of urban political economists, such as Frank Stilwell (1992, 2000) and Franklin Obeng-Odoom (2013, 2014), who would claim a socio-spatial dialectic.

None of the three groups of scholars, however, has considered the questions of continuum and relativities of urban space. Yet, doing so is crucial to our understanding of spatial transformation, because of the emergence of new urban spaces that are neither entirely public nor wholly private. In this process, as has been widely noted, neoliberalism plays a crucial role in driving the production of those new urban spaces (Dovey 1999; 2016; De Magalhães & Trigo 2017; Harvey 2006; Punter 1990; Yang & Xu 2011).

Basically, neoliberalism can be viewed as a set of pro-market prescriptions (Berry 2014). Frank Stilwell (2014) provides a good summary of how those prescriptions can be understood. According to Stilwell (2014), the concept of neoliberalism has three distinct but interrelated aspects. Neoliberalism can be seen as ideology, as social movement, and as a set of political practices. First of all, as ideology, neoliberalism sees the market, on the one hand, as an engine of efficiency and, on the other hand, as a guarantor of individual freedom. Second, as a social movement, neoliberalism is mainly concerned with propagating these beliefs about how the goals of market efficiency, freedom and progress should be pursued. Third, as a set of political practices, neoliberalism results in policy changes made by the government to directly serve the interests of corporate capital, facilitating capital accumulation and uneven wealth distribution. Neoliberalism, in these ways, changes the

nature of the government. In the neoliberal government, as Stilwell (2014) points out, the economic concerns trump other cultural and social concerns.

As a result, since the rise of neoliberalism in the late 1970s, the neoliberal government increasingly retreats from building and managing urban space. Private capital investors, consequently, begin to play an increasingly important role in doing those jobs. What happens along with this process is what Kim Dovey (2016, p.260) calls 'place destruction', namely the construction of 'an instant but privatised sense of place' by newly emergent urban spaces such as gated communities and shopping malls. In this process, due to the existence of private property rights in those new urban spaces, the boundaries between 'public' and 'private' are becoming more and more blurred in cities. Urban space is no longer a place of either 'public' or 'private'. Instead, 'public' has become a 'cluster concept' with various degrees and made up of multiple dimensions (Akkar 2005a; Kohn 2004). To extend the existing approaches, the rest of this section turns to the transformations of urban space and how the complexities of its publicness can be understood in the new situation.

2.2.4 Commodity, Space, and Power

Urban space, as Michel Foucault (1980) pointed out more than three decades ago, is essentially a site or container of power. This theme runs through the key conceptions of urban space discussed in sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.3. As a result of capital accumulation in the city, although thinks it is difficult to sort out the relationship between the physicality of urban space and the public sphere with any exactitude, Harvey (2006) also admits that urban space has become a place where capital investors exert their power generated from the money they have. He reminds us in his influential book *The Condition of Postmodernity*, money "is itself a form of social power that can be appropriated as 'the social power of private persons'" (p.101). Harvey (1990, p.102) goes on to explain, that:

> Money confers the privilege to exercise power over others – we can buy their labour time or the services they offer, even build systematic relations of domination over exploited classes simply through control over money power. Money, in fact, fuses the political and the economic into a genuine political economy of overwhelming power relations. … The common material languages

of money and commodities provide a universal basis within market capitalism for linking everyone into an identical system of market valuation and so procuring the reproduction of social life through an objectively ground system of social bonding.

When it comes to its impacts on urban space, Harvey (1990, p.257) claims, money power or capital results in the commodification of space and the production of 'new but equally oppressive geographical systems for the containerization of power'. It makes private property rights of capital investors embedded in the urban land, which leads to urban spaces 'legitimized under some legal system of rights to spaces which guarantees security of place and access to the members of society, form a fixed frame within which the dynamics of a social process must unfold' (p.258).

In a more recent book *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*, Harvey (2014) points out neoliberalism has caused the rise of capital investors' money power in the urbanisation process of recent decades. Neoliberalism holds that the social good will be maximised by maximising the reach and frequency of market transactions and when markets do not exist -in areas such as land, education, and environmental pollution- then they must be created. In this way, neoliberalism seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market (Harvey 2007). Zukin (2010, pxiii), in her book *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*, highlights three main categories of power that control the city: the economic power of capital investors, the legal power of the state, and the cultural power of consumers' tastes. By bringing all human action into the market, the rise of neoliberalism has significantly changed capital investors' relationship with the state and the public (as consumers) in the process of managing and organising urban spaces.

On the one hand, in the market, consumers' tastes are playing an important role in guiding how capital investors shape and reshape urban space. Sharon Zukin (2010) has noted that the means of the public's (especially the middle class') consumption, namely what products, both material products and cultural products, they want to buy, what kind of places they would like to go for shopping, meeting with friends, eating, or just relaxing, have become a kind of cultural capital which fuels rising real estate vaules. As a result, a growing number of new urban *terroirs*, localities with specific cultural products and

characters that can be marketed in the market are being created by capital investors in the city to draw consumers. In this process, She goes on to explain, consumers' tastes –no matter tasets for lattes and organic food, or for public spaces- through being reflected in the media's language and images, from lifestyle magazines to local wikis and online social media, now, by guiding capital where to go and what to create, define the city and have led to not merely the emergence but also the growth and evolution of new urban spaces. Zukin (2010, p.4), on this basis, claims that 'the power over space is not just financial. Even more important, it is cultural power.'

The cultural power over space can be clearly seen in the 'dream-world' created by the mall. The arcades, as Walter Benjamin (2002) pointed out long ago, present the unbounded optimism on which capitalism is sustained, using striking architecture and futuristic visions of what cities will one day look like. Just like the original arcades, the shopping mall of today, according to Pusca (2009, p.371), creates 'idealised cities, where streets are always lit, clean, and air-conditioned, where everything is readily availiable, where everyone looks happy and no one is poor. The dirt, pollution, poverty, noise, traffic, and physical danger are kept outside the magic city's doors, creating a sealed bubble of joy and happiness.' This kind of world, of course, is not real. The mall, in other words, creates the 'dream-world' of capitalism (Benjamin 2002; Buck-Morss 2000). Importantly, the dream-world is as much a socio-political project as it is an economic one (Pusca 2009). An important result of this dream-world, as Dovey (1999) notes, is that it constructs new forms of desire and stimulates consuption. In Buck-Morss' (2000, p.x) words, the dream-world in the mall is the 'expression of a utopian desire for social arrangements that transcend existing forms.' Unlike the communist community which emphasises equality, the capitalist dream-world highlights wealth and idividual glamorousness. What is more, the idea of happiness in the dream-world is intimatedly connected with material consumption. Everything in the mall points to fashion, food and relaxation as the ultimate source of both individal and collective happiness (Pusca 2009). Meanwhile, the luxury goods displayed in the mall provide visual enjoyment and entertainment to visitors. The easy access to goods in the mall creates the illusion that 'better' is possible: everyone can have any luxury goods and services they want

as long as they can afford to shop there. In this way, the mall becomes a place to showcase individual wealth. Through consumption, many can enjoy a sense of belonging to those safe, clean, prosperous spaces. However, as Pusca (2009, p.376) reminds us, 'there are still many more who are left out'.

On the other hand, the rise of neoliberalism makes the state and capital investors come together and form, in Harvey's (2011a) words, 'the state-finance nexus'. Harvey (2014, p.276) wrote in his recent book that neoliberalism has led to:

> … the figures of the financier and the rentier, the developer, the landed proprietor and the entrepreneurial mayor step from the shadows into the forefront of capital's logic of accumulation.

Furthermore, in *The Enigma of Capital*, Harvey (2011a, p.197) points out one crucial consequence of the above phenomenon is:

> The 'success' of a particular state (national or local) is often measured by the degree to which it captures flows of capital, builds the conditions favourable to further capital accumulation within its borders …

As a resutl, in the urban process, the rise of neoliberalism has caused the state to become more dependent on capital investors. Consequently, to cater for capital's needs, the state has to, on the one hand, allow the spatial forms and urban meanings of public spaces are designed to promote economic development, and on the other hand, make extra concessions to capital investors. In the U.S., for instance, although the right to free speech and assembly in publicly owned urban spaces is guaranteed by the Constitution, this right does not extend to spaces owned and managed by private sector (Németh & Schmidt 2007; Kohn 2004).

As a result, economic power of capital investors arises in the urban process under neoliberal capitalism. It leads to growing numbers of urban spaces are privatised and commercialised on the one hand, and, on the other hand, results in investors' property rights are increasingly embedded in urban space. In this process, capital views the public realm as a barrier for accumulation (Cuthbert 2006), and overcoming this barrier becomes an

important task for capital investors when organising, designing and regulating the urban space. One important function of property rights, as Waldron (1991) points out, is to provide a basis for determining who is allowed to be where. This function enables the property owners to implement their '*sense of place*' and prioritize this sense legally above any other considerations within the visible or invisible property boundaries (Layard 2010). Within the property boundaries, the manager-led, articulated 'sense of place' which relies on legal mechanisms subdues other multiple, heterogeneous, and diverse senses into submission (Layard 2010). Consequently, as Layard (2010) describes, entering a boundary in city setting, no matter it is visible or not, can transform what is permitted into something that is not. The property owners are entitled to control, exclude the 'undesirables', and seek profit within their jurisdictions.

Physically, the shopping mall is one of the key physical structures in which the property owner's economic power can be enforced. In his book *Thinking Like a Mall: Environmental Philosophy after the End of Nature*, Steven Vogel (2015), from an environmental psychology perspective, discusses the relations between the built form of the mall and people's action in it. According to Vogel (2015), the shopping mall is a place in which people interact not only with one another, but also with individual stores and with the mall as a whole in complex and unpredictable ways. Everything in the mall –from people, a chair to even a pet dog- plays a role in making the mall the place it is. All of the things in the mall, as a result, collaboratively form an 'ecosystem' which maintains itself in existence (Vogel 2015, p.157). Since every individual human involved in the design and building of the mall doubtlessly each had his or her own individual reason for engaging in those activities, the mall itself, as Vogel (2015, p.139) reminds us, is 'certainly the result of all these intensions at work'. In this sense, the design of the mall's built form, to a large extent, is a physical reflection of the architects' and developer's desires. To support this argument, Vogel (2015) analyses the design of the City Center Mall in Columbus, Ohio (built in 1989 and demolished in 2010). In this mall, one could not get from the first level to the third by escalator without walking all the way around the structures of commerce. This pathway through commodities was intended and deliberately designed by the architects to maximise

the number of storefronts one would pass and the chance that one would be tempted to make a purchase (Vogel 2015). In this way, one's trip to the mall was being extended beyond what one wanted. Her or his intentions, as a result, could not be straightforwardly satisfied when entering the mall. That is to say, the design of the mall's built form plays a role in blocking people's independence of action to an extent.

Moreover, socially, economic power also shapes our society, because property owners do not simply take advantage of property rights in the legal sphere and materialise their desires physically, but also refers to the 'social side of property' (Voyce 2003). It makes urban spaces under the control of capital investors become the separation for 'consumers' inside and 'citizens' outside, and the 'sense of place' in property a boundary separates the jurisdiction out from urban space outside. In these ways, the urban process under neoliberal capitalism leads to the rise of privatised and commercialised urban spaces in the city. In this process, 'traditional kinds of urban public space are being eroded or transformed and new models are being created' (Dovey 2001, p.53).

In sum, three factors lead to the rise of commercialised and privatised urban spaces can be identified. First, the relationships between capital investors, the state, and the public are framed in a neoliberial market; Second, the dependence of the state on capital investors in the processes of developing and managing urban spaces; And, the third factor is the existence of a consumerism culture to not only create demands for commercialised urban spaces, but also guide capital investors to produce them.

2.2.5 Public or Private Space? A Critique of Binaries

While the two contrasting views succeed in terms of analysing power, their attempt to grasp space falters as they mainly concentrate on 'public' or 'private' space, without looking at other types of spaces (such as commons) and the varieties of public and private space (such as pseudo-public space). Traditionally, as the public sphere, urban public space is 'life space' which, according to Friedmann (1988, 2010), is 'the theatre of life' and an expression of 'a convivial life', and it is the space where people gather, centre, link, and interact in the city. However, capital accumulation in the city leads to the rise of privatised and

commercialised urban space which is mainly what Friedmann (1988, p.97) calls 'economic space', which is 'abstract and discontinuous, consisting primarily of locations (nodes) and linkages (flows of commodities, capital, labour and information).' The formal choice criterion for actions productive of economic space, according to Friedmann (1988, p.97), is 'efficiency in the accumulation of a surplus'. Zukin (1991) points out 'economic space' helps to mediate the economic power of capital investors with public space, which results in a blurring of distinction between the public sphere and the arena of capital accumulation in the city.

As a result, the presentation of self in the public sphere came to substitute for representation, and the presence of self is more and more reduced to a matter of commodification and spectacle (Sennett 1992). This phenomenon, as Harvey (2003a, p.221) argues, makes the public sphere become 'more and more mystified'. Consequently, rather than as the pure public sphere, the public space is increasingly playing the role as an arena for capital accumulation. This has brought five important transformations to the public space.

Firstly, the sense of 'public' becomes a duplicable commodity which can not only be consumed but promote consumption as well. It is widely accepted that the sense of 'public' for a particular public space is deeply rooted in the local cultural and historical contexts. It determines people's sense of community and animation in the space, and how they perceive this space. This perception, then, fundamentally influences the publicness of space (Hall 1966; Varna & Tiesdell 2010; Wallin 1998). However, in order to accumulate, capital has to keep seeking new investment opportunities and creating new markets. Once they are found or created, capital will destroy or abandon the existing spatial structure (built environment) in a short period of time so as to shift rapidly from one location to another as well as create fresh room for accumulation. This phenomenon is described as the 'central contradiction of capital' by Harvey (2001, p.25) who states:

> (capital) has to build a fix space (or 'landscape') necessary for its own functioning at a certain point in its history only to have to destroy the space (and devalue much of the capital invested therein) at a later point in order to make way for a new 'spatial fix' (opening for fresh accumulation in new spaces and

territories) at a later point in its history.

Apparently, this process is driven by profitability rather than public interests or any long-term benefit of the city. As a result, the ability to speed up capital accumulation is given top priority when designing, building, and managing a public space. In the age of globalisation, the easiest and widest adopted way to achieve this goal is directly duplicating services and symbolic commercial urban meanings (for example, multinational shopping malls in the city create a meaning of international consumption for the city) which are proven to be profitable in any region of the world with no regard to the local cultural and historical contexts. Consequently, as a scheme of capital accumulation, developers and investors are increasingly interested in the production of spectacles to create a sense of 'public' in their land (Punter 1990). As Hardt & Negri (2009) have noticed, the relation between capital and consumers is no longer only mediated by material products, but also by information, images, messaging and the proliferation and marketing of symbolic forms. The sense of 'public' promotes the consumption by attracting people into an area so as to increase the possibility of consumption (Wansborough & Mageean 2000). Once present, the visitors themselves and their engagement with the space and the activities happening in it then become part of this sense of 'public'. However, service fees are required for most of those activities, such as outdoor cafe. As such, the sense of 'public' itself becomes an immaterial commodity that can be consumed.

Secondly, customers, rather than citizens, become 'the public'. In the process of accumulation, the social life in urban space is increasingly reorganised by the power of capital. For the purpose of facilitating and speeding up the circulation of money, commodities, and people throughout the spaces of the city, a growing number of commercial spaces are emerging in and integrating with the city streets. As a result, a large proportion of our social life is actually happening within those spaces. In those commercial spaces, as Sennett (1992) observes, people observe and express themselves in terms of what to buy, to think, to approve of after a period of passive, silent, and focused attention, rather than active social interaction. In this sense, Harvey (2006) argues the sociality of the urban space is now as much controlled by the commercial activities. One vital effect of this

phenomenon is that citizens in public realm are transformed into consumers, which results in the 'depoliticization' of public space. The public space is therefore of less political importance. This transformation enhances the property owners' ability to control urban space while weakening people's right to access and being in the public space.

Thirdly, while the process of capital accumulation has caused the enclosure of urban space, the resulting space is neither solely private nor entirely public, as Bentley (1999, p.80) once argued, all the building fronts, as a consequence of the city becoming an arena of capital accumulation, are now 'facing inwards onto the enclave, and this typological shift leaves only the backs of the development as a whole facing onto the outside world'.

Fourthly, instead of diversity, public space for capital accumulation becomes a site of homogeneity. The city is solely imaged as spectacle of consumption, and consumption is the uppermost activity in those 'public' spaces while differences are eliminated. Lastly, the distance between 'public' and the 'commons' becomes increasingly wide, as, as Franklin Obeng-Odoom (2017b) points out in his recent book *The Myth of Privatising Nature*, the public progressively loses touch with the common and common people.

Being as the mixture of 'life space' and 'economic space', and playing the dual-role of both the public sphere and the arena of capital accumulation make the relationship between 'public' and 'private' increasingly blurry. As a result, it is increasingly difficult to make a sharp categorization between these components, what at all is 'public' or what is 'private'? This phenomenon is also noticed by Staeheli & Mitchell (2008), who point out that, in modern society, it is no longer the reality that urban public space is a site of only public (or inclusive) activities. Instead, a space's publicness consists of a much more complex set of relationships between property and people. The publicness of space, as Kohn points out in her book *Brave New Neighborhoods* published in 2004 (p.9), has become a 'cluster concept' made up of multiple dimensions, rather than single factor-determined.

In an earlier work, Kilian (1998) identifies two mainstream approaches to the publicness of urban space in the literature. One approach, mainly represented by the works of Jane Jacobs (1962) and William Whyte (1980), considers public space as a site for personal 'contact'. The other approach views public space as a site for social

'representation', while concerns less with contact for its own sake. Don Mitchell's (1995) influential article, *The End of Public Space*, is a typical example of the latter approach. However, as Kilian (1998, p.115) points out, both of these two mainstream approaches are inadequate to explain the publicness of urban space, because 'they tend, albeit in different ways, to reify their object of analysis while failing to define it clearly.'

In response, Kilian (1998) proposes the framework developed by Thomas Markus (1993) to overcome the weaknesses. Markus's framework first ranks and classifies people using and managing urban space into three groups ('inhabitants', 'visitors', and 'strangers'), and then, on this basis, analyses those groups' power of access and exclusion over a space. Although highlighting the importance of power relation in determining the publicness of space, Markus's framework, on the one hand, oversimplifies the influencing factors of the publicness and, on the other hand, is mainly used for, as Kilian (1998) exemplifies in the last section of his article, comparing the publicness of different kinds of urban space (for example, to compare the publicness of a restaurant and a park), rather than spaces in the same category.

More recently, in 2007, the Australian geographer and political economist Kurt Iveson published a book, *Publics and the City*. This book bickers on the multi-dimensioned characteristics of public space. Iveson (2007, p.9) argues that a 'public' place is constituted by different dimensions, and this complexity 'ought to be at the heart of investigations into the spatiality of publicness'. From this standpoint, he summarises two dominant approaches to the concept of public space: topographical and procedural approaches. The former, according to Iveson (2007, pp.8-9), has some 'fundamental problems' and is 'inherently unstable'. He, therefore, recommends understanding public space procedurally. Rather than a particular kind of place in the city, a procedural approach sees public space as any space that 'is put to use at a given time for collective action and debate' (Iveson 2007, p.3). Although drawing explicit attention to the complex geographies of publicness that topographical approaches struggle to capture, procedural approaches still, as Iveson (2007, p.17) himself admits, either oversimplify or neglect the multidimensional nature of publicness and thus 'fail to trace fully the complex interactions between the distinct

dimensions of publicness'. These weaknesses of the existing approaches, I would argue, can be solved by adopting a property rights approach to which I now turn.

2.2.6 Understanding the Publicness of Urban Space

Multi-Dimensional Nature of Publicness: Towards a Property Rights Approach

It might be argued that the recent embrace by David Harvey of Henri Lefebvre's idea of 'the right to the city' (Harvey 2008) is a sign that both Harvey and Lefebvre engage property rights approach. However, as Harvey himself notes in that article, his approach is more analogous to a human rights framework. Drawing on the urban expansion processes happened in the Second Empire Paris, the 1940s New York and contemporary China, what Harvey (2008) argues in that article is that urbanisation has played a particularly active role in absorbing capital surpluses, at ever increasing geographical scales. What happens along with this process is 'accumulation by dispossession' (this idea is developed in Harvey's (2013) more recent book: *Rebel Cities*), namely 'the capture of valuable land from low-income populations that may have lived there for many years' for the affluent (Harvey 2008, p.34). The burgeoning processes of 'creative destruction', according to Harvey (2008, p.37), 'have dispossessed the masses of any right to the city whatsoever'. Harvey, thus, calls for greater democratic control and management over the production and utilisation of the surplus. In that article, Harvey's concept of 'the right to the city' emphasises class conflicts and the tension between use and exchange values. This idea can certainly be part of my property rights approach.

Here in this research, by property rights approach, I wish to stress the importance of even more specific property relations. In the literature, there are three interpretations of property relations. First one is the intersectionality of private, public, and the common. By this interpretation, property relations refer to the relationship between different property regimes. An analyst using this interpretation, then, must look at socio-economic, political, and environmental outcomes and how they relate to which forms of property regimes. For instance, according to Ely (1917), when the scope of 'public' space is extended, a rearrangement of property relations in the interest of the public and the parties immediately

interested will occur. One of the most influential examples of this interpretation is Ostrom's (1990) well-known book: *Governing the Commons*. In this book, Ostrom argues that natural (or physical) resources can be classified into four types of goods: common goods (highly rivalrous with difficulty of exclusion. e.g., urban squares); public goods (low subtractability with difficulty of exclusion. e.g., sunset); private goods (high subtractability but with no difficulty of exclusion. e.g., personal computers); roll or club goods (low rivalries and easy to exclude. e.g., country clubs). Clearly, according to this classification, urban public spaces are common goods, or to use Ostrom's (1990) expression, 'Common-Pool Resources'. This kind of resource is not necessarily privately owned. It can be a shared property. However, as Dolcerocca & Coriat (2016, p.128) remind us, even when common goods are owned by various commoners, they still function like private properties for outsiders, because they 'leave out a part of the population or limit (their) certain use and access rights.' Common goods, in this sense, are always exclusive to the public in general to a degree, and the term commons puts the emphasis on the question of who have access to the use resource and who control it (Dolcerocca & Coriat 2016).

A Second interpretation of a property rights approach deals with property relations as different rights in land and space. Through arguing that the received explanations are, on the one hand, essentially faulty for analysis and, on the other hand, seriously misleading for practically solving legal problems, Wesley N. Hohfeld (1917), in his well-known article *Fundamental Legal Conceptions as Applied in Judicial Reasoning*, clarified the meaning of paucital rights, or paucital claims, and multital rights, or multital claims, in legal research. He, on this basis, provided a detailed discussion of the practical consequence and economic significance of the property owner's 'right-duty' relations and 'privilege-on-right' relations over land and space. This legal approach has been adapted by land and property economists such as Johnson, Davies & Shapiro (2000) who argue that the two principal rights or interests in land and space are known as freehold and leasehold. Both of these rights are not merely permission to enter upon land and space. Rather, they are sources from which interest and profits can be created. For example, instead of occupying property himself, the freeholder of an urban space can 'grant or 'let' the exclusive possession of the premises to

another for a certain period, usually in consideration of the payment of rent, under a 'lease' or 'tenancy'' (Johnson, Davies & Shapiro 2000, p.22). Meanwhile, if the rent the leaseholder has to pay is less than the true rental value of the premises, the leaseholder can also gain a net income from the land or space. The use of this approach is discussed extensively in Benda-Beckmann, Benda-Beckmann & Wiber's (2009) book. It can be seen from the works discussed above that the legal emphasis of this interpretation of property relations remains quite strong.

The third approach to interpret property right framework is, probably, the broadest. It includes, but goes beyond, a synthesis of the other two interpretations. Considered as an approach to property and political economy, its historical development is explained at length in Richard Schlatter's (1951) book: *Private Property: The History of An Idea*. Franklin Obeng-Odoom (2016a) has recently provided a summary of how the approach addresses the issue of property relations. According to Obeng-Odoom (2016a), as previously mentioned, this approach focuses on three issues: (1) is private property natural or conventional; (2) whether common property leads to better use of resources; and (3) whether private property is more suitable to a good society and the nature of humans.

Guided by these three kinds of interpretations, a property rights approach has long been used as a tool to analyse the relations between property and people. Traditionally, property concerns the dyadic relationship between people and things. Blackstone (1766, p.2) famously defined property as: '… that sole and despotic dominion which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in total exclusion of the right of any other individual in the universe.' This dyadic conception, exemplified in more recent times by the work of Alchian & Demsetz (1973), however, as many scholars have pointed out, misses the social and political dimensions of property (Carruthers & Ariovich 2004; Fligstein 2001; Milonakis & Meramveliotakis 2013; Shipton 1994).

In modern societies, because of the changing nature of the global political economy, property has become 'the literal key to a market-based capitalist economy and to democratic political structure' (Jacobs 2013, p.S86). As a result, what Chris Hann (2007, p.290) calls the 'standard liberal model' becomes the most influential Western theorising about property.

Those models, according to Boydell & Searle (2014), range from Hardin (1968) wanting to avoid a 'tragedy of the commons', the ethnographic cost-benefit analysis of Demsetz (2000), economic interpretations of the attributes of the bundle (Alchian & Demsetz 1973; Barzel 1997) and the new institutional economics of North (1990), through to the beguiling capital creation propositions of de Soto (2000).

These divergent conceptions of property lead to the need for a broader approach to property relations and the clarification of the transdisciplinary nature of this approach (Cole & Grossman 2002). Rifkin (2001), for example, has emphasised the increasing significance of 'access' rather than ownership and claimed a broader approach must take account of such factors. Chris Hann (2007, p.290) argues that property in modern societies has already become 'much broader than the liberal tradition recognizes, and that the political, economic and social functions of property are in continuous flux.' Meanwhile, there is an intimate connection between property and space. According to Blomley (1998, p.567), 'if we want to explore the social dimensions of property, we need to think of it not only historically but also geographically, entailing both practices and representations of social space.' As a result, a property rights approach in the modern sense provides a coherent legal, economic and social framework to analyse the triadic relationship between people, place and property (Boydell & Searle 2014; Bromley 1991).

When it comes to the publicness of space, Staeheli & Mitchell (2008, p.141) remind us that what sits at the heart of 'the quality of publicness' is 'the relationships established between property (as both a thing and a set of relationship and rules) and the people who inhabit, use, and create property.' Understanding the publicness-property rights relation in this way, Layard (2016), in one of her recent works, has carried out three case studies in England to prove that public space is mainly produced through property relationships. Meanwhile, Boydell & Searle (2014), focusing on the Darling Harbour scheme in Sydney, have conducted research which engages an approach that incorporates property rights as the lenses through which to analyse the contestations in contemporary public spaces, or in their words 'urban commons'. Blomley (1998), to give another example, has studied the resistance to gentrification in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver through associating

space with property relations. However, an analytical framework that can guide empirical studies of both measurement and interpretation of publicness of space is still missing in these studies.

The work of Benn & Gaus (1983b) highlights the multi-dimensional nature of publicness in sociological research and identifies three dimensions of publicness -access, agency and interest. These three dimensions are introduced and refined by Madanipour (1995) as an analytical frame to study the degree of publicness of space. Madanipour's framework is adopted by some urban designers and planners (e.g., Akkar 2005a) but, at the same time, some argue that these three dimensions are too ambiguous and amorphous (Németh & Schmidt 2011), and some crucial dimensions of publicness of a space are neglected in this framework.

In response, a number of attempts have been made over the past two decades or so to explore what determines the publicness of urban space. In her book: *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Iris Marion Young (1990) explains her understanding of urban space and city life from the perspective of politics. In this book, Young defines public space as a model arena in which people enter, participate, and engage in civic life with their differences, and further points out that those unassimilable and unassimilatable differences are paradigmatic of urban life. Influenced by Young's theory, many urban scholars (e.g., Dovey 2002; Iveson & Fincher 2013; Varna & Tiesdell 2010) claim that 'tolerance of difference' should be a core feature of authentic urban public space. In his article *Dialectics of Place: Authenticity, Identity, Difference*, for example, Kim Dovey (2002, p.50) highlights the importance of 'difference' for the making of authentic urban places by arguing that 'constructions of (authentic) place are equally a product of difference.' Meanwhile, according to Kohn (2004), urban public space should have three core dimensions: ownership, accessibility, and intersubjectivity. Here, the third dimension reflects the social significance of urban space. A real public space, as Kohn explains, should be a place where people from various social groups can not only encounter each other, but carry out activities interactively according to their own desires as well. And importantly, the encounter and interaction should be encouraged and facilitated by the space.

Function-based urban and architectural design has also had some interest as a framework. Matthew Carmona (2010a), for example, argues that function, perception, and ownership are the three aspects which can distinguish whether a space is public or private. In Carmona's (2010a) interpretation, the 'function' dimension not merely focuses on how the physical space is planned to be used, but also, to be against being over-designed, emphasises the adaptability of unplanned or spontaneous uses (Carmona 2010a). Moreover, from the socio-cultural perspective, Carmona offers the explanation of the 'perception' dimension which refers to how the space is culturally understood by users, as well as the way users socially engage with the space (Carmona 2010a).

Spatial forms also play an important role in determining a space's publicness, because, as many existing studies (e.g., Dovey 1999; 2014) show, the organisation of space and its representations are often used as a tool to establish or reinforce social distinction among different classes. Varna & Tiesdell's (2010) work highlights the physical design related dimension of publicness. Through summarising the present body of work, they propose five dimensions to measure a space's publicness: ownership, control, civility, physical configuration, and animation. The last two dimensions: 'Physical configuration' and 'animation' are both design-oriented. The major difference separates them is that the former dimension focuses on the macro-scale design which includes the connection between the space and its surroundings, the routes into the space, and so forth. While the latter one refers to micro-scale design such as the design of street furniture within the space and the place itself (Varna & Tiesdell 2010). Meanwhile, unlike Németh & Schmidt's (2011) interpretation of 'management', which is described below, the control dimension here means a much more 'explicit control' over the space (Varna & Tiesdell 2010), namely applying what Lofland (1998) refers to as 'direct' instruments, including the installation of CCTV and surveillance by security guards, to control, rather than manage, the space. On the other hand, compared with the control dimension, the 'civility' here refers to a much 'softer' way to manage and maintain the space. It involves the cultivation of a positive and welcoming ambience as well as awareness of and respect for the public use of the space (Varna & Tiesdell 2010).

More recently, by refining and developing Madanipour (1995) and Kohn's (2004) work, Németh & Schmidt (2011) identify three core components: ownership, management, and uses/users to assess the publicness of an urban space. Their concept of management has some similarity with Madanipour's (1995) dimension of agency, but this 'management' lays emphasis on 'how' the space is controlled and maintained, namely the manner in and the specific methods by which the owners and managers of a space control and indicate acceptable uses, users, and behaviours (Németh & Schmidt 2011), whilst Madanipour's 'agency' pay attention to 'who' control and manage the space. Moreover, their 'uses/users' is a quantitative as well as qualitative concept. In the quantitative interpretation, this dimension means the number and sort of uses and users occur in the space. In the qualitative way, it focuses on the behaviours of the users when using the space (Németh & Schmidt 2011).

Furthermore, Smith & Low (2006) extend the discussion to the issue of property rights. They argue that, because the use of private space is much more strongly protected by state-regulated property rights, public spaces are thus differentiated from private spaces in four aspects: the rules of access to; the source and nature of control over entry to; individual and collective behaviour sanctioned in -which is similar with the notion of 'tolerance of difference' coined by Young (1990), but inclined to the specific rules and regulations; and rules of use the space (Smith & Low 2006). On the basis of Smith & Low's (2006) work, a more detailed property rights-based research has been conducted by De Magalhães (2010) who, through looking at the contracted-out public space, claims the rights of access, use, and control/ownership are the main attributes of publicness. Compared with the forenamed bodies of work, the significance of his work is the emphasis on 'rules' and 'mechanisms' for controlling and managing space. These rules and mechanisms, according to him, regulate what restrictions there might be on how individuals physically get access to a space, use the facilities and resources in a space, and through them the various stakes in the management of the space are recognized, the conflicts among different stakes are solved (De Magalhães 2010).

Rules have also been identified as one influential factor of the publicness of space in

Németh & Schmidt's (2007) work. They claim laws and rules; surveillance and policing; design and image; access and territoriality are the four dimensions and approaches to control what they call 'publicly accessible space'. The other three dimensions/approaches identified by them are quite similar with the aforementioned control, management, design, and accessibility dimensions. However, their 'laws and rules' dimension/approach highlights that the rules governing privately managed spaces are often more variable and inconsistent than those publicly managed and owned ones. Since, according to their explanation, growing publicly accessible spaces are controlled privately and they are increasingly subject to the prescriptions of the property owner.

So far, I have identified the dimensions –indeed intersections- of publicness of urban space from existing literature. By comparing the similarities and differences of all the aforementioned dimensions, twelve interrelated dimensions of publicness can be identified. Further, as shown in Table 2.1, we can group these twelve dimensions into three processes of design, manipulation, and use of urban space. The publicness of a given urban space, therefore, can be seen as determined by these three interrelated processes. How to distinguish 'more private' and 'more public' situations of these twelve dimensions, however, requires further discussion.

Table 2.1 Dimensions of publicness of urban space

Process	Dimension	Description (Explanation)
Design and plan process	Function	The planned use and the adaptability of unplanned spontaneous use of the space.
	Urban-scale design	The macro-scale physical design of the space. (The relation and connection between the space and its surroundings.)
	Architectural-scale design	The micro-scale physical design of the space. (The design of the space itself and the facilities within the space; Whether the public uses are supported and facilitated by the physical design of the space.)
Manipulation process	Ownership	The legal ownership of the space.
	Agency	The agents or agencies who/which are in charge of controlling and managing the space in day-to-day use.
	Interest	The target beneficiaries of controlling and using the space; who receive the benefits and profits of the space's operation.
	Management	The manner in and 'soft' or 'indirect' methods by which the managers control and indicate acceptable uses, users, and behaviours. (Whether these manners and methods encourage and facilitate the encounter and interaction in the space; whether the particularities of all the space users can be accepted and how they are treated)
	Control	The 'explicit' methods and 'direct' instruments to control the space.
	Rules	The rules and regulations for entering and using the space and the facilities within it.
Use process	Perception	The users' cultural understanding of the space, and the ways they socially engage with the space.
	Accessibility	The accessibility of physical space, resources, and information in the space.
	Uses/Users	The behaviours and activities occur in the space, and the number and sort of uses and users of them.

Source: The author's summary

Features of 'More Public' and 'More Private'

Through an in-depth review of the existing literature, I summarise the features of 'more public' and 'more private' of the twelve dimensions identified in Table 2.1, and have presented those features in Table 2.2. This table shows three columns of features of 'more public', features of 'more private', and the twelve identified dimensions. In each row, the specific features of 'more public' and 'more private' for a dimension are respectively described at the left and right ends. A detailed explanation and summary of how these features are discussed in existing literature is provided in Appendix V. Readers can begin the chapter by briefly looking at Appendix V.

The dimensions and their features of 'more public' and 'more private' can provide a basis for empirical assessments on the publicness of pseudo-public spaces. That is, while this space looks quite similar to a public park in terms of access, the space is controlled differently and the public sphere element which approves of the right to speech and free assembly may be curtailed. Also, it is possible, using this framework, to ask questions about uses and users, probe, for example, their race and ask whether certain social groups more commonly found in a public park can also be found in a shopping mall. Indeed, using the property rights framework I have developed in this chapter, questions about whether the process of transforming the 'public space' destroys the right of access for other users. If less publicness is being introduced through the extension of pseudo-public spaces, does that suggest stifling spontaneity in the public sphere? What about decreasing the size of publicness of parks and the quality of the public environment? While in pseudo-public spaces, are certain consumption patterns encouraged and hence what can we say about space and the choices that people make? Does the presence of pseudo-public spaces lead to speculative urban development around the centre? In other words, what property relations are emerging as a result of the changing publicness of space?

Such questions turn our attention to process and outcomes, how they are related to property, and in what ways new property relations shape economy, society, ecology, and polity. The framework, in this sense, also sheds light on the interpretation of the measurements of publicness of space, going beyond Karl Polanyi's (2001) idea that the

commodification of space automatically leads to social problems. But this set of questions and framework lead to a Polanyi (1957) type substantivist analysis. In other words, a researcher using this framework must be looking closely at empirical reality. Seeking data related to how an urban space is located in the city; How it is connected with its surrounding urban environment; How the urban space itself is designed; Who manages the space, and how the space is managed and controlled; What the rules for using the urban space are; how many and how people use the spaces during the day, including which people use the space; And how does urban space change the ways in which people conduct daily urban life in the city. This more grounded approach, in this way, can help to transcend the socio-spatial debate, provide a critique of existing simplistic conceptions of 'public space', while keeping a critical and more nuanced view of spatial transformation.

Table 2.2 Features of 'more public' and 'more private' for each dimension

'More Public'	Dimension	'More Private'
Designed or planned for public use; unplanned uses are encouraged	*Function*	Design or planned for seeking profit and fixed functions
Centrally located; being well connected physically and visually; not having explicit thresholds	*Urban-scale design*	Cannot be found and reached; being sharply distinct from the surroundings
Design to meet human needs; various facilities are provided, easily accessible to the public and encourage social engagements	*Architectural-scale design*	Deliberately designed to be uncomfortable and inconvenient to discourage undesirable uses and users
Owned by a public body mandated to act in the public/collective interest	*Ownership*	Privately owned by an entity that is not publicly accountable, and for private uses
Operated or controlled by public agents or agencies	*Agency*	Operated or controlled by private or for-profit agencies

Provide services to either any or every member of the society, and the benefit of this service is controlled and received by all members of the society	*Interest*	The target beneficiaries is the proprietors, shareholders, or the directors of the space; their advantages or profits are the ultimately regulative end of the space's operations
Encouraging freedom of use, access, and behaviour; and everyone's use of this space is recognised and respected	*Management*	Over-managed, public use, access, and behaviour are discouraged
For the safety of people; being enacted in the wider interest of the public; protects people from harm; lack or absent of an explicit control presence	*Control*	For the safety of property; being enacted in a narrower private interest; prohibit certain behaviours objectionable to certain groups for reasons of profitability or marketability
Maintaining the public order, not excluding certain social groups or particular behaviours; Signs list rules are posted and visible; rules are objective, enforceable; subjective rules can only be enforced after a judgment by the enforcer	*Rules*	Rules explicitly establish the Standards of what particular behaviours are acceptable and what are not are; prohibit certain activities from happening or allow them on by issuing permits, programming, scheduling, or leasing
More social groups regard it as a public space; many 'optional' and 'social activities' can be found	*Perception*	More social groups regard it as a private space, or 'a community of strangers'; only 'necessary activities' occur
The physical space, information, activities, and resources are accessible to all	*Accessibility (Information & Resource)*	Access to the space is denied physically; opaque information; fee for service or membership are required
More users and diverse uses	*Uses/Users*	Less users and homogenous uses

Source: The author's summary

2.3 An Analytical Framework

Fig 2.1 A trans-disciplinary framework for analysis
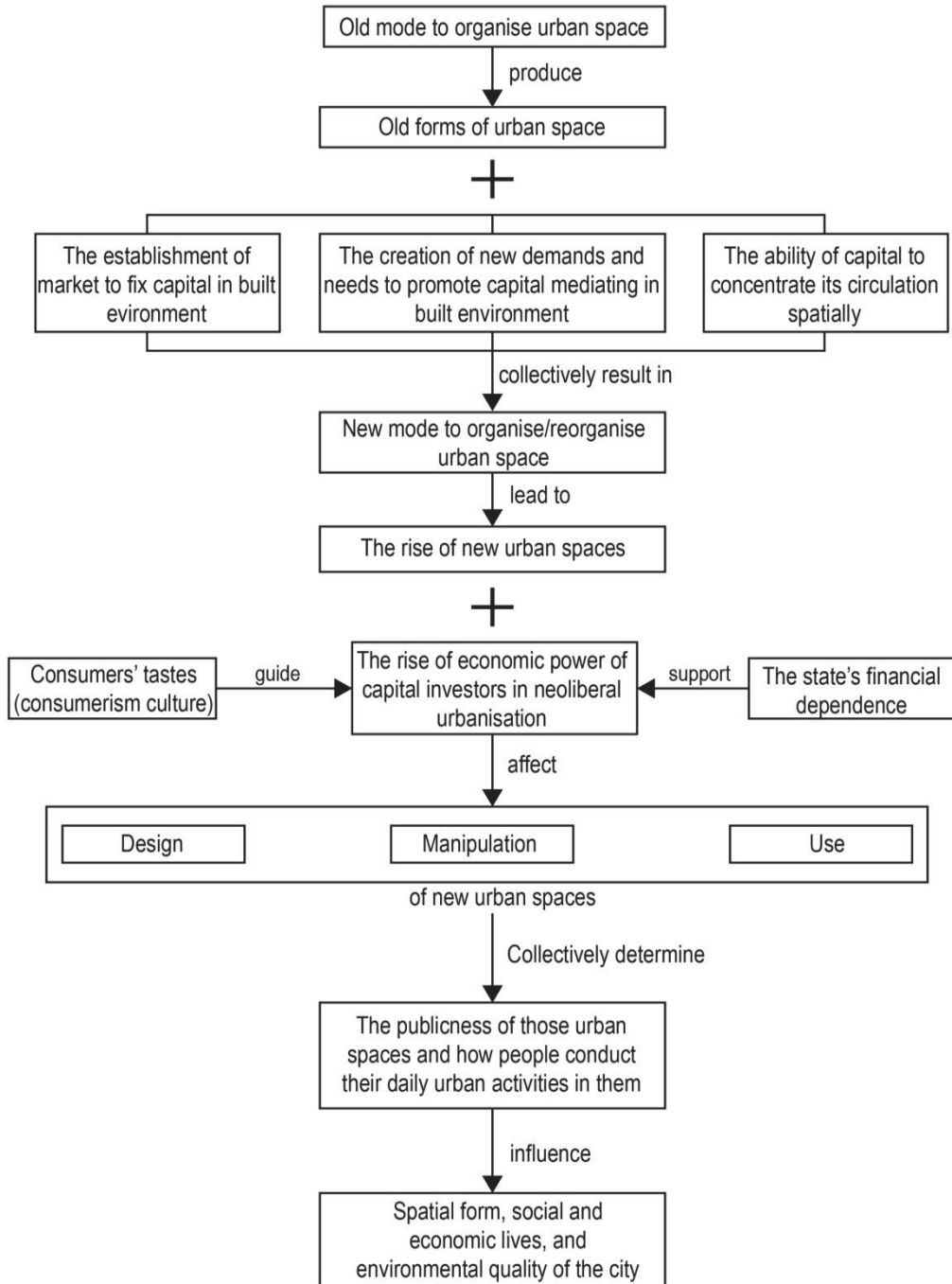
So far, we have navigated through some of the influential philosophical and empirical ideas about the urban process under capitalism and transformations of public space it caused. On this basis, it is important to consider how these ideas from the above discussions can be

used to frame the rest of the discussion in this study. What questions will need to be asked, what data need to be collected, and from where, and how should data be interpreted? This section tries to address these questions.

The insights derived from the ideas and theories discussed in this chapter can be weaved together as shown in Fig 2.1. This figure, therefore, serves as an analytical framework to help understand how the new kind of urban space emerges in the urban process under capitalism, how it expands and evolves because of the rise of capital investors' economic power in this process, and how it affects our daily urban life. In its vertical direction, from the top to the bottom, Fig 2.1 illustrates the process of how the urban process under capitalism changes the old mode to organise urban space, how the new mode then leads to the emergence of new urban spaces and changes the relationship of power over the production and control of those new urban space, and then how the new relationship affects the publicness of those new spaces and the spatial form and socio-economic lives of the city. Meanwhile, in its horizontal direction, the figure shows factors/aspects that influence/determine the process at some different stages.

By presenting this framework, I have not rejected the Marxist, Harvey, or Lefebvre frameworks. This framework is a further development of the dialectical approach to urban research because of the injection of quantitative measurement of degrees of publicness of new urban spaces. Meanwhile, this research is not entirely Marxist because, guided by this framework, historical institutionalism analyses are also drawn on in this research to study the genesis and rise of pseudo-public spaces in China. Historical institutionalism is an approach to study political-economy and outcomes. This approach has been widely used to answer real-world empirical questions. Many important political-economic studies, such as Karl Polanyi's classic *The Great Transformation,* can be classified as historical institutionalist. Historical institutionalism is distinguished from other social science approaches by, as Steinmo (2008) points out, (1) its focus on empirical questions in the real world, (2) its historical orientation, and (3) its emphasis on how institutional arrangements shape political-economic behaviour and outcomes.

From an institutionalism perspective, it is believed that institutional arrangements had

profound effects on shaping political-economic strategies and outcomes. As Obeng-Odoom (2016c, p.22) reminds us, for institutionalists, urban space is 'the product and outcome of many interacting institutional processes'. Institutionalism approach, therefore, places special emphasis on the role institutional arrangements play in structuring market and social behaviours (Steinmo 2008; Streeck 2010; Streeck & Thelen 2005). Meanwhile, historical institutionalism highlights the importance of understanding institutional arrangements and their outcomes in historical context, because, as Wolfgang Streeck (2010, p.30) reminds us, 'the institutionalised order of capitalism is a historical order which is continuously changing'.

According to this framework, to make capitalism itself survive, the urban process driven by capitalism has to establish a land market, create new social demands and needs, and facilitate capital circulation in the city. All these processes collectively result in new modes of urban organisation and reorganisation. The emergent urban space begins to expand and evolve in the city, as a result of the rise of the capital investors' economic power caused by neoliberal capitalism. Within neoliberal capitalism, the state becomes financially dependent on capital investors. Meanwhile, the desires of consumers can easily guide capital investors to produce more new urban spaces. These relationships between capital investors, the state, and consumers then affect the ways in which those new urban spaces are designed, manipulated, and used, and all these collectively determine to what degree those urban spaces are public and how they will influence the publicness, spatial form, social and economic lives, and environmental quality of the city.

This framework has some similarities with the theoretical framework Giovanni Arrighi (2007) developed in his book *Adam Smith in Beijing* to investigate the economic renaissance of China driven by capitalism. Arrighi's framework, drawing on Schumpeter's concept of 'creative destruction', considers the most important characteristic of capitalist development is 'its tendency to destroy the social framework within which it occurs and to create the conditions for the emergence of new frameworks with greater growth potential' (p.72). This process, Arrighi (2007, p.88) goes on to argue, is always accompanied by 'all commercial innovations – such as the opening of a new market, a new trading route, a new

source of supply, the marketing of a new product, …'. Arrighi's argument here agrees with what I have discussed in my framework that, in the urban process, capitalism needs to establish markets, especially in land, and create new social demands and needs to destroy the old mode of organising urban space and then create a new one within which 'new urban spaces' can emerge in China. Moreover, Arrighi's framework also recognises the importance of capital's desire to concentrate its circulation spatially in this process by emphasising that all those profit-oriented innovations not only 'cluster in time', but also 'cluster in space' (p.88).

However, my framework has important differences from Arrighi's. For example, based on Adam Smith's theory, money in Arrighi's framework is mainly reduced to 'purchasing power', rather than what Harvey (1990, p.101) calls 'social power of private persons' in a capitalist society which is how the concept of 'power' is understood in my framework. Most importantly, like other political economists, Arrighi's framework mainly focuses on macro-economic, political, and social themes, while how these processes impact the publicness of Chinese urban space and the daily urban life in China is missing in his framework.

According to my framework, systematically studying the genesis, expansion, evolution, and consequences of a new urban space must entail: first, what forces shape the transfer of the mode of organising and producing urban space from the old to a new one. Second, the forces that reorganise urban space must be recognised. Third, attention is given to the institutional fixes which lead to the establishment of the market, the creation of new social demands, and ability of investors to concentrate capital circulation spatially. Fourth, recognition that the expansion and evolution of privatised and commercialised urban spaces in the city are linked to the rise of the economic power of capital investors in the urbanisation process, and the neoliberal market is important for the rise of capital investors' economic power. Fifth, an understanding that the expansion and evolution of privatised and commercialised urban spaces influence the publicness of the city and our daily urban life through affecting the design, manipulation, and use of those urban spaces, so attention must also be given to the three aspects to understand the consequences those urban spaces have

brought to the city.

So, in this thesis, I am seeking answers to three sets of questions. First, how was Chinese urban space organised before the country's turn to neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics? How are neoliberal markets established in China? How does the turn to neoliberalism reorganise Chinese urban space? What fresh room for accumulation, namely new demands and social needs, have been created to promote capital circulation within the built environment in Chinese cities? How do these processes result in the emergence of pseudo-public space as a new kind of public space in China? How does the culture of consumerism emerge in China, and how does it shape consumers' tastes and guide captial investors' (developers') acitons in producing urban sapces? What is the relationship between the state and captial investors in the market? And how do these lead to the growth and evolution of pseudo-public spaces in Chinese cities?

A second set of questions will mainly focus on examine how pseudo-public spaces are public, and how they influence the publicness of Chinese cities. How are pseudo-public spaces located in the city, and how are they connected with its surrounding urban environment? How is pseudo-public space itself designed? Who do manage pseudo-public spaces in China? How are pseudo-public spaces managed and controlled in China? What are the rules for using pseudo-public spaces in China? How many people use pseudo-public spaces during an ordinary day in China and how do people use them? What daily social activities can be observed in pseudo-public spaces? What information and services provided in pseudo-public spaces are accessible to the general public?

A third set of questions will need to examine what role does the rise of pseudo-public spaces play in the economic transformation? How does the expansion of pseudo-public spaces change the spatial form of Chinese cities? How does this process change the ways in which Chinese people conduct daily urban life in the city? How does the rise of pseudo-public spaces or shopping malls affect the environmental quality of Chinese cities?

To answer these three sets of questions about the historical development, transformation process, and outcomes, the data needed here generally relate to the mode of organising urban space before the turn to neoliberalism; Institutional fixes that facilitate

urbanisation under capitalism in China; And the impacts those institutional fixes have brought on the ways of organising urban space. Further, capital investors' relationship with both the state and consumers in the neoliberal market will need to be investigated. Data on the portion of fiscal income of the state that is being supported by real estate development will have to be collected to determine the state's dependence on capital investors in the urbanisation process. Data on what concessions the state has made to encourage the developers providing and managing urban space ought to be collected to determine how capital investors' economic power over controlling pseudo-public space has been strengthened in the urbanisation under neoliberalism. Moreover, data and evidence ought to be collected and led to determine how the changes of consumers' tastes in the market lead to more and more pseudo-public spaces have been built and guide them mediate daily urban life with consumerism culture. Meanwhile, grounded data on how the pseudo-public space is designed, manipulated, and used will need to be investigated. Evidence about the connections between the expansion of pseudo-public spaces/shopping malls and China's economic restructuring and environmental quality need to be collected. Besides, grounded evidence and stories about how the emergence of pseudo-public space changes people's urban life in Chinese cities will also be needed to understand the influences of pseudo-public space and people's reaction to them.

All the data discussed here need to be triangulated. This has been long and widely proven very important for enhancing the reliability and the validity of analyses (Grix 2002; Yardley 2008; Yin 2014), because, as Obeng-Odoom (2014, pp.38-39) points out, drawing data on similar themes from different sources helps to check for consistencies and possible connections and associations, while detecting runaway estimates. Meanwhile, the study must be positioned in the history of the country to engage historical details and records and relates them to broader social explanations embedded in political economic institutions and phenomena that are interlocking and interdependent (Obeng-Odoom 2014, pp. 38-39). It will entail critically assessing and synthesising micro and macro level qualitative and quantitative historical data, and simultaneously traversing and transcending the 'economy', the 'social', the 'planning', and the 'polity' (Obeng-Odoom 2014, pp.38-39). Guided by the

framework, I will now turn to explain how specific data were collected and analysed in this study.

2.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection in this study can be divided into three stages[①].

Stage 1: Data collected in the first stage were mainly of two kinds, namely historical and contemporary. Historical evidence of how Chinese urban space was organised before and after the country's turn to neoliberalism is important. The collection of this kind of data entailed multiple visits to public libraries and archives, urban planning exhibition halls, and libraries of local universities in major Chinese cities (mainly including Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, Chengdu, and Guangzhou). Archival research, looking at local chronicles and the urban planning and construction history of major Chinese cities was carried out. The second category of data related to institutional fixes and arrangements, policies, and regulations made after the turn to neoliberalism that contribute to the emergence and rise of pseudo-public space in China. To obtain this kind of data, documentary research of government reports, policies, legal documents, planning regulations, local and national urban, economic, and social development plans was conducted. Relevant documents were collected through official websites of the central government and the local states of major Chinese cities; official websites of urban planning bureaus and land and resources authorities at different hierarchy; and printed materials in local libraries. These documentary data had to be mined and pieced together from different and scattered files. To ensure data validly and reliably, I was guided the four quality control criteria developed by John Scott (1990, pp.19-35) for handling documentary sources, namely: authenticity (the documents collected were genuine and from implacable source); credibility (the documents collected were typical of this kind); representativeness (documents collected were representative of the totality of the relevant documents); and meaning (the documents collected were clean and comprehensible).

[①] See Appendix II for the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Approval for this research.

To understand the fiscal implications and social consequences of those institutional fixes, arrangements, and policies, the documentary research was complemented by research of statistical databases and published statistical yearbooks and reports. Data in these databases, yearbooks, and reports were released by statistical bureaus, urban planning bureaus, and land and resources bureaus at national and local levels. The online databases were accessed through the official websites of relevant authorities. Printed statistical yearbooks and reports were accessed through public libraries and libraries of local universities in major Chinese cities.

It is worth mentioning that there are some doubts about the accuracy of Chinese official statistical data (Meng 1999; Rawski 2001a, 2001b; Xu 1999) because, as Rawski (2001b) points out, the official data sometimes contain numerous inconsistencies and widespread intentional falsification of statistics are made by officials at lower levels in the country. To minimise the possible inaccuracies, analyses of the official statistical data were triangulated by my own study and practice experience in China, observations in selected large Chinese cities, and interviews with Chinese architects, urban designers and planners. Moreover, statistical data released by foreign governments and international organisations were used to supplement the official Chinese data. To understand the relationship between consumers' tastes and the rise and evolution of pseudo-public spaces, study of commercial real estate consultants' reports, developers' market surveys, and government social and commercial development databases was conducted. Consultants' reports and developers' survey were accessed through their official websites or studied during interviews with Chinese architects, urban designers, and planners.

Meanwhile, articles in newspapers and magazines accessible in local libraries and online were also collected to provide supplement information and evidence. Again, because of the concerns about press freedom in China, I also relied on international magazines and newspaper accounts (such as *The Guardian*, *The Economist*, and *New York Times*). By revealing public opinion, newspapers and magazines are especially helpful for studying the changes in consumers' tastes and the social consequences of the rise of pseudo-public space. Such published documents tend to be ignored by researchers because of their different

purposes, focuses, and targeted readers. However, as recent research (Han 2014) shows, using such sources can lead to the production of new knowledge. As Tafuri (1987, p.14) points out:

> The interweaving of intellectual models, modes of production, and modes of consumption ought to lead to the 'explosion' of the synthesis contained in the work. Wherever this synthesis is presented as a completed whole, it is necessary to introduce a disintegration, a fragmentation, a 'dissemination' of its constitutive units. It will then be necessary to submit these dis-integrated components to a separate analysis.

Stage 2: To obtain grounded data on the actual impacts of those institutional fixes and arrangements, as well as data on the evolution of pseudo-public space, and to triangulate the data collected through archival and documentary research, in-depth unstructured interviews with Chinese architects, urban designers, and urban planners were carried out[1]. This was the second stage of the data collection. Architects, urban designers, and planners are in good position to provide helpful information required for this study because of three reasons. First, as one important part of their daily work is dealing with urban development policies and city planning and management regulations (Friedmann 1987), they have a great deal of knowledge on how those institutional arrangements actually shape and organise the urban space. Second, as one crucial role architects, urban designers and planners are playing in urbanisation process is coordinating the activity of the state, the public, and the developers (Friedmann 1988; Healey 1998; Low 1994), they are, thus, in good positions to know the interrelations among the three actors and how those interrelations impact the design, manipulation, and use of the urban space. Third, another role architects, urban designers and planers often play is the observer of daily urban life (Gehl 2011; Gehl & Svarre 2013; Jacobs 1962; Whyte 1980) and transformations of urban space (Bentley 1999; Cybriwsky 1999). Their reflections and thinking on the city, therefore, can provide helpful insights into the design, manipulation, and use of urban space, and the evolution of pseudo-public space.

The process of selecting respondents was non-probabilistic. It entailed a purposive

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[1] See Appendix III for Project (Interview) Information Sheet given to experts.

sampling of people who by virtue of work experience could authoritatively comment on the research problem. Thanks to my eight years' experience of studying and practicing architecture and urban design in China, I gained access to eighteen people who were working in China and had participated in at least one pseudo-public space project in large Chinese cities in recent five years. As shown in Table 2.3, those people included not only practicing architects and urban designers, but also academic architects and urban designers (who were both practicing architectural and urban design in the market, and doing research in academic institutions); government architects and planners (who worked in the government or government-backed organisations); and developer architects (who worked for the developers). The interviews were supplemented by reading planning regulations, developers' architectural design requirements, and studying architectural and urban design proposals and plans (which provided information about how the pseudo-public space were designed) prepared by the architects, urban designers, and planners.

Table 2.3 Interviewee list

No.	Name (de-identified)	Work as	Work in	Number of pseudo-public space projects participated in (in recent 5 years)	Month of interview
#1	Wu	Practicing architect	Chongqing	2	January 2014/ March 2015
#2	Ren	Practicing architect	Shanghai	2	April 2015
#3	Lu	Practicing architect	Shanghai	2	March 2015
#4	H. Ma	Practicing architect/urban designer	Shanghai	3	February 2015
#5	Zeng	Practicing architect	Chengdu	1	February 2016
#6	Cheng	Practicing architect/urban designer	Chengdu	2	March 2015
#7	R. Yang	Practicing architect	Chengdu	3	March 2015
#8	Z. Yang	Academic architect/urban designer	Chongqing	2	January 2016
#9	H. Liu	Academic architect	Guangzhou/ Beijing	1	February 2016
#10	J. Chen	Academic architect/urban designer	Chongqing	2	January 2016
#11	L. Chen	Academic architect/urban designer	Chongqing	2	March 2015
#12	Bao	Government architect	Nanjing	1	January 2014
#13	Zou	Government planner	Guangzhou	1	October 2015
#14	Wei	Government planner	Chongqing	2	February 2014
#15	X. J. Ma	Developer architect	Chongqing	1	March 2015
#16	C. Li	Developer architect	Chongqing	2	March 2016
#17	H. Li	Developer architect	Chengdu	2	January 2014
#18	Du	Developer architect	Shanghai	1	March 2015

Stage 3: To collect fieldwork data on the design, day-to-day manipulation, and use of pseudo-public spaces in China, and evidence about how they influence the daily urban life, I conducted fieldwork in five Chinese cities in the third stage of this study (Chongqing, Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu). It is acknowledged that by limiting the fieldwork to five particular cities may have made the assessment results less generalizable. However, the primary aim of this study is to assess the publicness of pseudo-public spaces to examine whether the hypothesis that the rise of pseudo-public spaces leads to the 'end of public space' is true in the particular context of China, not so much as to conduct a statistically representative comparison that is universally valid across the country.
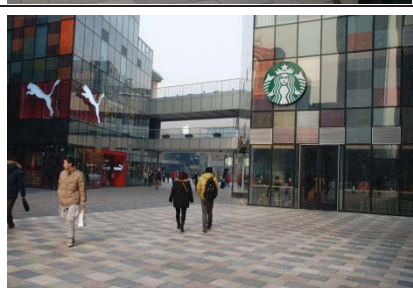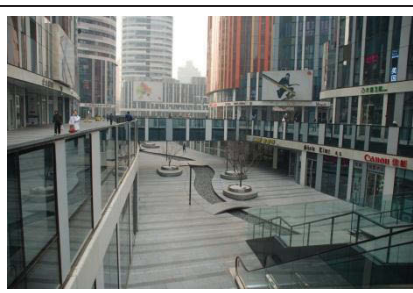
To this end, these five cities are particularly important for this study. This is because three of the five cities (Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou) are the so-called 'first-tier cities' in China, while the other two cities (Chongqing and Chengdu) are two of the 'second-tier cities'. Almost three fourths of shopping malls and commercial complexes in China exist in these two groups of cities (Knight Frank, 2014b). As the concept of 'pseudo-public space' in this study refers to: *open spaces within, around, or next to large scale commercial complexes or shopping malls/centres, which lie within the jurisdictions of the property owners of the commercial complexes or shopping malls/centres and, therefore, maintained, managed and controlled by the property owners or developers, but at the same time they are physically merged with the surrounding urban public realm (such as streets, square and plazas, or public parks) and publicly accessible* (as illustrated in Fig 1.4 in Chapter 1). Then, arguably, corresponding proportion of pseudo-public spaces in China can also be found in these two groups of cities.

In those five cities, the fieldwork was mainly carried out in ten pseudo-public spaces (five of the ten pseudo-public spaces are in the 'first-tier cities', and the other five studied pseudo-public spaces are in the 'second-tier cities') (see Table 2.4). To provide comprehensive and in-depth analyses of the two different but important roles pseudo-public spaces play and the impacts they bring to Chinese cities, Chapter 4 presents detailed analyses of two pseudo-public spaces: Xintiandi in Shanghai and Nanping Wanda Plaza in Chongqing.

Table 2.4 Ten Chinese pseudo-public spaces in the case study areas

No	The study pseudo-public space	Name of the shopping mall	Location
1		Nanping Wanda Plaza	Chongqing city centre (Nanping district)
2		Times Paradise Walk	Chongqing city centre (Yuzhong district)
3		The Mix C	Chongqing city centre (Jiulongpo district)
4		Paradise Walk	Chongqing city centre (Jiangbei district)
5		Xintiandi	Shanghai city centre (Huangpu district)

6		K11	Shanghai city centre (Huangpu district)
7		Sanlitun Village (The Piazza)	Beijing city centre (Caoyang district)
8		Sanlitun SOHO	Beijing city centre (Caoyang district)
9		Taikoo Hui	Guangzhou city centre (Tianhe district)
10		Taikoo Li	Chengdu city centre (Jinjiang district)

Source: photograph by the author

To observe how the two roles of pseudo-public spaces affect Chinese cities and analyse the reasons behind the observed reality, Shanghai and Chongqing are two particularly appropriate and important cities. This is because, as one of the most prosperous property markets in China, Shanghai's property values are much higher than the average level of the

country. High property values, as we will see in Chapter 4, lead to gentrification and strong demand for social segregation and spatial control in pseudo-public spaces in the city. While, in Chongqing, although the city is now the fastest growing shopping mall market in the world (CBRE 2016a), Chongqing's urbanisation is much more inclusive than other major Chinese cities because of its unique political-economic, social, and geographic contexts (Huang 2011). In Chongqing, for example, the property values are much lower than Shanghai and close to the national average. Choosing these two cities, as a result, makes it possible to see distinct degrees of private-sector involvement in the governance of pseudo-public spaces in China. Detailed discussions of the backgrounds of the selected study cities and spaces are provided in Chapter 4.

In his well-known work: *Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin painted a picture of the urban life in 19th- Century Paris, through the eyes of the *flaneur* –a leisured walker on the street. Benjamin (2002) himself describes the *flaneur* as 'the observer of the marketplace' (p.427), as he puts it:

> Performed in the figure of the flaneur is that of the observer. The flaneur required a social legitimation of his habitus. It suited him very well to see his indolence presented as a plausible front, behind which, in reality, hides the riveted attention of an observer who will not let the unsuspecting malefactor out of his sight (p.442).

Featherstone (1998) claims that the *flaneur* is a stroller who is experiencing the urban space continuously and constantly by different forms of urban locomotion, and the eyes of the *flaneur* enable Benjamin:

> not only investigated the city and tried to make sense of urban life … The reader is invited to stroll down the street, to indulge in a textual *flaneur*. … *flaneur* is a method for reading texts, for reading the traces of the city. It is also a method of writing, of producing and constructing texts (pp. 909-910)

In this sense, the *flaneur* is a useful and creative method for field research which builds the connection between the real city and the textual city. It is a method to observe and to record

one's observation, experience, and perception of the urban life and space, and then convert them into narrative description. It is an approach with a long history of successful application in urban studies (Jenks & Neves 2000). Jane Jacobs (1962), for instance, applies an approach which is quite similar, as she describes in her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, and other scholars point out in a special issue (vol. 74, no.3) of *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*. But, as Adam D. Morton (2017) notes in his inaugural lecture as professor of political economy (specialising in spatial political economy), the *flaneur* is not just an approach for observation. It is rooted in a spatial political economy tradition at the intersection of architecture and urban form on the one hand, and political economy and economic structure on the other hand. The *flaneur,* as Benjamin used it, then better complements my approach in this thesis strongly influenced by social provisioning (Jo 2011, 2016).

So, following Benjamin, in the fieldwork, I performed the figure of the *flaneur* in the study pseudo-public spaces. It allowed me to collect qualitative data required (such as how the space was connected with its surrounding urban environment; how the space itself was designed; how and by whom the space was managed and controlled; who were using the space; and so on) through direct-observation and participant-observation (participated in everyday social activities happened in the study spaces, such as window-shopping). While quantitative date needed (such as how many people were using a pseudo-public space; how many of them were conducting 'social activities', and how many of them were doing 'necessary activities'; how many public facilities, such as sitting places, and how many fee-paying facilities were provided; and so on) were collected, as suggested by Gehl & Svarre (2013), through direct-counting on site using hand-held tally counters.

Meanwhile, on-site documents, such as inscriptions of rules for using space, maps, master plans, and floor plans posted in the study spaces; and information about activities held in the study spaces printed in shopping guides, were collected during the fieldwork. Further, the fieldwork was also complemented by numerous informal conversations with people doing their everyday businesses, tourists, security guards, and staff of the cafes, bars, restaurants in the study spaces. Multiple visits to each selected site were conducted on

weekdays during 2014 and 2017. All site visits were conducted in fine weather spring days, when the temperature and weather conditions were suitable for outdoor activities. Every site visit lasted from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm, when the highest usage generally occurs. Data collected were recorded in the form of field notes and supplemented by photos taken on site.

Moreover, to collect stories about how the rise of pseudo-public space has influenced and changed people's ways of conducting daily urban life in China, numerous conversations with local residents who were conducting their daily urban life in the study pseudo-public spaces were carried out during my fieldwork[①]. Among them, I selected the stories of Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang to draw the picture of how the rise of pseudo-public space impacts the daily urban life of Chinese people. Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang's stories were typical because they have directly experienced how the transformations of urban space happened in China and the emergence of pseudo-public spaces had brought direct and significant impacts on their daily urban life. Details of their stories will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The above three stages helped to gather valuable data for analysis. Inspired by Obeng-Odoom (2014, p.44), three steps were adopted to analyse the data, namely data reduction, presentation, and interpretation. Firstly, I winnowed the data to arrive at the most relevant to reduce them and, following Jennifer Attride-Stirling's (2001) thematic network analysis, grouped them into themes. By presentation, I mean I have tried to portray the data effectively to enable readers to verify my assessment for themselves. Finally, in the interpretation step, I have thought about the data, the process I went through to collect them, and their meaning throughout the study. Moreover, I have discussed my observations, analyses, and findings with some interviewees in China. Taking their comments as quite representative of what others might think about the analyses, I have incorporated them in my work. As noted earlier, this approach to analysis is inspired by Obeng-Odoom (2014) but also by the works of Patton (2002) and my own previous experience of studying field data on Chinese urban issues in my own research (Wang 2012; Wang & Chen 2012) and the national research project of China in which I participated (see Lu 2012-2015).

[①] See Appendix IV for Project (Interview) Information Sheet given to the public.

Meanwhile, identifying the dimensions of the publicness and their features of 'more public' and 'more private' reveals what aspects need to be examined and what questions need to be asked to understand the publicness of pseudo-public space. However, it is still insufficient to answer how the examination of those aspects can collectively reveal to which degree a pseudo-public space is public. In other words, work still need to be done to fully answer the second and third research questions of this study. In my previous research (Wang 2015; Wang & Chen 2016), I identified four empirical methods from existing literature to analyse the publicness of urban space, namely: 'modelling' (e.g., Mehta 2014; Varna 2014), 'scoring' (e.g., Németh & Schmidt 2007), 'development process reviewing' (e.g., Akkar 2005a; Madanipour 1995), and 'interest/power distribution evaluating' (e.g., De Magalhães & Freire Trigo 2017). Among them, 'modelling' method is mainly used to compare the publicness of two different urban spaces; 'process reviewing' method is limited to study the evolution of one single urban space's publicness; 'interest/power evaluating' method is suitable for revealing the driving forces that make the publicness of an urban space change. Only 'scoring' method can effectively assess the publicness of a number of different urban spaces and reflect the general degree of urban space's publicness in a particular political-economic and social-cultural context. Therefore, the scoring method is adopted in the present study to assess the level of publicness of Chinese pseudo-public spaces.

Drawing on previous scholarship (e.g., Németh & Schmidt 2007; Van Melik, Van Aalst & Van Weesep 2007; Varna & Tiesdell 2010) and considering the nature of pseudo-public space (see, for example, p.14 of this thesis), I developed an index of indicators and scoring criteria for each dimensions of the publicness (Table 2.5). Table 2.5 is based on the twelve dimensions of publicness identified in Table 2.1. As the scoring criteria for 'management' and 'control' dimensions are the same, to simplify the index, in Table 2.5, I have collapsed 'management' and 'control' into one single dimension. That is why there are eleven, rather than twelve, dimensions of publicness in Table 2.5. On this basis, I have divided the eleven dimensions into twenty sub-categories. Those sub-categories are the indicators of the index (see Table 2.5). For each indicator, a grading system from -2 (most private) to 2 (most public) is given with a descriptor at each end of the grading system and an intermediate one.

To make the index more reliable and objective, the descriptors do not weigh the factors. Instead, they are either able to be examined directly from documents or they can be directly observable according to their presence and intensity. The overall score for an urban space represents its degree of publicness. The overall score is calculated by aggregating the score for all indicators on an arithmetic basis. The higher the overall score, the more public is the space. The highest possible overall score for a given space is 40 (very high degree of publicness); the lowest score is -40 (very low degree of publicness or very high degree of privateness); positive scores represent the 'more public' situation of a space; while negative scores represent 'more private' urban space. It is worth mentioning here that, as Varna & Tiesdell (2010, p.592) point out, assessing the publicness of urban space 'is not, and cannot be, an exact science'. The assessment, as we shall see in Chapter 4, serves as a basis for further discussions and analyses.

Table 2.5 Index of indicators and scoring criteria for each dimension of the publicness of pseudo-public space

Scoring criteria / Indicators			Public (2)	1	Neutral (0)	-1	Private (-2)
Design and Plan Dimensions	Function	Support of unplanned use	The design of the space offers users three or more choices of activities and means of carrying them out	-	One or two more choices of activities are offered by the design of the space	-	Design/plan only support fixed functions and activities
	Urban-scale design	Location and physical Connection (Physical accessibility)	Centrally located within the overall movement network, well connected with surrounding urban area to facilitate movement-to and movement-through the space for different groups	-	Connected with the overall movement network and surrounding urban area, but little movement-to and movement-through the space is facilitated	-	Physically isolated and cannot be reached from surrounding area
		Visual permeability	Visually permeable from surrounding urban area	-	Visual accessible, but the visual connection is obscured or camouflaged by view impediments or grade changes	-	"Disappeared" (Cannot be found) from surrounding area
		Thresholds and gateways	No distinguishable thresholds and entry points exist	-	Designed to be sharply distinct from the surroundings, and look or feel like being isolated or escaping from the whole urban context	-	Explicit thresholds and entrances are applied (e.g. walls, gates, and checkpoints)
	Architectural-scale design	Availability of facilities (Seating place; restroom; and microclimate)	Majority of facilities (e.g. restrooms and sitting places) are provide and designed to be easily accessible and used by the general public for free	-	Majority of facilities are provided for fee-paying customers	-	No facilities provided for public use

Manipulation Dimensions							
		Human needs (Comfort & relaxation; passive engagement; and active engagement)	The design of public facilities meets all human needs for the sense of publicness: "comfort", "relaxation", "passive engagement", and "active engagement"	-	Public facilities are inconvenient to use and can only meet part (half) of the four kinds of human needs	-	Public facilities deliberately designed to be uncomfortable and inconvenient to use, and no human need is met for public use
	Ownership		publicly owned	-	public-private-partnership	-	privately owned
	Agency		Operated or controlled by public agents or agencies	-	Public-private-partnership	-	Operated or controlled by private or for-profit agencies
	Interest		The target beneficiaries is the public; Majority of the benefits and profits of the service of the space (e.g. revenue, power to control) are received by the public	-	The benefits and profits of the space's operation is shared by the public and the proprietors	-	The target beneficiaries is the proprietors; Majority of the benefits and profits of the space's operations are received by the proprietors
	Management & control	Purpose	To protect the safety of all the public, and promote a 'responsible' freedom	-	To protect the safety and freedom of certain social groups	-	To protect the safety of property or an investment
		Methods and its Presence	No "direct" control instruments (e.g. security guards, and security cameras) evident	-	"direct" control instruments are used, but subtle/non-visible in the space	-	"direct" instruments are used and highly visible in the space
	Rules	Presence & Purpose	Visible sets of rules are posted in the space to maintain the public order and protect people from harm (e.g. no disturbing other users; no disorderly behaviour)	-	Rules for use the space are adopted, but subtle/non-visible in the space	-	sign announcing "private space" (or "no enter") exists; only insiders are allowed to enter and use the space in private interest (e.g. profitability or marketability)

Use Dimensions							
		Arrangement and enforcement	Arranged by public authorities, and enforced by local police	-	arranged by public authorities, enforced by private security	-	arranged by property owner or manager, enforced by private security
	Perception	Cultural understanding	The space gives users 'a sense of community'	-	The space is a mixture of community and strangers	-	The space is 'a community of strangers'
		Social engagement	Most activities in the space are "optional" or "social activities" (e.g. leisure, observe others and interacting with others)	-	Similar amounts of "optional (or social) activities" and "necessary activities" occurred in the space	-	Most activities in the space are "necessary activities" (e.g. waiting for bus; going to school/work)
	Accessibility (information & Resources)	Information	Information about the space is publicly accessible (e.g. clearly announced or posted in the space or on its website)	-	Information about the space is only accessible to certain groups of the public (e.g. consumers)	-	Information about the space is not publicly accessible (e.g. only accessible to employees or insiders)
		Resource	Majority of resources are accessible to all the public for free	-	Majority of resources are accessible to certain groups (e.g. potential consumers); or resources are accessible to majority of the public, but fee for service is required (e.g. café; bar; restaurant)	-	Majority of services and resources are only accessible to employees and members (e.g. club, residential community)
	Users/Uses	Variety	No particular social groups are excluded	-	Particular social groups are excluded, but no clearly visible rules posted	-	Particular social groups are excluded by rules clearly visible in the space
		quantity	The space is busy	-	some users present	-	empty or very few users present
		quality	Three or more kinds of spontaneous uses occur in the space	-	Only one or two kinds of spontaneous use occur in the space	-	Only planned use or uses occur in the space

Source: inspired by Varna & Tiesdell (2010); Oc & Tiesdell (1999); Carr (1992); Gehl (2001); Németh & Schmidt (2007; 2011); Akkar (2005); Van Melik, Van Aalst & Van Weesep (2007); and others

Moreover, a visual ethnographic approach is adopted in this thesis to capture, analyse and present data. Ethnography, according to Pink (2006, p.22) is:

> a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture and individuals) that is based on researchers' own experiences.

While, some argue ethnography is 'a particular method of set of methods of data collection'. Hammersley & Atkinson (1995, p.1), for example, wrote that ethnography is a set of methods which:

> involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.

Either way, visual approaches have become increasingly popular in ethnographic research (Jang 2015). Or, in Pink's (p.21) words, visual images are increasingly 'intertwined' with ethnographic research. Visual approach is particularly useful in ethnographic research because of its recognition of 'the interwovenness of objects, texts, images and technologies in people's everyday lives and identities' (Pink 2006, p.7). When researchers produce photographs, these visual texts, as well as the experiences of producing and analysing them, then, according to Pink (p.22), become part of the ethnographic knowledge.

In this thesis, I attempt to make the images meaningful to explain the genesis and rise of pseudo-public space in China, and to capture the moments in ordinary lives to virtually visualise conceptualised social practices and spatial-temporal milieu to draw a clearer picture of how pseudo-public spaces affect people's everyday life in Chinese cities. To this end, I see four benefits for using visual materials. First, according to Ali (2004, p.274), 'we live in a society where visual images have proliferated and our ways of seeing and our experiences of and responses to visual spectacles are central to our understanding of who we are and where we belong', the use of visual materials is, therefore, very helpful to visualise the intangible dimensions of human activity (Whincup 2004). Second, Pink (2006)

has reminded us that our conversations are filled with verbal references to images and the use of words alone is simply insufficient to express all of the elements of the visual in which we are interested. For this reason, using visual materials can help us better represent those aspects of the topics that we research that might otherwise be referred to and represented trough abstract words (Mason 2002). Third, as Collier & Collier (1986) point out, images can aid researchers in recording, remembering and rendering the research field visibly accessible to others. Fourth, the use of images can also effectively create a space for the unexpected (Athelstan & Deller 2013) because images can open up internal worlds and interpretations of what we observed regarding issues that we might not otherwise think to probe (Stanczak 2007). For this reason, using images, according to Stanczak (2007, p.8), is helpful to 'reveal surprising new knowledge that we as scholars, students, and researchers may not have recognised through conventional means'. Because of the above benefits, I endeavoured in my use of images as in all my data collection and analyses to juxtapose history, people, urban life and broader social discourses in large Chinese cities.

Furthermore, I have taken self-reflexivity seriously to further ensure validity in the analysis of the data. In a process of knowledge production, as Pagis (2009) points out, a researcher is simultaneously a subject and objective, because while he or she is observing a subject, he or she is also conscious of his or her position in the process. In this study, my position is both emic and etic. On the one hand, in the emic position, I am a Chinese citizen, a resident of some of the study cities, an architect studying and practicing architectural and urban design in the rapid urbanisation happening in China, and a researcher on urban development in China. However, at the same time, in the etic position, I am a 'returnee' to the Chinese cities after their new statuses. Clearly, both my emic and etic perspectives collectively inform my analysis. My position in this study is strengthened by my appreciation of the study cities, having lived and studied in those cities for several years and being fluent in the local languages and familiar with local cultures, and, in turn, aiding me to both obtrusively and unobtrusively observe, learn, reflect, and analyse them. However, I am well aware of that my position in this study does not make me an imprimatur of 'natural expertise'. Instead, I risk claiming too much and presenting my own views as representative

of the study cities. Also, the problem of native researchers, as Obeng-Odoom (2014, p.45) reminds us, may also be suppressing multi-vocality or multi-narratives and -perspectives, while celebrating grand monolithic narratives. To avoid these problems, I have tried to supplement and triangulate the data as much as possible.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has tried to (a) explore how we can make sense of the effects of urbanisation under capitalism on the transformations of public space; (b) develop an analytical framework for this thesis; and (c) provide a detailed account of the data collection and analysis tools used in this thesis.

Two influential bodies of work grapple with the question of space. One, led by Lefebvre, Soja, Arendt and Habermas, builds their works on the basis of spatio-social relations. They believe that space itself possesses inherent social-economic and political characteristics. Because of the extension of 'the public', according to this body of work, public spaces are playing an increasingly important role as the public sphere in modern times. This role makes characteristics such as serving for a wide scope of 'the public'; being as a site of diversity; can exist anywhere in the city; and being open and accessible to all are inherent to public space. The other influential body of work, on the other hand, is built upon social-spatio relations. This body of work is led by American-based urban thinker David Harvey who believes it is social processes that shape urban space confer on its features. In Harvey's theories of space, capital circulation and accumulation are the most powerful forces shaping urban space. Under these processes, urban space tends to be designed, managed and used to facilitate and support capital accumulation, rather than to cater for the demands of civil society. Meanwhile, there is also a small group of urban political economists, such as Frank Stilwell and Franklin Obeng-Odoom, who claim a socio-spatial dialectic.

However, although providing helpful insights on space and power, none of the three groups of scholars has considered the question of continuum and relativities of space: the publicness of public space. To extend the existing approaches, this chapter has further

discussed that the rise of neoliberal capitalism since the late 1970s has led to the rise of private power of capital investors in building, managing and using urban space. The urban public realm, as a result, is increasingly privatised and commercialised. The boundaries between 'public' and 'private' are becoming more and more blurred. This trend has made the publicness of urban space become a 'cluster concept' with various degrees and made up of multiple dimensions. Based on a critique of the socio-spatial debate, the chapter then puts the case for a continuum approach -through identifying twelve dimensions of the publicness of urban space and their features of 'more public' and 'more private', shows how that approach can be used for empirical research to examine the complexities of the continuum and relativities of urban space, and details the data collection and analysis approaches that are used in this thesis.

This chapter has argued that the genesis and rise of new urban spaces and their consequences cannot be systematically studied by theories within existing disciplinary disputes about spatial and social relations. Trans-disciplinary theoretical lenses, therefore, are needed to overcome the long-established dyadic line of thinking that seeing urban space is a place of either pure 'public' or pure 'private'. Based on the framework developed in this chapter, the next chapter probes the rise of pseudo-public spaces -as a new kind of urban space- in urban China.

Chapter Three

The Rise of Pseudo-Public Spaces

Urban development since the mid nineteenth century, if not before, has always been speculative, but the speculative scale of Chinese development seems to be of an entirely different order than anything before in human history.

—David Harvey, *Rebel Cities*

3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the first set of research questions of this thesis: how did pseudo-public space emerge in China? And why has it expanded rapidly in Chinese cities? Is the rise of pseudo-public spaces a 'conventional' or a 'natural' process? As discussed in the introductory chapter, in the ongoing debates on how space and property should be held (as commons, as public property, or as private property), one of the three key topics that have been fiercely discussed is: whether private property is natural or conventional? In property rights research, there are two different attitudes to this issue (Obeng-Odoom 2016a). On the one hand, scholars in the conventional school hold that property was conventional not natural. They believe that the common form was the norm, it was negated into a private form and hence it needed to be negated back to the norm. On the other hand, scholars in the natural rights school, or sometimes called the 'new property rights school', argue that the institution of property is natural. Among scholars in this school, there is a consensus that private property in the commons is completely developed in the original state of humans and the privation of space evolves naturally.

As also noted in Chapter 1, a more explicitly urban-focused literature is polarised along the conventional-natural rights school. Mainstream urban economists draw on the stages of growth thesis to explain the rise of cities and new urban spaces more generally. By this approach, urban economic transformation only takes place as a series of Rostownian stages of growth (Rostow 1960) which are mainly influenced by market forces (Obeng-Odoom 2016c). When it comes to the privatisation of urban space, some urban scholars, on the one hand, such as Punter (1990) and Xu & Yang (2010b), from a conventional school perspective, claim that the privatisation of urban public realm is resulted from changes that have occurred in ideology and politics. On the other hand, according to urban scholars such as Webster (2007) who explains the privatisation of urban public realm from a natural rights school perspective, the privatisation of urban space is a spontaneous process to limit usage caused by congestion.

As for the privatisation of urban space in the particular context of mainland China, existing studies typically argue that it happened in the 1980s and 1990s after the Chinese government adopted a market-oriented economic reform (e.g., Miao 2011; Yang & Xu 2006). This account is centred primarily on the market institution and neglects the role of other institutions and processes locally, regionally, and globally. But, analyses on these complex forces can help to better address the research question. So, this chapter attempts to fill this gap. In so doing, the chapter draws on 'historical institutionalism' (Steinmo 2008), an approach successfully used to analyse changes in urban form by many urban scholars (for example, Ferreira 2016) and grounded in the social provisioning approach (Jo 2011, 2016) that I mentioned in Chapter 2. By this approach, the shopping malls boom in China today ought to be understood as part of –rather than part from- the social change in urban society in China.

Focusing on exploring the reason behind the rise of pseudo-public space, one of the most ubiquitous kinds of privatised urban space in today China, this chapter uses evidence from sources such as local chronicles, archives, and other historical accounts to show that the process of privatising Chinese urban space is pushed forward by a series of major institutional fixes (locally, regionally, and globally) made since 1979, and all those major

institutional fixes collaboratively contribute to the rise of pseudo-public spaces in mainland China. Drawing on this finding, this chapter lends some supports to the conventional school and argues that, rather than a spontaneous, market-based process, the privatisation of urban space, as empirical evidence in China shows, is a conventional process, and the evolution of this process is largely driven by ideological, political and economic forces.

This chapter analyses the emergence of pseudo-public spaces as a new kind of urban space in China through looking into how the mode of organising and producing urban space transfers from the old one to a new one which results in the birth of new urban spaces. To understand this process, according to the analytical framework developed in Chapter 2, particular attentions are paid to the establishment of market to fix capital in built environment, the creation of new demands and social needs, and how capital circulation is concentrated spatially in the city.

To clarify the historical process of privatising Chinese urban space, this chapter is organised chronologically. The next section discusses how urban space was like in Mao Zedong's era (from 1949 to 1979) when privatisation of urban space was hardly seen in China. After that, section 3.3 provides a discussion of the ideological shifts that happened after Mao's regime. The following section examines how a series of major institutional changes made between 1979 and 1998 both within and outside China pushed forward the process of privatising Chinese urban space. On this basis, the chapter then analyses how those major institutional changes lead to the emergence of pseudo-public space in China in 2001. The last section analyses why pseudo-public spaces have expanded so rapidly in Chinese cities after 2001.

3.2. Urban Space in Maoist China, 1949-1979

During 1949 and late 1960s, Mao Zedong was clearly the unchallenged political leader of not merely the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) but also the entire new China (Teiwes 1997). His political views had dominated China's official ideology during that period. Influenced by Mao, the state was preoccupied by both the communist ideological determination to eliminate private ownership and the socialist mandate to establish a

centrally planned economic system.

As a result of the communist ideological determination, all land in China, as one of the three types of producer goods (besides labour and capital goods), was taken away from the private sector (landlords), at the beginning of Mao's era, and then transformed into either state property in the cities or collectively owned assets in the countryside. Indeed, based on the centrally planned economy, state-owned urban land in Maoist China could neither be traded nor subjected to any form of market transactions. Land could only be allocated through administrative channels according to central plans. Capital investment, moreover, in Mao's era was a function primarily handled by the central state through its budgetary allocation. In late 1970s, for example, more than 80 per cent of China's investment in urban construction was funded by the state (Lin 2009).

As a result, the centrally planned system allowed the central state to maintain tight control over not merely land use in the cities but also capital investment for urban construction. In turn, the CCP could easily carry out a series of programs to build and rebuild Chinese cities which were ill-equipped to serve the needs of their residents after decades of wars and civil unrest. Cities, according to the communist ideology, are 'production centres' rather than 'consumption ones'. Accordingly, in Maoist China, urban growth was driven by industrialisation and the urban space was organised based on the forms of production introduced by the Soviet-influenced Socialist state, while urban functions in commerce, finance and services were suppressed (Gaubatz 1998, 1999; Lu 2011).

The Soviet *mikrorayon* model significantly influenced the organization of urban space in Maoist China. In order to make all necessary urban functions accessible to urban residents as easily as possible to achieve 'maximized efficiency and minimized waste of socialist production' (Bater 1980), large-scale factories, adjacent workers' housing, and frequently used service facilities, such as day-care, schools, parks, and health services were constructed in concentrated areas within a short pedestrian journey (see Fig 3.1). Ideally, a *mikrorayon* was designed to be able to meet almost all the day-to-day requirements of its dwellers, so dwellers did not have much chance to conduct their urban life in other areas of

the city, and accordingly, there was no much need for the city to provide facilities for public use outside the *mikrorayon*. Introduced by Soviet advisers, a large number of so-called 'micro-districts' had been built in the suburbs of Chinese cities since the mid-1950s. The spatial form and functional organisation of those 'micro-districts', as 'self-sufficient' communities within the cities, were to a large extent influenced by the Soviet *mikrorayon* model and Soviet ideology more generally (Yang & Xu 2006).

Fig 3.1 Typical spatial and functional organization of the Soviet *mikrorayon* model
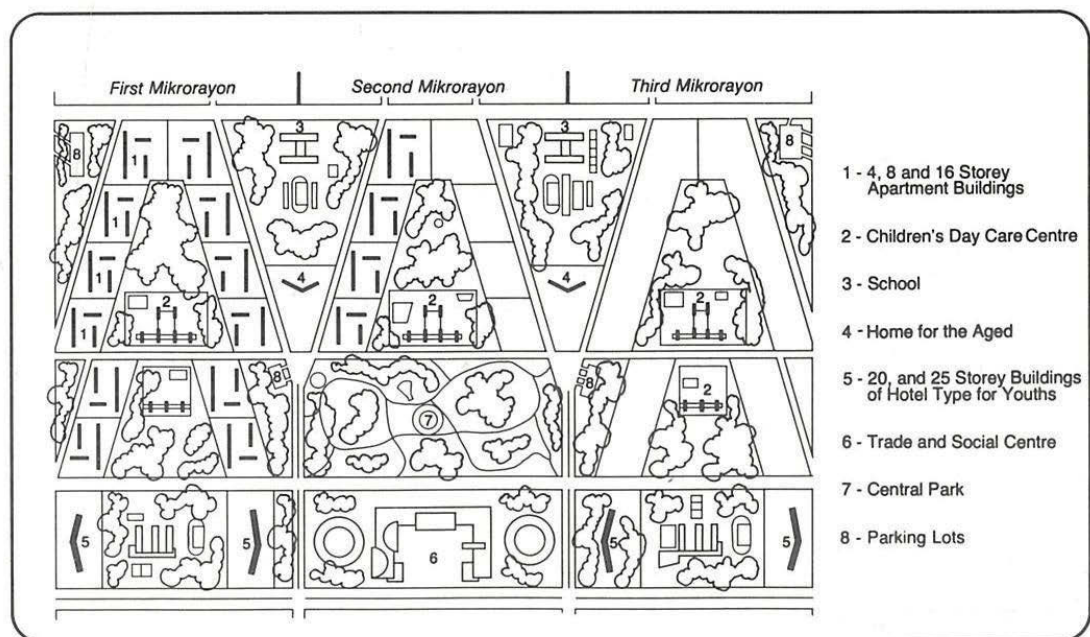
Source: Bater (1980)

This process of building Chinese city centres based on a self-sufficient socialist urban form of production produced a new form of urban space in Maoist China which was commonly referred to as 'work-unit', or '*danwei*' in Chinese. It soon became 'the basic building block' of Chinese cities in Mao's era (Lu 2011, p.48). Although developed from the Soviet *mikrorayon* model, the work-unit in Maoist China found its spatial expression of 'self-reliance' in a more extreme way by enclosing all apartments, work and service buildings and facilities within a large compound (in Chinese *dayuan*) and separating them from surrounding urban areas using continuous walls. Meanwhile, the centrally planned economy stripped shopping of sociality. During Mao's era, all daily necessities were

allocated to city residents. Commercial shops, as a result, were not needed and thus were not provided in the work-unit.

The morphology of Chinese urban space in Mao's era, as Fig 3.2 shows, was largely made up of a jigsaw puzzle of self-contained and spatially demarcated work-units. This morphology, as Lu (2011, p.13) points out, 'contrasts sharply with that of modern capitalist cities, where urban space is characterised by the separation of land use into commercial, industrial and residential districts'. Within those walled compounds, almost all kinds of basic social services and facilities were provided. In this way, work-units made urban residents in Maoist China work, live and play within a small community centred on the workplace and, ideally speaking, virtually eliminated their need for carrying out urban activities outside those walls (Gaubatz 1999). Consequently, urban streets, plazas and other public spaces in Maoist cities were not designed to be the main physical platform on which urban social life happened. The work-unit-based organisation of urban space dramatically diminished the streets' role as the public realm (Yang & Xu 2009).

Fig 3.2 The suburb of Beijing in Mao's era (As a 'production centre', the space was structured by a series of 'self-sufficient' work-units based on the Soviet *mikrorayon* model)

Source: Schurmann (1966)

In Mao's era, urban public spaces in China, such as streets and public squares, were mainly used for political gathering. The anti-revisionism movement, for example, used to meet in public squares during 'the Cultural Revolution'. In Mao's view, revisionists were bourgeois enemies that had infiltrated the government and society at large and tried to restore capitalism. As Mao (1964, pp.19-20) himself spoke in a speech made in 1957:

> Dogmatism and revisionism are both anti-Marxism. … It is revisionism that negates the basic principles and universal truth of Marxism. Revisionism is a bourgeois ideology. Revisionists not only obliterate the fundamental distinctions between socialism and capitalism, but also obliterate the differences between proletariat dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship. What revisionists claim is, in fact, not a road to socialism, but a road to capitalism[1].

To oppose such attempts, late Mao's era saw a large number of massive political demonstrations and rallies carried out by Red Guards[2] with official endorsement around China. During that period, Red Guards went into the streets in the cities, occupied them for very long periods of time and launched a series of 'vigorous' mass movements on a great scale (Schoenhals 1996). The *Peking Review* (1966, p.15) describes Red Guards' actions as:

> Coming out of their schools and into the streets, the tens of millions of Red Guards formed an irresistible revolutionary torrent. Holding aloft the red banner of the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung and displaying the proletarian, revolutionary spirit of daring to think, to speak, to act, to break through and to rise up in revolution, they are cleaning up the muck left over by the old society and sweeping away the rubbish accumulated over thousands of years of history.

As a direct consequence of Red Guards' fierce political actions in urban streets, shops in the streets were not able to conduct their businesses normally, nor cultural and leisure activities, such as sightseeing and festival celebration, could not be carried out in the streets during that period (see Fig 3.3). As Wu (2015, p.44) points out, in the Maoist period, Chinese city

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[1] Original text in Chinese, translated by the author.
[2] Red Guards, or *Hongweibing* in Chinese, were groups of militant university and high school students formed into paramilitary units during the Cultural Revolution. From the top down, they were formed under the auspices of Mao to crush his 'political enemies', namely those who deemed as 'revisionists'.

centres were 'used for political gathering rather than commercial activities'. What was worse, as an indirect consequence of Red Guards' political activities, in late Mao's era streets became the main places where Red Guards paraded and assaulted people who they deemed as 'revisionists'. Social groups that thought themselves had the potential to be seen as 'revisionists', therefore, became afraid of going to urban public spaces. However, the problem here was, in Red Guards' view, 'revisionists' were not a minority group in the society, instead anyone who was perceived to have 'bourgeois elements' and had the potential to follow the 'capitalist line' could be 'revisionists'. A wide range of social groups, such as intellectuals, officials in positions of authority and religious personages, as a result, had become the targets of Red Guards' attacks (Rodziński 1988; Schoenhals 1996).

Fig 3.3 A political demonstration carried out by Red Guards in Nanjing Road, Shanghai in 1967

Source: www.163.com

Due to the above direct and indirect consequences of Red Guards' political actions, a considerable portion of urban residents were not willing to carry out their city life in the streets. Red Guards became the dominate user of urban streets in late Mao's era. To a large degree, the streets during that period of time in Chinese cities became the arena for them to advocate their political stand, rather than for the general public to enjoy city life. To maximise the effect of their political claim, for example, Red Guards changed the names of

many streets in Chinese cities to 'Anti-Revisionist Street' trying to mediate their political stand in the everyday use of the urban space (see Fig 3.4).

Fig 3.4 Red Guards were changing the name of a street to '*Anti-Revisionist Street*'

Source: Schoenhals (1996)

The work-unit-based urban space organisation weakened the functional significance of public space, and the political demonstrations and rallies caused the decline of public space's social significance. These two phenomena combined forced city residents to seek other urban spaces to conduct their everyday urban social life which was traditionally conducted in the streets. Yet, at the same time, there were not many alternatives offered for them. In Maoist China, the local government played the role to 'fill the gap between the work-units' and 'deal with the sphere within the boundary of the city but outside the territory of state work-units' (Wu 2015, p.41). However, as Gaubatz (1999, p.1497) reminds us, the local government in that period operated on the assumption that: 'most urban residents would rarely have any need to travel beyond the walls of their work- and living-unit.' This way of life was possible because the work-unit could provide all frequently used

daily services and shopping was stripped of the sociality since all daily necessities were allocated by the work-unit for free. Consequently, commercial shops were hardly seen in Maoist cities, and there were only three kinds of public spaces, other than streets, built in Maoist cities, namely: public parks, large scale paved squares, and large scale public spaces at the entrance to railroad stations (Gaubatz 1998). However, none of them was actually designed for the purpose of everyday public use. Public parks in Maoist China were surrounded by high walls and controlled through guarded gateways, and an entering fee was required for using those parks. Large paved squares, usually modelled after Moscow's Red Square, were designed for mass rallies and ceremonies. As a result, they were usually under heavy government surveillance. Uses of those paved squares were heavily constrained. And since late Mao's era, most of them, such as Tiananmen Square, became major places where Red Guards advocated their political stand though demonstrations and rallies (see Fig 3.5). As for open spaces in front of railroad stations, the designed purpose of those urban spaces was for traffic circles, everyday urban social life was barely carried out in those urban spaces in Maoist China.

Fig 3.5 Tiananmen Square, a typical large scale paved square used for mass rallies and ceremonies in Maoist China.

Source: China Revolution Photography Association (1967)

Because of the decline of the streets and lacking other public spaces designed and can be freely used for everyday public uses in the cities, open spaces inside the work-units turned out to be the best places where city residents in Maoist China could carry out their everyday urban social life. As a result, the 'in-between spaces' of buildings inside the work-units then became the main arena where day-to-day urban social life took place in Maoist China (Yang & Xu 2006). However, doubts may raise about the publicness of those 'in-between spaces' because, in fact, 'in-between spaces' within a work-unit could only serve the needs of the workers of particular work-units in which those spaces were physically placed. In Mao's era, the accessibility of people from outside a work-unit was heavily constrained and controlled by walls and guarded gateways, while their uses and accessibility to the facilities inside the work-unit were strictly restricted and even prohibited in some cases (see Fig 3.6). For this reason, those 'in-between spaces' inside the work-units were more like 'common spaces' which were shared and could be used by certain groups and communities, rather than 'public spaces' which were supposed to be freely open to and could be used by the public in general.

Fig 3.6 The gateway of a work-unit in north China in the mid-1970s

(Work-units were walled and designed isolated from the surroundings. Although used as 'common spaces' in Maoist China, a work-unit was only accessible to its own workers. Physical accessibility of people from the outside was controlled by guarded gateways.)

Source: zhongyan.blogchina.com

From the above discussions, it can be seen that the design, control, and use of public spaces in Maoist China were highly shaped and influenced by the communist ideology. This feature of Maoist Chinese urban space resulted in a relatively low level of publicness, because urban spaces in Maoist China were mainly designed for the purposes of promoting socialist production, supporting mass rallies and ceremonies, or facilitating traffic circles. Most of those spaces were designed to be sharply separated and isolated from the surroundings using explicit gateways and high walls. Usually, facilities in those spaces were only accessible to certain groups and communities. Meanwhile, a considerable portion of the public saw the streets as unwelcoming places and did not actively engage in social life in the streets. Most public spaces in Maoist China were mainly used by particular social groups, rather than the public in general, for political or production purposes. Moreover, it is important to notice that privatisation and commercialisation of urban space were hardly seen in China during that period.

Mao's death came in September 1976. Urban form and politics changed radically after Mao died. After a short period of Hua Guofeng's 'stop-gap' leadership in 1977 and 1978, Deng Xiaoping came to power in December 1978 after the 3rd Plenum of the 11th CCP Central Committee meeting was held in Beijing. Deng's economic modernisation and rehabilitation programme, as a result, became the dominate force in the Party and also in Chinese politics. As Derbyshire (1987, p.71) points out, 'China's growth record since 1949 has been fitful and characterized by sudden shifts in policy direction'. This change resulted in China's turn to neoliberalism.

3.3 The Turn to Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism, as previously explained in Chapter 2, is an ideology, a social movement, and a set of political-economic practices that can be generally characterised by privatisation, deregulation and trade liberalisation (Stilwell 2014). After Deng came to power, radical changes in ideology, influential social movements, and far-reaching economic-political practices happened outside and within China began to reshape Chinese cities.

Outside China, neoliberalism ideology which significantly influences the world's social and economic history in the following decades began to emerge in the West since the end of the 1970s. In May 1979, Margaret Thatcher was elected as Prime Minister of Britain. To reform the economy of Britain which was suffering from the miserable inflationary stagnation for over a decade, Thatcher believed Keynesianism had to be abandoned and solutions could be found in neoliberalism. Immediately after coming into power, she launched a series of reforms to the institutions and political ways of the social democratic state that had been consolidated in Britain after 1945. She attacked all forms of social solidarity that hindered competitive flexibility, dismantled and rolled back the commitments of the welfare state, the privatisation of public enterprises, reduced taxes, encouraged entrepreneurial initiative, and created a favourable business climate to induce a strong inflow of foreign investment (Harvey 2007). In so doing, all forms of social solidarity were to be dissolved in favour of individualism, private property, and personal responsibility.

Thatcher was not alone in doing so. Indeed, soon after she became the Prime Minister of Britain, in October 1979, a draconian shift of monetary policy was made in the U.S. by Paul Volcker, chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank. This shift led to the Keynesian fiscal and monetary policies whose main objective was full employment was abandoned in favour of a policy designed to fight against inflation no matter what the consequences might be for employment. One year later, Ronald Reagan was selected President of the United States. To revitalise the economy of the U.S., he also turned to neoliberal solutions by supporting Volcker's moves at the Fed and adding his own particular blend of policies to curb the power of labour, deregulate industry, agriculture, and resource extraction, and liberate the powers of finance both internally and on the world stage (Harvey 2007).

Meanwhile, in China, the centrally planned system established in Mao's era allowed central state to maintain tight control over capital investment to fulfil its development agenda, but resulted in local states unable to respond adequately and efficiently to varying local demands for economic development because of the lack of ability to mobilize capital for its own demands. As a result, during 1958 and 1976, China witnessed a 5.2 per cent annual Gross National Product (GNP) growth with agricultural output rising by 2 per cent

and industrial output by 9 per cent annually. If a 2 per cent annual population increase is taken into account, the per capita output increased by 3 per cent annually during that period. This performance only accounted for about half of the standards of China's neighbouring countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and Japan, which recorded a 4.5 per cent to 6.5 per cent annual GNP growth per capita during the same period (Derbyshire 1987). What was worse, according to the World Development Indicators of World Bank, China's per capita GDP and value added in industry respectively saw a up to -26.6 per cent and -42.1 per cent negative growth in 1961[①]. At the end of Mao's era, the living standards of the Chinese reached a very low point in China's history. Apparently, to raise the living standards, banishing the obstacles to China's economic growth created in Mao's era was one of the CCP's most urgent tasks at the end of the 1970s.

What is more, China's diplomatic and commercial relations were maintained only with the Soviet Union and the Eastern European satellite states in early Mao's era. However, China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had progressively diverged about Marxist ideology since 1956, which end up with the Sino-Soviet split in 1960 after the CCP formally denounced the Soviet variety of communism as a product of 'revisionist traitors'. After that, China became extremely isolated in the international community. Although commercial relations with the United States were established after Richard Nixon, the then president of the U.S., visited China in 1972, the amount of American-Chinese trade was only 92 million U.S. dollars that year, which means the commercial relations were very limited (see Fig 3.7). To recover its economy, China in the 1970s was in need to open itself up to and participated in the global market and play a more active role in the international community so as to not only import foreign science, technology, management skills, but also gain enough foreign investments to buy the necessary means to support a stronger internal economic growth (Hsü 2000; Lardy 1998; Li & Tang 2000).

China's desire for participating in the global market was promoted by the end of the Vietnam War. In this war, the U.S. army failed to coerce the Vietnamese people into a

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[①] See:
http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableselection/selectvariables.aspx?source=world-development-indicators (accessed 16 November, 2014)

permanent scission along the Cold War divide and, as a result, decided to withdraw from Vietnam. In 1973, the U.S.' direct military involvement in Vietnam ended. The withdrawal of the U.S. allowed, in Paolo Sylos-Labini's (1976, pp.230-2) words, 'the inhabitants of all the different quarters of the world… arrive at that equality of courage and force which, by inspiring mutual fear, can alone overawe the injustice of independent nations into some sort of respect for the rights of one another.' The retreat of the U.S. military power from Vietnam, in this way, favoured the Third World countries in East Asia whose natural resources were in great demand and so were their abundant and cheap labour supplies. After the Vietnam War, according to Arrighi (2007, p.6), 'capital flows from First to Third (and Second) World countries experienced a major expansion; the rapid industrialisation of Third World countries was undermining the previous concentration of manufacturing activities in First (and Second) World countries; and Third World countries had united across ideological divides to demand a New International Economic Order.' The defeat in Vietnam, as a result, forced the U.S. to readmit China to normal commercial and diplomatic intercourse with the rest of Asia and the world at large (Arrighi 2007).

Meanwhile, the U.S. also wanted to seek an alliance with China in the Cold War with the USSR. The U.S. then gradually loosened its restriction on trade with China after Nixon's visit, which led to a dramatic growth of Sino-American trade. By 1982, the amount of trade between China and the U.S. reached 5,187 million U.S. dollars which increased more than 55 times than that in 1972 (see Fig 3.7). What is more, in 1979, the U.S. broke off its full diplomatic relations with Taiwanese authorities. The period between the late 1970s and early 1980s, as a result, witnessed a big improvement in the relationship between China and the U.S., the largest capitalist economy in the world, which was seen as a major 'enemy' in Mao's era and started to recover its own economy by turning to neoliberal solutions. In early 1984, Zhao Ziyang, the then premier of China, visited the United States, and soon after that Ronald Reagan, the then president of the U.S. and one of the main advocates of neoliberalism in the West, visited China in return.

Fig 3.7 Sino-American trade, 1972-1982 (million U.S. dollars)
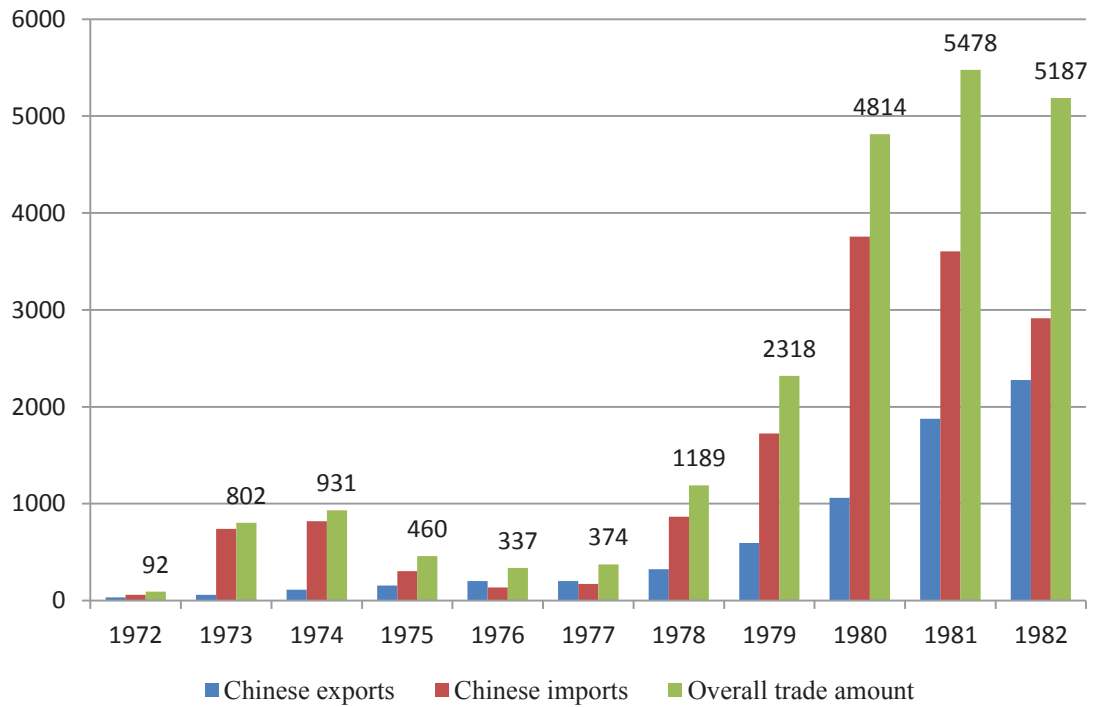
Source: Based on United States Congress Joint Economic Committee (1986)

Meanwhile, 1986 saw several workers protests in China. Those workers protests were followed by an unprecedented student protest which took place in Beijing and twenty-three other major cities in 1989. The triggering event of this student protest was the death of Hu Yaobang, former General Secretary of the CCP, in April that year. Hu, as a liberal reformer, was deposed after losing power struggle with hardliners over the direction of political and economic reforms and then had become for many a symbol of openness and political liberalization. After Hu's death, university students in Beijing marched and gathered in Tiananmen Square, seeking not only to honour Hu's memory with an elaborate commemorative service but also to express their own demands for greater freedoms. Although the protest was crushed on 4 June 1989, this student uprising in Tiananmen Square clearly indicated the tremendous demands for liberalisation in the political realm (Harvey 2007; Minzner 2015; Sullivan 1995).

Because of those internal and external drivers, Deng Xiaoping, after coming into power, placed a much lower priority on communist ideology in China's politics. Instead, he

believed passionately in the need to promote China's economic growth through material incentives no matter they are communist or have capitalist characteristics which Mao deemed as the 'enemy'. The Dengist economic plan shifts China's political ideology from class struggle and 'centrally planned economy' to all efforts concentrated upon developing its producing forces and building up a market economy (Harvey 2007; Teiwes 1997). This shift makes China, as Harvey (2007, p.120) describes, 'a particular kind of market economy that increasingly incorporates neoliberal elements interdigitated with authoritarian centralized control', namely, in a shorter term, 'neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics'.

Under the Dengist economic plan, a series of institutional fixes have been carried out since 1979 by the CCP to build a new market economy in China. Among all the institutional fixes, Table 3.1 highlights the landmark ones that contribute to the emergence of pseudo-public spaces. The process of privatising Chinese urban space, as summarised in this table, is pushed forward step by step by each of those landmark institutional fixes. Based on Table 3.1, sections 3.4 – 3.6 will (1) discuss how each of those institutional fixes pushes the process of privatising Chinese urban space, (2) analyse how they collaboratively set the stage for the emergence of pseudo-public spaces, and (3) explain how, on these bases, pseudo-public spaces, this particular kind of privatised public space, can occur and expand in Chinese cities.

Table 3.1 The process and landmark institutional fixes of privatising Chinese urban space

Phase	Landmark institutional fixes/events	Year	How it pushes forward the privatisation of Chinese urban space
Creating prerequisite for Privatisation	Decentralization and 'Opening-up'	1979	It brings substantial inflow of capital investments and growing number of private investors seeking investment opportunities in China.
Legitimising and Regularising Privatisation	The amendment to Article 10, Chapter 1 of the Constitution	1988	Private capital is legitimised to be fixed into land and urban space in China.
	The first long-term lease of land use rights for commercial development was formally approved in Shenzhen	1988	Officially allow privatisation: Leasing out urban land for commercial development becomes a lawful way to absorb the substantial inflow of capital investments from private investors in China.
	The implementation of the *Provisional Regulations on the Granting and Transferring of the Land Use Right over the State-Owned Land in Cities and Towns*	1990	The state owned urban land is then officially administered by the local states and it is clarified that the use-rights of urban land can be leased out to private land developers for a certain span of time.
Accelerating Privatisation	Establishment of 'tax-sharing' system (Fiscal reform)	1994	The local states begin to seeking local revenue from leasing out long-term use-rights of urban land within their jurisdictions, which makes urban land transactions began to play an important role in China's local economic growth.
Boosting privatisation	Dissolution of the state-run allocation system	1998	It creates great demands for housing and supporting facilities in the city which leads to the boom of real estate market in China. Real estate developers began to replace the work-units' role as the provider of public services and facilities in the cities. The work-units began to move out of the cities. Chinese cities began to become 'consumption centres', rather than 'production ones'.

Source: Author's summary

3.4 The Way towards Privatising Chinese Urban Space, 1979-1998

3.4.1 Creating Prerequisite for Privatisation

At the end of Mao's era, due to the centrally planned economy, the local government became had no enthusiasm for developing local economy (Lin 2009). However, to recovery China's economy, local states need to play a more active and effective role, because they have better information about local needs, be more responsive to local demands, and provide greater support for local business development that may not be apparent to central authorities (Jin, Qian & Weingast 2005; Lin & Liu 2000; Zhang & Zou 1998). Therefore, for the purpose of arousing local enthusiasm for economic development, the central state has since the end of the 1970s relaxed its control over local development affairs, decentralised the power of decision-making, and transferred the responsibilities of attracting investment and managing local economic growth to the officials at local level.

In 1979, the state replaced its previous development approach of 'self-reliance' by 'reform and opening-up' which allowed foreign investors participant in the capital market and urban construction in China. After that, the state had taken a series of actions to realise the decentralization and pursue high economic growth. Started from coastal provinces and cities, the reshuffling of state power downward has covered various scales including provinces, municipalities, towns, and individuals. Also in 1979, for example, The CCP Central Committee and the State Council approved Guangdong province and Fujian province to implement 'special policies' which allowed them more 'flexible measures' on dealing with foreign investments. The implementation of 'special policies' in Guangdong and Fujian resulted in four cities in these two provinces: Xiamen, Shantou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, were established as 'Special Economic Zones' (*China Daily* 2008). These zones were established with two tasks. On the one hand, their main objective was producing goods for export to earn foreign exchange in the global market. On the other hand, they also played a crucial role as social and economic laboratories where advanced technologies and skills from foreign countries and regions could be observed and learnt. To make them could better fulfil these tasks, local authorities were permitted to not only arrange foreign

investments without approval of the central state, but also offer a range of concessionary inducements to foreign investors, such as the prospect of free land and building equipment, tax holidays, low-cost labour, early remittances of profits and better infrastructure facilities and the exempted raw material. On this basis, in 1984, Most of those concessionary terms were allowed to be extended to fourteen other coastal cities which are designated as 'Open Economic Zones'.

Since 1988 the Constitution has been amended four times, initially to give legal recognition to the private sector and then gradually to elevate its position from 'a supplement to' to 'an important integral part of' China's economy growth. As a result, partnership among different sectors of the society beyond the government, such as private and Sino-foreign joint enterprises, was, initially in those economic zones, established in China. After the implementation of those decentralizing reforms, the local governments as well as the private sector were not only able, but indeed encouraged to explore their own ways to mobilize and utilize capital investment for its own economic demands.

Decentralization and 'opening-up' brought substantial inflow of capital investment from foreign investors and the private sector. They, in this way, created the prerequisite for privatising Chinese urban space. After the 'opening-up', growing numbers of capital investors from foreign countries and the private sector were emerging and seeking investment opportunities in China (Broudehoux 2004). As a result, although 'economic spaces' still only made up a relatively small part of the city centres which were still mainly occupied by 'production spaces' at that time (see Table 3.2), increasingly 'economic spaces' had been built in Chinese cities in the 1980s to meet the investors' demands (Jin 1993).

Table 3.2 Ratio of land use for commercial purposes in the centres of some Chinese cities in the 1980s

City	Changzhou	Suzhou	Wuxi	Jiaxing	Nanjing
Year of statistic	1982	1983	1983	1983	1984
Urban population (10,000 people)	49.4	68.1	81.2	not available	220.8
Area of land for commercial use (ha.)	57.83	35.55	37.76	70.21	99.40
Ratio (percentage)	**18.40%**	**11.30%**	**12.00%**	**23.70%**	**31.70%**

Source: based on Jin (1993) and Editorial Committee of Jiangsu Province Chronicles (1996)

Meanwhile, because urban land market was not established yet, market transactions of large scale urban land for commercial development were still not allowed before the end of the 1980s. Private real estate developers were not able to get land parcels in Chinese cities to conduct commercial developments. Consequently, large scale commercial developments by private real estate developers, which are now commonly seen in China, could not be found in the cities in the 1980s (Chung, Inaba, Koolhaas & Leong 2001).

As a result, those 'economic spaces' occurred in Chinese cities in the 1980s were mainly state-owned department stores, or in Chinese *Baihuo dalou,* which usually built on relative small pieces of land. Because of the limited land they built on, those department stores, as shown in Fig 3.8 (left), normally designed in the form of free-standing buildings whose shopping spaces were vertically distributed at different floors and, as the developers usually did not have enough land to build open spaces at the ground floor to improve shopping environment and connect the interiors and exteriors of the buildings to attract consumers, the interiors of those departments stores at the ground floors were usually designed abruptly separate from the outside urban public realm (see Fig 3.8, right). This resulted in there had clear physical boundaries between the urban public realm and those 'economic spaces'. The physical separation clearly drew out the jurisdictions of different powers that control different parts of the urban space, and largely confined the private power of those department stores' property owners or managers within the internal shopping spaces making them hardly spread out and merged with the public realm. As a result, pseudo-public spaces, which mixed with private control and public use, were very rarely seen, if any, in Chinese cities in the 1980s.

Fig 3.8 Chongqing Jiefangbei department store, a typical commercial space in the 1980s

Source: Chongqing Municipal Government Local Chronicles Editorial Committee (1996)

3.4.2 Legitimising and Regularising Privatisation

The centrally planned land allocation policy in Mao's era was no longer suitable for the urban and economic development based on the market economy that Deng was trying to build. Although the emergence of 'economic spaces' in the 1980s did not actually give birth to pseudo-public spaces in China, it did bring commercial activities back to the city centres. According to the *Commercial Growth Survey of Chinese Cities* conducted by the Ministry of Chinese Urban and Rural Construction, by 1984, more than 65 per cent commercial activities were concentrated in the centres of cities which had a population under 200,000; 38-45 per cent in cities of 200,000 to 500,000 people; and 20-35 per cent in cities over 500,000 (also see Jin 1993). Building up an urban land market to allow more urban space can be built in the city centres to accommodate those commercial activities became necessary in the late 1980s.

To build up a land market that coincides with market economy, the first step was to allow market transaction of urban land. However, at the same time, the CCP did not want the changes in Chinese land policy to weaken its power of control on the land resource in China through violating the constitutional designation of the state as the sole owner with supreme authorities and giving up completely the public collectively ownership (Hsing 2006). As a result, an amendment to the Constitution was made to separate the ownership

and use rights of urban land. This was made official in 12 April 1988 in the First Session of the Seventh People's Congress. The clause: 'The right to the use of land may be transferred according to law' was added to Article 10, Chapter 1 of the Constitution which originally stipulated: 'No organisation or individual may appropriate, buy, sell or otherwise engage in the transfer of land by unlawful means' (The Seventh National People's Congress of P.R.China 1988). This amendment of the Constitution legitimises the privatisation and capitalisation of urban land use rights. On a leasehold basis, the establishment of urban land market in China is in essence a shift of urban land use rights from public to private land rights system (Xu, Yeh & Wu 2009).

In 9 September 1987, the first long-term lease of land use rights for commercial development in China was introduced in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, and it was formally approved there in 1988 on an experimental basis (Lin 2010). This marks the formal establishment of urban land market in China. To take the establishment of urban land market further, follow-up institutional reforms had been made by the central state in the early 1990s. In 1990, the State Council issued the *Provisional Regulations on the Granting and Transferring of the Land Use Right over the State-Owned Land in Cities and Towns*. This legal document made clear the lease term of the assigned right to use the urban land is 70 years for residential uses, 50 years for industrial uses, and 40 years for commercial uses (Article 12), and the assignment of the right to the use of urban land should be carried out by three means: reaching an agreement through negotiation, invitation to bid, or auction (Article 13). Meanwhile, it also stipulated people's government at the municipal level shall be in charge of assigning the right to the use of urban land (Article 9). The implementation of these regulations led to state-based urban land administration system overseen by local officials who lease out the use rights to private land developers under long-term leases. Initially conducted on an experiment basis in Shenzhen Economic Zone, the long-term lease of urban land use rights policy was expanded to the rest of the country in 1992.

Although it did not immediately result in the emergence of pseudo-public space in China, the establishment of urban land market is a big step towards the privatisation of Chinese urban space (Lai & Lorne 2015). It sets the stage for private investors to participant

in building, developing, and managing urban spaces in China, by allowing urban land to be leased to private developers for a certain time span to carry out commercial developments. On this basis, the process of privatising and commercialising Chinese urban space began to accelerate and occur in more and more cities in the early 1990s. Yu (1993, pp.82-83) observed this situation in Shanghai in 1993 and wrote it in one of his works:

> Land-leasing inevitably moves the inhabitants away from the city proper. In their pursuit of profits, land developers tend to go for the largest plot ratio, using every inch of the transferred land and erecting the largest possible buildings. A brief survey of the 135 tracts of land transferred (in Shanghai between January and September 1992) indicates that most of them are utilized for high-quality comprehensive buildings for residence and offices for business. … Downtown Shanghai is becoming exclusively a commercial and financial centre.

However, probably, what exceeded Yu's expectation was that what he observed in 1993 was only an initial phase of this process. The process toward privatising and commercialising Chinese urban space was pushed forward significantly since the mid-1990s by two landmark institutional changes, namely the fiscal reform in 1994 and the dissolution of the state-run allocation system completed in 1998. These changes require additional comments for their implications. This is to which we now turn.

3.4.3 Accelerating Privatisation

A consequence of decentralising the responsibilities of attracting investment and managing local economic growth to local authorities is a significant decrease of the share of central budgetary allocation in capital investment for local governments. For example, the capital investment in urban construction allocated form the central government declined dramatically from more than 80 per cent in 1976 to less than 10 per cent in 1992 (Lin 2009). So in 1987, to compensate this considerable decline in capital investment for local governments, a 'fiscal contract' system was established.

This system required local governments sign a contract with the central state stipulating a fixed lump-sum revenue remitted to the central state, then the surplus revenue was allowed to be retained by local governments. This fiscal system provided great

incentives to local governments for revenue generation (Lin 2009). During a short period of time from 1985 to 1993, the total revenue of local governments soared from 123.52 billion to 339.14 billion Yuan, increased over 170 per cent (see Fig 3.9). However, the 'lump-sum remittance' to the central government was fixed for a period of time. During this period of time, as a result, local governments enjoyed the benefit of fast economic growth by retaining the surplus revenue, while little of the revenue generated locally had been enjoyed by the central state (see Fig 3.9). The revenue of the central state, therefore, only saw a slight increase in this period. According to official data, the central government revenue in 1993 only accounted for 22 per cent of the total national revenue, while local government contributed 78 per cent of the overall revenue of that year[1].

Fig 3.9 Revenues of local governments and the central state, 1985 to 1993 (billion Yuan)
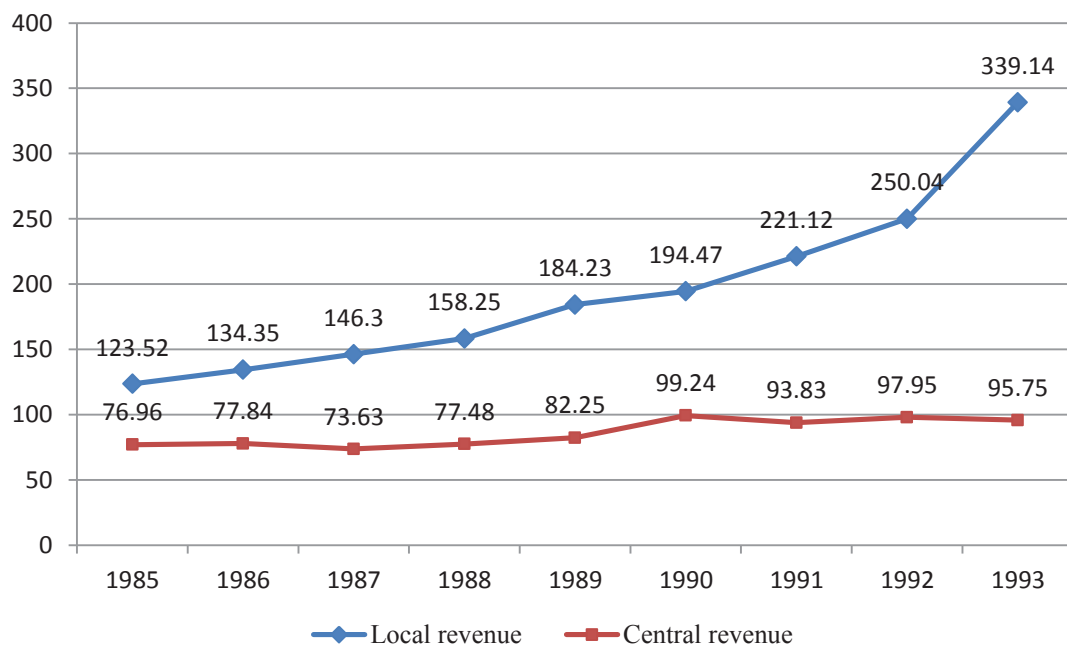
Source: Based on the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China

As a result, serious financial deficits occurred in the central government's budget during this period. The deficit which was 2.52 billion in 1981, increased about 9 times and reached 23.75 billion Yuan in 1992 (see Fig. 3.10). Under such a high financial pressure, it

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[1] According to the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China (See: http://data.stats.gov.cn/)

is unsurprising that a new fiscal reform had been put on the agenda of the central state and its implementation was clearly just around the corner.

Fig. 3.10 Financial deficit of the central state, 1981, 1989, and 1992 (billion Yuan)
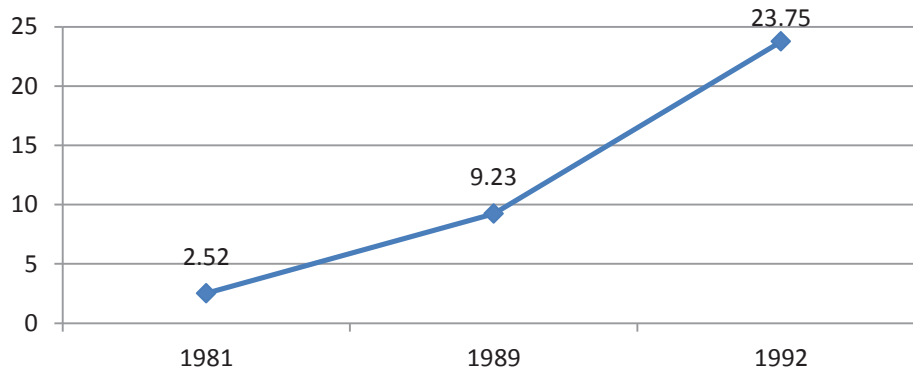
Source: Based on Wang & Hu (1993)

In November 1993, the Third Plenum of the Fourteenth Party Central Committee made the decision of introducing a 'tax-sharing' system to replace the previous 'fiscal contract' system. At the second session of the Eighth National People's Congress on March 1994 this decision was turned into a new budget law which went into effect on 1 January, 1995. The eighth Article of this law stipulated: 'the State practices a system of tax sharing between the central and local governments', and according to the Article 20: 'the budget revenue are divided into the central budgetary revenues, the local budgetary revenues and the budgetary revenues shared by the central and local governments' (The Eighth Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of P.R.China 1994).

The implementation of the budget law marks the establishment of 'tax-sharing' system. On this basis, a series of further institutional reforms have been made to balance the revenue distribution between the central and local governments. For example, the revenues of (central and local governments) shared taxes have been redistributed to let the central state receive the majority of them. After the redistribution, 75 per cent of added-value tax revenue is shared by the central state, 25 per cent by local governments; 60 per cent corporate income tax revenue is distributed to the central state, 40 per cent received by local governments; and stamp tax whose 94 per cent revenue is now received by the central state,

only 6 per cent left to the local authority[①].

Fig 3.11 clearly shows, as it was predicted, the fiscal reform led to the revenue share of the central state roughly equal to that of the local government immediately after 1994. After the 'tax-sharing' system based fiscal reform in 1994, the central state has successfully taken the revenue generated locally and retained locally to finance local development away.

Fig 3.11 Share of revenue between the central and local governments during 1985 and 2008 (%), and its variation trend before and after 1994
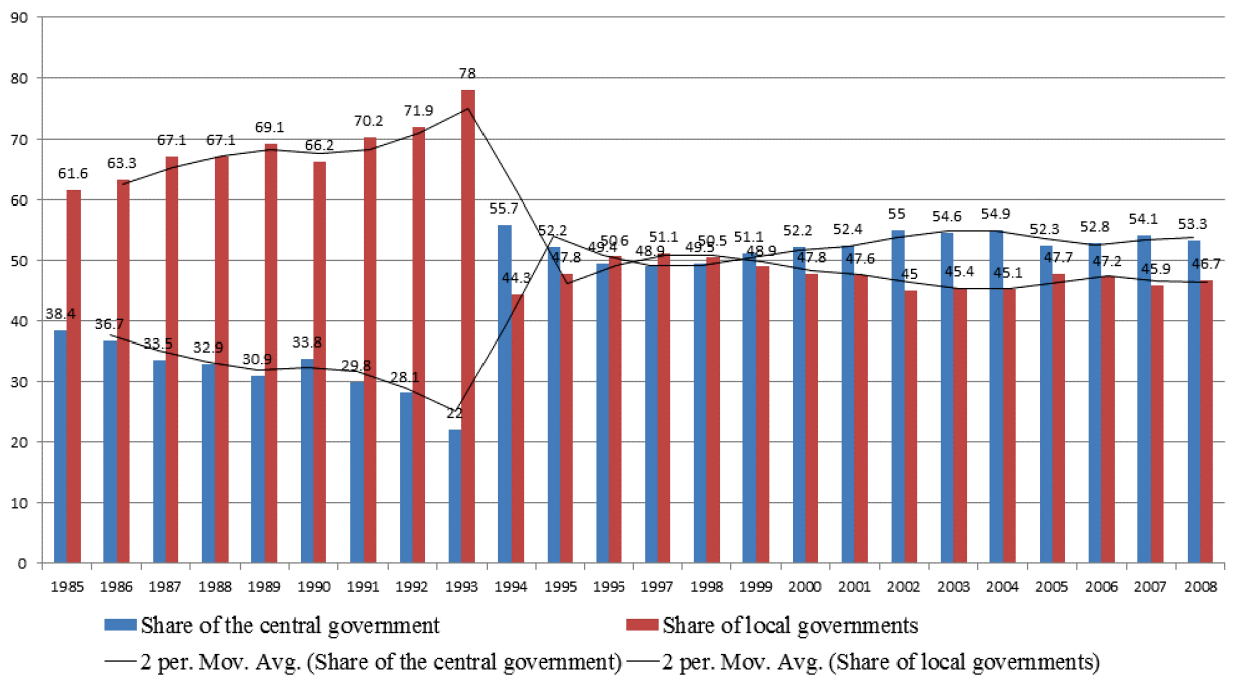
Source: Based on National Bureau of Statictics of China (2009)

The establishment of 'tax-sharing' system significantly accelerates the process of privatising Chinese urban space. It is widely viewed as the cause of the entrepreneurialism of Chinese local governments. This is because the fiscal reform launched by the central state did not alter the local states' expenditure obligations nor did it lessen the pressure on them to promote local economic growth and invest in local social and urban development (Ding & Lichtenberg 2011). Therefore, finding new ways to generate revenue locally became an urgent task for Chinese local governments at the end of the twentieth century. It

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① According to the State Administration of Taxation of China (See: http://www.chinatax.gov.cn/)

did not take long before the local government came to realise that leasing out long-term use-rights of urban land within their jurisdictions is the most effective way to achieve this task, because the new tax system allows the local government to keep almost all land revenue from leasing out urban land use rights (Wu 2015).

The local states then began to make efforts to promote land use rights transactions, especially those for commercial developments which were more profitable and therefore more attractive to the investors. As a result, the quantity of urban space produced by real estate investors increased considerably in Chinese major cities soon after 1994. Taking Beijing for example, according to official data[1], the real estate investors only built 4.460 million square metres floor area in the this city in 1994, and this figure skyrocketed to 12.086 million square metres in 1999 with a tremendous annual growth rate of 34.2 per cent. The fiscal reform in 1994, as a result, had resulted in much more commercialised or privatised urban spaces produced in Chinese cities.

However, the development of large scale commercial complexes or shopping malls was still limited by the weak demand in the real estate market in China, because at that time, urban housing was still mainly allocated for free and frequently used day-to-day service facilities, including places like shops and restaurants where people gathering, consuming and conducting urban social life, were still mainly provided in the state-owned work-units for their own workers. Yet, this situation was changed in the late 1990s when the state-run allocating system for job and urban housing was formally abandoned.

3.4.4 Boosting Privatisation

According to Marx (1967a), a market in labour power is one of the basic characteristics of a distinctively capitalist mode of production. Therefore, in Mao's era, following the communist ideology and to eliminate the capitalist mode of production, there was no labour market established in China. Jobs then were allocated by the state based on central plans (Périsse 2017). Correspondingly, housing, as one of the most important elements for the recreation of labour power, was freely provided to form part of the socialist

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[1] Data released in the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China (See: http://data.stats.gov.cn/)

welfare system. It was also allocated to workers, especially those employed directly by the state and state collective owned work-units, according to the central plans. As previously discussed, workers' housing in Maoist China were constructed next to their factories within walled work-units. That is to say, housing was freely allocated by the state and intimately attached to city residents' workplaces. As a result, city residents did not have many demands for buying housing through market outside work-units and, consequently, there was no housing market built up in Mao's era.

Since 1979, the central state began to make reforms to gradually dissolve the state-run system for allocating both jobs and housing. However, because of China's own domestic economic problems and political unrest, those reforms progressed very slowly in the 1980s (Howard & Howard 1995; Ping Wang & Murie 1996). Meanwhile, in the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, a 54-year-old reformist became the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (KPSS) in March 1985. After being in power, similarly with what Deng did in China, Gorbachev initiated radical economic and political change under the openness. However, his reforms did not turn out to be successful. In 1989, soon after the reforms in the Soviet Union started, some of the Soviet Union republics declared independence while the Eastern European satellite communist regimes, including Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania, began to collapse one after another. In August 1991, Gorbachev, trying to save the Soviet Union, proposed a new voluntary Union federation before an attempted coup in Moscow sought to reinstate hardline communist government. However, again, the coup turned out to be failed, which led to most of the republican parties withdrew from the KPSS and the Russian Federation and ten Soviet republics signed up to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on 21 December 1991. This directly resulted in the declaration no. 142-H of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union which formally enacted the collapse of communism in the USSR four days later (Day, East & Thomas 2002; United States Department of State: Office of the Historian 2013).

The collapse of the USSR sounded a loud alarm to the CCP leaders. However, it also led to a new world order. The Third World countries, instead of having two superpowers to

play against one another, now had to compete with former Second World countries in gaining access to the market and resources of the First World. What is more, the U.S. and its European allies, seizing the opportunity created by the collapse of the USSR, claimed a global 'monopoly' of the legitimate use of violence, fostering the belief that their superiority of force was not just greater than ever but for all practical purposes unchallengeable (Arrighi 2007). To make China capable of competing with Second World countries and protecting itself from the U.S. and its allies in the new world order, Deng remained convinced that economic development and reform were key to modernising China and the only way to avoiding the USSR's fate (Minzner 2015).

From 19 January to 21 February 1992, only about one month later after the Soviet Union officially collapsed, Deng toured the special economic development zones and cities in southern coastal regions. In this 'southern tour', Deng saw for himself what effect the decentralisation and 'opening-up' policy had done for the economic development in those regions, and pronounced in a series of speeches during the tour that he was fully satisfied. Through the speeches made during the southern tour, Deng not only criticised those who were against further reform and opening up due to their fear that USSR's fate could happen in China, but more importantly, reasserted and confirmed that China should not merely unswervingly stick to but further promote economic reform. As Deng spoke in a speech made in 1992:

> If we do not stick to socialism, reform and opening-up, if we do not develop economy and do not improve people's lives, China's future can only be a dead end. … Sticking to 'the basic route' (market reform and opening-up) is the only way to win the trust and support of the people. The people won't agree with and will overthrow anyone who wants to change 'the basic route' and policies made after the Third Plenary Session (of the 11the CCP Central Committee). So, the army and the government must keep on sticking to this route and those policies[1].

The impact of Deng's 'southern tour' speeches was far-reaching. After that, a large number of marketisation reforms and institutional fixes were reinvigorated and vigorously pushed

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[1] Original text in Chinese (See: http://gd.people.com.cn/n/2014/0811/c123932-21952148.html, accessed 20 June, 2017), translated by the author.

forward, and the dissolution of state-run allocation system for jobs and housing was part of them.

In his 'southern tour', Deng made it clear that he believed in market economy, there must have a demand for greater enterprise autonomy and in particular for enterprise management's need for authority over labour utilization, since it could help enterprises cut costs, raise labour productivity, and increase profits and taxes handed over to the state by enabling them, especially those state-owned, to reduce the size of their labour forces. In this way, enterprises could become more adapt to the newly established domestic market economy, at the same time more competitive in the external market to which China increasingly opened up (Howard & Howard 1995). Guided by this view, the central state officially abolished the state-run system for job allocation in early 1990s soon after Deng's 'southern tour'. After that, enterprises in China, especially state-owned ones, were allowed to choose their own employees and the state did not take responsibility for matching the supply and their demand for labour any more.

Combining with the emergence of private enterprises, Sino-foreign joint enterprises, and various other sorts of partnership among different social sectors beyond the government caused by the implementation of decentralisation and 'opening-up' policy since the late 1970s, a vital result of dissolving the state planned job allocation system was that a growing number of city residents in China no longer worked in the work-units since the mid-1990s. As can be seen from Fig 3.12, the short period between 1995 and 2000 witnessed a marked fall of the number of people who worked in the work-units which were mainly made up of state and collective owned enterprises -from 107.9 million to only 58.9 million, while the figures in joint, private and foreign enterprises had all kept growing steadily since 1980.

Fig 3.12 Urban employment structure and trend in China, 1980-2002 (million people)
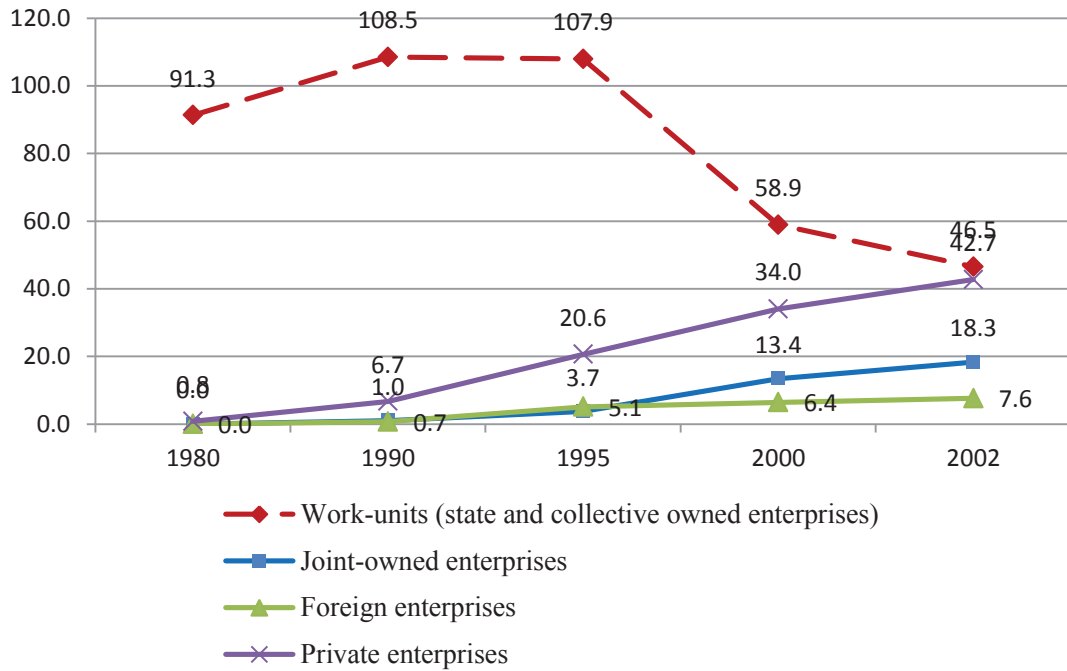
Source: based on Prasad (2004), Table 8.1

It appears that those who lost their jobs in the state-owned enterprises found jobs in private, emergent units. However, as research by Périsse (2017) shows, most people had to look for informal work. Those trends impacted the organisation and use of Chinese urban space by separating city residents' living places and workplaces spatially in the cities. Because, as aforementioned, the work-units only provided housing for their own employees or workers, the decrease in the employment of the work-units combined with the increasing number of people worked in joint-owned, foreign and private enterprises led to the result that more and more city residents in China, as Wu & Ma (2005) notice, had to find living places outside the work-units since the mid-1990s, which was meaningfully different from the situation in Mao's era when the vast majority of city residents worked, lived and played within small communities of the work-units centred on their workplaces. As a result, there occurred a growing demand for housing outside the work-units, and the marketisation of urban housing became an urgent need in China.

The first attempt of urban housing reform in China was conducted on an experimental basis in two selected cities, Xi'an and Nanjing, in 1979, the first year of the reform era. In

1988, the State Council turned the housing reform from experiments to official overall implementation in all urban area in China by issuing the *Implementation Plan for a Gradual Housing System Reform in Cities and Towns*. However, this document did not in fact effectively abolish the urban housing allocating system in China, since although many cities, based on this State Council document, have made their own local housing marketisation reform plans, only very few had actually carried them out.

Like the dissolution of job allocation system, reform on urban housing allocation system was also reinvigorated and vigorously pushed forward after Deng's 'southern tour'. In 1994, the State Council released the *Decision on Deepening the Urban Housing Reform*, which aimed at establishing a new urban housing system that suited market economy. To this end, it called for building up a dual housing provision system in urban China. One was a policy-oriented social housing supply which provided 'economic and affordable housing' for 'low-to-medium' income households. The other was market housing supply which provided 'commodity housing' for 'high-income' families, defined as those who can afford to purchase a two-bedroom apartment from the market on 5 to 6 times annual family income, through housing market (The State Council of P.R.China 1994). Soon after this decision was implemented, large-scale housing reform plans were put in place and carried out in a wide range of Chinese cities. Although it did not successfully shift the system away from the work-unit which still dominated the housing provision scene, the decision successfully built up a market-oriented commodity housing supply in urban China (Wang 2001).

In July 1998, the The State Council of P.R.China (1998) issued the *Resolution on Continuing Urban Housing System Reform, Accelerating Housing Development*. This milestone document stipulated that welfare housing distribution system would be formally abolished at the end of 1998 and completely replaced by monetary distribution. Through releasing this document, the central state officially abandoned the work-unit based welfare housing allocation system and vigorously encouraged city residents to purchase housing from the market. The implementation of this document, therefore, resulted in housing provision in urban China was officially shifted from a welfare system to a market system

(Yang & Chen 2014). It marketed the full marketisation of urban housing provision was established, and the state-run allocation system was largely dissolved in China.

Dissolution of the state-run allocation system boosted the privatisation of urban space in China. On the one hand, it resulted in a significant expansion of demands in the urban housing market which led to the boom of real estate market in the following years in China. With the supply (completed area) of commodity housing expanded rapidly after 1998, the real estate market began to grow at a fast speed since then, which resulted in the floor area of commercial building started to build in 2013 dramatically increased over twelve times reaching 25,902,000 square metres than 1998 when only 1,938,650 square metres commercial space started to be built all around the country (see Fig 3.13). As a result of the booming real estate market, urban land and space began to play an increasingly important role in absorbing and accommodating capital investments from private and foreign investors since the late 1990s.

Fig 3.13 The growth of commodity housing and real estate market, 1995-2013 (10 thousand square metres)
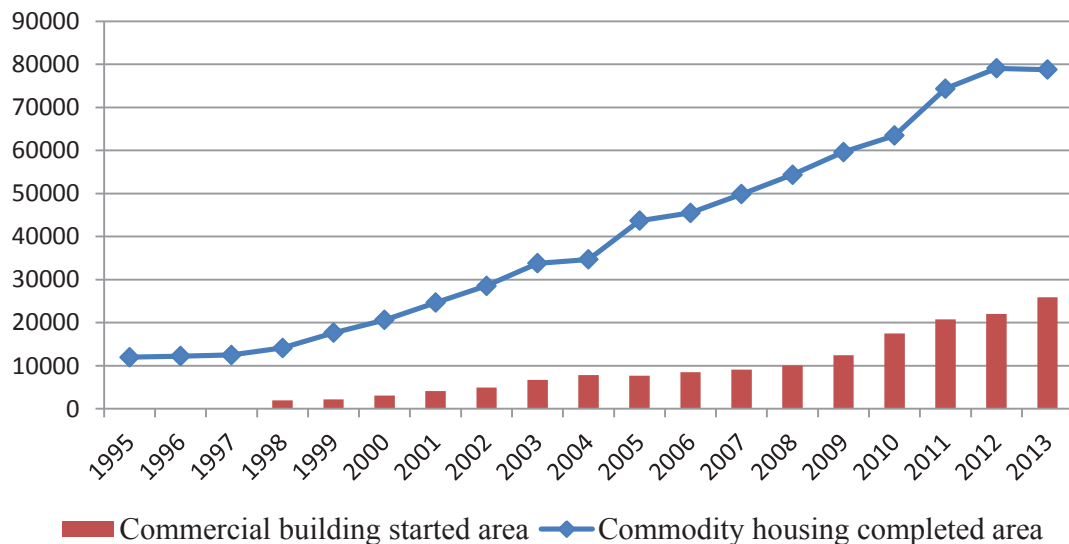
Source: Based on National Bureau of Statistics of China (2012) and its online database

On the other hand, as the vast majority of urban housing in China began to be sold in the market, rather than allocated through the work-unit, a growing number of city residents

then lived outside the work-unit. As a result, the work-unit, which exclusively provided frequently used service facilities to their own employees, no longer played the role as the main provider of such facilities in Chinese cities. Instead, a noticeable trend occurred in China since the late 1990s was that facilities supporting daily urban life, such as schools, shops, and places where city residents gathering, linking, and interacting, became increasingly provided outside the work-unit by real estate developers. A crucial consequence of this trend was the decline of the work-unit based organisation of urban space in the cities, which resulted in Chinese cities gradually become 'consumption centres'.

3.4.5 Chinese Cities as 'Consumption Centres'

Cities, because of their advantages in aspects such as convenient transportation and close to life facilities, are places in where a large number of people want to live. This resulted in a great demand for housing in the cities after the allocating system was dissolved. Commodity housing development in the city then became an even more profitable investment in the late 1990s. In order to make space for the development of commodity housing and their supporting facilities in the cities where, as a legacy of Mao, previously largely occupied by state-owned work-units, the municipalities began to move those state-owned factories out of the cities into the outlying areas in the 1990s. As a result, walled work-units as a Soviet mode of production gradually disappeared in the central areas of Chinese cities.

The trend occurred in Shanghai is a typical example. As we can see from Table 3.3, in 1998 when the state-run allocation system was just formally abandoned, there were over 75 per cent industrial factories, most of which were state-owned work-units, located in the central urban area of the city. However, this figure kept dropping continuously since then. By 2005, only about 32 per cent of the industrial factories were still situated in the central urban area. Combining with the booming real estate market, this process not merely gradually 'opened up' physical urban space, but more importantly, turned those production spaces into economic spaces such as shopping malls and commercial streets. This trend was

not unique to Shanghai, but also happened in other Chinese major cities, just at different levels of speed. The urban space of Guangzhou, to take another example, had become dominated by 'economic spaces' very soon after the central state began to dissolve the allocation system, because of the city's much less important role as an industrial 'production centre' in China's economy in Mao's era which resulted in much less industrial heritages left in its urban area. This trend, as a result, led to Chinese cities since the late 1990s began to gradually become 'consumption centres', rather than 'production ones'.

Table 3.3 Changes in the quantity and ratio of industrial factories in the central urban area

of Shanghai during 1998 and 2005[①]

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2003	2005
Total	22450	20290	19516	19065	18320	14769
Quantity in the central urban area	17025	11251	10648	7011	6481	4708
Ratio (percentage)	**75.84%**	**55.45%**	**54.56%**	**36.77%**	**35.38%**	**31.88%**

Source: based on Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006)

3.5 The Stage Has Been Set

The major institutional changes made between 1979 and 1998 brought significant transformations to Chinese urban space and social life, which set the stage for a new public space to emerge in Chinese cities. According to Zukin (2010), the public (as consumers), capital investors (market), and the state (as regulator) are the three main actors that shape the city's future. Following Zukin (2010), this section analyses how the institutional reforms during 1979 and 1998 set the stage for the emergence of pseudo-public spaces in China by changing the roles the three key actors play in the country's urbanisation process.

[①] The 'central urban area' of Shanghai here refers to the urban area consists of following districts: Huangpu, Shinan (merged into Huangpu in 2000), Luwan (merged into Huangpu in 2011), Xuhui, Changning, Jing'an, Putuo, Zhabei (merged into Jing'an in 2015), Hongkou, Yangpu, Minhang, and Baoshan. Several minor adjustments of administrative jurisdiction had been made to the above districts during 1998 and 2005. Therefore, these figures should be understood more in terms of the general trends they illustrate than for precision in making direct comparisons.

First of all, let us start form the public. The 'opening-up' policy brings not merely capital investments but also postmodernism lifestyle to China. A key feature of postmodernism lifestyle is that it mixes consumerism with daily urban life (Harvey 1990). In China, this new lifestyle began to exert its influences in the 1990s. New ways of life and leisure which were never provided by the work-units before began to occur in large cities. Bars, themed stores, and international fast-food chain restaurants became increasingly commonly seen in China. Meanwhile, as a growing number of people lived in the cities no longer received services and facilities from the work-units, there were great demands for those newly emerged life and leisure styles in the 1990s. For example, the McDonald's opened their first fast-food restaurant in mainland China in Shenzhen, October 1990. Their American style fast-foods soon became products sell like hot cakes in China. As a result, the highest sales record in the long history of the America-based globally spread fast-food chains was soon broken by one of their restaurants in Guangzhou, a costal Chinese city, in 1993. The great demands for new life and leisure styles resulted in great demands for new kinds of urban places where various facilities and services were provided to not only allow city residents to gather and meet, but more important, to meet their increasingly diverse needs for the opportunities and supports for experiencing modern consumerism urban life.

Second, as for the capital investors, the decentralisation and 'opening-up' not only allowed but also invited them to seek investment opportunities in Chinese market. Then, since the end of the 1980s, after the urban land market was established they were able to accumulate their capital in the particular field of real estate by acquiring long-term lease of urban land use rights for commercial developments. When the full marketisation of urban housing provision was largely completed and, as a result, heavy demands for urban housing and supporting facilities and services were created in the late 1990s, it was not difficult for the capital investors to foresee that the real estate market in China was going to enjoy a boom in the following years. Therefore, the investment in the real estate market expanded notably since the end of the 1990s. As Fig 3.14 shows, in China, investment in real estate development in 2008 was 3.2 times the size of investment in 1995.

Fig 3.14 Investment in real estate development in China (100 million yuan), 1995-2003

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Investment	3149.02	3216.44	3178.37	3614.23	4103.20	4984.10	6344.11	7790.92	10153.8
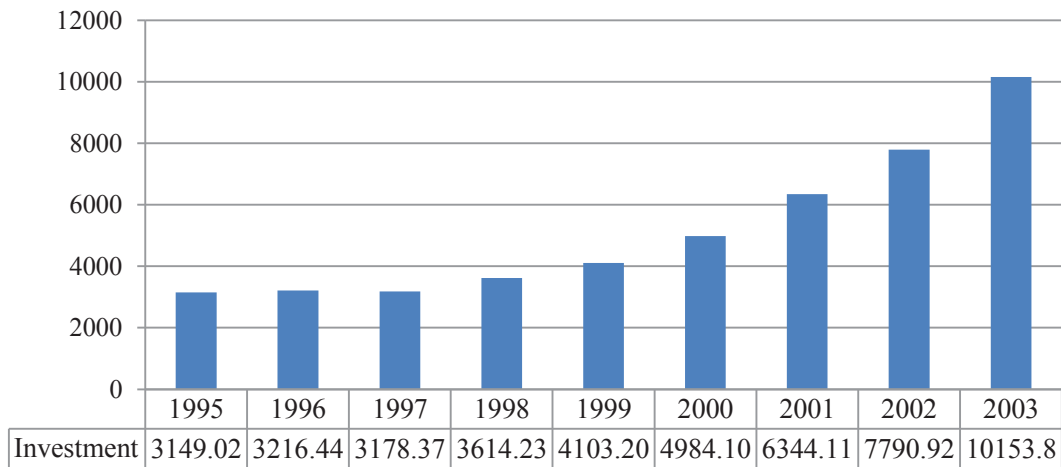
Source: Based on National Bureau of Statistics of China (1996-2004)

However, speaking of the physical space to accommodate the expanding investment, department stores of the kind commonly seen in the 1980s —when frequently used facilities and services were still mainly provided by the work-units— were no longer sufficient to satisfy capital investors' ambitions, as they were relatively small in scale, usually only able to provide a comparatively simple combination of retail formats, and, as a result, only able to attract a relatively narrow range of consumers. In other words, they were not capable of generating enough profits by meeting the fast growing and increasingly diverse demands for services and facilities in the late 1990s. At the same time, large scale, multi-functional shopping complexes began to become popular in many Western countries. In those large scale shopping spaces, investors are not only able to sell material products, but also able to generate revenue from selling immaterial services and cultural commodities (such as movies, exhibitions, and fee-paying cultural events). In these ways, those large scale shopping complexes, as Herman (2001, p.527) wrote in the *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping,* provided 'a new typology (of shopping space) that will deliver greater profits and higher consumer satisfaction' for capital investors. Because of their ability to absorb more investment and generate greater profit, those large scale, multi-functional shopping complexes became what capital investors wanted to import to Chinese cities in the late 1990s (Chung, Inaba, Koolhaas & Leong 2001).

Third, local governments were forced by the fiscal reform in 1994 to find new ways to generate fiscal income locally. Meanwhile, the establishment of urban land market had given them power to assign the right to the use of urban land within their jurisdictions and retain revenue from it. Resulting from these two institutional reforms and promoted by the booming real estate market, the local state began to seek local financial revenue from urban land transactions since the 1990s. Driven by the local states' attempt of promoting land transactions, land use planning, which played an important role in maximising the profitability of the urban land, became more and more 'market-oriented' (Wu 2015). In this process, as Yang & Xu (2006, p.39) noticed, 'consumerism' gradually became one of the 'core values' of urban planning in China since the late 1990s. The 'consumerist' land use led to Fordism production of urban space in Chinese large cities. Mass production of standardised products, this high-efficiency modern commodity production mode was applied in land use planning.

As a result, open-grid road system was increasingly widely used in Chinese urban planning to divide the urban land since the late 1990s (Lu 2012). The reason behind this phenomenon is because, as Jiang & Zhang (2009) point out, dividing urban land in this way can effectively accelerate the 'production-consumption-value realisation-reproduction' process of capital circulation in urban land market. On the one hand, using open-grid road system is a simple and easy-to-operate way to produce urban space. Open-grid can easily be applied in any cities under any conditions with little regard for local geographic and historical urban textures. In this way, open-grid road system planning made urban spaces easily divided and developed into similar size pieces of land, as standardised products that can be leased out in the land market. On the other hand, open-grid road system planning produced standardised (similar size) pieces of urban land which were not only easy to fix the price for market transaction but also convenient for the developers to carry out standardised development procedures.

In the Fordism production of urban space, land for commercial use tended to be divided into relatively larger scale pieces for massive development (Fig 3.15 shows one example), because commercial land parcels in larger scale were helpful for the local state to

not only facilitate land transactions but also promote real estate market by accelerating the circulation of the developers' investments in commercial developments. On the one hand, dividing land into relatively larger pieces, namely what Xu & Yang (2010a) describe as 'super blocks', caused sparser grid roads, which led to fewer roads and relating supporting facilities need to be built. This considerably shortened the time-span of developing land form raw materials into end products ready for leasing out in the market. Meanwhile, a larger size of each piece of land resulted in more land leased out in each single transaction, which also contributed to fasten the circulation speed of capital in the land market (interview #16).

Fig 3.15 Land use plan of Beijing CBD made in 2001
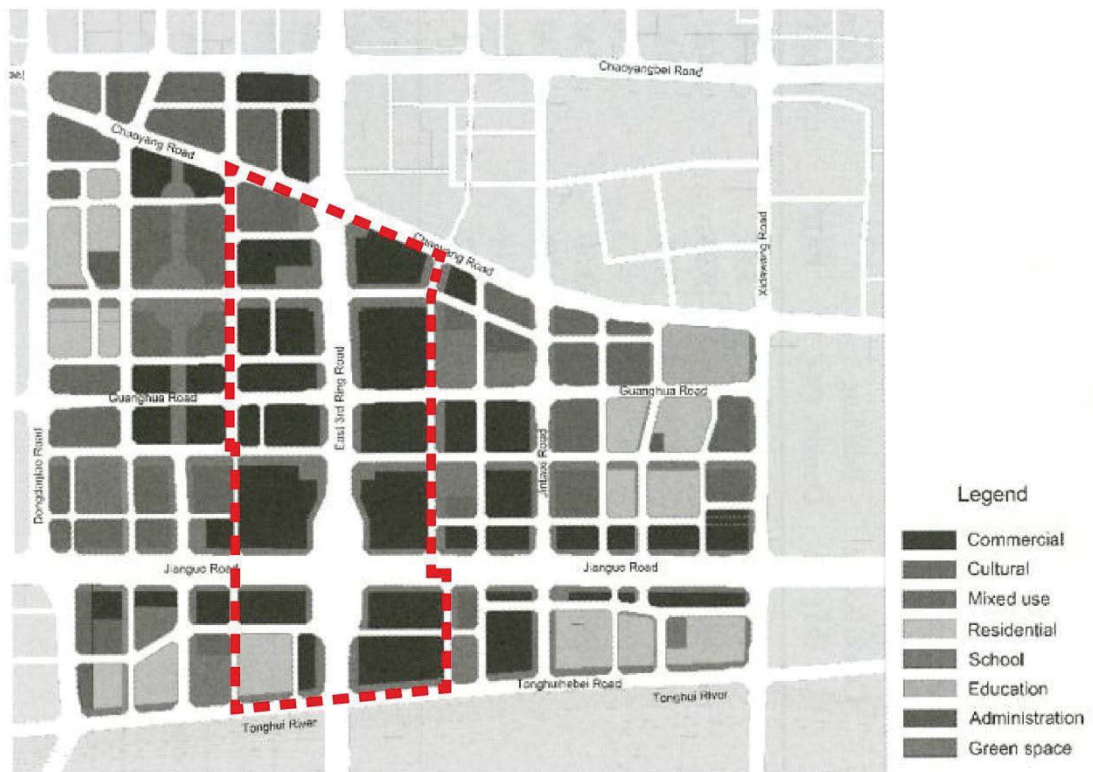
Source: based on Lu (2012)

On the other hand, commercial developments on larger pieces of urban land concentrated a wider range of different kinds of commercial activities in a relatively smaller urban area. It was able to shorten the spatial distance for value realisation and thus fasten the turnover time of the developers' investments in the real estate market. A typical example

of the local governments' attempts to concentrate various commercial activities in a relatively smaller urban area occurred since the 1990s was the construction of pedestrian commercial streets in the centres of some large Chinese cities, such as Jiefangbei in Chongqing, Central Street in Harbin, and Nanjing Road in Shanghai. Each of them have an over 1000-metre length but with dense shopping malls built along the pedestrian street (for example, 25 large scale shopping malls whose retail areas range from 12 to 78 thousand square metres have been squeezed in the approximately 1,300 metres long pedestrian commercial street of Jiefangbei, Chongqing since the late 1990s[①]).

As a result, by the end of the 1990s, massive commercial developments on large scale land parcels that can (1) concentrate commercial activities in the city and fasten land use rights transactions for the local state, (2) provide wide ranges of facilities and services for both material consumption of goods and immaterial consumption for experience and images for the consumers, and (3) accommodate and pin down expanding investments and deliver greater profits and higher consumer satisfaction for capital investors had become a common demand for the developer, the public and the local state.

3.6 The Emergence of a New Kind of Public Space in 2001

As the stage has been well set by the end of the 1990s, it is not surprising that pseudo-public spaces begin to emerge in mainland China since then. In July 1997, Yutian Cai, the director of the Shanghai Municipal Housing and Land Management Bureau, represented the bureau signed a contract for the transfer of the land use rights of Lot 108, an urban land with a site area of 5,928 square metres in the city centre to a Hong Kong based real estate developer, Shui On Group, for forty years at a price of 3,627,936 US dollars. Together with Lot 109, a piece of land immediately to the north of Lot 108, sized about 20,000 square metres, and whose use rights had been transferred to the developer earlier, Shui On Group had acquired the use rights of over 25,000 square metres urban land as a whole to conduct commercial development in the city centre. The developer's vision for the

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[①] This information draws on the author's site survey in Jiefangbei, Chongqing and interviews with local architects.

commercial development on this land was no longer like what Chinese people usually saw in the 1980s when shopping spaces were mainly concentrated within free-standing buildings and separated and isolated from surrounding urban public realm, because in the developers' view they were still merely places to sell products. Instead, commercial development of this project was considered an opportunity to 'build a physical platform for various urban activities in the city centre and to offer an attractive gathering place for both local and foreign visitors, in order to help Shanghai build a new financial and commercial centre of the world', as Vincent Lo, the chairman of Shui On Group, announced in the 10th Shanghai International Business Leaders' Advisory Council (IBLAC)[①] in 1998. Probably, it was for this reason, the developer named this project 'Xintiandi' which in Chinese means 'the new horizon'.

The architectural design work of this project began in 1998. Benjamin Wood, an American trained in Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was commissioned as the architect of the Xintiandi project. Unsurprisingly, the architect's design concept for the Xintiandi project agreed with the developer's vision for the urban space on this land. 'My goal is', as Wood himself once said, 'making living areas, where people can eat, drink and enjoy themselves' (Shao 2013, p.100). And 'the real point (of the Xintiandi project) is not the architecture of the place, but the new life the place attracts', as he mentioned in another occasion (Iovine 2006).

Guided by the vision which shared by both the developer and the architect, the construction of Xintiandi started in 1999 and completed two years later. When Xintiandi (the north block) was first opened to the public in June 2001, visitors found the urban spaces produced in this project were quite different from what they had usually seen before in China. There were not merely free-standing shopping buildings stood on the land. Instead, publicly accessible and street-like open spaces which merged with surrounding urban public realm were provided in this project (see Fig 3.16). Xintiandi, as Benjamin Wood, the architect, described in an interview:

[①] See: http://iblac.gov.cn/web/login (in English) or http://sh.eastday.com/kpzhb/szzxh/ (in Chinese) (accessed 21 June 2015)

created a public space that belongs to the public, of which they can take ownership of. It is not a plaza, where you have an army parade, it is not a plaza where politicians speak, it is a public space dedicated to the enjoyment of life (Muynck 2006).

Fig 3.16 Overview of Xintiandi

Jurisdiction of the property owner (or developer)
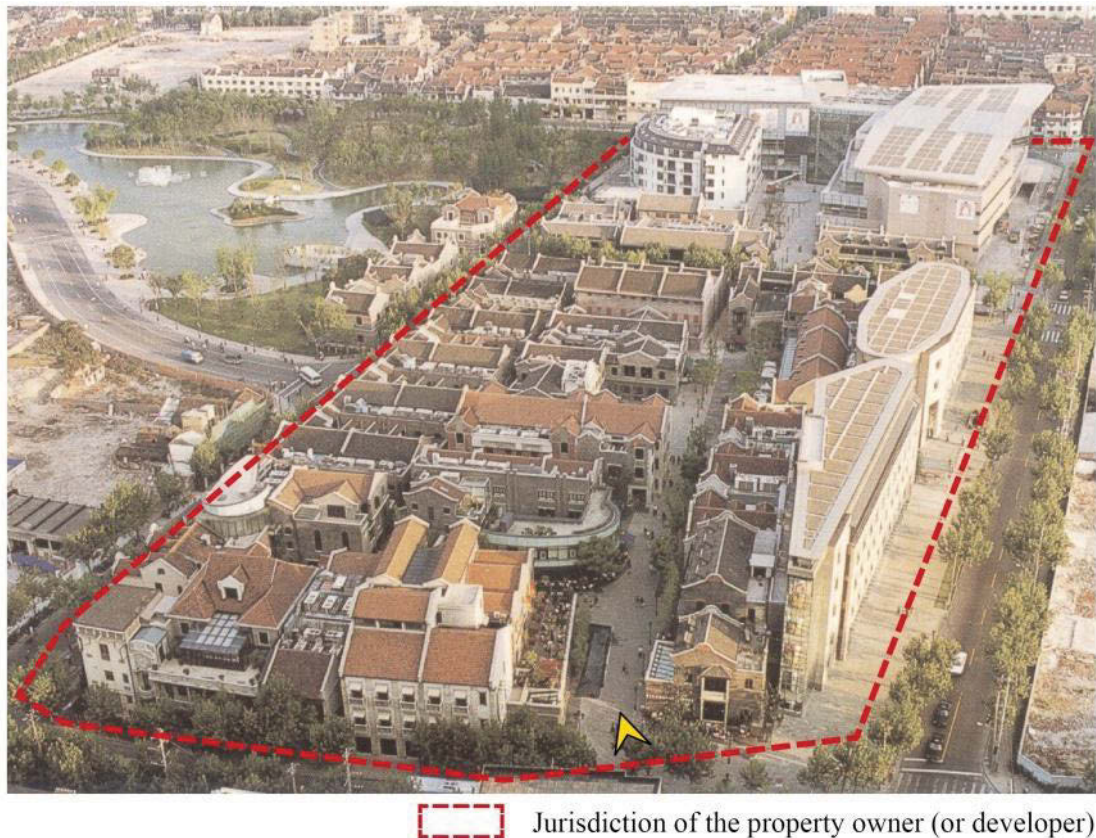
Source: based on Luo (2002)

Although it is hard to say whether Xintiandi is the very first case that provides public space-like open space in a commercial development in China, there is little doubt, as all Chinese architects I interviewed expressed, that Xintiandi is the first case of this kind in China that drew unprecedented attentions of both the professionals and the general public because of its new way to merge life space and business space and blur the boundaries between the urban public realm and private property. According to Benjamin Wood, the architect of Xintiandi, this place:

was the first one I know of in China. It was the first project in China where

people can feel romantic about a place, … It gave them a sense of freedom about making choices, not political choices, but life style choices (Muynck 2006).

This particular space, as revealed by interviews with Chinese architects, has been widely regarded as the prototype of pseudo-public spaces in China. There are a large number of commercial complexes and shopping malls completed after 2001 have learnt from Xintiandi in one way or another. When reviewing China's urbanisation process in the recent 15 years (from 1998 to 2013), *New Weekly* (2013), one of the most influential magazines in China, summaries eight most remarkable features of this process. One of them is, as the magazine wrote, that 'Every city in China has a 'Xintiandi', all Chinese cities are learning from Shanghai.' The far-reaching impacts of Xintiandi have also been noticed by some Western commentators. Iovine (2006), a journalist form *The New York Times* commented: 'Now there are dozens of copycats. But it is not so much the number that's so influential but that Wood (the architect of Xintiandi) has changed the way people with money think about public spaces'. In this sense, the opening of Xintiandi in 2001 marked the emergence of a new kind of public space, pseudo-public space, in China.

3.7 Why Pseudo-Public Spaces have Expanded Rapidly After 2001

After its emergence in 2001, pseudo-public spaces have been expanding rapidly all around China. According to a global survey, the overall floor area of shopping malls opened in 2014 was 11.4 million square metres among which 5.7 million were in China. That is to say, China, one single country alone, has half of the shopping mall opened in the world in 2014 (*XinhuaNet* 2015). Meanwhile, according to Knight Frank (2014b), a global real estate consultancy, the overall floor area of shopping complexes built in Chinese major cities in 2013 was 280 million square metres. By the end of 2014, with an annual growth of 17.8 per cent, this figure increased to 330 million. When counted according to quantity, we can see an even higher growth speed of shopping malls and complexes in Chinese major cities. In 2013, the number of shopping malls and complexes in Chinese major cities was 711. It increased to 885 in 2014, which was a 24.5 per cent annual growth (Knight Frank 2014b).

Although the unprecedentedly rapid growth of shopping malls began to slow down since 2014 when China's decades-long phenomenal annual GDP growth slipped from 10 per cent to around 7 per cent (see Fig 3.17), China is still the fastest growing shopping mall and commercial complex market in the world. In 2015, the number of shopping malls and complexes in China reached 1,000. It is estimated that there will be over 1,200 shopping malls and complexes in Chinese major cities by 2018 (*Economic Information Daily* 2015). That is to say, pseudo-public spaces are still growing at a fast speed of over 6.0 per cent annually in recent years.

Fig 3.17 The growth of shopping malls and complexes in Chinese major cities, 2013-2018
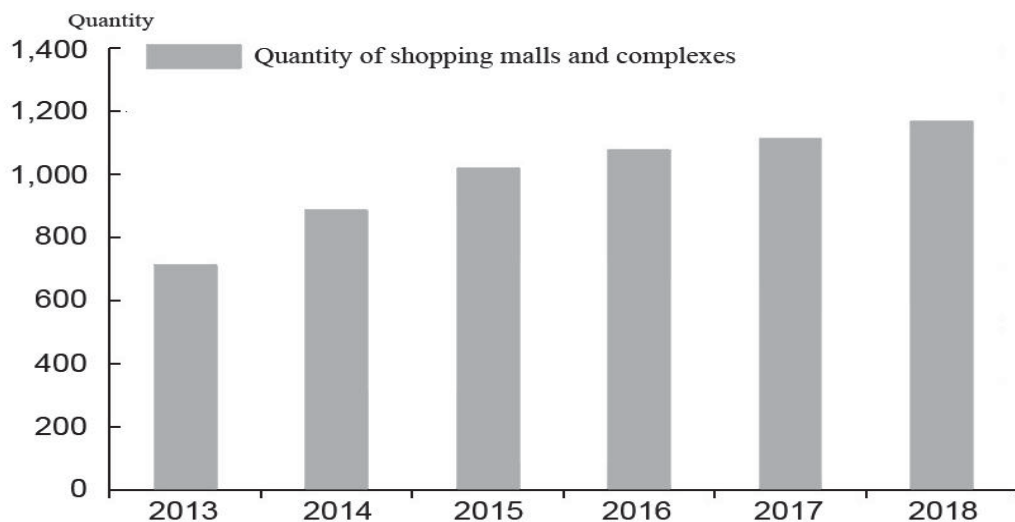
Source: Based on Knight Frank (2014b)

What happens along with the fast growth of shopping malls is the rapid expansion of pseudo-public spaces in China. Now, pseudo-public spaces can be seen almost everywhere you turn in Chinese major cities. Then, a meaningful question to ask here is: why pseudo-public space this new kind of urban space can expand so rapidly after its emergence in China? Following Zukin (2010), this section analyses the driving forces behind the expansion of pseudo-public spaces by looking into the roles the three key actors that shape the city -namely capital investors, the state and consumers- play in this process.

3.7.1 Capital Investors: with Adequate Money to Invest

Prior to 2001, foreign capital investments in China were still largely under the watchful eyes of the CCP and were compelled to enter the country under strict guidelines and limited to certain sectors (Panitchpakdi & Clifford 2002). In November 2001, after 15 years arduous negotiation, the World Trade Organization (WTO) approved China's accession. According to Gertler (2004), the WTO sets five basic principles for its members, namely (1) non-discrimination; (2) market opening; (3) transparency and predictability; (4) undistorted trade; and (5) preferential treatment for developing countries. To join the WTO, China agrees to compromise with the neoliberal rules of international trade and make changes to policy in order to fit itself within the context of the five fundamental principles set up by the organization. To this end, China, after the accession, progressively and substantially opens up its market to foreign competition by not merely relaxing the restrictions on foreign investors, but also offering them unprecedented access to a wide range of previously closed industries and geographic regions. Barriers to foreign goods and services shrink and the door for foreign investment opens more widely than ever before. As a result, the accession to the WTO in 2001 significantly accelerates China's transition from a command economy to a market economy. It not only pushes China further toward opening its domestic market to outside world, but also significantly pushes forward the country's neoliberal reform process (Martin 2004). The accession to WTO enhances the attractiveness of China's market and gives foreign investors greater confidence in the Chinese market, which lead to China as a nation becomes entangled in a global capitalist network and soon after the accession becomes the largest market of any WTO member (Gertler 2004).

China's accession to WTO has brought significant impacts on Chinese cities which turn out to be important drivers of the rapid growth of pseudo-public spaces in the country. On the one hand, because of an unprecedentedly dramatic fall of average tariff after the accession and the plenty of opportunities provided for foreign investors to invest almost all areas in China, the increase of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows into China begin to accelerate noticeably since 2001 (see Fig 3.18). Not long after the accession, by the early-2000s, over 40 per cent of China's GDP was accounted for by FDI. The considerable

growth of FDI inflows provide the capital needed for the country's modernization efforts. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the WTO agreements also make China substantially open its service market to the outside world. A crucial result of opening up China's service market is the reduction and elimination of restrictions on service activities China have made after joining the WTO. The WTO classifies service activities into 12 general sectors and 154 subsectors. According to the WTO agreement, as shown in Table 3.4, China made commitments to open 9 general sectors, 5 of them were related to producer services, and 88 of the 154 subsectors. Relaxing restrictions on these activities allow greater market access to foreign service-providers over a period of 3-6 years. Taking telecommunications service for example, before the accession, foreign telecommunications service providers were strictly restricted from China's market. But 6 years after the accession, foreign providers are now allowed to offer a broad array of telecommunications services with no geographic restrictions, through joint ventures with Chinese partners.

Fig 3.18 Actual FDI inflows in China, 1997-2014 (US$ 100 million)
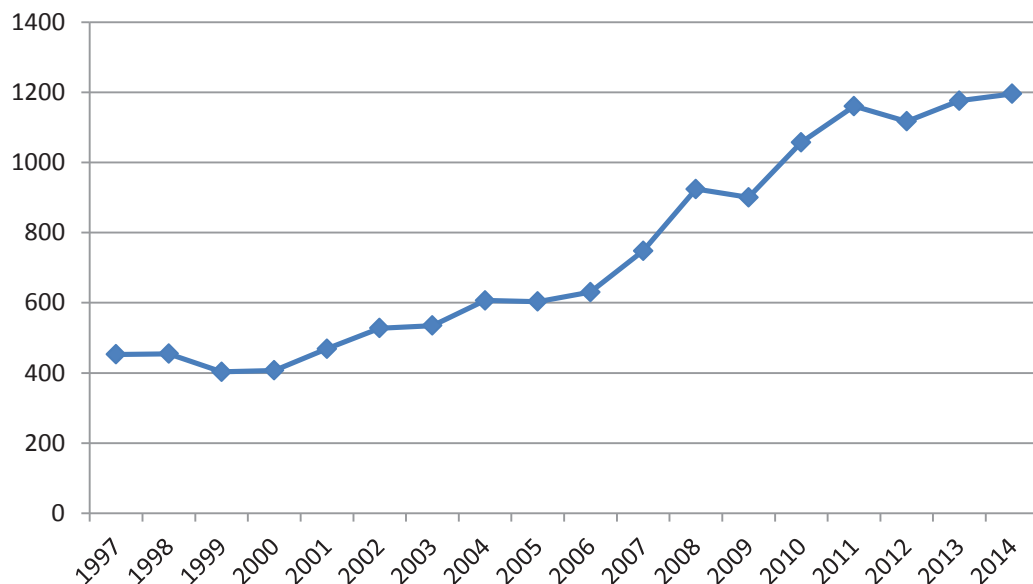
Source: based on data released in the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China

Table 3.4 Number of WTO service sectors where China made commitments

General WTO service sector	Number of subsectors included in WTO general sector	Number of subsectors included in China's commitments
Business	46	26
Communication	24	17
Construction	5	5
Distribution	5	5
Education	5	5
Environmental	4	4
Financial	17	13
Health-related and social	4	0
Tourism and travel-related	4	2
Recreation, cultural, and sporting	5	0
Transport	35	11
Other	Number of subsectors not specified	No commitments in this sector
Total	**154**	**88**

Source: United States General Accounting Office (2002, p.25)

The acceleceration of FDI growth and the reduction and elimination of restrictions on services activities combine had resutled in considerable part of the increased FDI flows went to the service market. Mounting foreign and domestic investments poured into the service market had led to dramatic expansion of the service sector in China after accession to the WTO. With a 47 per cent increase of the number of people employed in the service sector, the period between 2001 and 2013 saw a over 6 times soar of the value-added of service sector[1] (see Fig 3.19). In 2000, the service sector only acount for 39.8 per cent of China's GDP. In 2013, this figure reached 47 per cent. While the contribution of the service sector to the contury's employment rose from 24.8 per cent in 1995 to 38.5 per cent in 2013. Since 2011, acturally utilized foreign investment in the service sector surpassed that in the industrial sector. Moreover, in 2012, actually utilized foreign investment in producer services particularly reached 38.9 billion US dollars, which made up 78 per cent of that in total services (Trade and External Economic Statistics Division of National Bureau of Statistics 2013). A crucial result of the dramatic expansion of the service sector is it has

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[1] 'Value-added of service sector' refers to the final results of service production in monetary terms. (Details see: http://data.stats.gov.cn/english/easyquery.htm?cn=C01)

traggered huge urban land demand for commercial uses (Yeh, Yang & Wang 2015).

Fig 3.19 Value-added of service sector in China, 1995-2013 (100 million yuan)
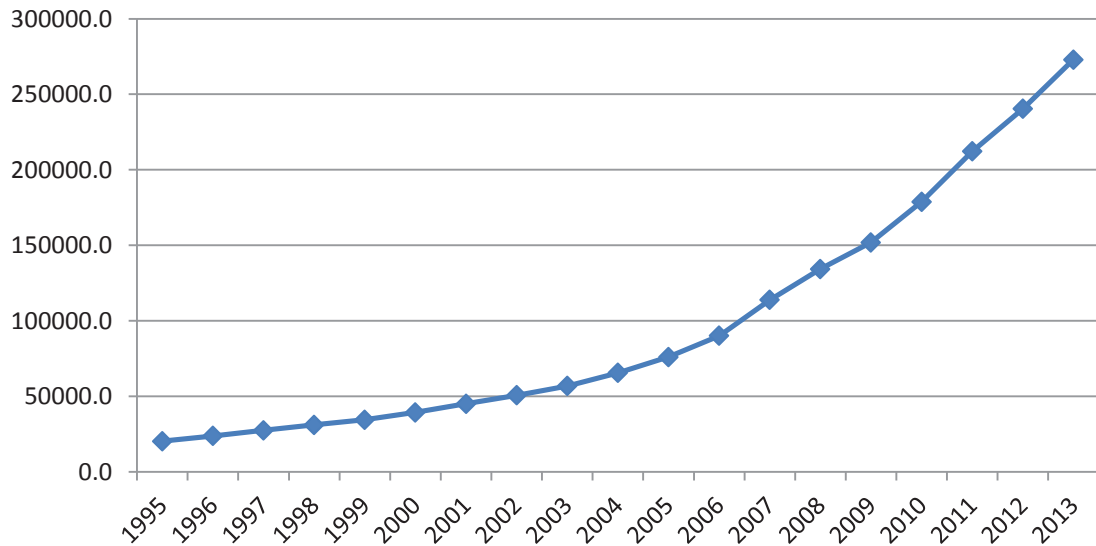
Source: based on data released in the online database of the National Bureau of Statistics of China

Meanwhile, in the first decade of the new century, Chinsee urbanisation also received a huge amount of investmetns from domestic sources. In 2008, after the outbreak of the global financial cirsis, Chinese central state announced a stimulus package of 4 trillion Yuan to jump start a slowing economy and shield the domestic economy from the cirsis. A huge part of this stimulus program was absorbed by the real estate market which has long served as an engine of growth for China's domesitc economy (Minzner 2015; Pan et al. 2017). The mounting capital investments from foreign and domestic sources colaboratively result in expanding demand for commerical land. As can be seen from the trends introduced at the beginning of this section, capital investors' demand for coomerical land has been met to a large extent, because the recent two decades or so have seen an unprecented growth of shopping malls and commercial comlexes in Chinese cities. To understand why capital investors' expanding demand for commerical land can be met, the role that the local state, which has become the the *de facto* landlord in China since the early 2000s, plays in this process should not be ignored.

3.7.2 The State: Strong Desire to Lease out Commercial Land

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the reform on urban land market in China had not yet been completed. The reform in the 1990s did not end the free central allocation of urban land. Although state-owned work-units no longer needed to allocate housing for their workers, they were still able to get use rights of urban land through central allocation. As a result, a 'dual-track' land supply system was established in China. In this system, market supply coexisted with state allocation, namely urban land use rights were assigned in two ways at the same time: allocation for 'plan track' and conveyance for 'market track' (Hsing 2006). Because the conveyance price of urban land use rights was way higher than the allocation price, and state-owned work-units were not prohibited to transfer their land use rights obtained through allocation to commercial developers, the 'dual-track' land system created huge profitable asymmetry between these two tracks. This problematic 'dual-track' land system caused uncontrolled and unlawful urban land use rights transaction through 'under-table' negotiation and black market in the late 1990s, which led to a highly fragmented process of urban land development (Xu, Yeh & Wu 2009). This problem, as a result, became a crucial task the CCP needed to solve at the outset of the new millennium.

In response to the problems caused by the 'dual-track' land supply system, the state had radically rearticulated the institutional configuration since 2001 to develop the market institution more aggressively. In 2001, the *Directory of Allocated Land* was announced in Beijing to abolish administrative urban land allocation to commercial uses. In 2002, the Ministry of Land and Resources (MLR) issued Decree No.11, namely the *Regulation Governing the Granting of Use Rights in State-Owned Land by Tender, Auction and Quotation*, in which all urban lands for businesses uses including commerce, tourism, entertainment and commodity housing were required to be transferred publicly through either tender, auction or quotation after 1 July 2002. Meanwhile, Articles 5 and 6 of this decree stipulated that the land administration departments under the people's governments at the municipal and county levels shall draw up land use rights transfer plans which required to be submitted for approval by the local governments at the same levels. In 2004, the MLR issued Decree No. 71 which set 31 August 2004 as the deadline for all cities in

China to ban negotiated conveyances for commercial developments. Furthermore, later in 2004 the State Council issued the *Notice on Deepening Reform and Strengthening Land Administration* which was widely seen as the strictest land policy to reiterate the order contained in Decree No. 11 and 71.

The implementation of the above regulations on the one hand bans land transactions by negotiation which is the major way state-owned work units transfer the use rights of their allocated land, and on the other hand strengthens local governments' sole power of control on urban land use rights transactions in the formal market. Most of the urban land use rights are now transferred though public means, tender, action, and quotation, which are to a large extent under the control of local governments (Xu, Yeh & Wu 2009). As a result, as Hsing (2006) points out, local governments have become the *de facto* 'landlord' in the urban land market of China.

Playing the role of the *de facto* landlord significantly strengthens Chinese local states' ability of increasing local fiscal income through land conveyances. As previously discussed, after the fiscal reform in 1994 Chinese local governments have to find all possible ways to increase local revenue to make up the considerable part of fiscal income which is generated locally but taken away by the central state. To this end, they have, on the one hand, taken actions to mobilize and accumulate capital, and attract investment from a broader range of resources such as bank loans and foreign investments (Lin 2009), and on the other hand made efforts to maximise the profit-producing ability of the resources within their jurisdictions. To make these processes more effective, there has occurred a trend in Chinese major cities -such as Wuhan, Chongqing, Shanghai, Beijing, and Shenzhen- since the early-2000s that local governments begin to operate themselves and their resources as big 'corporates' through maximising revenue, accumulating capital, and seeking investment. Entrepreneurialism of local states has become a widely seen phenomenon in Chinese major cities since the 2000s (Gong 2011a; Gong 2011b; Ma & Ma 2011). During this entrepreneurialism process, local governments, on the one hand, have capitalised all resources under their control, especially land, and, on the other hand, competed with other regional governments in global market to attract investment and profit.

In this sense, China's trajectory is quite different from what institutions of global governance, such as the World Bank, seek to pressure it to follow. While the World Bank in its various publications and policy advice tries to direct countries towards the privatisation and individuation of its landed resources (see, for example, World Bank 2003). China takes a rather different path.

Inspired by Henry George and his strong influences on Sun Yat-Sen's vision for urban development in China (Cui 2011; Lin 1974), local governments realise that leasing out the use rights of urban land to real estate developers is one of the most effective ways to achieve both of the above tasks because, unlike most of other local resources, land is spatially fixed and under the firm control of local authorities, while local resources such as labour force although a large number are available to be expropriated and sold to investors to mobilise capital from external sources but, as Lin (2009) points out, since the regional economy of China is increasingly exposed to global market after the 'opening-up' and accession to WTO, in addition to the time-space compression and increased mobility in both capital and labour in the current era, labour like capital becomes highly mobile. It can easily move to other regions. In this sense, capitalisation on those movable resources usually has great uncertainty for local development. Meanwhile, because of the rapid urbanisation in recent decades, there are more than 20 million people move to cities every year in China[①]. This leads to great demand for housing and supporting facilities and services in Chinese cities. This demand makes real estate one of the most profitable investments in China. As a result, offering an access to Chinese urban land which is the basis for real estate development has become a very effective way to attempt external investors in the global market. Last but not least, according to the Budget Law, revenues from urban land transactions are not included in the 'taxable budgetary categories', which means local governments are able to retain almost all the land sale revenue generated locally, and not obligated to share it with the central state (Wu 2015).

Therefore, urban land becomes an important revenue generating resource for Chinese local states since the mid-1990s. However, during the 1990s, the income generated from

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[①] See: http://money.163.com/13/0519/21/8V94TNES00252G50.html (accessed 5 April, 2015)

land conveyances still only made up a very small part of local states' total budgetary revenue. Since the early-2000s, after local states obtained the sole power of control on urban land use rights transactions in the formal land market and beginning to operate themselves and their resources as big 'corporates', the profitability of urban land began to improve dramatically.

This process can be exemplified by the case of Chongqing. Urban land, in the 1990s, was not a major source for the city's local revenue generation. In 1998 and 1999, for example, land use rights conveyance revenue only respectively accounted for 1.37 per cent and 1.62 per cent of the total annual budgetary revenue of Chongqing (Chongqing Municipal Statistics Bureau 1999, 2000). However, in 2002, Chongqing municipal government, to maximise the profitability of its land resource, founded a 'land reserving' centre which is responsible for requisitioning of rural land, converting them into urban construction land, and reserving their use rights which can be leased out to real estate developers for construction. On this basis, Chongqing municipal government established Chongqing Real Estate Group in 2003 and eight more corporates in following years. Like the 'land reserving' centre, those local government-owned and solely funded corporates, on behalf of the municipal government, all play an important role in converting rural land, reserving the use rights of those land, and leasing them out to real estate developers.

All those corporates together have reserved about 266.8 million square metres urban land. Leasing out the use rights of those parcels of land have become one of the most important source of local revenue for Chongqing government. In 2001, the annual land conveyance revenue of Chongqing was only 0.2 billion Yuan. One year later, according to *The Time Weekly* (2013), when the 'land reserving' centre was established, 1.1 billion Yuan revenue was made from land, this number soared 80 times in 2012 reached 89.75 billion Yuan. By 2013, half of the use rights of the land reserved were leased to real estate developers generating about 400 billion Yuan (*The Time Weekly* 2013). Those earnings were mainly used to fund social equity programs (for example, in 2009 alone, Chongqing spent 68.2 billion Yuan for people's livelihood such as building 40 million square metres public rental housing) and infrastructural construction (during 2006 and 2011, Chongqing, on

average, invested over 30 billion Yuan in infrastructural construction every year) in the city (Huang 2011).

A result of the growing revenues from land source is the significant increase of the ratio of land income to total local revenue. In 2000, land revenue only contributed 4.02 per cent of the total budgetary revenue of Chongqing. In 2012, this figure jumped dramatically to 69.70 per cent (see Table 3.5). Chongqing's case is not unique. As can be seen from Table 3.5, land revenue begins to take a very large part of the total budgetary revenue of almost all Chinese local governments at provincial level since the beginning of the twenty-first century. As a result, urban land has already become the most important source of revenue for Chinese local governments since the early-2000s.

Table 3.5 Ratio of land revenue (based on transaction price[1]) to total budgetary revenue of local governments at provincial level[2] (%)

Province	Year							
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007	2012
Total China	**9.30**	**16.61**	**28.38**	**55.04**	**42.16**	**39.53**	**51.83**	**45.91**
Beijing	20.74	26.37	25.42	55.44	84.80	10.77	25.13	19.80
Tianjin	5.83	10.52	15.53	102.44	170.47	38.71	69.55	30.06
Hebei	8.58	21.07	40.26	45.13	47.08	32.18	48.78	54.41
Shanxi	2.54	4.03	17.91	24.70	18.66	13.30	17.88	28.26
Inner Mongolia	2.45	4.87	8.83	9.53	13.79	18.61	33.15	35.74
Liaoning	7.17	19.22	25.98	40.62	51.63	39.97	65.41	57.19
Jilin	5.73	11.44	14.69	22.20	24.78	28.24	38.50	43.09
Heilongjiang	2.42	2.33	6.51	15.54	16.02	13.60	21.62	30.18
Shanghai	7.18	13.67	18.09	33.20	44.49	27.50	18.34	16.07
Jiangsu	18.24	37.76	70.62	120.19	68.79	76.16	67.13	66.36
Zhejiang	34.36	48.57	81.55	165.68	108.48	75.60	101.82	58.98
Anhui	5.84	13.89	33.75	79.32	83.89	65.16	90.96	70.42
Fujian	13.99	15.78	36.50	54.66	61.26	55.52	101.78	58.17
Jiangxi	3.39	18.16	42.69	52.29	61.76	59.69	48.46	56.14
Shandong	4.93	6.57	29.22	56.07	54.19	46.46	50.58	64.02
Henan	5.18	6.88	12.07	22.91	28.30	23.83	27.71	53.10

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[1] Transaction prices are usually higher than net revenues, but the total budgetary revenues of local governments in this table are calculated based on their net revenues. That is why some ratios in this table are higher than 100 per cent.

[2] Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, and Tianjin are four 'municipalities directly under the central government'. These four cities have the same rank as provinces, so, although they are cities, their local governments are classified as at provincial level in this table.

Hubei	0.35	9.09	20.61	54.75	63.27	43.74	63.38	53.88
Hunan	5.45	15.16	37.81	44.17	57.78	40.02	52.97	43.92
Guangdong	7.16	12.53	11.17	16.50	16.85	19.55	40.64	24.36
Guangxi	6.00	9.26	16.51	32.54	54.76	29.89	50.56	43.28
Hainan	0.52	17.30	15.29	14.63	15.53	41.94	51.34	51.34
Chongqing	4.02	9.43	24.16	55.38	76.91	62.77	81.08	69.70
Sichuan	23.21	11.99	22.79	76.18	93.50	82.19	99.20	56.25
Guizhou	6.63	7.90	10.16	16.34	19.10	18.63	28.54	54.14
Yunnan	4.59	5.12	7.15	30.21	28.60	22.84	21.41	56.63
Tibet	0.94	0.86	7.78	8.72	19.09	38.36	18.69	6.81
Shanxi	4.39	10.03	10.66	24.46	52.73	24.33	42.40	33.69
Gansu	2.19	3.07	9.00	14.14	14.75	15.35	19.49	24.15
Qinghai	4.27	5.43	12.24	7.43	8.29	10.02	2.89	23.37
Ningxia	10.19	3.17	7.27	53.88	53.31	28.84	63.70	35.52
Xinjiang	4.42	7.01	9.13	19.62	18.53	11.90	21.44	25.71

Source: based on Ministry of Land and Resources of China (2001-2006, 2008, 2013); National Bureau of Statistics of China (2008, 2013); and Ding & Lichtenberg (2011)

Since land revenue plays such a crucial role in the local states' budgetary income, it is not surprising that promoting land conveyance is not merely a desire of capital investors, but also a major task for Chinese local states. As a result, in 2001, land revenue in China reached 129,589 million Yuan which was double of that in 2000. Since then, as shown in Table 3.6, land conveyance in China begins to grow even more remarkably. The numbers of rural land in China converted into urban land for construction and then leased out to real estate developers increase much faster since the beginning of the new century.

Table 3.6 Land conveyance in China between 1998 and 2012: transaction number, area (ha) and revenue (million Yuan)

Year	Total number	Area	Revenue
1998	130.417	62,058	49,956.1
1999	99,017	45,391	51,433.0
2000	118,846	48,633	59,558.5
2001	170,157	90,394	129,589.0
2002	242,763	124,230	241,679.3
2003	207,387	193,604	542,131.1
2004	184,850	181,510	641,217.6
2005	162,112	165,586	588,381.7
2006	186,667	233,017	807,764.5

2007	160,404	234,960	1,221,672.1
2008	123,358	165,859	1,025,979.9
2009	122,498	220,813	1,717,952.6
2010	141,941	293,717	2,747,446.9
2011	151,249	335,085	3,212,608.5
2012	138,588	332,432	2,804,228.3

Source: based on Ministry of Land and Resources of China (1999-2013)

In this process, in order to attract industrial or manufacturing investment to create necessary local jobs and promote local industrial growth, industrial land is usually provided to investors at very low or even zero prices (Wu 2015). However, price for commercial and residential land, because of the considerable demand, is usually much higher. Commercial and residential land, as a result, provides a much more secure and stable source of revenue for local states (Yeh, Yang & Wang 2015). Chinese local states, therefore, have strong desire of leasing out commercial land within their jurisdictions to make fiscal revenue. When this desire meets capital investors' expanding demand for commercial land, what Zhang & Wu (2008) call 'growth coalitions' then form in China. These coalitions between local states and capital investors have resulted in the rapid growth of commercial urban land conveyances in recent years. Official data indicates that the urban land supply for commercial uses in China almost doubled in a 5-year period of time from 269 km² in 2007 to 509 km² in 2012 (Ministry of Land and Resources of China 2008, 2013).

The existence of the local state-capital investor 'growth coalitions' helps to explain why commercial spaces such as shopping malls and complexes can expand so rapidly in China since the early 2000s. However, it does not explain why capital investors are willing to provide open spaces for public use within the boundaries of their private properties.

3.7.3 Growing Open Spaces in Shopping Malls and Complexes

China has a sheer size of middle class population and, more importantly, the size of the middle class grows at an unprecedented rate since the mid-1990s (Asian Development Bank 2011). According to Chen & Qin (2014) who classify middle class as those households with per capita daily consumption expenditure between 4 to 20 US dollars, between 1995 and 2012, the scale of the middle class in China swelled from 17.4 per cent to 54.8 per cent of

the overall population (Chen & Qin 2014). That means, in comparison with those in the 1990s, China now has at least 450 million more middle class people who can spend 1,800 to 9,000 million more US dollars for consumption in the market every day. The expansion of consumers has brought significant impact on Chinese cities.

As Zukin (2010) reminds us, in capitalist urbanisation, consumers –their tastes, to be more specific- are a key actor that shapes the city. In China, the 2000s and early 2010s saw a crucial shift of consumers' tastes for where they prefer to do their shopping (McKinsey & Company 2016). Traditionally, department stores were the places where Chinese people most often go for shopping. However, this tradition began to change since March 1998 when the first on-line sale was made in China (Kim & Leung 2006). In the first year of China's e-commerce era, 8 million US dollars were generated from on-line sales in the country. This figure increased 4 times in 1999 reaching 40 million US dollars. One year later, in 2000, the total value of consumers' on-line purchasing in China rose to 38.6 million US dollars (Li & Buhalis 2006). By 2012, China already had more than 200 million online shoppers who spent over 200 billion US dollars, ten times as much as in 2008 (*The Economist* 2013). While China's internet retail is growing at a phenomenal speed, the overall growth of the country's retail market is slowing down (Bain & Company 2014). The share of online sales in the total retail sales of China, as a result, grew significantly in the 2000s and 2010s. In 2006, only 0.3 per cent of China's total retail sales were made online. This figure, however, increased to 12.8 per cent in 2014, an over 41 times growth in only 8 years (Switzerland Global Enterprise 2014).

Due to the rise of internet retail, traditional retailers in China are under increasingly high pressure in competing with online retailers. In this competition, traditional retailers' biggest advantage is they can provide customers with elaborately designed and well maintained physical shopping environments in which people can not merely find and buy products they need, but, more importantly, also meet, get together, hang out and conduct other urban social life. Those shopping environments are becoming increasingly important in modern urban life, but web-based retailers cannot offer them to their customers. As a result, shopping malls' 'social role' is becoming increasingly prominent in recent years in

China (CBRE 2016b).

To compete with online retailers, commercial developers increasingly require the physical design of a shopping space values consumers' shopping experience and able to support consumers' 'non-consumption leisure activities' (interview #1). As a recent official report issued by the Ministry of Commerce of China (2016, p.1) points out, Chinese shopping mall developments, in recent years, are laying 'more and more emphasis on customer services and shopping experience'. Clearly, having open spaces with facilities for public uses is essential for a shopping space design to achieve these requirements. Therefore, enclosed free-standing shopping spaces without open spaces connecting with the urban public realm are increasingly seen as lacking vitality to attract consumers by the developers. As a result, as a Chinese architect explained to me:

> unless the construction land is not big enough or the urban planning authorities do not permit to, shopping malls and commercial complexes built in China in the recent years always contain publicly accessible open spaces. Those open spaces are increasingly used as venues for holding public events, such as art exhibitions, and their spatial forms are increasingly designed to support and facilitate those events and mix them with shopping activities. This is an obvious trend in China, because, in an era when people can buy everything they want online at much cheaper prices, those activities and shopping experience are now the most important reasons why people still go to shopping malls (interview #1).

The effectiveness of traditional retailers' strategy is well exemplified by 'K11' which was opened in 2013 in Shanghai. This 6-floor shopping complex provides 'one of the best well-organized open spaces to the city and is one of the most successful cases in China that attracts consumers through taking advantage of the open space it provides to the city' as the Chinese architect I interviewed described. K11 provides two open spaces to the city. One enclosed courtyard at the ground floor, and an urban plaza at the sixth floor, namely the roof of its shopping spaces. Since the shopping mall opened to the public, a series of art exhibitions and cultural activities were held in these two open spaces and the indoor spaces of the shopping mall. During March to June 2014, an exhibition of the art works of Claude Monet, a founder of French Impressionist painting, was held in K11. During the 3-month

period, according to *Businessweek/China* (2015), more than 400 thousand people visited this shopping mall, which resulted in a 20 per cent increase of its sales turnover.

What K11 did is not unique. During my fieldwork in Chinese cities, I often saw art galleries were set up and cultural activities were held in the open spaces provided in shopping malls or commercial complexes. During December 2014 and March 2015, to take another example, an art event, the 10th Shanghai Biennale, was held in Xintiandi. Shanghai Biennale is an international biennale of contemporary art. This year (2015), the organiser of this art event decided to move part of its exhibition out of the art gallery and directly display them in the urban space to set up a so-called *city pavilion* themed 'Urban Work & Shop' which, according to the organiser: Shanghai Contemporary Art Museum's explanation[1], broke the word 'workshop' into 'work' and 'shop' to indicate 'city is essentially equal to production pulse consumption'. Xintiandi, because of 'its representativeness in both culture and commerce', was selected as one of the urban areas to display the artworks[2]. People went to Xintiandi during the art event could collect a visitor guide brochure at every entrance of the shopping complex showing where the artworks were located in the open space provided in Xintiandi (see Fig 3.20).

Meanwhile, there are other forces that encourage developers to provide open spaces in their commercial developments. On the one hand, urban land has become an increasingly scarce resource in China in the recent decade or so, because of the 'city building fever' caused by the local state's enthusiasm for attracting investments over the past two decades (*People's Daily Online* 2015). According to the *Second National Land Survey* conducted by the Ministry of Land and Resource of China, for example, it is estimated that by 2020 there will be no room for Shanghai to expand its urban area for construction, and by the same year Beijing and Tianjin will respectively have only 12.4 and 2 thousand hectares of land left that can be used for urban construction (*China Business Journal* 2016). Because of the scarcity of urban land, providing publicly owned and managed urban spaces that are purely for public use becomes an increasingly difficult task for the government.

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[1] See: http://www.powerstationofart.com/en/ (accessed 12 February 2015)
[2] See: http://www.powerstationofart.com/en/ (accessed 12 February 2015)

Fig. 3.20 Visitor guide brochure of the *City Pavilion*, the 10th Shanghai Biennale (It shows art works displayed in Xintiandi (right) and where those art works can be found in this pseudo-public space (left)).

Source: collected during my fieldwork in Shanghai, 2015

On the other hand, as Yang & Xu (2009) and Zhang & Yu (2010) have noticed, because usually urban public spaces cannot directly generate fiscal revenue for the local states but do directly cost a large sum of the local states' fiscal budget to build and maintain them. Currently, although the Chinese municipal governments are providing stable funds for the maintenance of urban public space, such as parks and squares, most of those government funds usually only cover the cost of natural wear and tear of park facilities. However, according to the security office of a public park in Yichang city, only in the first 10 months of 2014 and in this single park alone, there were as many as 2,797 cases of 'inappropriate uses' which caused unexpected damage to the public facilities had been recorded. That is to say, in the daily maintenance of those urban public spaces, there are in fact a considerable number of cost cannot be actually covered by the government maintenance funds (*Sanxia Economic Daily* 2014). This situation has not only resulted in

poorly maintained public spaces, but also increase Chinese local authorities' financial burdens for providing and maintaining high quality urban public spaces.

Due to the scarcity of urban land and the increasing financial burden of building and maintaining high quality urban public spaces, there is a trend in Chinese large cities in the recent decade or so that the provision and management of open spaces in Chinese cities are increasingly depended on the private sector (Yang 2016). Many Chinese major cities have made urban planning policies and architectural design codes to encourage private commercial developers to provide open spaces for public use in their commercial developments. Floor area bonus is the most often seen reward Chinese cities give to private developers who provide open spaces to the city in their commercial developments. Normally, if the developer provides one unit open space that, subject to different local requirements and standards, can be effectively used for public uses, then she or he will be allowed to build 1 to 3 more units of floor area of residential or commercial space that can be sold for money as a reward. In Shanghai, for example, the developer provide each square metre open space in their real estate projects that can be effectively used for public use will be rewarded 1 more square metre floor area when the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of the project is less than 2.0; 1.5 more square metres when the FAR is between 2 and 4; 2 more square metres when the FAR is between 4 and 6; and 2.5 more square metres when the FAR is over 6 (Shanghai Municipal Government 2003). In Cities in Jiangsu province, to take another example, 1.5 more square metres will be rewarded to each square metre open space developers provide for public use in their real estate developments when the project's FAR is less than 2; 2 more square metres when the FAR is between 2 and 4; 2.5 more square metres when the FAR is between 4 and 6; and 3 more square metres when the FAR is over 6 (Jiangsu Provincial Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development 2004). Meanwhile, in some other Chinese cities, such as Hangzhou, developers who provide open space for public use are not only rewarded an 'appropriate' floor area bonus, but also exempt from relevant taxes and fees, such as land-transferring fee, for the open space they provide (Hangzhou Urban Planning Bureau 2008). By allowing more floor space to be built for sale, providing open spaces for public use in commercial projects becomes profitable. It,

therefore, becomes a thing commercial developers are willing to do.

As a result of the trends discussed above, more and more open spaces now can be found in shopping malls and complexes built in China in the recent decade or so. Those urban spaces are playing an increasingly important role in Chinese people's daily urban life. They, therefore, become the key places where the public, capital investors and the state meet in Chinese cities. However, whether, or to what extent, those urban spaces are private or public? How do the conflicts and tensions in those urban spaces affect the publicness of Chinese cities? Whether, or in what way, they are different from publicly owned and managed public spaces such as parks and public squares? Answers to these important questions have not been made clear. The next chapter explores answers to these questions.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the rise of pseudo-public spaces in the particular context of mainland China. It ought to answer: how did pseudo-public spaces emerge in China? And why this particular kind of urban space can expand rapidly in the country? Through looking into the empirical evidence from China, the chapter also tries to contribute to the ongoing debates in property rights research by addressing the fiercely debated question: whether the privatisation of urban space is a natural or conventional process? To answer these questions, this chapter has discussed how Chinese urban space was like in Mao Zedong's era (1949-1979); how Chinese urban space has gradually become highly privatised since the late 1970s; and how this process leads to the emergence and rapid expansion of pseudo-public space in the country.

The chapter has shown that (1) because the state was preoccupied by the communist ideological determination to eliminate private ownership in Mao's era, urban spaces were hardly privatised or commercialised in Maoist China. Instead, they were mainly designed and used for production and political purposes during that period; (2) Chinese urban space began to be privatised since the end of the 1970s, and this process was driven by a series of major institutional fixes and reforms made after the country's turn to neoliberalism. To be specific, the decentralisation and 'opening-up' since 1979 created prerequisite for

privatisation by bringing substantial inflow of capital investments and growing numbers of private investors seeking investment opportunities to China. Soon after that, the privatisation of urban space has been legitimised and regularised during 1988 and 1990 by an amendment to the constitution which separates the ownership and use rights of urban land and the implementation of the *Provisional Regulations on the Granting and Transferring of the Land Use Right over the State-Owned Land in Cities* which makes leasing out urban land to private developers for a certain span of time a lawful way to absorb the substantial inflow of capital. The process of privatising Chinese urban space has accelerated by the establishment of a new 'tax-sharing' system which makes urban land use rights sales the most important source of local fiscal revenue and the local state, thus, begins to vigorously promote urban land transactions. Furthermore, the dissolution of the state-run allocation system of jobs and housing in 1998 significantly boost the privatisation of Chinese urban space, because it creates great demand for housing and commercial facilities in Chinese cities which leads to the boom of real estate market in China. Work-units, as a result, have been gradually replaced by commercial housing and shopping spaces, and Chinese cities began to become 'consumption centres', rather than 'production ones'. Discussions and analyses in this chapter also show that (3) those major institutional changes and reforms have brought significant changes to the desires of and relations between the three main actors that shape cities (the state, capital investors, and the public) in China and to the roles they play in the Chinese urbanism. It is these three actors that have led to the emergence and rapid expansion of pseudo-public spaces in China.

These findings lend some support to the conventional school in property rights research, and lead to the argument that, rather than a spontaneous, market-based process alone, the privatisation of urban space is a conventional process which is driven by a series of institutional arrangements put in place. This chapter shows how pseudo-public spaces emerged in China and why they can expand rapidly in the country. However, what remains unclear is how the rise of this particular kind of urban space, as a mixed form of 'public meaning and private control', affects the publicness of Chinese cities. The next chapter explores answers to this question.

Chapter Four

The Publicness of Pseudo-Public Spaces

Case studies in Shanghai and Chongqing

Performed in the figure of the *flaneur* is that of the detective.

—Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*

4.1 Introduction

Now that the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China has been explained, it is important to also consider the publicness of this emergent urban space. It is a worldwide trend that, in the urban process under capitalism, growing numbers of urban spaces are becoming pseudo-public spaces because of privatisation and commercialisation. This dramatic trend has drawn great scholarly attention. The existing literature is characterised by research which empirically assesses the design, day-to-day manipulation, and everyday use of those privatised and commercialised urban spaces and how they influence the publicness of the city on the ground. But, these studies have been carried out mainly in North America (e.g., Mehta 2014; Németh 2009, 2012; Németh & Schmidt 2007, 2011) and Europe (e.g., Akkar 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; De Magalhães & Freire Trigo 2017; Ekdi & Cıracı 2015; Langstraat & Van Melik 2013; Madanipour 1995; Mantey 2017; Van Melik, Van Aalst & Van Weesep 2007; Varna 2014). Much less research has been conducted in Asia on similar issues (e.g., Cuthbert & McKinnell 1997; Tan & Xue 2014; Xue, Ma & Hui 2012).

In mainland China, research about the privatisation and commercialisation of the urban public realm and discussions about their impacts on the publicness of the city are mainly

built upon researchers' own subjective views and judgements (e.g., Miao 2007; Sun 2006; Xu & Yang 2010a; Yang 2006). In recent years, a small number of Chinese scholars have begun to pay attention to the empirical evaluation of the quality of urban public space, looking at how to identify 'authentic urban public spaces' in cities at a theoretical level (e.g., Chen & Ye 2009). However, as Leiqing Xu, an influential Chinese urban scholar, points out in one of his recent papers, 'in all those studies about the evaluation of the quality of urban public space, the assessment of publicness is very rarely discussed'[1] (Xu & Yan 2016, p.6). Meanwhile, the research objects of the existing work are mainly confined to certain types of space such as urban streets and rail transit station areas (e.g., Xu & Kang 2014; Xu, Liu & Lu 2015). As a result, empirical assessment of the publicness of pseudo-public space, as a particular kind of urban space, in mainland China can hardly be found in the existing body of work.

However, China requires careful analysis. This is because, on the one hand, China is where the largest number of shopping malls/centres exist and are growing at the fastest speed in the world (Knight Frank 2014b). On the other hand, the fast growth of pseudo-public spaces in mainland China is driven by a new form of urbanism under what Harvey (2007, p.120) describes as 'neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics'. This process has impacted Chinese architecture significantly. As Xue (2006, p.viii) points out, recent decades have witnessed 'an astonishing architectural revolution' in China. Indeed, Chinese architecture is moving away 'from being a planned, state-controlled enterprise to being market-led'. This transition results that the political-economy and social-cultural contexts bearing on the design, management and use of pseudo-public spaces in China are manifestly different from those in the West.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, in property rights research there are fierce debates on space and property and how they should be held, whether as commons, as public property, or as private property. Whether 'common property leads to better use of resources' or 'private property is more suitable to a good society and the nature of humans' are key issues central to the debates. In the literature, as Obeng-Odoom (2016a) points out, attitudes

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[1] Original text: '*国内公共空间品质的分析模型中，大多很少涉及公共性的评估*', translated by the author.

towards these issues are highly polarised. One group of scholars, such as Ulrich Duchrow and Franz Hinkelammert, in the 'conventional school', claim property should be owned in common, because it is more consistent with a good society. The other group, made up of scholars such as William Blackstone and Garrett Hardin in the 'natural rights school', 'new property right school' (Obeng-Odoom 2016a), or the Chicago school of property rights (Haila 2016), argues that private property or the enclosure of the commons is a better way to use resources because common property leads to a dissipation of resources.

In this on-going debate, the unresolved questions are: (1) what are the relative degrees of publicness for pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces? (2) What account for these differences? And (3) how do pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of the city? It is these questions that this chapter seeks to answer. In doing so, analyses of fieldwork in two selected major Chinese cities, Chongqing and Shanghai, are presented in this chapter. In the fieldwork, I performed the figure of the *flaneur* to observe, listen, linger, think about, and reflect on how the spaces were designed, managed, and how people were doing their day-to-day businesses in the spaces. This approach was supplemented by conversations with local architects and urban designers and studies on relevant design and planning documents. Data collected were analysed using scoring method based on the index developed in Chapter 2 (see Table 2.5).

The empirical study presented and discussed in this chapter lends some support to the 'conventional school'. The results show that, in selected Chinese cities, the levels of publicness of pseudo-public spaces, as a particular kind of enclosed urban spaces, are noticeably lower than urban public parks and plazas which are owned and managed publicly. So, although it is widely claimed that pseudo-public spaces are able to provide better maintained facilities and urban environments (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998; Zhang & Yu 2010), these resources are mainly provided for certain social groups. For the general public in the society, resources in public spaces are better accessible.

Yet, the evidence is inconsistent with the claim that the public realm is 'ended' because of the rise of pseudo-public spaces (Mitchell 2003; Sorkin 1992; Voyce 2006). Pseudo-public spaces, the evidence suggests, are more complex. In city settings enclosing

the commons and public space is not simply a process that should be criticised. Indeed, in the urban process driven by capitalism, pseudo-public spaces, as private properties or enclosed urban commons, are also playing a role in providing 'public places' for the society. As the assessment reveals, although the levels of publicness of the study pseudo-public spaces are much lower than urban spaces owned and managed publicly, in some cases such as Nanping Wanda Plaza, pseudo-public spaces received positive scores, meaning they play the role as 'public places', rather than 'private' ones, in the city.

Drawing on these two key findings, this chapter argues that the rise of pseudo-public spaces does not necessarily lead to the 'end of public space' and the 'fall of public man' in Chinese cities. As Carmona (2010a, p.171) reminds us, urban space has been 'developing and changing as it comes into existence'. The urban process under capitalism has changed how public spaces are being held, the space itself, in turn, has been changing to adapt to new uses and activities, and the public has also changed the ways they socially engage with the new forms of space called forth in the process of capitalist urbanisation.

This chapter is structured thematically. I first discuss the key socio-economic characteristics of Shanghai and Chongqing and how they impact the management and use of urban space. Next, in section 4.3, the results of the empirical assessment of the publicness of selected urban spaces are presented and explained. Building upon these assessment results and evidence collected during my fieldwork, sections 4.4 to 4.6 discuss how pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of the city in China from the three aspects of design, manipulation, and use respectively.

4.2 Study Cities and Pseudo-Public Spaces

As noted in Chapter 2, to study the publicness of pseudo-public spaces and their influences on Chinese cities, fieldwork was carried out in ten Chinese pseudo-public spaces (see Table 2.4 in Chapter 2). The publicness of all the ten study pseudo-public spaces was assessed using the scoring index developed in Chapter 2. Details of the scoring results are presented in Appendix I. The scoring results can be classified into two kinds: some study spaces (three out of ten) got positive scores; while the other study spaces got negative

scores. The results, according to the scoring system, suggest that pseudo-public spaces play two different roles in Chinese cities: 'public' places and more 'private' places. To draw a fuller and more detailed picture of the two roles Chinese pseudo-public spaces play, this chapter presents detailed analyses of fieldwork in two study pseudo-public spaces, Xintiandi in Shanghai and Nanping Wanda Plaza in Chongqing.

Shanghai is a coastal city in east China and Chongqing is an inland city located in southwest China (see Fig4.1). They are particularly important and appropriate cities for answering the research questions of this thesis. As noted in Chapter 2, Shanghai is one of the so-called 'first-tier cities', while Chongqing is one of the 'second most developed cities' in China. These two groups of cities provide over 70 per cent of pseudo-public spaces in China (Knight Frank 2014b). Meanwhile, as one of the most prosperous property markets in China, Shanghai's property values are much higher than the average level of the country. High property values, as we will see, lead to gentrification and strong demand for social segregation and spatial control in pseudo-public spaces in the city. Chongqing, on the other hand, is the city with the fastest shopping mall growing speed in the world (CBRE 2016a). However, at the same time, as Huang (2011, p.569) reminds us in his article published in a special issue of *Modern China* devoted to the study of the new urban experiment in Chongqing, Chongqing is experiencing an 'equitable urban development' driven by the city's unique political, social and economic contexts. The equable urban development results in inclusive urbanisation and, as we will see, weak demand for social control and segregation in pseudo-public spaces.

As for the two study pseudo-public spaces, Xintiandi in Shanghai represents an often-seen kind of pseudo-public space, namely those in the spatial from of street-like blocks, while Nanping Wanda Plaza in Chongqing (a more ubiquitous kind of pseudo-public space in China) is in the spatial form of multi-story malls sit on and directly connected with subway stations. These two selected pseudo-public spaces, therefore, require additional attention. To set the scene for the empirical assessment, the key socio-economic features of the two cities and their impacts on selected pseudo-public spaces are discussed in detail below.

Fig 4.1 Location of case study cities in China

Source of the map: http://data.stats.gov.cn/english/mapdata.htm (accessed 28 August, 2016)

4.2.1 Shanghai and *Xintiandi*

Shanghai has long been the economic centre of China. Literally, the word 'Shanghai' in Chinese means 'on the sea'. From this, Shanghai's advantage in water transportation can be clearly seen. As early as Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), thanks to its geographical advantage in water transportation, Shanghai has already become one of the busiest and most important commercial ports in southeast China. In 1840, the British waged the first Opium War. Two years later, the Treaty of Nanjing designated five Chinese ports to be opened up to Western trade, and Shanghai was one of them. In the following year, 1843, Shanghai was officially opened up to Western trade. This sealed Shanghai's destiny. Shanghai, since then, has become the most important connection between mainland China and the global market. After 1978, with China gradually opening up to the outside world, the amount of foreign

capital absorbed by Shanghai becomes tremendous. In 2014 alone, Shanghai actually utilised 18,166 million US dollars foreign investment which, at municipal level, was the largest number in China (Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau 2015). Enormous available capital leads to significant growth of wealth for not only the city but also individuals. According to Knight Frank's (2014a) *The Wealth Report*, Shanghai was the home to 1,028 very wealthy individuals (with 30 million USD or more in net assets) in 2013, and this number is expected to reach 1,542 by 2023. Both figures are the second largest in mainland China, only after Beijing.

However, at the same time, because of the huge demand for labour caused by urban economic growth, Shanghai, as a municipality, also has the largest number of rural migrants (or peasant workers) in China. Since the early 'reform and opening-up' era, migrant population in Shanghai has kept increasing (see Fig 4.2). By the end of 2015, according to the *Statistical Communique of the 2015 Municipal Economic and Social Development of Shanghai*, migrant population in Shanghai reached 9.82 million which accounted for over 40 per cent of the overall population in Shanghai (Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau 2016). This ratio is more than 8 times that of Chongqing (4.98 per cent) which had only 1.5 million migrant population in 2015 (Chongqing Municipal Statistics Bureau 2016b), and about 2.5 times that of Chengdu (16.1 per cent) in 2014 when 2.32 million migrants were recorded that year in the city (Chengdu Municipal Statistics Bureau 2015).

Fig 4.2 Migrant population in Shanghai, 1982-2015 (10,000 people)
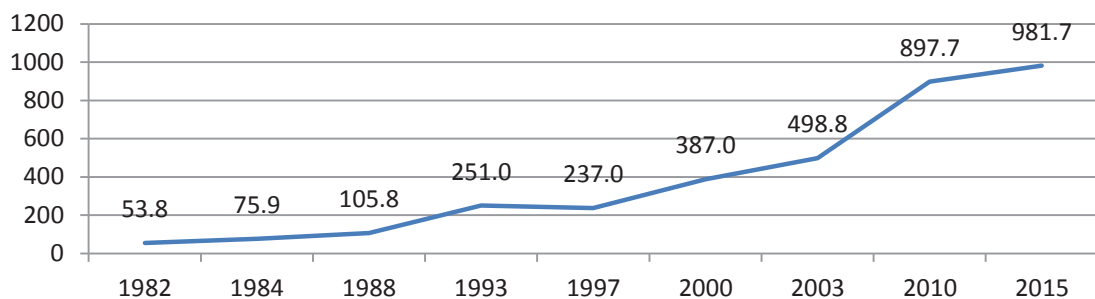
Source: based on Wang & Zhang (2006), Office of the Sixth Population Census of Shanghai Municipality & Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau (2010), and Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau (2016)

A large portion of the migrant population, however, is poorly educated. According to the national sample survey in 2005 and the sixth national population census conducted in 2010, the majority (over half) of the migrant population in Shanghai has only received middle school education (see Table 4.1). As Yang & Yang (2014) find in their research, the job options of those poorly educated migrants have been largely restricted. As a result, they find the majority of the migrant population in Shanghai are working in industrial production and basic service sectors as 'manual labour'. According to their analysis of the population survey, over 75 per cent of the migrants in Shanghai are working as 'commercial and service attendants' and 'operators of production and transport equipment' (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.1 Education situation of migrant population in Shanghai, 2005 and 2010 (%)

Year	Not educated	Elementary school	Middle school	High school	College or above
2005	2.9	15.7	54.3	17.7	9.5
2010	1.8	15.1	52.7	16.3	14.1

Source: Yang & Yang (2014)

Table 4.2 Occupational distributions of migrant population in Shanghai, 2005 and 2010 (%)

Year	Leaders of enterprises	Technical personnel	Clerical staff	Commercial & service attendant	Agricultural production personnel	Production & transport equipment operator	others
2005	4.0	5.6	5.0	33.7	2.4	48.8	0.5
2010	3.8	8.3	6.9	34.0	2.2	44.7	0.1

Source: Yang & Yang (2014)

Usually, the wages of those 'manual labour' workers are relatively low in China. According to a survey in 2003, for example, the average wage of the migrant manual workers in Shanghai was less than half of the average amount local urban workers were paid (Wang & Zhang 2006). Shanghai, moreover, has one of the strictest 'residency permit system' in China (in Chinese *Hukou*). This system separates migrants from local urban population by conferring many welfare benefits on the latter while denying them to the former. Migrant workers thus have to spend an additional part of their income on necessary

education, health care, housing and so on for themselves and their families, though the differences in social welfare benefits have been reduced considerably in recent years. Consequently, the huge number of the migrate workers, especially manual workers, provides an un-negligible source of low income social groups in Shanghai.

On the other hand, following a series of market-oriented institutional reforms, such as the dissolution of the state-run allocation system for job and housing, China's old 'sellers' market' established under centrally planned economy has gradually transferred into a 'buyers' market' in the 1990s (Fewsmith 2001). As a result, the conflicts between the old organisation and production modes of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), the basic production unit under centrally planned economy, and flexible demands in a market economy become increasingly sharp. SOEs' struggles in the market competition led to mounted deficits in the late 1990s. The state, therefore, undertook a drastic restructuring plan in an effort to make the large and medium-sized SOEs economically viable, especially after 1998 when the Asian financial crisis hit. SOEs, as a consequence, began to lay off workers rapidly since the late 1990s. Although SOEs laid off their workers happened in many major Chinese cities, Shanghai, as the primary player for mainland China in international finance, was under particularly significant influence of this process (Zhang 2014). Huge numbers of SOE workers in Shanghai were laid off. Taking state-owned textile factories for example, in the 1990s up to nearly 70 per cent workforce (380,000 out of 550,000) in this industry alone were laid off in Shanghai (Zeng 2013). Because they are usually too old and lack competitive skills, a large portion of those SOE lay-off workers can only compete for relatively low-level and low-paying positions in the labour market. As a result, most of those lay-off workers can only work at lower wages and certainly with fewer benefits than they had in their original jobs. In the words of Fulong Wu (2007), a well-known Chinese geographer, these social groups are in the 'poverty of transition'. The SOE lay-off workers thus become another major source of low-income social groups in the city.

In comparison with less economically developed Chinese cities like Chongqing, a much more noticeable result of the income gap between the rich and rural migrants and

urban low income groups in Shanghai is spatial segregation in its urban space. At a macroscopic scale, based on the national sample survey 2005 and the sixth national population census 2010, Yang & Yang (2014) find that the city centre, where the housing price is the highest in the city, is mainly the home to local urban residents, because there are only about 20 per cent migrant population live there. The majority, over 50 per cent, of migrant workers, as revealed by the survey, live in the 'inner suburb area' of the city where the housing price is much lower than the city centre and close to their workplaces. And during the 5 years between 2005 and 2010, the number of migrant workers chose to live in the outer suburb area, where housing price even lower than the inner suburb area, increased way faster than the number of those who chose to live in the city centre (see Table 4.3). This indicates that the spatial segregation had been widened significantly during the period. While in Chongqing, the spatial segregation is not so obvious. According to the survey conducted by Chongqing Municipal Statics Bureau (2016a), in 2015, there were 952,000 'floating population' lived in the central urban area. This number makes up 63.47 per cent of the total migrant workers in Chongqing that year. That is to say, the difference between numbers of migrant workers live in and outside the city centre is much smaller in Chongqing.

Table 4.3 The spatial distribution of migrant population in Shanghai, 2005 and 2010 (10,000 people)

Year	City centre (ratio)	Inner suburb area (ratio)	Outer suburb area (ratio)
2005	97.1 (22.2%)	242.5 (55.3%)	98.8 (22.5%)
2010	173.3 (19.3%)	482.2 (53.7%)	242.2 (27.0%)
Growth rate	78.4%	98.9%	145.1%

Source: Yang & Yang (2014)

The spatial segregation also occurred at a microcosmic scale in Shanghai, especially in its city centre. As noticed by many Chinese urban sociology scholars (Chen & Wei 2015; Wang & Zhang 2006), in the city centre, low-income migrant workers mainly live in 'corner spaces', namely spaces such as unauthorised ghettos, shantytowns, and 'urban villages', because of their more affordable rents. A crucial spatial feature of those 'corner spaces' is that, although adjoin to, they are physically separated from expensive residential

communities where high-income groups live. 'Corner spaces' become isolated 'islands' in the city centres. Walls and gateways are set up to deny any physical connection between these two kinds of space (see Fig 4.3). In other words, the boundary between the rich and the poor is clear. When it comes to the management of public space, the boundary between

Fig 4.3 An unauthorised settlement (rent: 500 RMB per month for a bed room) and an expensive residential community (rent: 7500 RMB per month for a bed room studio) at each side of an urban street in the city centre of Shanghai (Clear boundaries, walls and gateways, exist to clearly separate these two kinds of urban space)

Source: photograph by the author, 2015. Rent information collected through conversations with local residents during my fieldwork in Shanghai

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the rich and the poor in Shanghai city centre is not only material, but more often virtual. Harvey (2016, p.114) has reminded us that in postmodern societies 'identity is increasingly dependent upon images'. High-income social groups thus always have strong demand for 'high-end' urban environments. To meet this demand, capital investors, using their power of money, have created many 'exquisitely maintained' public spaces in the city centre. Directly or indirectly, those spaces are profit-oriented. The purpose for the management of those spaces is creating 'high-end' urban images and atmospheres in certain urban areas to attract high-income social groups for consumption, rather than to genuinely provide spaces for 'grass-root' activities which are normally not so profitable. Consequently, to maintain a 'high-end' urban spectacle and exclude possible 'grass-root' activities, as I have noticed in a public owned privately managed park in Shanghai but not observed in any public parks and squares in Chongqing, rules such as '*sloppily dressed people are not allowed to enter*' have been made to clearly filter the users and possible uses of 'high-end' public spaces (see Fig 4.4).

Fig 4.4 The rule: '*sloppily dressed people are not allowed to enter*' (written in Chinese, underlined in red by the author) in an urban park in central Shanghai
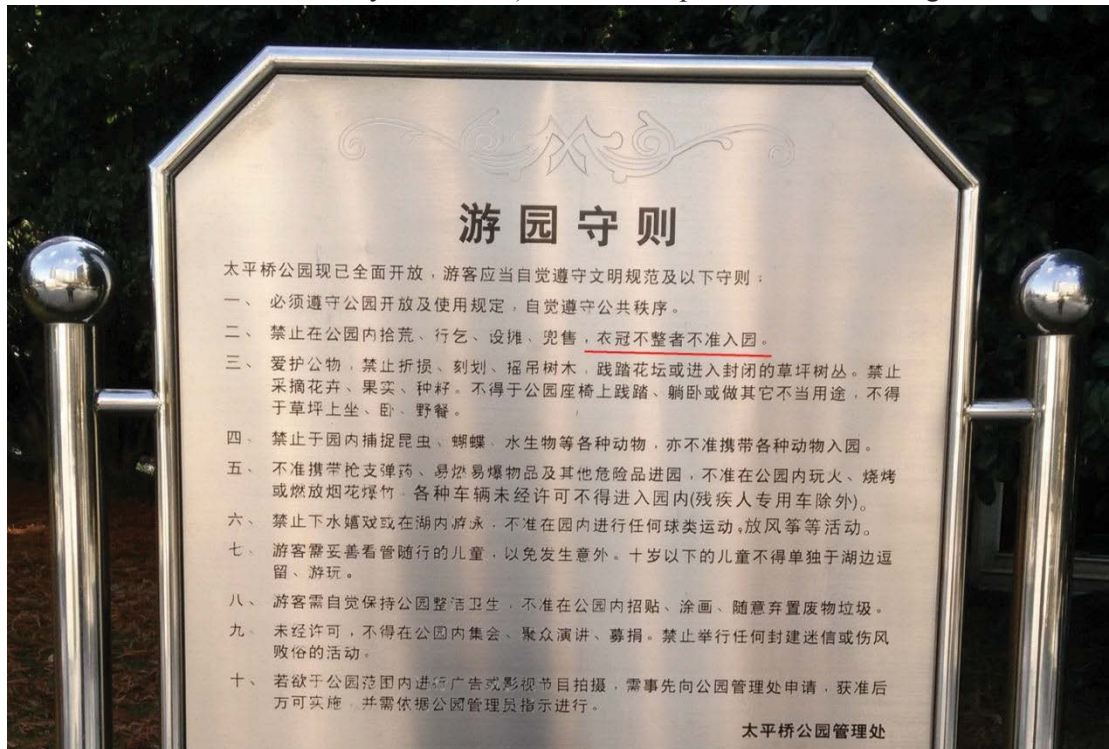
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

Xintiandi is one of those 'high-end' urban spaces in Shanghai city centre (see Fig 4.5 for the site plan of Xintiandi). 'This commercial development, which officially opened to the public in 2001, was essentially part of an urban regeneration project launched by the Shanghai Municipal Government during 1991 and 2000' (interview #4). 'The regeneration project aimed at transferring old traditional residential buildings in the south of Luwan district –where they were classified as 'undesirable areas' by the municipal authority because of the existence of large numbers of unauthorised slums- into new street-like high-end commercial and entertainment blocks' (interview #3). In 1998, Shui On Land, a Hong Kong based real estate developer, cooperated with Luwan District government, to start the project. In the same year, Vincent Lo, the chairman of Shui On Land, clearly described his vision for this project in the 10th Shanghai International Business Leaders' Advisory Council (IBLAC)[1]. He said: 'as a global financial and commercial centre, Shanghai has to create a good living environment to not only attract outstanding talents, but, more importantly, make them stay. To this end, Shanghai should build attractive public spaces to stage various urban activities in the city centre to offer gathering places for both local and foreign talents'. Guided by this vison, the developer intended to create a new kind of public space, as revealed by the name of the project: 'Xintiandi' which, in Chinese, means 'the new horizon'. In Xintiandi, 'new' not merely refers to the material renewal of the old 'undesirable' spaces, but also implies a new way of how the urban public realm can be managed and used for the rich. In Iovine's (2006) words, Xintiandi 'has changed the way people with money think about public spaces'.

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[1] See: http://iblac.gov.cn/web/login (in English); or http://sh.eastday.com/kpzhb/szzxh/ (in Chinese), (accessed on 21 June 2015)

Fig 4.5 Site plan of Xintiandi

Source: Luo (2002)

4.2.2 Chongqing and *Nanping Wanda Plaza*

Chongqing has a rather different feel to it, being both an inland and a mountainous city. As a legacy of the 'reform and opening-up' policy which sets the coastal areas as the primary bridge connecting China and the global market, inland cities are much less internationally connected than coastal ones in China. Therefore, Chongqing, as an inland city, is much less important as an international capital market. As described in one economic report released by the Consulate General of Netherlands in Chongqing (2014), Chongqing is 'sometimes referred as an 'invisible city', a world-scale megalopolis that people outside China have never ever heard of' (p.9). Similarly, Tim Franco, a European photographer who has documented the change in Chongqing from 2009 to 2015, describes in an interview that, while 'many of Chinese coastal cities are very famous worldwide', Chongqing is 'maybe the most widely unknown megacity in the world' (Stott 2015).

As a result, Chongqing has received much less foreign investment than Chinese coastal cities, such as Shanghai and Hong Kong, even though Chongqing's economic connection with the outside world has improved significantly since 1997 when the central state designated the city as the fourth Municipality directly under the Central Government (MCG) to make it an economic centre serving the needs of south-west China and an engine driving the growth of China's vast western region (Han & Wang 2001). According to data released by local statistical bureaus of the two cities, in recent years, both the actual utilised foreign capital and GDP in Chongqing accounted for only 60 per cent of Shanghai's (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Utilised foreign capital (100 million USD) and GDP (100 million Yuan) in Chongqing and Shanghai, 2010-2014

	City	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Utilised FDI	Chongqing	63.7	105.8	105.8	106.0	106.3
	Shanghai	111.2	126.0	151.9	167.8	181.7
	Ratio (Chongqing/ Shanghai)	57.3%	84.0%	69.7%	63.2%	58.5%
GDP	Chongqing	7,925.6	10,011.4	11,409.6	12,783.3	14,262.6
	Shanghai	17,166.0	19,195.7	20,181.7	21,818.2	23,567.7
	Ratio (Chongqing/	46.2%	52.2%	56.5%	58.6%	60.5%

Shanghai)

Source: based on Chongqing Municipal Statistics Bureau (2015) and Shanghai Municipal Statistics Bureau (2013, 2015)

Chongqing is home to a smaller number of high-income groups. Although, at the municipal level, Chongqing's overall population (30.17 million) is much bigger than the population sizes of other major Chinese cities such as Beijing (19.61 million), Shanghai (24.15 million), Chengdu (14.43 million) and Guangzhou (12.70 million)[1], Chongqing has much fewer rich people. According to Knight Frank (2014a), wealthy individuals (defined as people with 30 million USD or more in net assets) in Chongqing are significantly fewer than those in the most developed Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, and even fewer than some of the other 'second most developed cities' such as Chengdu (see Table 4.5). Meanwhile, Chongqing's 2015 Gini coefficient (the most widely used inequality measure, 0 represents completely equal and 1 represents maximally unequal) was 0.35. It was a low figure among Chinese major cities, and this figure was even close to the Gini coefficient of 0.33 at the start of the reform era that had been the legacy of the Maoist period (Huang 2011). As a result of the relatively equal wealth distribution and fewer rich people whose influence on urban development is much less, there are, as we will see later in this chapter, much weaker demand and desire for spatial division between different social groups in the urban space of Chongqing.

Table 4.5 Number of very wealthy individuals in Chongqing, Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu, 2013 and 2023 (predicted)

City	2013	2023 (predicted)
Chongqing	96	191
Shanghai	1,028	1,542
Beijing	1,318	1,872
Guangzhou	311	504
Chengdu	120	217

Source: based on Knight Frank (2014a)

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[1] According to the 6th national-wide census of population of China carried out in 2010, details see: http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/rkpcgb/qgrkpcgb/201104/t20110429_30328.html (accessed 9 May 2016)

Physically, while most of the big cities in China are flat and extended, Chongqing, as a mountainous city, is growing right in between mountains and giant rivers, which give it a unique scale. According to the *Chinese National Geography* (2014), 77.5 per cent land in Chongqing is mountains, 18.8 per cent of it is hilly, while only 2.4 per cent of Chongqing is flat land. As a result, construction land is scarce in the city. As revealed by a survey conducted by a local university professor, only 7 per cent of the land in Chongqing is suitable for construction. This ratio is dramatically lower than the other three MCGs in China (Wang & Chen 2012). Furthermore, because of the large population size of Chongqing, the per capita construction land in the city only accounts for 30 per cent of Beijing, 22 per cent of Tianjin, and 60 per cent of Shanghai (see Table 4.6). Unsurprisingly, the scarcity of construction land has resulted in very highly intensive use of urban space in Chongqing. Strolling in Chongqing, you will feel almost every corner of the city has been utilised to accommodate urban activities. Spaces under elevated highways, for example, are used as marketplaces, and underground passages are used as second-hand book stores (Fig 4.6). The high density results in unique spatial experience, as Tim Franco describes, in Chongqing:

> I felt like I was in Blade Runner (a science fiction film which depicts a futuristic American city in 2019), walking through dark alleys and getting lost in maze-like streets. … It looked to me like a chaotic and dark mix of Manhattan and Hong Kong (quoted in the interview with Rory Stott[1]).

Table 4.6 Per capita construction land in the four MCGs of China (based on 2012 data)

City	Area (Km²)	Land suitable for construction (%)	Per capita construction land (m²)
Chongqing	82,300	7.0	0.18
Beijing	16,800	58.6	0.60
Shanghai	6,341	100.0	0.30
Tianjin	11,305	95.5	0.83

Source: Wang & Chen (2012)

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[1] See: http://www.archdaily.com/?p=612385 (accessed 13 April 2015)

Fig 4.6 Urban space under an elevated highway utilised as a fruit market in Chongqing

Source: photograph by the author, 2013

As a consequence of the extreme density, open space in Chongqing becomes a very scarce resource. Creating open space for the city as much as possible has thus always been given high priority by local architects and urban designers when doing architectural and urban design projects (interviews #1, #8, #10, and #16). As a result, mixed uses of architectural spaces and the urban public realm are often-seen in Chongqing. Architectural spaces such as interior spaces and roofs of buildings are often directly connected with and easily accessible from the urban public realm. These architectural spaces are often used as public spaces in Chongqing (see Fig 4.7). The physical mixture of architectural spaces and the public realm have their social consequences. In Chongqing, therefore, the boundaries between what social activities can be carried out in the public realm and what should be conducted inside a building are, to a large degree, blurry. Using the urban public realm as an extension of individual homes has become a unique local lifestyle.

Fig 4.7 The interior corridor of a residential building used as an urban 'street' (above) &

roof space of a building used as an urban street in Chongqing (below)

Source: (above) photograph by Prof. Feng Lu (Chongqing University) and (below) http://image.baidu.com

Moreover, being less internationally connected has brought less foreign cultures and lifestyles from the outside world. The local social lifestyle, as a result, has not been changed

so significantly even in the globalisation era in which consumerist culture increasingly dominants the image-making and everyday use of urban public space. Today, it is quite common to see in Chongqing local residents conducting social activities with friends in squares in front of luxury shopping malls or even doing their window-shopping wearing their pyjamas, just like at home. However, in many other cities, such scenes are rare. Indeed, they are explicitly prohibited by property managers for 'image-making' reasons. During my fieldwork, I observed that the unique local culture and lifestyle combined with the weaker demand and desire for spatial division in the public realm led to loose social control and high tolerance for spontaneous public uses and the appearance of 'different' social groups in pseudo-public spaces in Chongqing.

Today, rapid urbanisation has made Chongqing a city rich in pseudo-public spaces. As Tim Franco noticed, in Chongqing 'luxury shops appearing like mushrooms on the main pedestrian streets' (cited in Stott 2015). Huigong Road is one of those commercial pedestrian streets Franco discusses. On this street, an urban redevelopment project was launched at the beginning of the new millennium by the Nanping district government 'to develop this urban street into a vehicle-free pedestrian commercial street hoping to create a new commercial centre for the district' (interview #1). However, 'shops in this street are mainly transformed from old residential buildings rather than newly built ones. The growth of the new district centre is thus largely constrained. To meet the growing demand for commercial development, the district government leased the use rights of a 97,902 square metres land just a stone through away from Huigong Road to Wanda Group, one of the largest commercial real estate developers in China. Wanda Group then built a new large scale urban complex named Wanda Plaza, which opened to the public in December 2009' (interview #1).

Apart from a 500-metre-long indoor shopping street, Wanda Plaza also provides a huge scale concentrated outdoor open space to the city. The concentrated open space has a size even larger than Huigong Road, the pedestrian street in the new district centre nearby (see Fig 4.8, Fig 4.9, Fig 4.10). 'Because Wanda Plaza provides more spacious space for carrying out urban activities, more places for people to gather, and better maintained urban

environment, it soon replaced Huigong Road and became the favourite place local residents would like to go for shopping' (interview #1). Besides shopping activities, the pseudo-public space in Wanda Plaza has also become an important stage where local residents conduct many of their daily social activities, such as playing with dogs and practising *Tai Chi*, as a result of the loose social control in the space which is deeply rooted in local cultural and economic contexts.

Fig 4.8 Location of Wanda Plaza
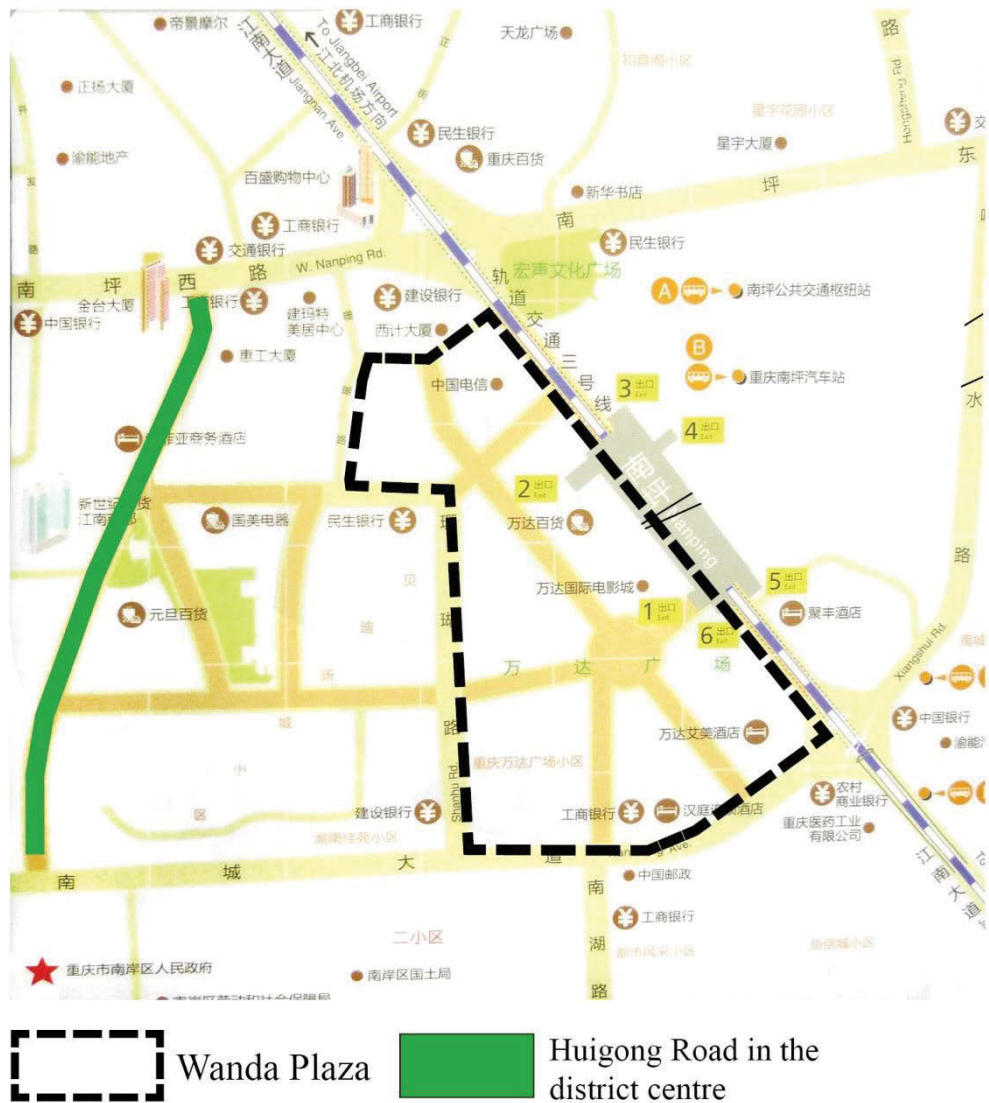
Source: based on http://map.baidu.com/ and fieldwork in Chongqing

Fig 4.9 Site Plan of Wanda Plaza

◁ Fig 4.10 was taken at this point

Source: Interview #8

Fig 4.10 The pseudo-public space in Wanda Plaza

Source: photograph by the author, 2014

So far, I have introduced the key socio-economic features of Shanghai and Chongqing and qualitatively discussed how they generally influence the management and use of public spaces in these two cities. It is also important to consider a quantitative assessment of the publicness of those pseudo-public spaces. In order to show to what degree pseudo-public spaces are public and in what ways they influence the publicness of Chinese cities.

4.3 Assessing Publicness

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, a scoring index was developed and employed to empirically assess the degrees of publicness of the selected pseudo-public spaces. To clarify the degree of publicness, additional evidence and data on the design, management and use of two publicly owned and managed urban spaces -People's Square (PS) in Chongqing and People's Park (PP) in Shanghai- were also collected and assessed using the same scoring index.

People's Square was built in 1997 and located in central Chongqing. It is a major pro-people project to celebrate Chongqing's designation as China's fourth Municipality directly under the Central Government (MCG). This square is surrounded by two very important public buildings (see Fig 4.11 for the site plan of People's Square). Chongqing People's Auditorium, which was built in the 1950s with the involvement of Deng Xiaoping, sits at the eastern end of the square. The auditorium is not only one of the largest public halls for political meeting and cultural events in Chongqing, but also serves as one of the most well-known architectural symbols of the city. When People's Square was built, Chongqing Museum, another important public building in Chongqing, was developed at the square's western border. In 2005, Chongqing Museum was replaced by the Three Gorges Museum, one of the largest public museums in China. The purpose of building People's Square, as the monument to the construction of the square makes clear, is to provide a brand new public space for the local people to gather, enjoy public life, and appreciate the two important public buildings.

Fig 4.11 Site plan of People's Square in Chongqing
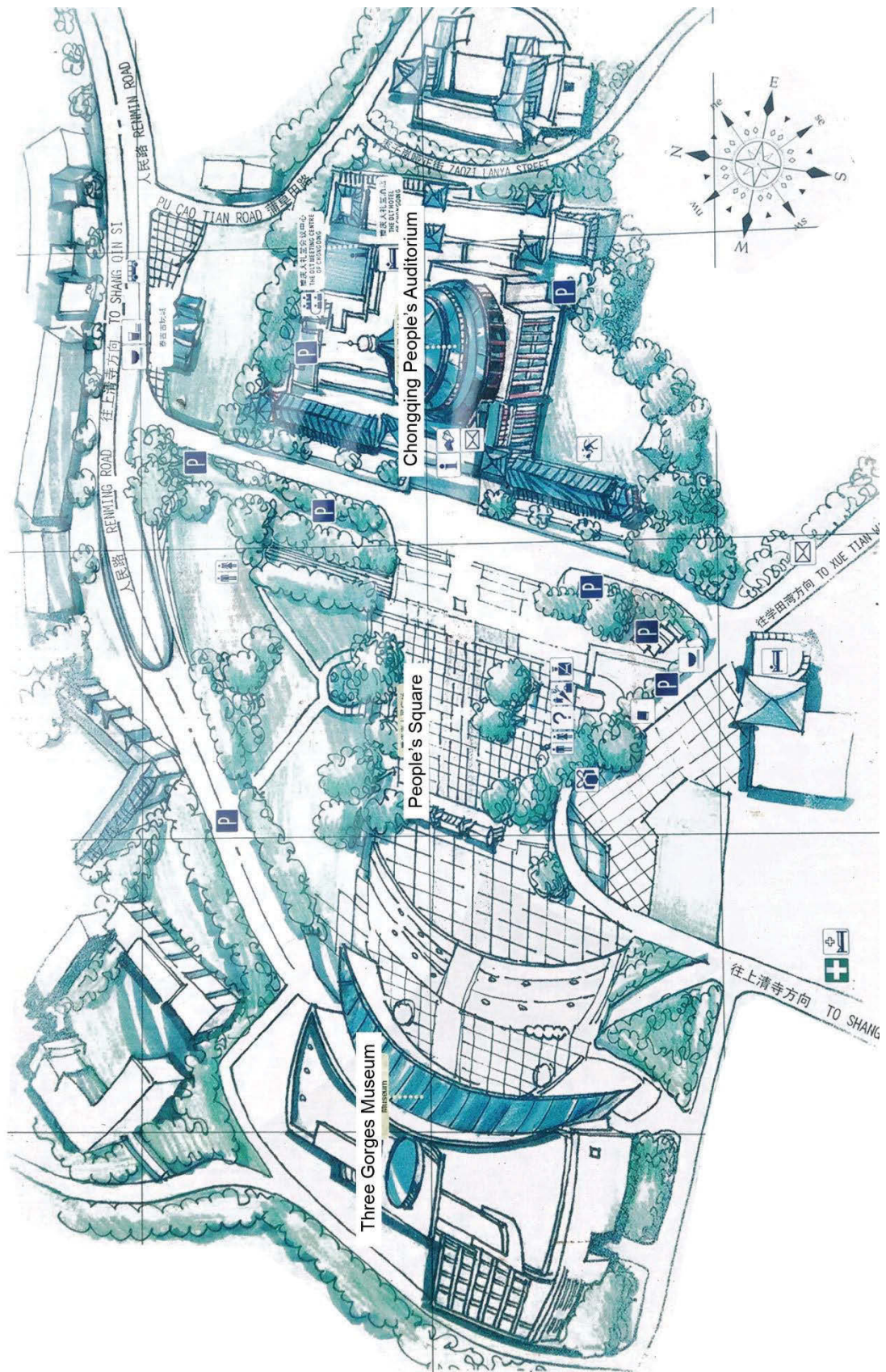
Source: tour guide of Chongqing People's Auditorium

People's Park is the most famous publicly built and managed park in Shanghai. The park was built in 1952 to replace the former Shanghai Race Club. There are a number of public buildings near or inside People's Park. Inside the park, there are two public museums, Shanghai Art Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art Shanghai. Besides, a small amusement park also situates inside the park (see Fig 4.12). Shanghai Museum, Shanghai Municipal Government Building, and People's Square are all within five-minute's walk distance from the park. The park itself is centrally located. It is close to the city's major shopping street, Nanjing Road, and closely connected with two subway stations. People's Park plays an important role in Shanghai people's daily public life. The local government views the role of People's Parks as what Central Park plays in the public life of New York City[1].

Fig 4.12 Site plan of People's Park in Shanghai
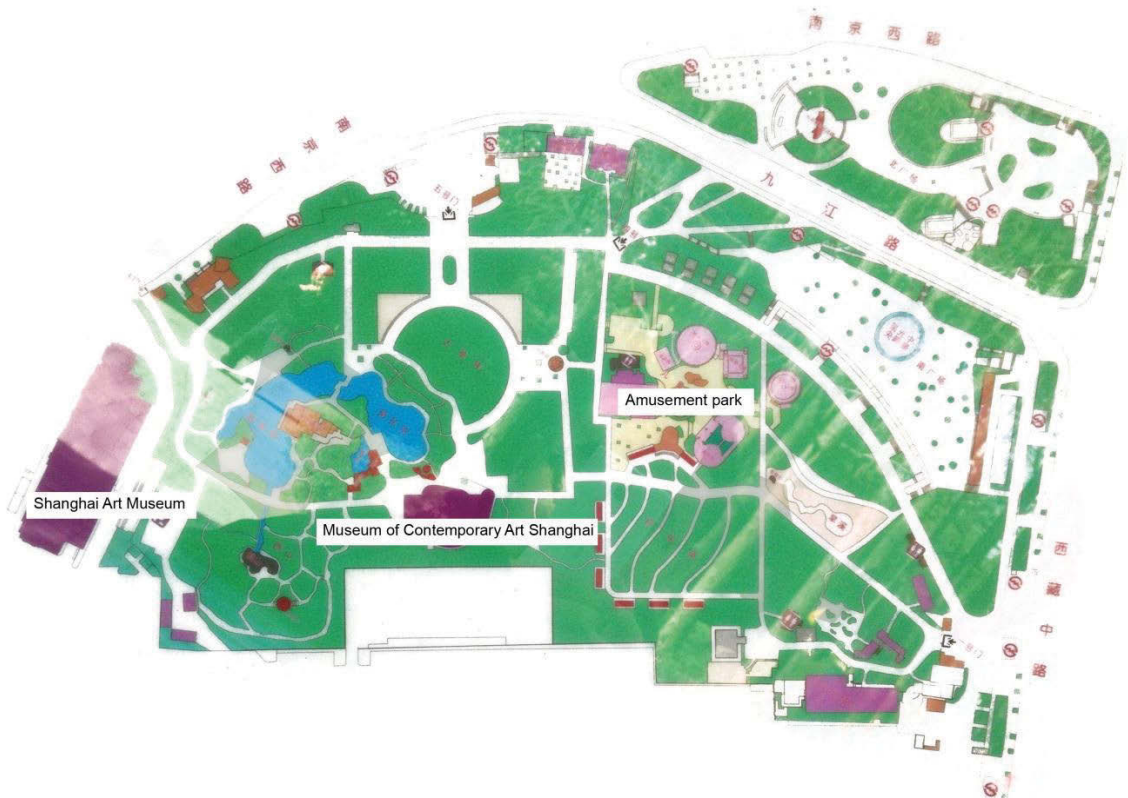
Source: tour guide of Shanghai People's Park

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[1] See:
http://lhsr.sh.gov.cn/sites/wuzhangai_lhsr/neirong/9d99a135-2438-4e21-bbd4-34a52407f5ca/d2922bc4-0ace-43ff-80f1-aa0bbedb95fa/ (accessed 10 January, 2018)

The scoring results of the four urban spaces are presented in Table 4.7. Based on the scoring results, analyses on three different levels were carried out. First of all, as shown in Table 4.7, the levels of publicness of pseudo-public spaces are much lower than those of publicly owned and managed public spaces. Both People's Square and People's Park received very high positive scores, 35 out of 40 for People's Square and 30 out of 40 for People's Park. According to the scoring index, these scores indicate that these spaces are highly 'public'. On the other hand, the two pseudo-public spaces received much lower overall scores. Xintiandi got a very low negative score: -20 out of -40, which means it is in a highly 'private' situation. Although Nanping Wanda Plaza got a positive score of 13 which means it is quite 'public' and can be seen as a 'public' place, its score is still much lower than the overall scores of the publicly owned and managed public spaces.

These findings lead to the second question raised at the beginning of the chapter: What makes pseudo-public spaces scored much lower than the publicly owned and managed public spaces? To answer this question, I mapped out the distribution of each study space's score for each of the twenty indicators of publicness (as identified in Table 2.5), as shown in Fig 4.13. In this diagram, except in the dimension of 'uses / users-quantity', noticeable differences in the distribution of the scores of pseudo-public spaces and public spaces got can be seen in all other nineteen dimensions. For example, in the dimension of 'social engagement', both pseudo-public spaces scored -2, while both publicly owned and managed public spaces got a score of 2. These noticeable differences marked out where pseudo-public spaces were mainly designed, manipulated and used differently from publicly owned and managed public spaces. They, therefore, indicated in what aspects or dimensions pseudo-public spaces, as a particular new kind of urban space, had impacted the traditional ways to design, manage and use urban public spaces. It was those aspects or dimensions that made the degree of publicness of pseudo-public spaces significantly different from that of publicly owned and managed public spaces.

Identifying in what aspects or dimensions pseudo-public spaces influenced the publicness provided a basis for a third analysis: a principle components analysis. Principle

components analysis reduces large amounts of descriptive data into explanatory components that describe whether and how variables are intrinsically linked (Németh 2009). In Table 4.8, the indicator of 'uses/users-quantity' has been removed from the original twenty indicators. This elimination is necessary because, as revealed by Fig 4.13, pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces do not show noticeable differences in this aspect. It is this adjustment that explains why Table 4.8 has nineteen, rather than twenty, indicators for publicness (unlike Table 2.5). As shown in Table 4.8, the principle components analysis reduced the original nineteen identified aspects to six new components. Although the six components are not directly related to previous tables and figures, they represented a typology of key aspects in which pseudo-public spaces are designed, manipulated and used differently from publicly owned and managed public spaces. They, therefore, outline how pseudo-public spaces, as a new kind of urban space, influenced the publicness of Chinese cities. In the following sections, I will discuss these components in detail based on my fieldwork in Chongqing and Shanghai.

Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that, as can also be seen from Table 4.8, publicly owned and managed public spaces' Median Absolute Deviations (MADs) in up to sixteen out of the nineteen dimensions were '0', while pseudo-public spaces' MADs were '0' in only eight dimensions. As MAD is a statistical measure of dispersion for ordinal data. The higher the MAD is, the greater the data disperse. '0' MAD means the data are not dispersed. In other words, all numbers in the measured ordinal data are the same, and they have not changed. Here, these statistical differences in MADs between publicly owned and managed public spaces and pseudo-public spaces implied that the ways in which the two study publicly owned and managed public spaces were designed, managed, used were relatively very similar, while how the two study pseudo-public spaces were dealt with were much more different from each other. These differences reveal that the distinct geographical, economic, and social cultural features of the two large Chinese cities under discussion bring much bigger impacts on the design, manipulation, and use of pseudo-public spaces, than on publicly owned and managed public spaces.

Table 4.7 Index scoring for selected pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned/controlled

public spaces in Chongqing and Shanghai

(NWP=Nanping Wanda Plaza; XTD=Xintiandi; PS=People's Square; PP=People's Park)

Indicators / Study Spaces			NWP	XTD	PS	PP
Design and Plan Dimensions	Function	Support of unplanned use	2	-2	2	2
	Urban-scale design	Location/ spatial Connection	2	2	0	0
		Visual permeability	0	0	2	0
		Thresholds and gateways	2	0	2	-2
	Architectural-scale design	Availability of facilities	0	0	2	2
		Human needs	-1	-1	2	2
Manipulation Dimensions	Ownership		-2	-2	2	2
	Agency		1	-2	2	2
	Interest		0	-2	2	2
	Management & control	Purpose	2	-2	2	2
		Methods and its Presence	-2	-2	0	0
	Rules	Presence & Purpose	1	-1	2	2
		Arrangement & enforcement	2	-2	2	2
Use Dimensions	Perception	Cultural understanding	0	-2	2	2
		Social engagement	-2	-2	2	2
	Accessibility	Information	2	0	2	2
		Resource	0	0	1	2
	Users/ Uses	Variety	2	-2	2	2
		quantity	2	2	2	2
		quality	2	-2	2	2
Overall score			**13**	**–20**	**35**	**30**

Source: based on fieldwork in Chongqing and Shanghai

Fig 4.13 Score distribution of the study pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces
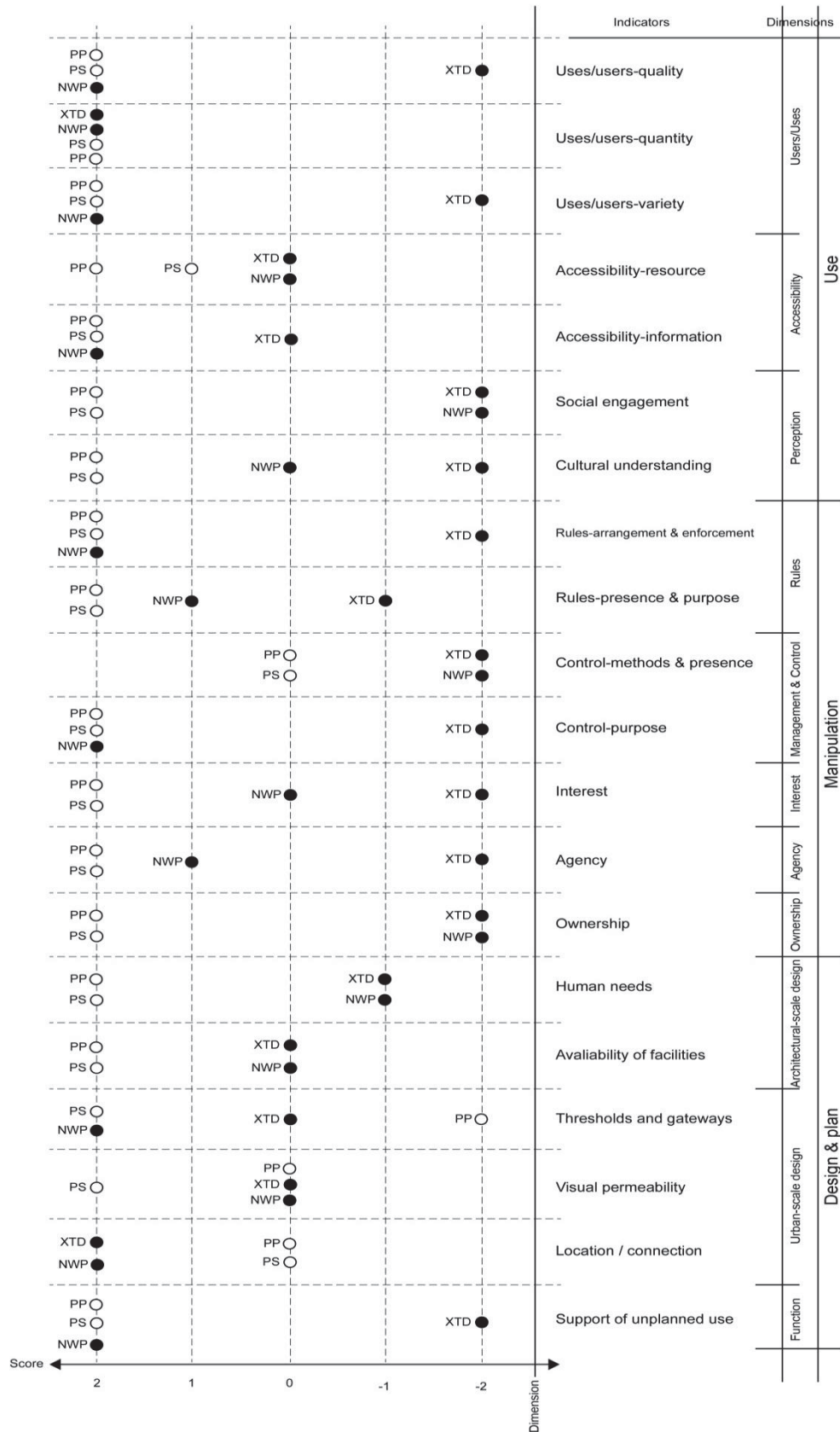
LEGEND: ● Pseudo-public spaces ○ Publicly owned / controlled public spaces

Table 4.8 Principle components analysis of the key aspects in which pseudo-public spaces affect the publicness of urban space

Process	Component (key aspects in which pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of the city)	Dimension	Pseudo-public spaces' overall score of the dimension (MAD*)	Publicly managed spaces' overall score of the dimension (MAD*)
Designing the publicness	**Integrating with the city**	Location & spatial connection	4 (0)	0 (0)
		Visual permeability	0 (0)	2 (1)
		Thresholds and gateways	2 (1)	0 (2)
	Creating 'unstayable' space	Support of unplanned use	0 (2)	4 (0)
		Availability of facilities	0 (0)	4 (0)
		Human needs	-2 (0)	4 (0)
Manipulating the publicness	**Mediating power in space**	Ownership	-4 (0)	4 (0)
		Agency	-1 (1.5)	4 (0)
		Interest	-2 (1)	4 (0)
	Constraining spontaneity	Management & control: purpose	0 (2)	4 (0)
		Management & control: methods and presence	-4 (0)	0 (0)
		Rules: presence and purpose	0 (1)	4 (0)
		Rules: arrangement and enforcement	0 (2)	4 (0)
Public use of pseudo-public space	**Forming communities of strangers**	Cultural understanding	-2 (1)	4 (0)
		Social engagement	-4 (0)	4 (0)
		Uses/users: variety	0 (2)	4 (0)
		Uses/users: quality	0 (2)	4 (0)
	Serving the 'filtered' public	Accessibility: information	2 (1)	4 (0)
		Accessibility: resource	0 (0)	3 (0.5)

* MAD is Median Absolute Deviation = $median_i$ ($|x_j - median_j (x_j)|$). It is the most robust measure of dispersion for ordinal data and is more resilient to outliers than standard deviation (see Németh & Schmidt 2011, p.16).

4.4 Designing the Publicness in Pseudo-Public Spaces

Marx (1967a) reminds us in the second volume of *Capital* that a crucial survival condition of any social process under capitalism is 'in motion', namely everything under capitalism has to keep moving. This is why Harvey (2014) argues that 'capital is a process, not a thing'. He points out, in the urban process under capitalism, if the flow of money is out of motion, capital will not exist anymore. As an important part of the physical platform on which capital is circulating in cities, pseudo-public spaces, as we shall see in this section, are physically designed to make the flow of people, information, and money keep moving by highly integrating with the city and creating spaces that are uncomfortable to stay. These, as a result, make pseudo-public spaces are physically well accessible but less supportive for the occurrence of public uses.

4.4.1 Integrating with the City

This component consists of three indicators: location and spatial connection; visual permeability; and thresholds and gateways. Assessments on these three indicators show that, in comparison with publicly owned and managed public spaces such as public parks, pseudo-public spaces are better connected with the city. Physically, pseudo-public spaces are probably the most intimately connected kind of open space with the urban overall movement network in China. On the one hand, most pseudo-public spaces I visited over the past three years in Shanghai and Chongqing are closely linked with the city through the metro network. Indeed, in many metro stations in large Chinese cities, the exits directly pour people into pseudo-public spaces (see Fig 4.14).

A typical walk from the metro station to the pseudo-public space in Wanda Plaza demonstrates the intimate connection between the urban metro system and pseudo-public spaces. In Chongqing, passengers who get off the subway at *Nanping* Station immediately see a series of signboards on the platform walls and columns directing them on how to exit the building. They can either follow the directions or more effortlessly follow the huge flow of passengers (estimated by one of my interviewees to be over 1.8 million people daily). Both the signboard system and passenger flow soon lead passengers to the escalator which

Fig 4.14 A metro station in Shanghai whose exits directly open to a pseudo-public space

Source: Photograph by the author, 2015

then take them away from the six-metre deep underground platform. Twenty seconds later, passengers will find themselves already in a five-metre high spacious hall. This hall connects the urban metro system and the outside world. In the hall, visitors can see a map of the station posted on the wall showing them that there are six exits all of which, in ordinary views, are supposed to lead them to the urban streets. If passengers are not living in the surrounding areas of the station or a frequent visitor who is familiar with every urban street

around the station, it is very likely that they will not bother to make any choice form the six, but simply follow the largest flow of people which, they may think, is the shortest way out. However, only a few steps later, passengers will suddenly realise they are already in the midst of the indoor shopping street of Wanda Plaza, without noticing when they have left the station hall.

Pseudo-public spaces in the study cities, on the other hand, are usually not visible from surrounding city streets because they are enclosed by large scale shopping malls whose exteriors, like what Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee (1998) observed in Los Angeles, are giving few clues of the space within by using blank facades, deemphasising the street-level accesses and isolating themselves from the street by putting parking spaces and freight exits in between the sidewalk and the building (see Fig 4.15). Meanwhile, pseudo-public spaces in Shanghai and Chongqing very rarely, if ever, physically separate themselves from the surrounding urban areas by explicit thresholds, walls and entrances which obstruct the flow of people. As a result, to use the words of Bottomley & Moore (2007, p.204), as we walk through urban centres we 'increasingly cross boundaries between public/private ownership without knowing that we have done so, just as we increasingly walk in and out of zones of regulation without knowing we have done so.'

Fig 4.15 Large-scale commercial buildings with blank façades deny the visual permeability of the pseudo-public space at the heart of the block, Xintiandi, Shanghai
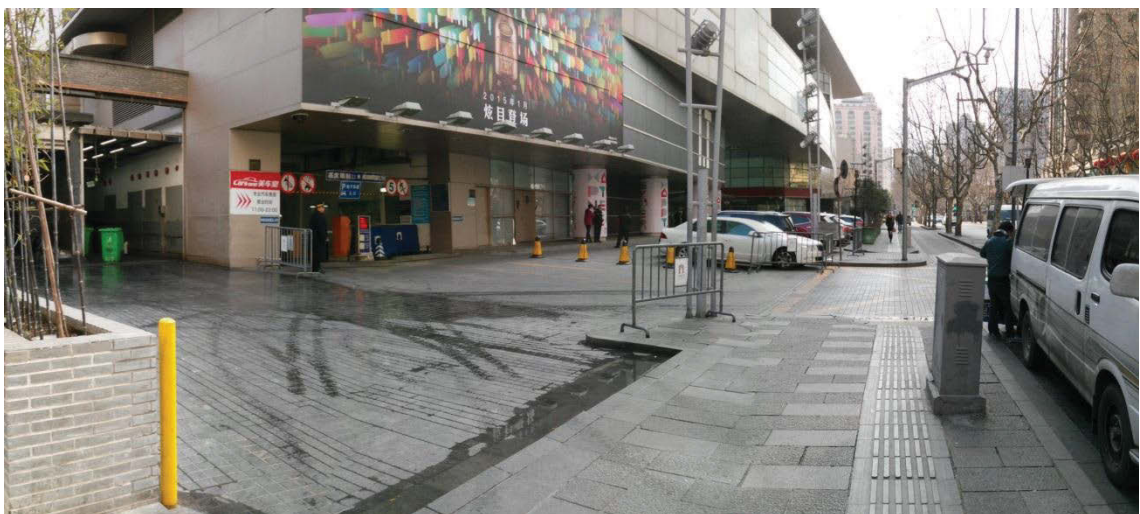
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

4.4.2 Creating 'Unstayable' Space

This component includes three indicators: availability of facilities (seating places; restroom; and microclimate); human needs; and support of unplanned use. Assessments on these indicators show that, in comparison with publicly owned and managed public spaces, the pseudo-public spaces under study are much more uncomfortable to stay especially for non-consumers. Public seating plays a crucial role in making people stay in an urban space, because, as the influential Danish architect Jan Gehl and his colleagues point out in an urban quality consulting report, 'good, comfortable seating placed in the right locations provides visitors with a rest and an opportunity to stay longer' (Gehl Architects 2004, p.48). For this reason, let us start the discussion with the public seating in Chinese pseudo-public spaces.

Only a minority of the sitting places in the study spaces are public seating. Direct-countings reveal that there were 799 sitting places in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi. Yet, only 27 among them were public sitting that is free to use. The remaining 772 sitting places were all in outdoor cafes and restaurants which were only provided for fee-paying customers. In Nanping Wanda Plaza, 102 out of 240 sitting places in the pseudo-public space were provided for public use. It seems that the ratio of public seating in Wanda Plaza is not so small. However, the location of the public seats creates discomfort for users. Because of the huge flow of people, the ground floor building interfaces facing pseudo-public spaces are of great commercial value and thus are always designed and used as street-side shops in China. Meanwhile, as a legacy of a far-reaching urban management policy made in the 1980s which was commonly called as 'the three responsibilities in the gate area', or in Chinese *Menqian Sanbao* (Jiang 2010), keeping good social order and general sanitation in the frontage of those street-side shops are still largely deemed as part of the shopkeepers' responsibilities in China. As a result, in order to make shopkeepers' tasks of keeping social order and general sanitation easier and also to avoid obstructing customers from entering those street-side shops, public sitting places in Chinese pseudo-public spaces are usually located far away from the edges of the open spaces. Some were even located right in the middle of the open space. As a consequence, in the case

studies, public seats have become isolated 'islands' in open air (see Fig 4.16).

Fig 4.16 Typical public sitting places in Nanping Wanda Plaza: far away from the edge, like isolated 'islands' in open space.

Source: photograph by the author, 2016

Being placed isolatedly in open space results in unprotected microclimates for public sitting in pseudo-public spaces. Some influential urban scholars such as Whyte (1980) have found that placing sitting places close to strong pedestrian flows can generate more

opportunities for passive engagement activities such as people-watching, which is helpful for making the space more attractive. However, this, as Gehl (2011) reminds us, can hardly happen without the support of a comfortable microclimate. In publicly owned and managed public spaces, microclimates for sitting places are usually protected and relaxing. In People's Park of Shanghai, for example, most public seats are placed under Platanus orientalis (or in Chinese *Faguo Wutong*), a kind of tall deciduous trees. 'An important botanical feature of this kind of tree is that', as a park-keeper introduced to me, 'they shed their leaves in winters and grow thick leaves in summers. This feature allows the public seats under these trees bathing in the warmth of sun in cold seasons and providing shades in seasons when the sun is blazing.' Public sitting under big deciduous trees can also be easily found in People's Square in Chongqing (see Fig 4.17). Big trees provide protected microclimates that make people can stay long in those publicly owned and managed public spaces. 'I can easily spend two hours in this square talking with my friends or just simply sitting here enjoying the sun', as an old man spoke to me when I was doing my fieldwork in People's Square.

Fig 4.17 Public sitting under tall deciduous trees in People's Square, Chongqing
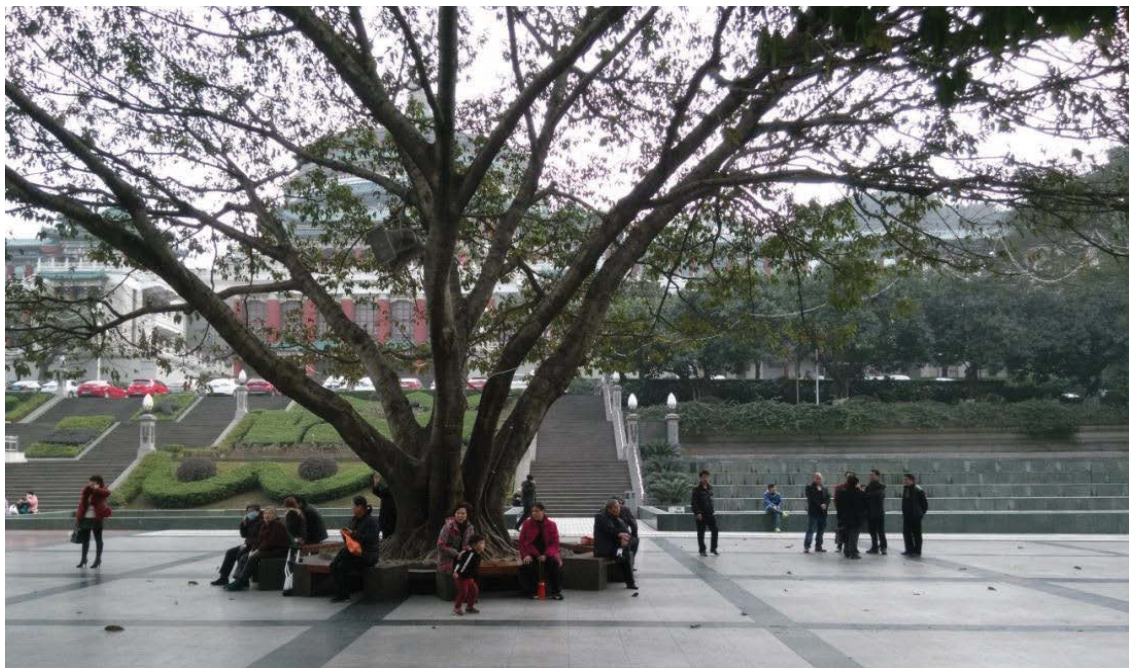
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

On the contrary, the situation in pseudo-public spaces is very different. Tall trees cannot grow in pseudo-public spaces. This is because, as an architect explained to me:

> As part of a shopping complex, the underground space of a pseudo-public space is invariably used as large open-shelf supermarkets, parking space or metro stations. The ground of pseudo-public space is in fact the roof of those underground spaces. Larger load on the ground requires stronger underground structure which, correspondingly, costs much more money. It is not economically rational to put a thick and very heavy soil layer on the ground just for planting some tall trees (interview #8).

As a result, being placed in open air but lacking big trees to provide protected microenvironments leads to that public seatings in pseudo-public spaces expose in wind, rain, sun and noise. The unprotected and uneasy microenvironment not only restricts talking, listening and other active engagement activities, but more importantly, it makes people hard to be relaxed and stay long in pseudo-public spaces.

Moreover, another factor that contributes to the uncomfortability of the public seats in pseudo-public spaces is the shapes and materials of the seats. I observed that, instead of wood, public sitting places in pseudo-public spaces are typically made of stone or marble, making them 'cold in winter and hot in summer' as a tourist I talked with in Xintiandi described. On the other hand, the public seats in pseudo-public spaces are often designed in shapes that are uneasy to sit on, such as slope surface and very low height (see Fig 4.18). Why choose these uncomfortable materials and shapes? The reason can be seen from the statement of a Chinese architect:

> There are many cafes and bars in those spaces (pseudo-public spaces), so there is no lack of places to sit. The major role they (public sitting places) play then is as landscape elements, rather than making people sit. As landscape elements, obviously, look good is more important than convenient to use (interview #5).

Fig 4.18 Uncomfortable materials and shapes of public sitting places in Chinese

pseudo-public spaces.

Source: photograph by the author, 2016

Apart from public sitting places, restroom is another facility that is important for making people stay longer in an urban space (Németh & Schmidt 2007). In the publicly owned and managed public spaces in China, finding and accessing restrooms are very easy. In both People's Park and People's Square, evident signboards are set up along the main pedestrian path to direct people in the public spaces where they can find the restrooms which are visible from, located in, and directly accessible from the outdoor space. However, during my fieldwork in Chinese pseudo-public spaces over the past three years or so, I often struggled with finding a restroom when I needed it. In the pseudo-public spaces I visited, restrooms were usually only located inside two kinds of places: onsite cafés and restaurants; and the shopping complex buildings. The location of restrooms makes them can hardly be found by the general public and hard to access for non-consumers.

Few public sitting places provided; uncomfortable microenvironments of those public sitting places; and the inconvenience of using necessary facilities such as restrooms collectively make it difficult for non-consumers to stay for longer periods in pseudo-public spaces. As an important result of being designed to be 'unstayable', physical spaces under study hardly support unplanned spontaneous uses. Xintiandi is a typical case in point. In Xintiandi, there are a large number of onsite cafés and restaurants. Those cafés and

restaurants echo Zukin's (1995) description of 'domestication by cappuccino' because they turn their frontage areas into privatised spaces that are provided for and only accessible to their own customers. Those privatised outdoor areas thus compress the activity space for the general public. As a result, there is only a narrow linear passage left for people to walk through in Xintiandi (see Fig 4.19). Because the space is not designed for long periods of seating and staying, people in these spaces have to do everything quickly and then keep moving, unless they are willing to pay some money for a seat and a cup of coffee in the outdoor cafés.

As a consequence, only certain fixed activities (such as walking along the designed linear pedestrian path, photo-taking in front of the preserved old buildings, and having very short conversations with friends standing in the pedestrian flow) could be observed. Those fixed activities, however, are not a quest for 'authentic' urban places because, as Stevens & Dovey (2004, p.354) remind us, 'the authenticities of urban life are linked to its ambiguities', rather than certainties. Clearly, the occurrence of fixed activities raises questions about how private power is mediated in the public realm and how spontaneity is constrained.

Fig 4.19 Privatised outdoor areas and a linear passage in Xintiandi
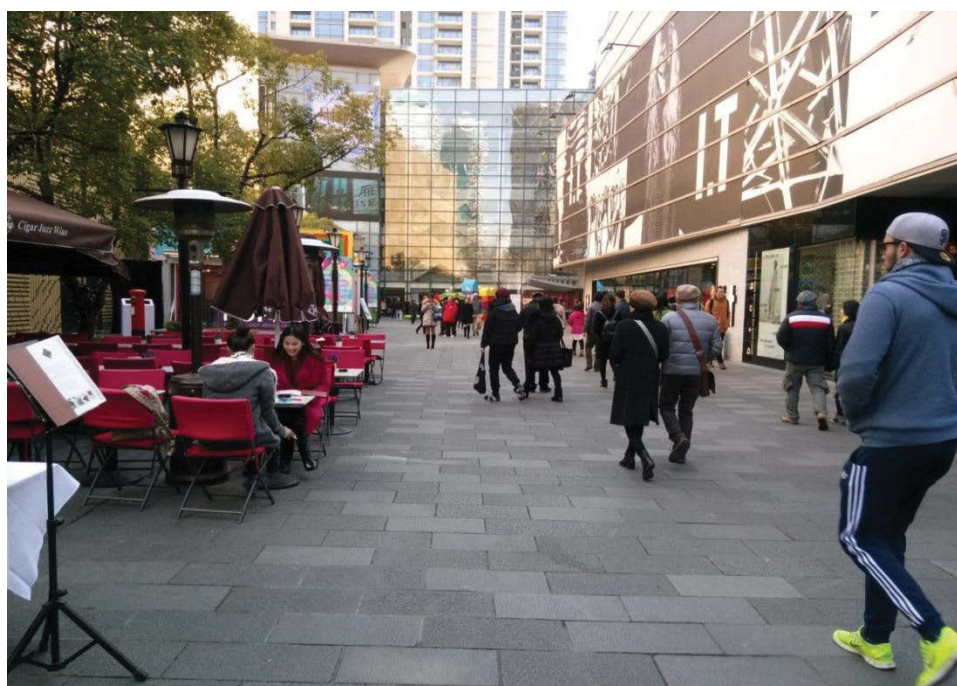
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

4.5 Manipulating the Publicness in Pseudo-Public Spaces

The noticeable differences in the overall levels of publicness of the two spaces are mainly caused by how they are manipulated and used. Here in this section, I turn to the daily management and control of the two study pseudo-public spaces. David Harvey (2013, p.3) maintains that 'we live in a world, after all, where the rights of private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights one can think of.' In general terms, when it comes to the management and control of pseudo-public spaces in contemporary China, what Harvey describes is true, and Xintiandi provides a typical case that supports Harvey's claim. However, as we will also see in this section, there are also occasions when the private power of capital investors does not play a dominant role in the daily control of pseudo-public spaces, which results in the general public can regain their rights to the city, or at least their rights to the 'streets' for conducting everyday urban life in a relatively freer environment.

4.5.1 Mediating Power in Space

This component is made up of three indicators: ownership, agency and interest. Assessments on these indicators reveal that the degrees of private control mediated in pseudo-public spaces vary significantly between different cases in China. Both of the study spaces are privately owned. However, there are significant distinctions between the two pseudo-public spaces in terms of the agencies in charge of controlling and managing the private properties. On the one hand, within the property boundaries of Xintiandi, all urban space is managed and controlled privately. Hired private security guards are the only actors in charge of maintaining the day-to-day order and security in Xintiandi. On the other hand, observations in Wanda Plaza show that there are occasions in China when the private power of capital investors does not play a dominant role in the daily control of pseudo-public spaces. The security and social order in Wanda Plaza is mainly maintained by three public agencies. First, the most often seen agency patrols in the pseudo-public space is the Public Safety Patrol Teams, or *zhian xunluo dui* in Chinese, organised by the local sub-district office, the administrative agency of the smallest political divisions in urban China (see Fig

4.20, left). Second, a few patrol vehicles driven by *chengguan*, China's urban management officers, are also often seen in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.20, right). Third, the city police patrol Wanda Plaza, although only occasionally. Undoubtedly, because pseudo-public spaces are private properties, the proprietor of Wanda Plaza must get involved in the daily control and management of the pseudo-public space to a degree. During the fieldwork in the space, only one security officer of the proprietor patrolled through the space in roughly every 2 hours. In Wanda Plaza, therefore, although the agency maintaining the security and order of the space is in essence a public-private-partnership, the roles the two parts play are not balanced. The private sector plays a much weaker role in this partnership. For this reason, in the dimension of 'agency', I scored Wanda Plaza a '1' to indicate that the agencies in charge of controlling the space are 'more public' than a neutral public-private-partnership but 'less public' than pure public agencies.

Fig 4.20 Public Safety Patrol Team members (left) and urban management officers (right) in Nanping Wanda Plaza
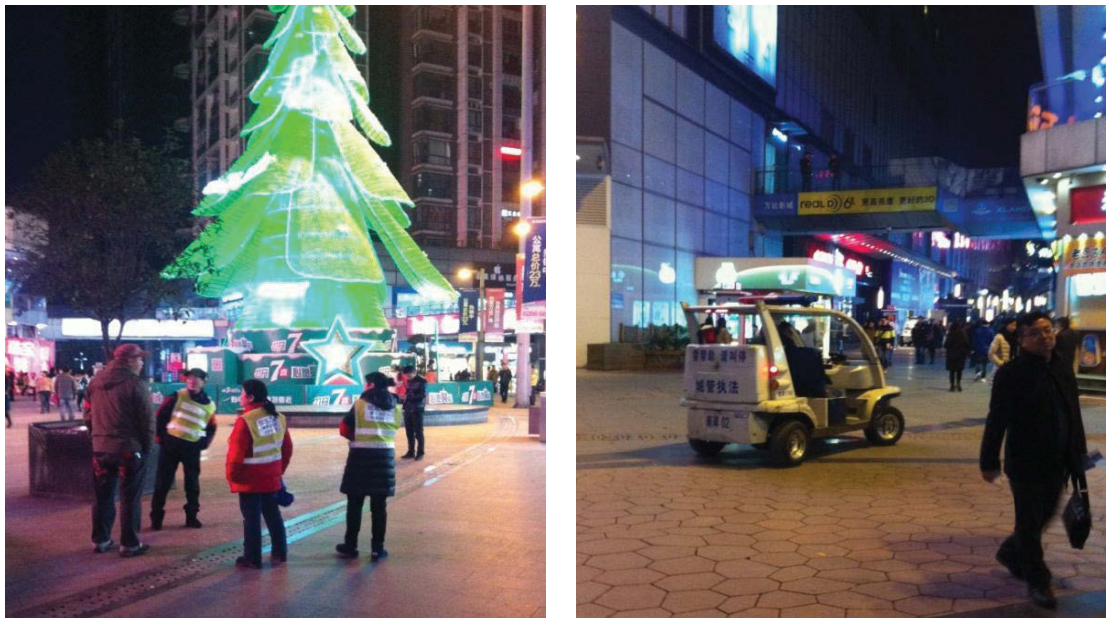
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

Turning now to the issue of 'interest', the issue requires even more careful analysis. Akkar (2005a) shows that urban public space plays aesthetic, physical, symbolic, and

economic roles. Following Akkar, assessment on the 'interest' dimension focused on these four roles. Regarding the aesthetic and physical roles, the private sector's involvement takes the form of investing considerable amount of money to enhance the aesthetic, visual and physical qualities of the urban areas in where pseudo-public spaces are located. Both Xintiandi and Wanda Plaza significantly improved the visual and aesthetic qualities of the urban areas in where they are situated, and powerfully accentuated those urban spaces' aesthetic and physical roles. The significant improvements in their aesthetic and physical qualities have promoted the symbolic roles that the pseudo-public spaces play. For example, the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi has generated a new but strong 'visual identity' for not merely the particular urban area, but also the whole city (Luo 2002). The images of Xintiandi have become a model for Shanghai, as they are used by almost every tourist book about Shanghai to illustrate the city's unique feature of combining Chinese and Western cultures (which is commonly referred to as *haipai* culture in Chinese). 'Xintiandi has been a Shanghai icon for a decade or more', as Lonely Planet, the largest and most popular travel guide book publisher in the world, describes Xintiandi's symbolic role for the city in its official webpage[①].

However, a crucial question to ask is whether the general public is able to enjoy the benefits generated from those improvements? Answering this question requires a look at the economic roles the spaces play. Because of the profit-seeking nature of private investors, it is not difficult to understand that a key motivation of all the aesthetic and physical improvements made by the developers discussed above is 'image-making' for consumer attraction, spending, and hence increased profit.

In Xintiandi, for example, the developer successfully makes the pseudo-public space an 'economic catalyst' and creates a 'high-end' image in this particular urban area. The proprietors, as a result, become the biggest beneficiaries of the economic roles Xintiandi plays. Between 2001 and 2015, the average house price in the Xintiandi area soared 7.5 times, reaching 120,000 Yuan per square metre[②]. While, between 2005 and 2014, as noted

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[①] See: http://www.lonelyplanet.com/china/shanghai/sights/neighbourhoods-villages/xintiandi (accessed 20 July, 2016)
[②] The average house price of Xintiandi area during late 2001 and early 2002 was about 16,000 Yuan per square metre. The 2015 average house price (120,000 yuan per square metre) was for

in a *China Business News* (2015) article, the average house price of Shanghai (central urban area) only increased 1.9 times, which means the house price of Xintiandi area increased at a speed of over 3 times faster than the average house price growth rate of the city after the pseudo-public space was built. Because of the high house prices in this area, Xintiandi has already become a very affluent neighbourhood.

'The apartments in Xintiandi are built to sell to rich people from the developed world, rather than local Shanghaiers.' I heard this interesting comment from a taxi driver during my fieldwork in Shanghai. Although what the diver said is not the exact truth (most people live in Xintiandi area, according to my observation, are still Chinese, rather than people from 'the developed world'), it reflects what this particular urban area looks like in local people's eyes. Moreover, the driver's impression that people live in Xintiandi area must be very rich has been confirmed by one of my interviewees working in the real estate industry in Shanghai. 'Xintiandi is definitely one of the most expensive areas in not any Shanghai, but the whole Asia', the interviewee spoke (interview #18). I was told people live there are mainly senior executives of the Fortune Global 500 enterprises and some big film and sport stars[1]. I heard, for example, Sven-Göran Eriksson, the well-known former manager of the English national soccer team who was working in Shanghai during 2014 and 2016 and paid 4 million US dollars per year, was living in a spacious luxury apartment in Xintiandi. Consistent with findings established in the urban studies literature (e.g., Obeng-Odoom, 2014; 2016c), becoming an affluent neighbourhood under capitalist conditions, has created gentrification and spatial segregation in this urban area. High service prices, tight social control schemes and strict rules which directly exclude certain social activities, as we will see, are applied to filer users and their activities in this urban space.

However, the situation in Wanda Plaza is different. Indeed, the improvements in aesthetic, physical and symbolic conditions have caused noticeable increases in property prices in and around Wanda Plaza. Between 2009 (when Wanda Plaza opened to the public) and 2015, the average house price of Wanda Plaza area grew by 58.7 per cent, increasing

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second-hand houses. This information draws on conversations with local real estate agents during the fieldwork.

[1] This information draws on conversations with local real estate agents during my fieldwork in Shanghai.

from 6,300 Yuan to about 10,000 Yuan per square metre[1]. While, the average house price of the city only increased by 24.8 per cent during 2009 and 2014[2]. According to Chongqing Municipal Statistics Bureau (2015), in 2014, the average wage of workers in Chongqing was 56,852 Yuan[3]. Based on house prices in 2015, a 100-square-metre apartment in Wanda Plaza area only costs an average income family 9 years' salary, which is an affordable ratio in China (*Shanghai Securities News* 2012). As a result of the affordability, most residents live in Wanda Plaza area are middle-income people[4]. Being a middle-income neighbourhood, leads to much weaker demands for spatial segregation in this particular urban area. Consequently, the proprietors do not play a dominant role in controlling this pseudo-public space, and, as we will see, no explicit social control schemes are adopted and no visible sets of rules exist in the pseudo-public space to exclude any specific social groups or activities. Beggars and itinerant vendors selling small toys and mobile phone accessories such as screen protectors, as a result, can all be observed in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.21). In this sense, Wanda Plaza is more open and accessible to a wider range of social groups. The benefits of the improved aesthetic, physical and symbolic conditions of this urban space are, thus, able to be enjoyed by not only the proprietors, but also a wider range of members in the society.

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[1] This information draws on conversations with local real estate agents during my fieldwork in Chongqing.

[2] The price increase is calculated based on Chongqing Municipal Statistics Bureau (2015), table 7-29: Sales price indices of houses (1998-2014).

[3] This figure is the average annual wage of workers employed by 'non-private enterprises'. Data on the average wage of workers employed by 'private enterprises' is not available. Therefore, this figure is merely indicative.

[4] This information draws on conversations with local real estate agents during my fieldwork in Chongqing.

Fig 4.21 A beggar in the pseudo-public space of Wanda Plaza (He wondered in the pseudo-public space without being excluded).
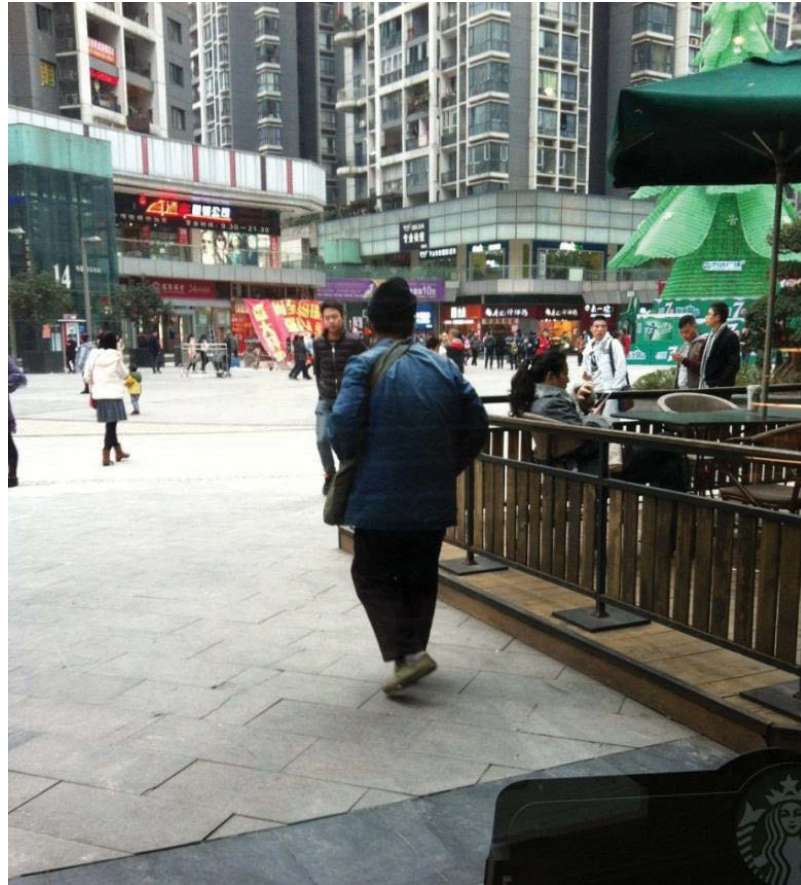
Source: photograph by the author, 2016

4.5.2 Constraining Spontaneity

This component assesses rules and 'direct' control schemes used in Chinese pseudo-public spaces. In general terms, compared with public parks and squares, rules and control/management schemes applied in Chinese pseudo-public spaces contribute to constrain the spontaneity of conducting urban social life to a degree. Direct control instruments, such as security patrols and surveillance cameras, are highly visible in both Xintiandi and Wanda Plaza. Among all the pseudo-public spaces in China I visited during the past four years, Xintiandi is one of the smallest in scale. However, the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi has the greatest concentrations of surveillance cameras and uniformed security guards. In Xintiandi, there are always two to three security guards in a private

security company's police-like uniforms standing at every entry point plus three to four uniformed security guards patrolling inside the pseudo-public space. Meanwhile, at least 22 surveillance cameras are placed -on top of streetlight or on the external walls of buildings- along the main pedestrian path in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.22). Although painted in black, these cameras still can be seen very plainly in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.22). In Wanda Plaza, four large Chinese characters: '城管巡逻', which means 'chengguan patrol', are printed on the front and the rear of every chengguan vehicle patrolling in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.20, right). Meanwhile, the fluorescence yellow vests which the local Public Safety Patrol Team members wear clearly distinct them from other people in the space (see Fig 4.20, left). Moreover, surveillance cameras are also placed on the external walls of buildings along the main pedestrian path. None of these direct control instruments has made an effort to cover themselves up.

As for rules of use, no visible set of rules can be observed in Wanda Plaza, while strict rules are adopted and posted out at every entry point of Xintiandi. Those rules specifically exclude certain public activities, such as all unauthorised commercial activities, bringing and playing with pets, and using roller-skaters and skateboards, from the space (see Fig 4.23). Highly visible explicit control instruments or rules for use in pseudo-public spaces plays a significant role as 'opportunity-reduction' techniques which removes potential 'ambiguity', discourages the spontaneous social activities to happen, and thus enhances the space owner's or manager's control over the space to a degree (Oc & Tiesdell 1999).

Fig 4.22 Locations of surveillance cameras and private security guards in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi

A surveillance camera in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi
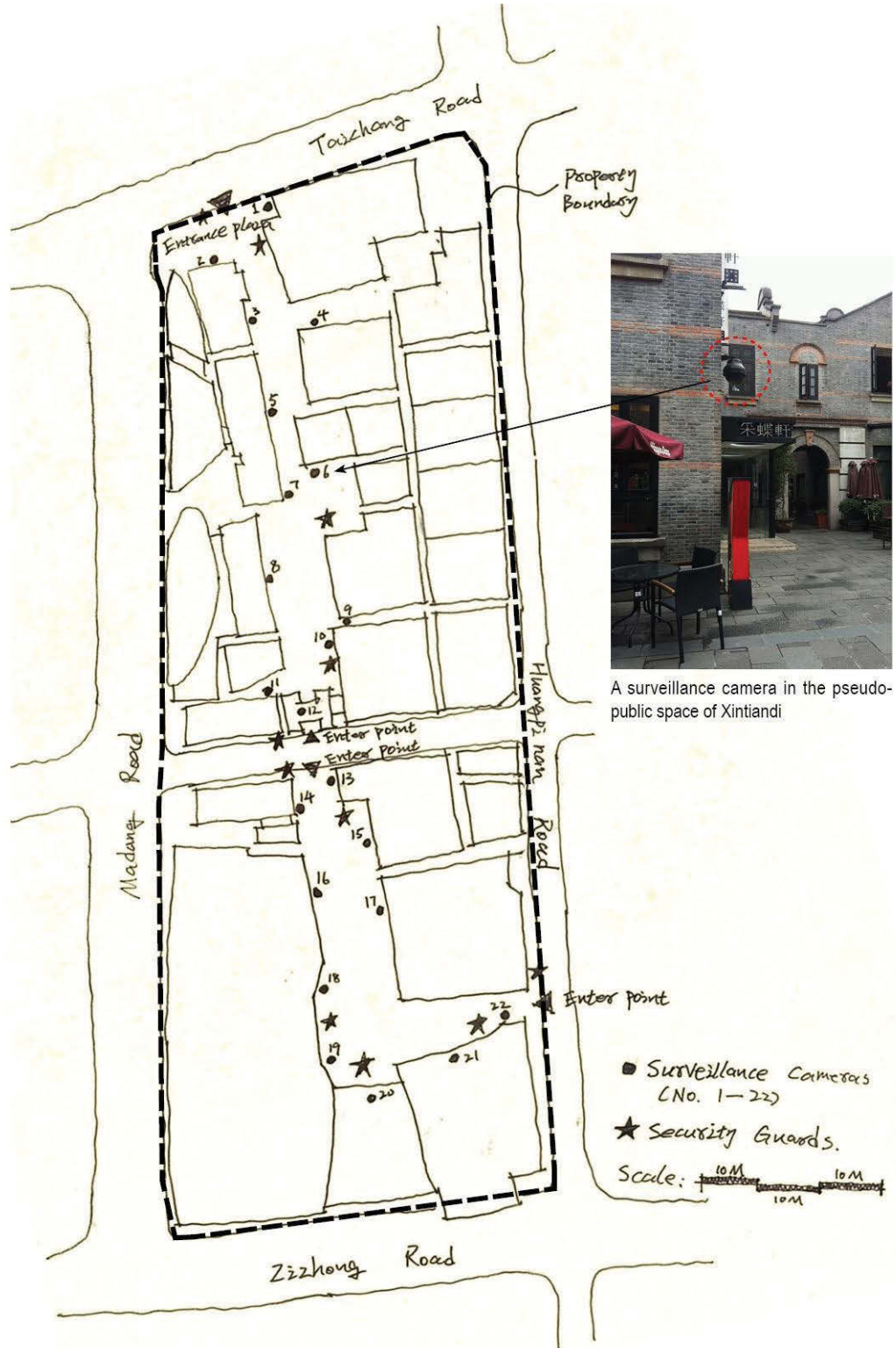
Source: the author's fieldnotes (photograph by the author, 2016)

Fig 4.23 Visible sets of rules are placed at every entry point of Xintiandi

Source: photograph by the author, 2015

However, because the agencies in charge of controlling the pseudo-public spaces are different, the purposes for adopting those direct control schemes or rules in Xintiandi and Wanda Plaza differ. On the one hand, as we have seen, the social order in Wanda Plaza is mainly maintained by public agencies such as urban management officers and police. Protecting profitability and promoting property values and economic spill-over are not the major responsibilities of those public agencies. Instead, for those agencies, Wanda Plaza is, to a large extent, nothing special but a component of the urban public realm under their jurisdiction. The social control in Wanda Plaza is, therefore, to a large degree incorporated in the overall public security system of the city. As a result, the purpose of social control in Wanda Plaza, like that in other publicly controlled spaces, is more inclined to protect the safety of people and promote a 'responsible' freedom in the space.

On the other hand, in Xintiandi, as the agency in charge of maintaining the social order in the pseudo-public space is private security guards hired and paid by the developer and proprietors, protecting the safety and profitability of private property becomes a core duty.

It, therefore, becomes the main purpose for conducting direct control schemes in the space. Here is one piece of evidence. Because of its great popularity and attractiveness to visitors, Xintiandi is one of the most popular places in Shanghai for home and aboard artists to display their outdoor artworks. During my multiple visits to this place over the past four years, I came across several art and design exhibitions held in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi. There were times when I tried to touch the sculptures displayed in the pseudo-public space. I was abruptly stopped by the security guards stood by the artworks. When I asked the security guards why I could not touch the sculptures, because there was neither cordon separated them from the visitors nor sign indicated that people are prohibited from touching them. Every time, from different security guards, I received the same explanation: 'they (the artworks) are expensive and fragile', rather than they may fall and people may get hurt (Fig 4.24).

Fig 4.24 Security guards protecting an artwork exhibited in Xintiandi

Source: photograph by the author, 2015

4.6 Public Use in Pseudo-Public Spaces

In *The Production of Space* (1991), Henri Lefebvre argues that urban spaces are *produced* 'to be used and to be consumed' (p.85). He claims social activities involve the economic realm and inherent to property relationships play a crucial role in producing urban spaces. In the previous sections, we have seen how the economic activities inherent to property relationships shape the spatiality of pseudo-public spaces and determine how they are controlled and managed. We have also seen some stories about how the two study pseudo-public spaces are used. This section discusses more about this subject. It tries to draw a fuller picture of how the spatiality of pseudo-public spaces and power mediated in pseudo-public spaces discussed in previous sections collectively determine how these urban spaces are used by the public.

4.6.1 Forming Communities of Strangers

Assessments of this component show that, in China, the ways people socially engage with pseudo-public spaces also vary noticeably between different cases. Let me start the discussion by describing a typical walk in the city centre of Shanghai in the early morning. At around 8:00am when the majority of tourists and people need to go to work have not left their hotel rooms and homes, if you come to Nanjing Road -China's premier shopping street- you will see this place is not as crowded as you may think it is. This street, however, is not empty or quiet either. Several groups of old ladies can be seen in the street gathering at different spots of the street and dancing in orderly formations to the loud music played through portable speakers (see Fig 4.25 above). They are performing square dances, or *guangchang wu* in Chinese, which is a popular, especially with middle-aged and retired women, exercise routine performed in public spaces. Go down the street from east to west, cross Middle Xizang Road, you will immediately reach another public space: People's Park. In comparison with Nanjing Road, this park is 'so quiet and feels so unpolluted that it is interesting to have it side by side with Nanjing Road in the city centre', as a tourist comments in TripAdvisor, a famous travel website and blog. People's Park is a real public space for the city. Even when it is very early in the morning, it is still possible to see the

Fig 4.25 People engaged with public spaces in the early morning: a group of old ladies playing square dances in Nanjing Road (above), Shanghainese parents with their unwed children's resumes in the 'marriage market' (left below) and people express and disseminate their dissatisfactions with judicial decisions (right below) in People's Park.

Source: photograph by the author in 2015, except the one at left below which is collected from http://blog.colettefu.com/2014/06/shanghai-marriage-market.html (accessed 22 August, 2016)

space occupied by a series of public activities. There are people playing *Tai Chi*, practicing martial arts, doing morning exercises, having a game of chess, sitting on a bench reading newspapers or chatting with friends, and so on. If you come to the park on weekends, you can see unique ways people engaged with the space. For example, every weekend, hundreds of Shanghainese parents assemble in People's Park with the resumes of their unwed children to negotiate potential hook-ups. Crowds of them jostle and chatter at a corner of

the park, making bushes around filled with papers advertising height and weight, salary and education of their children (see Fig 4.25 left below). Engaging with the space in this way, their activities turn the corner of the park into a temporary 'marriage market'. Meanwhile, to take another example, another corner of the park, in weekends, is used as a place where people gather with big-character posters to publicly express and disseminate their dissatisfactions with judicial decisions and the corruptions of some government officials (see Fig 4.25 right below).

Leave People's Park heading toward south, go through People's Square and keep waking, you will then soon arrive at Xintiandi. Now, the clock reaches around 8:45am. There is still over one hour before the shopping mall, retail stores and restaurants in Xintiandi open to their customers. The pseudo-public space of Xintiandi is almost empty at this time of a day (see Fig 4.26). The only group of people using the space at this point of time is those who work in nearby office buildings. They simply walk through the pseudo-public space without stopping using it as a shortcut connecting the metro station and their workplaces. None of the social activities you just saw in Nanjing Road and People's Park can be observed in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi at this time of a day. Nobody is dancing in the space, because 'here is not a park', as one of the security guards, who already begin to patrol the space, spoke to me. In this urban space, loud music is only allowed to be played by the bars and restaurants as background music to create a 'tasty' dining environment for their customers.

Fig 4.26 The pseudo-public space of Xintiandi is empty before business hours.
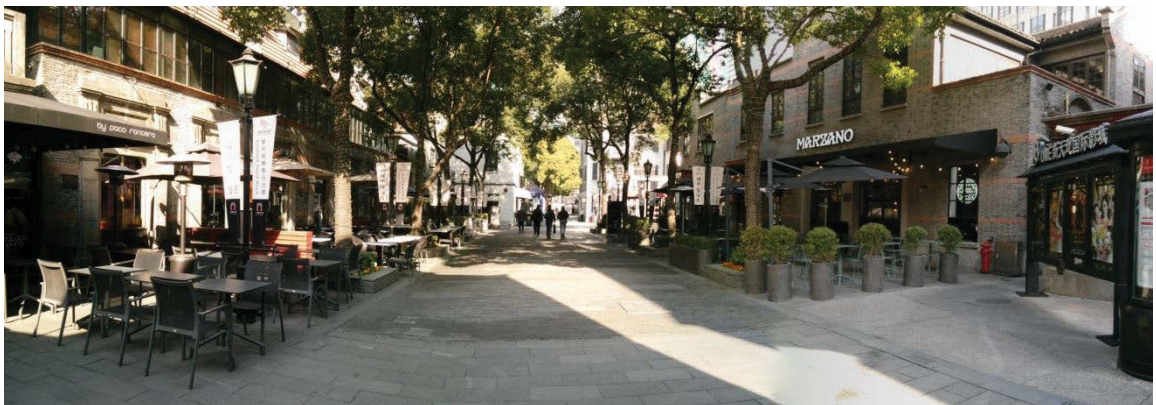
Source: photograph by the author, 2015

Fig 4.27 Numbers of persons doing 'social activities' and 'necessary activities' in Xintiandi (left) and Wanda Plaza (right) during the business hours of a weekday

Xintiandi

		94	84	117	118
24	86				
47	44	112	65	32	46

10:00 12:00 14:00 16:00 18:00 20:00

☐ Social activities ☐ Necessary activities

Wanda Plaza

290	306	263	373	588	341
68	79	101	155	134	167

10:00 12:00 14:00 16:00 18:00 20:00

☐ social activities ☐ Necessary activities
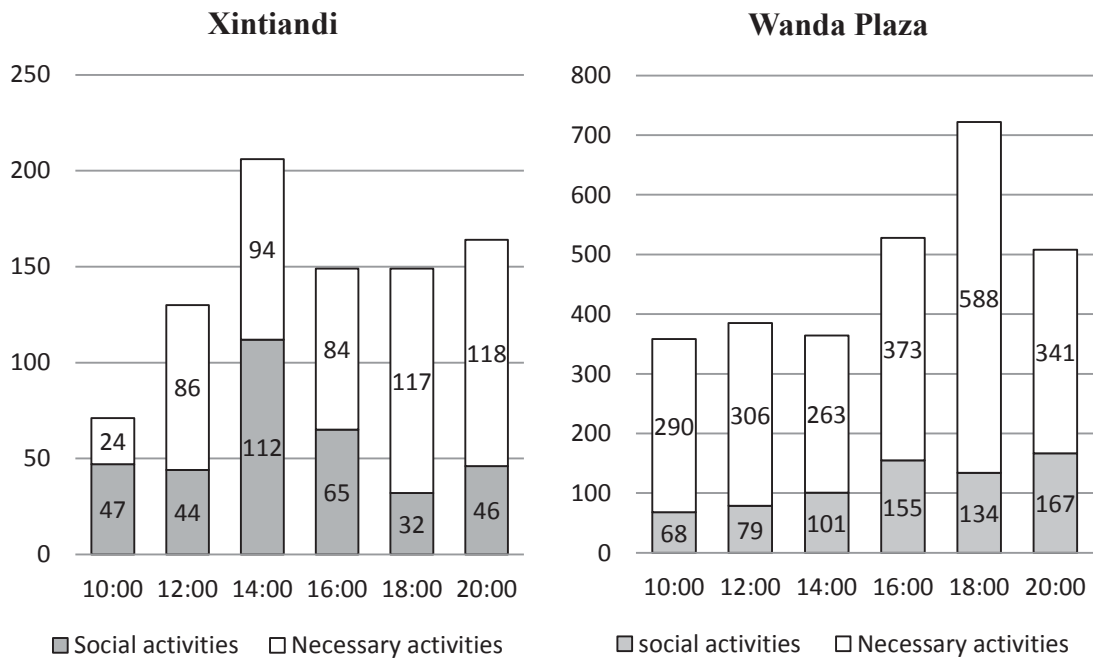
Source: based on date collected through direct-countings during my fieldwork[①]

After 10:00am when the shopping mall, bars and restaurants are open, the number of social activities in the pseudo-public space starts to increase. However, as a result of the 'opportunity-reduction techniques' applied in the space which, as we have seen, exclude particular social groups by prohibiting certain behaviours and activities from happening in the space, there are, as aforementioned, only 'planned uses' such as photo taking, window shopping or having a cup of coffee in the outdoor café can be observed in the space during a day. According to direct-counting on site, during the business hours, most activities occurred in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi are what Gehl (2011) calls 'necessary activities' (see Fig 4.27 left). When night falls, a special social group begins to emerge in Xintiandi: sex workers. If you are a man and walk alone in this particular urban space at night after 8:00pm, some sex workers will come close and ask you, in a very strong Southern Min accent, whether you are interested in 'finding a place to have some fun'.

[①] On-site direct-countings were carried out every two hours during the business hours: from 10:00 to 20:00. The numbers illustrated in above diagrams are arithmetic averages of date collected in 3 different weekdays. All on-site direct-countings were conducted in fine weather spring days, when the temperature and weather conditions were suitable for outdoor activities.

Their heavy accents clearly tell those sex workers are not locals of the city. Southern Min, or *Min Nan* in Chinese, is a Chinese dialect mainly spoken in certain parts of China including southern Fujian, eastern Guangzhou, Hainan, southern Zhejiang and Taiwan, and it is also spoken by descendants of emigrants from these areas in diaspora, most notably the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. Even if you say 'no' to those sex workers, they will not leave you immediately. Instead, they will follow you closely for a few paces to make sure you are truly not interested in their sexual services. If you hesitate and show interest, they will, very likely, offer you a price trying to make you stop walking and bargain over it with them.

Although sexual service transactions are not rarely-seen in China today, prostitution is still, to a large extent, regarded as a disgraceful thing in Chinese culture. Talking about sexual service in public is still very shameful for the Chinese. Moreover, sexual service transactions are not legally permitted in China so far. It is, therefore, hard to imagine a man and a sex worker can negotiate on sexual service transaction in an urban space if they feel it is full of people who know them. For this reason, the presence of sex workers in the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi is a strong proof of how this urban space is culturally understood. In the pseudo-public space of Xintiandi, although they have deliberately lowered their voices to a degree, the 'customers' are not so shy to bargain over prices with sex workers. You can still easily heard what they are talking about when you walk pass them. People feel not so uncomfortable to do this in this urban space, because they know that other people using this urban space are all strangers. A local newspaper reported that the peak number of daily visitors to Xintiandi reached 80 thousands in 2015 (*National Business Daily 2015*). However, according to a study carried out by two local urban scholars (Xu & Wang 2012), over 35 per cent of the visitors to Xintiandi are tourists from other cities. Meanwhile, almost 80 per cent of the visitors to Xintiandi use taxi or public transport, and the average time they spent on their way from their homes to Xintiandi is 77 minutes. That is to say, the vast majority of people in Xintiandi are either from other cities or from other parts of Shanghai which are far from the city centre. Most of them do not come to the space regularly. People have no idea about each other's names, who their

family members are, what they do for living, or where they live. The pseudo-public space in this sense is what Wallin (1998) describes as 'dystemic space' in which people are connected through impersonal and abstract relationships. It is, in short, 'a community of strangers'.

In Wanda Plaza, however, the situation is different. Early in the morning at around 8:30am when the shopping mall and stores are still closed, Wanda Plaza is not occupied by consumers or metro passengers who enter the station via the pseudo-public space, but occupied by several groups of local residents. There is, for example, one group of old ladies playing square dances, or *guangchang wu,* at the north-western end of the pseudo-public space, while another group of elderly people are playing *Tai Chi* in the square at the heart of the space. During the business hours, since, as previously discussed, the proprietors have no strong demand for social control to exclude particular social groups and behaviours from the space, many unplanned spontaneous public uses can be observed in the pseudo-public space during a day -such as bringing and playing with pets, begging, vending, soliciting and performing exercise routines- even though what most people doing in the space during the business hours are still 'necessary activities' (see Fig 4.27 right).

After 8:00pm at every night, a group of local residents emerge in Wanda Plaza and bring their pet dogs to the space, using the pseudo-public space as a playground for their pets. To get to the place, many of those dog owners only need to go downstairs and cross a road, so it can be observed that some of them come to the space even without changing their clothes. They are wearing pyjamas and slippers just like what people usually wear at home. When dogs are playing in the space, the dog owners and other people in the space are chatting (see Fig 4.28). People are linked by those talks and activities happening in the space. What Kohn (2004) calls 'intersubjectivity' can be observed in the pseudo-public space, namely people from different social groups not only encounter, but also carry out activities interactively in a shared urban space. In this way, the pseudo-public space of Wanda Plaza becomes a common social space for local residents and people visit this place. The sense of community mixes up with the inherent commercial nature of the shopping space making the space, to a large extent, a mixture of consumers and community.

Fig 4.28 People playing with pet dogs and chatting in Wanda Plaza

Source: photograph by the author, 2016

4.6.2 Serving the 'Filtered' Public

The last component assesses the accessibility of information and resource in the study pseudo-public spaces. In Xintiandi, few resources are provided for free public use. For example, there is no free water refill station or drinking fountain provided in the space. As for information about the space, people in the pseudo-public space can acquire it in two ways. First, there are information cylinders placed at every entry point of the space (see Fig 4.29, left). Second, people can obtain information by collecting free information pamphlets placed in boxes next to every information cylinder. The main information provided in those cylinders and pamphlets is where all the luxury stores, restaurants, bars and fee-paying leisure services are located in Xintiandi. Obviously, this kind of information is only useful for and intentionally targeted at shoppers. To know any other kind of or more detailed information about the space, one has to go to the Visitor Information Centre which is

located inside the shopping mall. In retail spaces, as Németh (2009, p.2472) reminds us, owners or managers often implement a number of techniques to 'effectively filter or sort users to ensure an appropriate clientele'. In this sense, the location of the Information Centre does not merely mean that it is only accessible during business hours, but, more importantly, implies that it mainly serves only the 'filtered' public, not the general public. That is why, in the dimension of information accessibility, Xintiandi is scored '0' (information about the space is only accessible to certain groups).

Like in Xintiandi, the majority of resources in Wanda Plaza are also only accessible to consumers. For example, the majority of sitting places in the pseudo-public space are located in outdoor cafés and only accessible to fee paying customers. However, in Wanda Plaza, the information is both more varied and more publicly accessible. The public can get a very wide range of information about the pseudo-public space itself and its surrounding urban areas through a number of computerised and self-serviced information stations placed in the pseudo-public space (see Fig 4.29, right).

Fig 4.29 Information cylinder in Xintiandi (left) and the self-service computerised information station in Wanda Plaza (right)

Source: photograph by the author, 2016

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter sought to (1) answer the questions: what are the relative degrees of publicness of pseudo-public spaces? What accord for the differences? And how do pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of Chinese cities? In doing so, the chapter (2) presents and discusses case studies of pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces in two selected large Chinese cities: Shanghai and Chongqing. On this basis, the chapter (3) has assessed the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in the two Chinese cities.

The chapter shows that pseudo-public spaces, as a new kind of urban space, are designed, manipulated and used significantly differently from publicly owned and managed public spaces. Those differences need particular emphasis. First, in comparison with public parks and squares, pseudo-public spaces are physically better connected with the overall movement network of the cities, but their spatial designs are less supportive for people's long-time stay without consumption. Second, pseudo-public spaces mediate stronger private power of the proprietors in the urban public realm, which means people's spontaneity and freedom are constrained to a higher extent in pseudo-public spaces than in publicly owned and managed public spaces. Third, pseudo-public spaces are usually seen and used as communities of strangers whose resources and information tend to only accessible to filtered users, rather than the public in general. The above differences collectively lead to the argument that the levels of publicness of the two study pseudo-public spaces are noticeably lower than publicly owned and managed public spaces. According to the empirical assessments based on the scoring index, the two study pseudo-public spaces, Xintiandi and Wanda Plaza, are scored -20 out of -40 and 13 out of 40 respectively, while the two publicly owned and managed public spaces received 35 out of 40 and 30 out of 40 separately both of which are much higher (indicating 'more public') than the scores the pseudo-public spaces received. This finding supports the 'conventional school' argument that: owning space in common can lead to better use of resources and is more consistent with an inclusive society.

However, because the economic, social and geographical backgrounds vary

considerably among different cities in China, important differences in the manipulation and use of pseudo-public spaces in distinct Chinese cities can be observed. As a result, while some pseudo-public spaces in China, like Xintiandi in Shanghai, have become affluent neighbourhoods which are in 'highly private' situation (as indicated by the very low negative score of -20 out of -40), there are also some pseudo-public spaces, as we have seen in the case of Wanda Plaza, in where no strong demand for social segregation exists and thus no tight social control schemes applied. They serve as public places which provide the city with relatively freer environment in which the general public can meet, gather, stay and conduct their daily social urban life. This finding supports the more 'natural rights school' view that: perceptions of the public realm's apparent decline in contemporary societies are false. The relationship of public space to public life is dynamic and reciprocal in the urban process under capitalism, with new forms of public life requiring new spaces. The rise of pseudo-public spaces, as a result, has significantly extended the scope of public spaces in Chinese cities. Today in China, people no longer only see parks and public squares as places where they can conduct their daily urban life. Some private properties, such as Wanda Plaza, have also become stages on which everyday civil social life occurs. This transformation, in turn, has dramatically blurred the boundaries between the public and the private in Chinese cities.

Building upon the above key findings, this chapter has argued that, although pseudo-public spaces are generally less public than publicly owned and managed public spaces, the rise of pseudo-public space in the particular context of mainland China, does not necessarily result in what many western urban scholars call the 'end of public space' (Mitchell 2003; Sorkin 1992; Voyce 2006) in the country. Pseudo-public spaces in Chinese cities still play a role in providing 'public places' for the society and the city. The findings of this chapter implicate that the commons, public spaces and pseudo-public spaces should not be seen as antinomies. Rather, they should be seen dialectically. For this reason, Zhang & Peck's (2016) recent work about Chinese varieties of capitalism will have to be qualified. Even within China, there are huge differences.

This chapter shows that, as a result of the rise of pseudo-public space, the nature of the

public realm is changing speedily and the line between the public and the private are blurring quickly in Chinese cities. Then, in this process, what economic, socio-spatial, and environmental consequences have occurred in Chinese cities? What are the policy implications of the rise of pseudo-public spaces for China? These are the focuses of the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Consequences of Pseudo-Public Spaces

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, …

—Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

5.1 Introduction

Much has been written about the transformation of urban spatial form and social life (e.g., Gaubatz 2005, 2008; He & Lin 2015; Lu 2011; Yang & Xu 2009), gentrification and dispossession in rapid urbanisation (e.g., He 2007; Shin 2016; Wang 2011; Wu 2016b), urban-based economic reform and restructuring (e.g., Lin & Yi 2011; Pan et al. 2017; Wu 1999b), and the degradation of urban environmental quality (e.g., Brajer & Mead 2004; Fernandez 2007; He et al. 2016; Lu & Liu 2016) in China. How the rise of pseudo-public spaces or commercial spaces in China is connected with those widely discussed urban phenomena, however, has received much less attention. This neglect is surprising because the rise of pseudo-public spaces has been accompanied by several socio-economic and environmental contradictions in Chinese society. Failure to recognise the consequences of pseudo-public spaces, which are new but ubiquitous in Chinese cities, could result in an incomplete picture of Chinese urbanisation and, as a result, weaken its reference value.

This chapter, therefore, outlines the structural connections between the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China and those widely discussed urban phenomena. The chapter argues that the rapid spatial transformation happening in China not only produces severe environmental challenges, but also threatens to undercut any progress that the cities purport to have made. Rising pollution levels, massive evictions, and growing inequality illustrate

the tensions and contradictions called forth by Chinese pseudo-public spaces. While many people appear to have adapted to the growing contradictions, China's new urbanism threatens to undermine any real progress. To demonstrate this argument, this chapter is structured thematically in four parts. The first three sections respectively discuss the economic, environmental and socio-spatial consequences of and reactions to the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China in that order. The fourth section proposes some suggestions for policy-making.

5.2 Economic Consequences

5.2.1 Expediting the Circulation of Money in Urban Space

The economic consequences of the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China are micro and macro in scale. Generally speaking, at the micro-scale, the rise of pseudo-public spaces expedites the circulation of money in Chinese cities. To understand how the circulation process is accelerated by pseudo-public spaces, it is important to recognise that urbanisation under capitalism is, in essence, a process that tries to make fluid capital pinned down in the built environment (Harvey 1975, 1978, 1981). In this sense, as aforementioned in Chapter 2, the built environment plays a dual-role. On the one hand, the built environment is itself produced as commodity that can be sold directly for profit. On the other hand, the built environment is a physical setting which stages and facilitates the circulation of goods, people and information in cities (Bentley 1999).

Furthermore, some kinds of built environment, such as private houses, are more inclined to play the role of commodities. This kind of built environment, as Bryan & Rafferty (2014) point out, is being drawn directly into the circuit of capital because it can be bought and sold for its use value as shelter and for its exchange value in speculation. The existence of those built environments may slow down the circulation process of money in cities, because –unlike many other products such as clothes which can be produced, sold, consumed, and then replaced by new ones in s short period of time- the built environment is an unique kind of product that usually takes a long time to produce (build) and, once built,

they usually last for a very long time before being demolished and spaces are made available for new investments and constructions (Harvey 2016). On the contrary, some other kinds of built environment, such as highways and marketplaces, are more inclined to play the role as the physical setting or platform on which capital circulation and accumulation can not only take place, but be facilitated. When playing this role, the built environment shortens the turnover time of capital by bring all production, distribution and exchange activities together and making them happen in spatially concentrated areas. Harvey (2016) describes this phenomenon as 'time-space compression'. A crucial result of the reduction in turnover time is that it makes the overall circulation process of money become significantly faster in cities. Urban spaces for commercial use are a typical example of this kind of built environment. As a special issue of *Regional Studies* -that brings together papers from urban economics and urban geography to analyse how investment in business property may affect the economic, spatial and social development of cities- finds, commercial properties are a vital, integrated component of business capital and have a significant impact on capital's aggregate productivity in city settings (Halbert, Henneberry & Mouzakis 2014).

When it comes to pseudo-public spaces (namely the outdoor spaces in commercial complexes), unlike shops and interior spaces inside commercial complexes, they are very rarely directly sold for profit. Instead, those outdoor spaces are mainly used to attract consumers by providing open leisure spaces decorated by prosperous retail atmospheres and to promote consumption by displaying tempting products and services that can realise people's consumerism material dreams. In other words, pseudo-public spaces are physical platforms to promote and enhance the profitability of the commercial complexes or shopping malls they belong to (Banerjee 2001; Langstraat & Van Melik 2013). Therefore, pseudo-public space this particular kind of urban space mainly plays the second role of built environment to facilitate the circulation of capital in cities.

Specifically, in Chinese cities, pseudo-public spaces expedite the circulation of money in two ways. First, the circulation process is expedited from the outside. As the empirical evidence from Shanghai and Chongqing shows, in China, pseudo-public spaces are always

physically well connected with the overall movement networks of the cities. By integrating with the city public transport system and eliminating distinguishable thresholds and entry points, people's movement-to and movement-through pseudo-public spaces in Chinese cities are always well facilitated. At the same time, by creating 'unstayable' spaces, staying in the pseudo-public space for a long time without consumption is usually not supported in Chinese pseudo-public spaces. These two important features of Chinese pseudo-public spaces combine lead to the result that people keep coming to pseudo-public spaces but only those who are willing to consume can stay for long, while non-consumers are unknowingly filtered and driven out of those urban spaces very quickly to make spaces and resources in them available for new comers who are willing to spend money. As a result of these processes, people come to and leave pseudo-public spaces quickly. According to my on-site direct counting in Nanping Wanda Plaza, to take an example, in an ordinary weekday, the numbers of people who came to and left the pseudo-public space in the first 10 minutes of 12:00pm, 4:00pm and 8:00pm were 385, 528 and 508 respectively. That is to say, on average, people were travelling to or leaving this particular pseudo-public space at a speed of nearly 3,000 people per hour during an ordinary weekday.

Second, the circulation is also expedited from the inside. In comparison with the West, Chinese urbanisation has more concentrated decision-making power, fewer landowners with whom to negotiate, and hotter speculative property markets in which there are great income disparities between existing and potential residents (Abramson 2008). These conditions make it easier to consolidate land in China. As a result, shopping malls in China appears to take the form of megaprojects. In China, those large scale commercial complexes are also often called as 'HOPSCA' which, according to Gao (2011), is a term literally stands for Hotels, Offices, Parks, Shopping malls, Convention centres and Apartments, and used to describe massive mixed used urban commercial developments emerging in China's urbanisation. As indicated by this term, large scale commercial complexes or shopping malls are physical hybrids of various urban functions. They, in this sense, become cities within a city. To an extent, they are independent from other parts of the city, and possess enough urban functions which reduce capital's necessity to circulate in urban spaces outside

those urban complexes (Yang 2012). For example, one may live in an apartment in an urban complex. Meanwhile, she or he may also work in a company whose offices are located in the office spaces of the same urban complex. As a result, she or he earns money from the office spaces of the urban complex and then spends a big portion of it in the residential spaces of the same urban complex to pay the rent of his or her apartment. Another considerable part of her or his earnings may go to the supermarkets, cinemas and retail shops in the shopping mall which is also a part of the urban complex. Besides, she/he is also very likely to spend some of his/her money in the restaurants and cafes located in the leisure plaza of the urban complex which are spatially downstairs under where she/he works. Those components of the urban complex, in this way, collaboratively concentrate the circulation of money within a small spatial area and reduce the turnover time and distance to the shortest. As a result, they, at the micro scale, significantly accelerate the circulation process of money in Chinese cities.

Pseudo-public spaces, as previously discussed in Chapter 3, have been growing rapidly in China in recent two decades or so. During 1988 and 2016, Wanda Group, the developer of Nanping Wanda Plaza, alone has built 171 urban complexes around China[①]. The faster the circulation velocity of capital in cities, as Harvey (2014) points out, the bigger yield of surplus value capital investors can have. As pseudo-public spaces accelerate the circulation of money in Chinese cities, the rise of this new kind of urban space brings highly profitable investment environment to China and makes non-negligible contributions to the prosperity of the country's economy. Between 1990 and 2014, the total sales value of China's retail trade increased 12.3 times, reaching 11,064,140 million Yuan (National Bureau of Statictics of China 1999, 2015). Apart from spatially expediting the circulation of money in urban space, the rise of pseudo-public spaces also contributes to China's local economic growth in other ways.

5.2.2 A Driver of the Local Economy

One way to understand the contribution of shopping malls to the local economy is to

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[①] According to the official website of Wanda Group, see: http://www.wanda.cn/about/group/ (accessed 02 December, 2016)

use the economic base framework which draws attention to both basic activities (which bring in money and job opportunities to the local economy) and local activities that support the non-basic processes (which deal with production or services directed towards intra-urban demand) (Krikelas 1992; Obeng-Odoom 2016c). In this sense, the rise of pseudo-public spaces is a major driver of the local economy because it generates jobs, increase local tax revenue, and triggers multiplier effects in allied urban industries.

In November 2010, for example, Wanda Group opened a 930,000-square metre shopping mall in Weijiazhuang, Jinan city. This single shopping mall created 10,591 jobs for the local economy. Just one month later, Wanda Group's another shopping complex opened in Fuzhou, the capital city of Fujian Province. It brought over 8,400 full-time service jobs to the city[1]. By October 2014, when Wanda Group opened its 100th shopping mall in China in Kunming city, shopping malls built by this particular developer alone have directly led to the creation of approximately one million jobs for Chinese cities. What is more, the number of employment opportunities indirectly created by those malls, according to Wanda Group's own report, is 'significantly higher'[2]. On average, according to Jianlin Wang, the chairman of Wanda Group, every shopping mall can create ten thousand jobs and contribute over 100 million Yuan tax revenue annually for the local economy (*Inner Mongolia Morning Post* 2014).

Besides, non-basic activities in pseudo-public spaces have also made considerable contributions to the local economy. Basic activities bring money into the local economy, and the non-basic sector in pseudo-public spaces plays an active role in absorbing the incoming money. In June 2016, to take an example, a performance art festival was held in Xintiandi. This festival attracted over 20 thousands visitors worldwide. Those visitors from other cities and countries brought a great deal of businesses to the hotels, cafes, bars, and restaurants in Xintiandi. The consumer volume of those businesses, which are dominantly non-basic (such as cafes, restaurants, hairdressers and dry cleanings), saw a significant 26 per cent increase during the festival. As a consequence, those non-basic businesses absorbed

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[1] According to the official website of Wanda Group, see: http://www.wanda.cn/new_en/job/ (accessed 03 May, 2017)
[2] See: http://www.wanda-group.com/2014/latestnews_1031/784.html (accessed 10 August, 2017)

a large amount of money brought by visitors, resulting in a 10 per cent growth of sales volume in two weeks' time[1]. In these ways, the non-basic businesses in Chinese pseudo-public spaces have also made non-negligible contribution to the local economy.

5.2.3 An Important Driving Force for 'Capital Switching'

At the macro-scale (national) level, the rise of pseudo-public spaces and commercial spaces has played a significant role in capital switching in China. China has created an 'economic miracle' over the past three decades or so (Shirk 2007). During 1979 and 2010, China's national GDP growth rate averaged 10 per cent a year. The growth only begins to slightly slow down to about 7 per cent a year, which is still one of the fastest speeds around the world, since 2012. In his latest book, Harvey (2016, p.2) wrote, 'almost all of China's growth (which bordered on 10 per cent until recently) were attributable to investment in the built environment.' Harvey's claim is not exaggerated. According to McKinsey Global Institute (2016), during 1992 and 2013, China's spending on infrastructure (one of the largest components of the investment in built environment) accounted for 8.6 per cent of the country's GDP. This ratio is considerable and much higher than the spending in other countries (the global average infrastructure spending during the same period was 3.5 per cent of world GDP). It is not hard to see that investment in the built environment is central to China's economic miracle. Similarly, Hyun Bang Shin, a political economist from London School of Economics, also notices the urban land development-economic growth relationship in contemporary China, as he wrote in an article published on the website of the China Policy Institute in the University of Nottingham: 'The heavy investment in the built environment in the forms of fixed assets has been the biggest contributor to the country's macroeconomic growth in recent years[2].'

As a result, what happens along with the phenomenal economic growth, as Chapter 3 shows, is the rapid expansion of commercial spaces in Chinese cities. It is important to note here that the expansion of commercial spaces is one of the most important driving forces

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[1] See: http://www.sohu.com/a/143797237_309168 (accessed 28 June, 2017)
[2] See: https://cpianalysis.org/2013/04/24/chinas-speculative-urbanism-and-the-built-environment/ (accessed 12 December, 2016)

that lead to China's economic boom (Lin & Yi 2011). This is because the expansion of commercial spaces plays a crucial role in absorbing surplus capital produced through manufacturing, namely what Harvey (1978) calls the primary circuit of accumulation, and switching it to investment in the built environment. The switching avoids over-accumulation of capital in one circuit and creates new spaces for further accumulation. It, in this way, enables China's economy to keep growing at such a high speed for decades long. The capital switching in China and the role commercial spaces play in this process are the focuses of this sub-section.

To begin with, let me first briefly explain what 'capital switching' is. As previously noted in Chapter 2, Harvey (1978) claims, under capitalism the capital accumulation process is made up of three circuits. In the primary circuit, the means of production and consumption are produced. In this circuit, capital moves in and out of manufacturing and industrial production. The second circuit is related to the production of fixed assets and the built environment. In this circuit, capital invested into fixed assets, physical frameworks and the built environment. The tertiary circuit involves science and technology as well as social expenditure in education and health. In the urbanisation under capitalism, capital first accumulated in the primary circuit. However, the capitalist mode of production always leads to the 'tendency to produce without regard to the limit of the market' (Marx 1968). This then results in over-accumulation and declining profits in the primary circuit. To solve these problems, surplus capital has to be switched into the secondary circuit. Harvey (1978) introduces the term 'capital switching' to describe this process. Failure in switching capital will lead to, on the one hand, a shortage of capital to trigger the engine of economic growth in the secondary circuit and, on the other hand, failing profits and devaluation of capital in the primary circuit. As a result, the conditions for capital accumulation may disappear or, at least, the accumulation process will slow down to a large extent.

In China, as a result of the 'opening-up' policy and low labour prices, capital investment from foreign investors and the private sector were initially mainly absorbed by the manufacturing industry at the early stage of the reform era. The manufacturing industry, as a consequence, grew rapidly in China in the 1980s and 1990s (Hsü 2000). Increases in

the share of manufacturing industry contribute to promote the industrialisation process of the country. Industrialisation, according to Le-Yin Zhang (2011, p.1167), is a very effective means of achieving economic growth for developing countries, especially for sizable ones like China. The 1980s and 1990s, as a result, became one of the fastest GDP growth periods in China's modern history. Since the mid-1990s, as previously discussed in Chapter 3, local governments in China have been active in using urban land to attract and mobilise needed capital from foreign and domestic sources for local economic growth. This process is one way in which capital is switched from the primary to the secondary circuit. As a result, as Wu (1999a, p.1765) observed at the end of the 1990s, 'the post reform capital circulation (in China) is characterised by a dramatic increase in the flow of investment from the production circuit to the circuit of land development.' Let us now take a closer look at how surplus capital in the primary circuit is mobilised to the secondary circuit.

As explained in Chapter 3, in China, the local government is the *de facto* landlord. That is, only the local government can buy cultivated land from farmers at a low price, convert it into urban construction land, and then lease the land to land users at a much higher price in the land market. The price gap (between buying land from farmers and selling it in the urban land market) then provides an important source of revenue for the local government. However, to maximise the rent from urban land, the local government usually does not directly lease out urban construction land to real estate developers. Instead, to lure investments, the local government usually first leases out industrial land at very low prices, sometimes even for free, to industrial investors. As a result, industrial land transactions usually do not absorb much surplus capital produced in the primary circuit of capital accumulation. Instead, the local government usually must, through various 'local financing and investment platform' (state-owned enterprises backed by the local government), borrow money from the bank to develop the infrastructure to make the industrial land able to be leased out.

However, urban development on industrial land brings inflow of investment and sets the chain reaction, such as the emergence of many small businesses to serve large enterprises, in motion (Huang 2011). Those processes collectively lead to the growth of

population in the city. The growing investment and population, as a result, trigger growth momentum and increase demand for serviced land. The growing demand boosts land values in the city. The local government then leases out commercial and residential land at very high prices for real estate developments. Commercial and residential land transactions, therefore, absorb a huge amount of surplus capital produced in the primary circuit and bring significant revenue to the local government. After compensating for any loss during early industrial development and paying back the loan, the local government can then use the revenue generated from commercial and residential land transactions for local social and economic development (interviews #8, #12, #13, #16; also see Wu, 2015).

In the above process, commercial development plays an important role. Although residential development absorbs a major part of the surplus capital (Wu 1999a), commercial spaces also absorb and mobilise a considerable amount of capital to the urban built environment. According to the Peterson Institute for International Economics (2015), an America-based non-profit international economic policy research institution, approximately 30 per cent of the investment in China's real estate market has been absorbed by non-residential property developments (mainly made up of office buildings and commercial spaces like shopping malls and centres). This ratio is consistent with the official data released by the National Bureau of Statistics of China. According to *China Statistical Yearbook 2015*, in 2014, real estate developers invested 3,068.3 billion Yuan in non-residential projects. This figure accounted for 32.3 per cent of the total investment in real estate development (9,503.6 billion Yuan) in China that year.

Furthermore, more detailed data can be found in the official statistical yearbook. Among the non-residential investment, investment in commercial spaces (1,434.6 billion Yuan) accounted for 15.1 per cent of the total investment; investment in office buildings (564.1 billion Yuan) made up 5.9 per cent of the total investment; and other investments (1,069.6 billion Yuan) contributed 11.3 per cent of the total investment (National Bureau of Statictics of China 2015). That is to say, commercial development serves as the second largest contributor to absorbing capital investment in China's real estate market and mobilising capital in the circuit of the built environment. In this sense, the influence of the

rise of pseudo-public spaces on China's 'capital switching' is substantial. It plays an active role in China's urbanisation-based economic growth.

The capital switching process has also brought some negative effects to Chinese cities. Most notably, this process has caused mounting debts to Chinese local governments. According to the National Audit Office of China (2013), by June 2013, China's local governments were liable for a total debt of nearly 10.88 trillion Yuan. Debt guaranteed by local governments amounted to nearly 2.66 trillion Yuan, and debt indirectly guaranteed by local governments totals a further 4.34 trillion Yuan. As the local government's loans are usually secured by the land they own (Wu 2015). The fluctuations in real estate market then trigger concerns with respect to the local government's indebtedness, financial stability and sovereign risk (Pan et al. 2017). Meanwhile, another problem occurred along with surplus capital switches to the built environment is the expansion of urban construction land at the expense of cultivated land. In the recent decade or so, cultivated land in China continues to shrink and non-agricultural land continues to expand (Lin & Yi 2011). Those urbanisation issues, however, cannot be discussed separately from environmental consequences. As Harvey (2016, p.212) reminds us, 'there is a powerful inner connection between urban process and environmental change. Everything from habitat loss to ozone concentrations to pollution to global warming is profoundly affected by urbanisation.' For this reason, let us now have a look at what environmental consequences the rise of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls has brought to Chinese cities.

5.3 Environmental Consequences

5.3.1 Overbuilt, 'Ghost Developments' and the Waste of Resource

China has been experiencing substantial urban expansion. In the first decade of this century alone, approximately 4,400 million square metres living space was built in China (Moreno & Blanco 2014). And it is expected that this expansion will continue through 2030 (Fernandez 2007). Traditionally, rapid urban expansion is an outcome of migration, natural increase, and reclassification (Obeng-Odoom 2013). However, this traditional

understanding of urbanisation does not sufficiently capture what is happening in China. As some scholars, such as Lin & Yi (2011) and Sorace & Hurst (2016), have noticed, it is the logic of capital accumulation and pattern of capital flows, rather than the rural-to-urban migration, that drive the urban expansion process we have seen in recent China. This is because, on the one hand, as we have seen, the fiscal reform in 1994 makes Chinese local governments largely dependent on land revenue for their fiscal solvency and augmentation for their power-base. On the other hand, in China, urban growth is often regarded as the 'royal road' to modernity and an important criterion for assessing local officials' political performance (Sorace & Hurst 2016). As a result, the local state apparatus, as Hsing (2010, p.7) points out, often 'grows along with urban expansion.'

In this capital-accumulation-driven urban expansion process, commercial spaces, such as shopping malls and complexes, are usually built at a very early stage when a new urban area or a completely new city is to be built. This is because building commercial developments early is helpful for maximising not only land-related revenue for the local state, but also house prices for the developer. As a Chinese urban planner I interviewed explained to me:

> Unlike old city centres, newly built urban areas usually do not have enough existing service facilities. As a result, when people consider whether to buy apartments in newly built urban areas, whether the new urban areas can provide enough service facilities, such as restaurants, cinemas and supermarkets, which are indispensable for their daily life needs in the future is always a major concern. This concern then becomes a key factor that influences the house prices of the new urban area. … If potential property buyers have doubts about the ability of a newly built urban area to provide enough service facilities, they, understandably, will not be willing to pay high prices for the apartments in the new urban area. Accordingly, the urban land use rights in the new urban area can hardly be leased out at high prices. Therefore, to clear up potential property buyers and investors' doubts, commercial spaces are usually built at very early stage of building a new urban area. Doing this can, on the one hand, prove to the potential buyers that the new urban area can and will accommodate enough service facilities for their daily life. The area, therefore, will not become a place inconvenient to live. On the other hand, those commercial spaces are also used for branding purposes. The existence of those huge commercial spaces draw a picture of how commercially prosperous the new urban area is supposed to be in the near future in the developer and local government's vision. This materialised

vision is way more convincing than the developer's any oral promises and any written development plans made by the local government. It, therefore, significantly boosts investors and property buyers' confidence with the property value increase in the future (Interview #14).

However, an important question arising from building commercial spaces early is whether the newly built housing surrounding them can provide enough residents to actually use those commercial facilities. Chinese developers and local officials tend to have an optimistic view of this risk because of increasing rural migrants (Sorace & Hurst 2016). On the 2015 basis, China's urban population will further expand by nearly 200 million by 2030, as a result of the state-led top-down migration (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2009). Developers and local officials, therefore, believe that the rapid urban expansion will be successful due to the inexhaustible demand caused by rural migrants moving to the city. However, what they neglect here is that housing does not only have use value as a place to live in. It also has exchange value as a thing for investment (Harvey 2014). In China, as Citi Bank (2011, p.12) reports, 'estate assets account for a dominant position due to the lack of investment alternatives, some estimates put it at around 65% of personal wealth' (also see Sorace & Hurst 2016, p.7). In this sense, China's property market has acted as a huge capital reservoir and urban housing has become a main investment vehicle. As a result, most of the housing supply in Chinese real estate market focuses on high-end properties, rather than low-to-middle ones, as high-end housing provides the highest returns on investment (Citi Bank 2011).

A crucial result of focusing on high-end properties is supply-demand mismatch. Mainstream economists typically claim that after a certain demographic transition –namely a so-called 'Lewis Turning Point'- the rural-urban inequality will take care of itself (Molero-Simarro 2016). On this basis, some scholars argue that China has already reached the Lewis Turning Point, or will reach it very soon (Das & N'Diaye 2013; Zhang, Yang & Wang 2011). As a result, the income inequality between rural migrants and urban residents in China should be disappearing naturally. However, a recent paper written by Molero-Simarro (2016, p.50) finds that 'the Lewis Turning Point will not automatically, or, maybe, never be reached' in China, because of the policies and institutional arrangements

made in recent decades, such as the *hukou* system (a household registration system serves to control the distribution of population between rural and urban areas, and within each city), that maintain the rural-urban segregation and limit the increase of peasants' wages and social welfares below productivity. As a result, the rural-to-urban migrants who really need urban housing to live in are still mostly low-income groups in current China. For those people, although their incomes have risen dramatically in recent years, there is still a noticeable gap between their income growth and the increase in property prices (Gaulard 2013). Consequently, most of the housing in those newly built urban areas is bought by the affluent class as their investments, rather than places to actually live in.

The outcome is the development of ghost cities. According to the *National Land Planning Outline of P.R. China (2016-2030)* released February 2017, during 2000 and 2015, the urban and town constructed area in China increased 113 per cent, while the urban and town population only grew 59 per cent during the same period (The State Council of P.R.China 2017). By 2016, according to a national survey conducted by the central government's National Development and Reform Commission, China had at least 3,500 new districts which would be able to house 3.4 billion people. However, the country's overall population was only 1.4 billion (*South China Morning Post* 2017). Building physical spaces that resemble a city but without enough people to inhabit them, as a result, leads to the emergence of huge numbers of vacant properties and even 'whole new cities, with hardly any residents or real activities' in China (Harvey 2013, p.60). Those empty cities are usually called as 'ghost cities'. When those newly built urban areas and cities become ghost cities, shopping malls and complexes which are built at very early stage of building those cities then become 'ghost developments'. Because no people use them, those commercial spaces are completely abandoned. When walking in those ghost developments, as Shepard (2015, p.ix), an American journalist who travelled to many Chinese ghost cities describes:

> The absence of masses of humanity pouring through them makes it all seem like a life-sized version of the little plastic scale models of cities that are proudly displayed in the office of architecture firms.

In China, moreover, those ghost developments not only exist in newly built cities, they can also be found in many old urban areas. According to Frank Chen, the executive director for China at CBRE, a global commercial real estate services firm, in first-tier Chinese cities, such as Beijing and Shanghai, the average vacancy rate of commercial properties is roughly 8 per cent. While, among the group of second-tier cities, which is much larger in number, such as Chongqing, the average vacancy rate reaches 21 per cent. That is to say, over one fifth commercial spaces in those existing cities are empty. What is more, in some cities, such as Chengdu, a city geographically close to Chongqing, the vacancy rate has hit a very high level of 44 per cent, which means almost half of the commercial spaces in this city are ghost developments (*China Economic Review* 2014). Those rates are not exaggerated. They are in accordance with what I witnessed during my fieldwork in Chinese cities. Although entirely abandoned commercial complexes are hardly seen in the major Chinese cities I visited over the past 4 years or so including Shanghai, Beijing, Chongqing and Chengdu, only partly used shopping malls and complexes are quite ubiquitous in the city centres of those cities. In Chongqing, for example, I visited a huge scale (800,000 square metres of floor area) commercial complex sited in the central urban area of the city and noticed that almost half of its shops located around a central plaza were empty (see Fig 5.1). And 'those shopping spaces have been empty and never been used since the complex was built and

Fig 5.1 A large scale commercial complex in the central urban area of Chongqing (The shopping spaces of this complex have never been fully used. Those shops in the photo have been empty since 2008 when the complex was opened to the public).

Source: photograph by the author, 2017

opened in 2008, because of the difficulties of attracting enough investors', as a local architect who visited this space with me explained (Interview #1).

It is widely known that what happens along with rapid urban expansion is definitely drastic increase in resource demands (Chen 2007). Around 40 per cent of the total cement and steel produced in the world every year is now consumed in China (*Beijing Times* 2015). According to Fernandez (2007), commercial spaces, along with residential buildings, contribute approximately 80 per cent of all new space added to China's building stock. More importantly, those building types are of the greatest material content and, therefore, dominate the resource consumption of the new building stock and the overall urbanisation in China (Jiang & Keith Tovey 2009). As shown by a survey of over 50 residential, commercial and industrial buildings, when the floor area is the same, commercial buildings require approximately 62 per cent, while industrial buildings only need 13 per cent, of the bulk volume of the material consumed by residential buildings (Fernandez 2007). That is to say, a commercial building usually consumes almost five times the volume of materials of a comparable industrial building. This is because commercial spaces require greater volumes of materials for interior partitions, ceilings, floor and wall finish materials. Meanwhile, they are usually well equipped with water and electrical fixtures, distribution devices, lighting and air conditioning facilities, and other service-providing elements. However, when it comes to industrial buildings, most of them only consist of large and open spaces of relatively light material content (Fernandez 2007). As a result, commercial space is the second largest resource consumer of all building types built in China's rapid urbanisation. Taking concrete –the most often used structural and exterior wall material for buildings in China- as an example, in China, for every unit area (square metre) produced, the concrete required for residential buildings is 0.32 square metres, the figure is 0.27 square metres for commercial buildings, and only 0.059 square metres for industrial spaces (Fernandez 2007). Because of the huge amount of resource required for building commercial spaces, the vacancy and abandonment of pseudo-public spaces have caused serious resource waste in China.

What is more, the energy and resource embodied in construction materials only

account for less than 20 per cent of commercial spaces' life-cycle energy consumption. The remaining 80 per cent is consumed in their daily uses after built (Ramesh, Prakash & Shukla 2010). As we have seen, the rise of large scale commercial complexes and pseudo-public spaces in China just started at the beginning of the new century. A large portion of pseudo-public spaces in China, therefore, just began their life-cycle in the recent decade or so. It is not difficult to predict that those commercial spaces will make significant contributions to the increase of the per capita resource and energy consumption in China in the following several decades.

Unfortunately, China's per capita resource usage is now already at a low level (about half of the global average). According to the *National Land Planning Outline of P.R. China (2016-2030)*, China's current per unit GDP energy consumption is 2.5 times higher than the world standard (The State Council of P.R.China 2017). And, as the urbanisation continues, the proportion of total energy dedicated to the building sector is predicted to keep rising until 2050 (Zhu & Lin 2004). Chinese cities, therefore, will inevitably face greater pressure and burden on improving the utilisation efficiency of resources and energy used for buildings in the next three decades or so. Because of rapid growth in recent decades, China is already experiencing a shortage and price increase of domestic resource supplies of glass, steel, aluminium, synthetic and natural polymers, and other building materials (Huang et al. 2013). As a result, only less than 50 per cent of resources such as steel, cooper and aluminium consumed in China are currently provided domestically (The State Council of P.R. China 2017). The remaining 50 per cent of those resources needed have to be imported from other countries. However, the world economy struggles to provide strong traction for recovery. In the meantime, the geopolitical conflicts around the world become intensified in recent years (BBVA 2017). As a consequence, international competitions around markets and resources become increasingly fierce. Those trends collaboratively increase China's difficulty of importing required resources for domestic development. If China cannot improve its resource utilisation efficiency, those trends will result in threats and vulnerabilities to the stability of China's economic growth in the coming decades (Mathews & Tan 2014). For this reason, how to control the growth and avoid overbuilt and excessive

vacancy of pseudo-public spaces –one of the major resource consumers in China's urbanisation- have already become issues to which Chinese policy-makers should pay more attention.

5.3.2 A Non-Negligible Contributor to Air Pollution

China, in recent years, is facing worsening air quality. The amount of sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) emissions from Chinese cities increased 1.5 times and 2.5 times respectively during 1990 and 2010 (Lu & Liu 2016). In February 2014, Beijing issued its first ever 'orang' smog warning, indicating the concentration of PM 2.5 (the particular matter of less than 2.5 microns in diametre. The concentration of PM 2.5 is a main indicator of air pollution) reached 237 micrograms per cubic metres which is eight times higher than the level recommended as being safe by the World Health Organisation (Blue & Green Tomorrow 2014). The poor air quality in China has received much attention and been criticised by a large number of political and academic sources. For example, the World Bank (2001) has noted that air pollution is the most prominent urban environment problem in China in their two-year research and assessment on the air, land and water in China. Physicists at the University of California, to take another example, have studied the connection between the polluted air and citizen health. They find that 1.6 million people in China (roughly 17 per cent of all deaths in the country) die each year from heart, lung and stroke problems caused by the hazardous air (Rohde & Muller 2015).

To tackle the poor air quality, the state council issued '*Action Plan on Prevention and Control of Air Pollution*' in September 2013. This document serves as guidance for national efforts to prevent and control air pollution in the following decade. It sets the goal that, by 2018 (namely in five years after 2013), the air quality in China will be improved significantly, and the heavy air pollution will gradually eliminated five years after that. To achieve this goal, 10 measures are outlined in the document. They mainly focus on actions such as shutting small coal-firing boilers, accelerating construction of desulphurisation, denitrification, and dust-removal projects in key sectors, hastening the removal of 'old' vehicles, and promoting public transport (*Power magazine* 2014). This important national

action plan, however, does not mention the impact of the fast growing real estate market on the air pollution in China. So, are pseudo-public spaces really a negligible contributor to air pollution?

Since early 2014, after the central government declared a 'war on pollution', China's air quality has been improved. The concentration of PM 2.5 in the air dropped considerably during 2014 and 2015. However, with the noticeable increase in the concentration of hazardous PM 2.5, the air quality in northern China has begun to worsen again since the spring of 2016 (see Fig 5.2, the diagram at the top). A recent study carried out by *The Economist* (2017b) finds that, considering China's industrial outputs such as crude steel, pig iron and cement also began to increase around the spring of 2016 (see Fig 5.2, the diagram in the middle) and the country's heavy industrial factories are mainly located in the north, the recent changes in the concentration of PM 2.5 in northern China happened 'more or less in tandem with the industrial production increases'. Importantly, the increase in industrial outputs since early 2016, *the Economist* report presumes, was caused by a property-market rally. This presumption can be confirmed by a survey of the statistical data released by the National Statistics Bureau of China. The statistical data shows that, consistent with the trends of average PM 2.5 concentration and industrial output, the investment in real estate also began to accelerate since the beginning of 2016 (see Fig 5.2, the diagram at the bottom). It can be seen from Fig 5.2 that, by promoting heavy industrial production which is a main source of PM 2.5, the growth of real estate market has non-negligible connections with the air quality in China.

Moreover, the expanding property market and growing numbers of commercial developments in China do not merely cause air pollution indirectly. They also pollute the air in direct ways. Construction activities are a major direct source of air pollution (Wang et al. 2016). An architect I interviewed told me that 'the air quality in construction sites is always very bad. There is always a lot of duct in the air. Sometimes, it even makes you feel hard to breathe if you enter a construction site without a mask' (interview #3). In fact, almost every construction activity needed to build a large scale commercial project –such as land cleaning, demolition, burning, and operation of diesel engines- contributes to air pollution.

Fig 5.2 The connection between real estate market and air pollution in China

Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, average PM 2.5 concentration (micrograms per m³)

China, industrial output (unit unkown)

China, real estate investment increase rate (%)
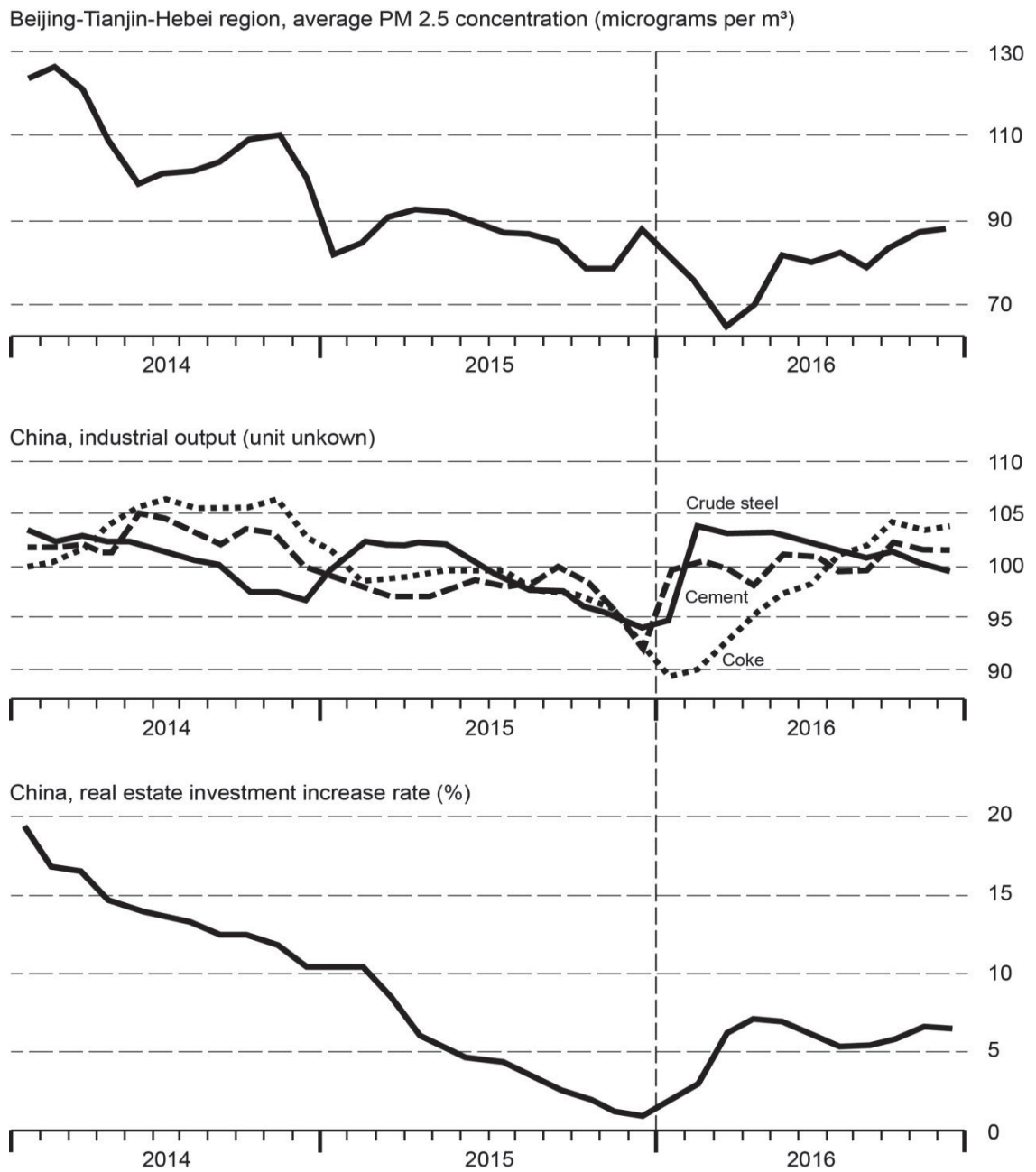
Source: the diagram at the bottom is based on statistical data released by the National Statistics Bureau of China; other diagrams are based on *The Economist* (2017b).

Given that the number of commercial complexes being built in China is enormous (according to Knight Frank (2014b), in 2014 alone, at least 48.7 million square metres commercial complexes were being built in major Chinese cities), it is not difficult to deduce that the air pollution they caused is non-negligible.

This deduction can be supported by what happened in Beijing in 2008 and 2014.

During the 2008 Beijing Olympic, the central government carried out ambitious plans, including halting almost all construction activities in the city centre, to improve Beijing's air quality. Affected by those plans, as an architect then worked in Beijing told me, 'almost all large scale commercial projects under construction in the central urban area of Beijing were suspended during the Olympics' (interview #9). Since March, some kinds of construction work in Beijing were banned on windy days. From July, all digging and pouring of concrete on sites in the city were suspended for two months (*The Guardian* 2008). The outcome of the construction ban was impressive. During the Olympics, the air quality in Beijing improved dramatically. The city's air quality reached the top grade in 10 out of the 17 Olympic days. This was, as Xu & Zhang (2013) remind us, 'the best it had been for a decade'. Because it is proved effective, construction activities in Beijing were ceased again in November 2014 for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference. During the APEC conference, as a result, the average concentration of PM 2.5 and most of other measured species in the air in Beijing were greatly reduced (Yang et al. 2016). Commercial projects, only after residential development, make up the second largest proportion of all construction work in Chinese cities (Fernandez 2007). The suspension of commercial projects, therefore, is clearly an important contributor to the effectiveness of the construction bans in Beijing.

What is more, the rise of shopping malls, as Jewell's (2016) recent book reminds us, has also brought many social-spatial changes to Chinese cities. What role do pseudo-public spaces play in those social-spatial changes? This is to which we now turn.

5.4 Socio-Spatial Consequences

5.4.1 Eroding the 'Walled-In' Tradition of Chinese Cities

The rise of pseudo-public spaces in China significantly erodes the thousand-year-long 'walled-in' nature of Chinese cities (Gaubatz 2008). Chinese urban spaces had a long tradition to be surrounded and organised by high walls. In imperial China, urban family life was hidden behind walled courtyards, and public structures were enclosed with high walls.

As a result, the wall-organised urban structure precluded the existence of public spaces and separated different social groups in traditional Chinese cities (Gaubatz 1998; Yang & Xu 2006). In the imperial era, the powerful classes lived within massive walled complexes, while the slums comprised mazes of walled-in hovels. Almost every kind of urban activity took place inside the walled wards and, as a consequence, street life was virtually non-existent (Gaubatz 2008). In imperial China, temples were often used as the largest 'open spaces' where the public could enter. Periodic events such as temple fairs and religious festivals were hosted in temples at that time. In these ways, temples in imperial China afforded opportunities for the public to participant in public life. They, as a result, become the most important public sphere in Chinese cities during imperial era. Besides, places including urban teahouse, markets, spaces around the theatres where Chinese opera and other traditional entertainments were performed also played a role as the public gathering places in imperial China (Gaubatz 2008).

When it comes to socialist China (between 1949 and 1978), as we saw in chapter 3, Soviet urban form of production, namely the work-unit, was introduced to China. Chinese cities became production centres, rather than consumption ones. As a result, Chinese urban space had been reorganised significantly. Although new forms of public space, such as large scale paved square and large scale public spaces at the entrance to railroad stations, that predicated on socialism's participatory ideals had also been introduced, the 'walled-in' nature of Chinese urban space had not been changed yet. In some ways, as Gaubatz (2008) reminds us, public spaces were even more restrictive in the socialist China than it had been during the imperial era. This is because, on the one hand, all work-units were enclosed by high walls. Therefore, walls were retained in socialist China. Meanwhile, on the other hand, as Gaubatz (2008, p.75) points out, 'other aspects of traditional society (such as temples) were discarded in the aftermath of the Chinese revolution.' As a consequence, almost all everyday social life spaces were sited within work-unit compounds behind high walls (Lu 2011). The 'in-between spaces' of buildings inside work-units compounds then became the places where public sphere mainly occurred in Maoist socialist China (Yang & Xu 2006).

A tremendous expansion in the realm of public society can be witnessed in the reform

era (after 1978) (Huang 1993). As we saw in chapter 3, with the rapid increase of economic spaces in China after the country's turn to neoliberalism, growing numbers of production spaces in Chinese city centres have been replaced by commercial structures. Those commercial spaces are now much more often found in an un-walled site. They, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, are always physically well connected with the city and very rarely, if ever, apply explicit thresholds to separate themselves with their surroundings. The rise of pseudo-public spaces in the reform era, as a result, has brought a significant sublimation of the bounded qualities of traditional and Maoist urban space, and eroded the long 'walled-in' tradition of Chinese cities. Since the first major city, Yindu, was built in the 14th century B.C., there have never been fewer walls in Chinese cities than today. As Gaubatz (2008, p.75) puts it, 'the walled-in nature of Chinese cities has eroded more significantly in the past 20 years than in the previous 2000.'

A crucial consequence of this massive spatial transformation is that it creates a physical condition for forming a new public sphere in Chinese cities. The rise of pseudo-public spaces does not merely change the spatial form of Chinese cities. More importantly, it has brought Chinese urban social life which was largely confined to the walled wards out to the city. In this way, the rise of pseudo-public spaces, to some extent, contributes to bring individuals from different social groups and have various backgrounds come together to form 'a public'. As a result, public life in Chinese cities today is enacted in very different ways than it was in imperial and Maoist periods. In this socio-spatial transformation, pseudo-public space, as a newly emerged kind of urban space, has already played an important role. As revealed by a study based on Tianjin city, in Chinese residents' perceptions, commercial retail spaces (along with cultural/sport spaces and urban squares/parks) have already become one of the three most important kinds of public spaces in newly-urbanised areas in China (Tao et al. 2006). The stories of two ordinary Chinese people, Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang[1], who are not only witnesses but also participants of this epic transformation, provide good and typical examples that can help to illustrate the social consequences of the erosion of the 'walled-in' tradition of Chinese cities.

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[1] 'Mrs. Qin' and 'Mr. Wang' are de-identified interviewee names. They are two of the numerous local residents I talked with during my fieldwork in Chinese pseudo-public spaces.

5.4.2 Bringing Urban Social Life Back to the Public Sphere

Prior to socialist China, Majiabao and Yuanjiagang, filled with weeds and barren farmlands, were two little-known areas located at the edge of the city centre of Chongqing. In the late 1950s, not long after Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the P. R. China in Beijing, a large number of workers, soldiers and 'sent-down' youth, also known as the *zhiqing*, were sent to Majiabao and Yuanjiagang with the mission to transform the city into a socialist production centre. Like what was happening all around the country during that period, those workers, soldiers and urban young people stripped the land, excavated the site, conducted pilling works and built constructions in these urban areas. Although their equipment was outmoded, those people, fuelled by the passion of building a brand new China, constructed over one hundred buildings on these lands and turned the urban area into a place made up of a series of work-units in only three decades (interview with Mr. Wang). 'When I first came and began to work here (in the late 1980s), there were 6 to 7 work-units in this urban area', as Mr. Wang said, 'all of those work-units were separated from each other and the outside urban space by walls' (interview with Mr. Wang).

Mr. Wang and Mrs. Qin began to work in one of those work-units in Majiabao and Yuanjiagang areas since the late 1980s. In 2004, Mrs. Qin retired. 8 years later, Mr. Wang retired from the same work-unit. Since they began to work for the work-unit, Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang have lived in the same residential community provided by the work-unit. Based on the Soviet *mikrorayon* model (see chapter 3, section 3.2), this residential community is gated and only 5 minutes' walk away from the work-unit it belongs to. Frequently used daily facilities, such as kindergartens and playgrounds, were all enclosed in the walled residential community and provided for the work-unit's own workers. This eliminated people's need for travelling to other work-units. 'We very rarely travel to other work-units or their residential communities in those years,' as Mr. Wang recalled (interview with Mr. Wang).

As a result, for most of the time since the late 1980s, Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang's daily social activities were largely confined to the residential community they lived in. For example, Mrs. Qin, like many other retired Chinese women, likes dancing square dances -or

guangchang wu in Chinese- with her friends who also live in the same residential community. The open spaces inside the residential community were the places where they danced. As Mrs. Qin described:

> Every weekday evening after dinner, we came to the basketball court (at the heart of the residential community) or, if there were people playing basketball, we would gather at a small square in-between the building I live in and other two buildings to dance. It had become a common habit shared by us. Two of my friends would bring portable speakers to play music. Other people did not need to bring anything. The dances always started at around 7:30 in the evening. We usually danced for about one hour every time (interview with Mrs. Qin).

One of Mr. Wang's favourite hobbies, to take another example, is doing workout exercises. In the residential community, basic training equipment, such as horizontal bars, parallel bars and non-electronic treadmills, are provided. Some of them are placed in the landscape areas, and, to shed them from the sun in summers, some are placed behind high-rise buildings. These places became where Mr. Wang and his colleagues who share the same habit with him do their workouts every day. As Mr. Wang spoke to me during our conversation:

> I went to those areas to work out almost every evening. I ran half an hour there and then did pull-up 50 times every day. I kept doing these for years. It was one of my routines. … I very rarely carried out my workout exercises outside the community. One reason was that it was not convenient to find those training equipment outside. Another important reason was that there is much fewer traffic inside, making the exercising environment much safer and more comfortable (interview with Mr. Wang).

In 2007, the largest local real estate developer, Longfor Properties, obtained the use rights of the urban land on which the work-unit Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang used to work for was built. In 2009, a land use modification for this particular part of Majiabao and Yuanjiagang urban areas was made by a local urban planning consultant. Soon after that, the land use modification was officially approved by Chongqing municipal urban planning bureau in the same year. The new land use plan transformed the walled work-unit (the area marked by dashed line) into an urban space mainly made up by land for commercial and

residential uses (see Fig 5.3). On this basis, in the following year, the development firm released its architectural and urban design proposal for this urban area. According to the proposal, the work-unit would be torn down and then replaced by a brand new shopping complex which, as described in the proposal, is 'the largest one in Asia' (interview #8). The first phase of this project was completed in 2012. At the end of that year, a new urban space with a series of large scale pseudo-public spaces, which is named 'Times Paradise Walk', was officially opened to the public. The emergence of Times Paradise Walk which is just 5-minite walk away from where Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang live has brought, as Mr. Wang described, 'obvious impacts on their daily life trajectories' (interview with Mr. Wang).

Fig 5.3 The new land use plan of Times Paradise Walk area
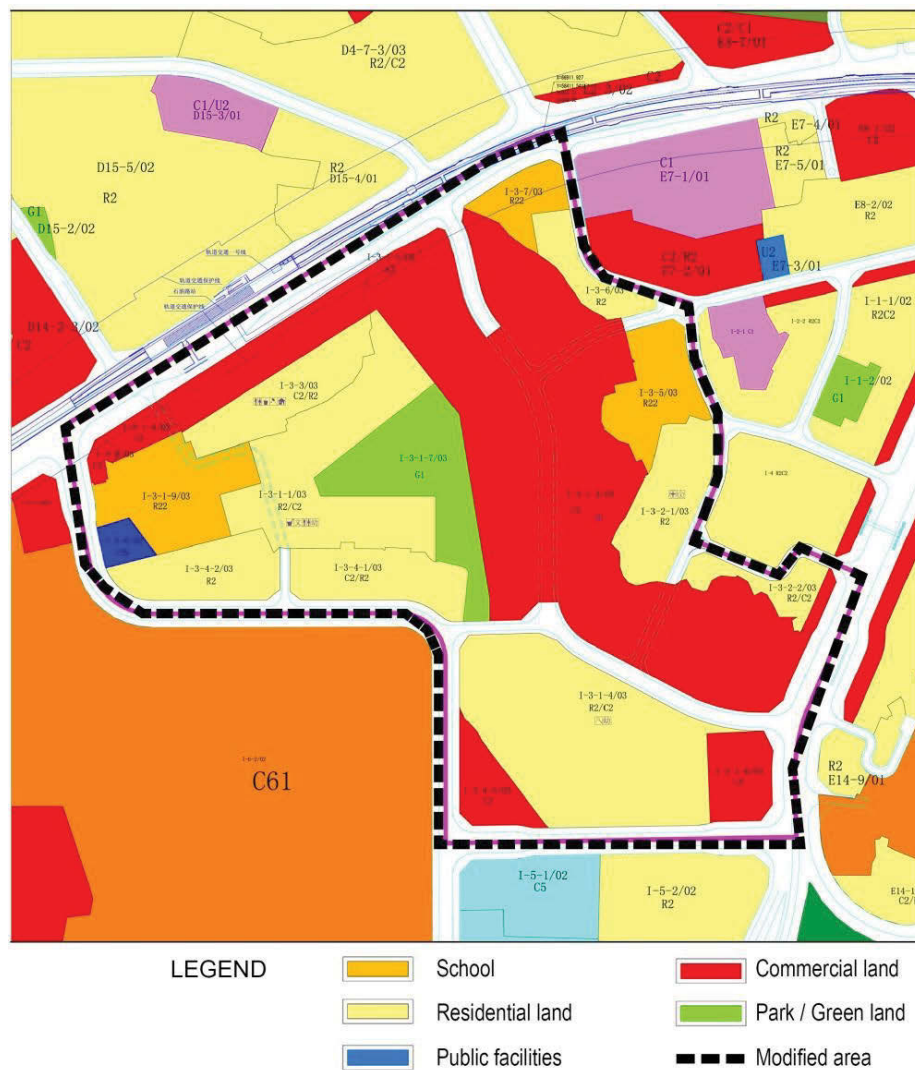
Source: based on the land use modification studied in interview #8

Now, the open spaces inside the gated residential community are no longer the main places where Mrs. Qin and her friends perform their square dances. Instead, Mrs. Qin and many of her friends now prefer to dance in the pseudo-public spaces in the new shopping complex (see Fig 5.4).

Fig 5.4 A group of retired women dancing in the pseudo-public space of Times Paradise Walk

Source: photograph by the author, 2017

As Mrs. Qin spoke to me:

> Of course, in recent years, we dance much more often in (the open spaces in) Times Paradise Walk than in the residential community we live in, because that is a much better place for square dances. In the past, when we danced in the residential community, people often complained about the loud music accompanying our dances. As a result, sometimes we had to end our exercise routine earlier than we planned. However, in the busy shopping complex, the music we play becomes not so loud and thus nobody complains about it. Meanwhile, in our residential community, open space is too limited. The small square in-between buildings is only able to accommodate no more than 10 people to dance at the same time. Unlike in our residential community, the

squares (pseudo-public spaces) in Times Paradise Walk are way more spacious. This allows more people who are interested in square dances to join us. Some of my neighbours who did not dance before now join us. When we dance in Times Paradise Walk, some people who are not from our residential community but attracted by our dances will also join us. Meanwhile, sometimes we also join other groups of dancers who are dancing in the squares in the shopping complex. In these ways, the group dancing in Times Paradise Walk is becoming larger and larger. Through the group dancing in Times Paradise Walk, I have met some very good people. Now, we often go shopping or have dinner together. We have become very good friends (interview with Mrs. Qin).

On the other hand, the basic training equipment provided in the residential community is no longer able to satisfy Mr. Wang. In 2013, a new fitness centre was opened in Times Paradise Walk. Mr. Wang received one of their free trial coupons. After the free trial, Mr. Wang decided to move to the new commercial complex for his daily workouts. This spatial shift has brought important impacts to Mr. Wang's urban social life. As he explained:

I have not used the training equipment in my residential community for a very long time. I now prefer to work out in (the fitness centre located in) the new shopping complex. This is because, on the one hand, I find doing workouts there is much more effective, as the trainers there can 'force' you to keep working out at a relatively high intensity. … On the other hand, working out in the fitness centre has become an important way to enrich my social life after retirement. … I can meet a lot of retired people there. I know a few of them. They are my former colleagues. But I did not know most of them before. They were police officers, doctors, and university teachers live in and around Majiabao and Yuanjiagang. Some of those people know how to work out effectively very well. We have created a chat group in QQ (the most popular instant messaging software in China), so that we can exchange our fitness experience. The QQ chat group also allows us organise some group activities. The activity we most often organise is mountain-climbing. We now do this almost every weekend. Chongqing is a mountainous city, so there are a lot of mountains we can climb. We can discuss which mountain to climb, when we meet in the fitness centre. If we make a decision, we will post information such as when and where to meet in the chat group to let every member of the group know the activity. We (the group members) also take part in some public activities, such as Chongqing Half Marathon (interview with Mr. Wang).

China's new form of urbanism produces many new kinds of urban space in Chinese

cities (He & Lin 2015). Those new urban spaces allow Chinese city residents to carry out their old activities in new ways and new places. This, as a result, changes people's daily social life. Chinese city residents, as Chen (2010, p.22) has observed in Beijing, 'are adapting new urban spaces for past functions', and 'as they appropriate spaces to support their old habits and practices, they are unintentionally but effectively developing new typologies of hybrid use.' The stories of Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang exemplify how the rise of pseudo-public spaces changes the ways and places people conduct their social life in Chinese cities. Importantly, Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang's stories are not unique. As previously discussed, work-unit was 'the basic building block' in Maoist China (Gaubatz 1998). Chinese urban residents' daily life was typically organised by this unique urban form before 1978 (Lu 2011). With the accomplishment of a series of institutional fixes and reforms, as we saw in chapter 3, growing numbers of Chinese people no longer work and live in work-units, and those production spaces are increasingly replaced by commerical spaces in Chinese city centrs since 1978. According to Prasad (2004), there were at least 91.3 million people still worked in work-units in 1980. That is to say, since the early 1980s, there are dozens of millions of people who have experienced, are experiencing, or will experience what Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang have experienced.

Habermas (1989, p.27) defines public sphere as the place where 'private people coming together as a public'. The rise of pseudo-public spaces has brought more and more people together by bringing the urban social life which, in the pre-reform era, was largely confined to certain parts of Chinese cities, such as the work-unit compounds and gated communities, out to the public realm. As we saw in chapter 4 and in the stories of Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang, some pseudo-public spaces provide stages for different social groups and urban activities to co-exist. Pseudo-public spaces in China, to an extent, have become places where individuals are able to 'assemble to form a public body' (Habermas 1974, p.49), although the rise of pseudo-public spaces has simultaneously also contributed to major dispossession and displacement.

5.4.3 Growth by Dispossession

Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang have adapted the changes. However, stories about the rise of pseudo-public spaces are not always harmonious. There are also some cases of confrontation. Pseudo-public spaces were not developed on empty land. Instead, they were built in the central urban areas. As a result, the rise of pseudo-public spaces is often accompanied by displacement of original residents who lived in Chinese city centres. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, Xintiandi, which was a less developed urban area filled with traditional residential alleyway houses in the city centre, has become a gentrified affluent neighbourhood after the high-end commercial and entertainment facilities were built. What has happened along with the gentrification of this urban area is the dispossession and displacement of the original residents who lived there. The dispossession that happened in Xintiandi is very well demonstrated by a little-known piece of history told by Qin Shao (2013) in her book *Shanghai Gone*.

The protagonist of the story is the He family. The story started in 1923 when Chujin He, a Chinese Muslim who sold Western medicine in Shanghai and worked his way up to a senior position in a German pharmacy, purchased a piece of land in the Taipingqiao area in Shanghai. Two years later, Chujin He built a shikumen house on this piece of land that is now part of the north block of Xintiandi. The house was as large as 307 square metres. Chujin He spent his all savings, 6,000 taels of silver, on this house and made it the most advanced style of that time. Chujin He named the house '*Chunjin Jingshe*', which in Chinese means 'Chujin's Fine House', and laid down a rule for his descendants that 'this house will forever remain in the He family and will never be up for pawn, sale or rent' (Shao 2013, p.103).

Chujin He's son, Shuhong He, who ran a steel company with a few of his friends in Shanghai, and his wife lived together with He's parents in the fine house. In 1928, Shuhong He's son, Liming He, was born in the house. Liming He was rebellious. So, he escaped from the house and, joined the Nationalist government to fight against the Japanese. After Japan's defeat, he joined the Chinese Communist Party's People's Liberation Army, and was sent to Korea after the Korean War broke out. In 1955, Liming He returned to the house

his grandfather built. He got married and had his own son, Yidong He, in 1963. The house then, in the early 1960s, became the residence that reunited a family of four generations. However, good times did not last long. The He family and their house suffered from the Cultural Revolution during the 1960s. To lodge traveling Red Guards, the Hes were ordered out of their house. When they got back years later, the house was in near ruin. The family then spent years to renovate and restore the house. The work was completed in 1997, the same year when the municipal government leased the use rights of the piece of land the Hes' house was built on, together with several other blocks near the house, to Shui On Land, the Hong Kong based developer. This land use rights transaction has changed the house's fate and the Hes' lives significantly.

As previously discussed in Chapter 3, according to the 'Taipingqiao Area Specific Plan' approved by Shanghai Municipal Urban Planning Bureau in 1997, the Xintiandi area, for the reason of 'urban renewal', was planned to be gentrified into a mix of high-end commercial, residential and entertainment spaces. To make sure the planned redevelopments could be conducted smoothly, the district government began to clear people out from this urban area soon after the specific plan was approved. In 1998, the neighbourhood committee brought two people from Hong Kong to He family's house to videotape the interior, which was followed by repeated inquiries of whether the family would sell the house. Furthermore, in August of that year, the Hes received a letter from the district government informed them that 'according to the needs of city development, your home must be demolished in the near future' (Shao 2013, p.110). The letter offered the Hes a choice of two settlement plans. The family could either give up their ownership rights and take a cash payment, or move to a few assigned apartments to which they would have ownership rights. However, the Hes rejected both of the two options.

To negotiate a contract with the Hes, the district government held a series of meetings from late 1998 to early 1999. However, in early 1999, while the negotiations were still going on, the district government issued two directives which reemphasised that the Hes' house was on a site designed for demolition, and their continuing stay in the house were 'unreasonable' and 'unjustified'. The family was ordered to relocate to the assigned

apartments, or else the district government would 'force you out according to the law' (Shao 2013, pp.111-112). The Hes did not want to be forced into giving their permission to lose their house. Meanwhile, the overall situation for them to keep fighting against the district authority was worsening, as growing numbers of the Hes' neighbours had left and their houses had been torn down and the pseudo-public space development had begun. For these reasons, the He family decided to walk out and leave their house on the eve of the 1999 Chinese New Year. The only lucky thing for the He family is that their house was not torn down after they left. Instead, it had been turned into a fine restaurant, because it was in good shape and fit readily into the overall architectural style of Xintiandi. The existence of the house had given the family some hope of reclaiming it back someday. Since 1999, the He family, through a series of lawsuits, had made a number of attempts to reclaim the ownership of their house. However, at least by 2013, the He family had not succeeded, although they never lose the hope of returning to the house one day (Shao 2013).

The existing gentrification literature, as Shin, Lees & López-Morales (2016, p.456) point out, 'has been overly preoccupied with the identification of particular forms of gentrification without paying adequate attention to how gentrification interacts with other urban processes'. The He family's story sheds some light on how the rise of pseudo-public spaces interacts with gentrification in China. In Chinese cities, commercial complexes and shopping malls mainly locate at city centres (according to CBRE (2016b), by 2015, 82 per cent of China's shopping malls or complexes located at central urban areas). However, in the centres of large Chinese cities like Shanghai and Chongqing, vacant land is very scarce. As a result, there are usually only two ways for the developers to acquire large land parcels for commercial developments in large Chinese cities (Hsing 2006). One way is that, like what we have seen in Mrs. Qin and Mr. Wang's story, the developer obtains the use rights of urban land on which a work-unit is built, then tears down the work-unit and builds pseudo-public spaces on the land. The other way is that, like what happened in the case of Xintiandi, the developer, with the help of the local government, can get urban land through urban 'renewal' or 'redevelopment' projects. As in Chinese city centres, the number of work-units has been decreasing rapidly since the Chinese cities began to play the role of

consumption centres, rather than production ones, in China's economy. Increasing numbers of developers now obtain land for pseudo-public space development through the second way.

However, it is widely recognised that the 'renewal' or 'redevelopment' process often turns out to be more preferred to gentrification (Ley & Teo 2014). And, in China, the gentrification process is often 'state-sponsored' (He 2007). This is because, as land revenue has become the most important fiscal income for the local governments after the tax reform, the local state, as a result, endeavours to promote the growth of local real estate market to make more revenue from land transactions. Displacement is a crucial step for the local states to achieve this goal, because, as China is in a transition from a planned economy to a market economy, displacement ensures that all kinds of complexities associated with the socialist legacies and economic transition are removed, and thus a 'clean sheet' that is susceptible to operation of real estate capital can be presented to individual and corporate investors (Shin 2016). The entrepreneurial local state which has been made the *de facto* landlord, therefore, resort to exercise their state power to help expropriate properties from existing users and owners, and turn them into commodities that are available for market transactions (Shin, Lees & López-Morales 2016).

As can be seen from the He family's story, under the banner of urban redevelopment and upgrading the less developed and undesirable urban areas, the district government seized the Hes' house and the land it is built on, and then transferred the use rights of the land to carry out redevelopment projects. After the redevelopment, the He family was displaced from the house they lived in and they 'could no longer afford to live in that house anyway' (Shao 2013, p.118). As we have seen in the preceding chapter, this particular urban area now becomes a highly gentrified place with a very low level of publicness. This kind of urban spaces, as Harvey (2016, p.295) reminds us, 'do not really help to reconstitute an adequate daily life for the impoverished masses.' In this sense, the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China, to an extent, is realised by dispossessing the residents, driving them out and destroying their original lives there. Importantly, the number of people affected by this process in China is considerable. As Vicent Lo, the chairman of the developer Shui On Land,

himself admitted, in the Xintiandi project alone, about 2,000 families who used to live in the site were displaced[①]. While in the whole city of Shanghai, during the 13 years between 1995 and 2008, up to 997,712 households were displaced from their original neighbourhoods with 64,802 square metres dilapidated housing demolished for commercial gentrification (Wang 2011). Around the country, as Shin's (2016) recent work finds, mega-displacement of local residents caused by large scale commercial gentrification has already become a sharing experience among major Chinese cities.

The mega-displacement leads to a rising tide of complaints by the displaced around China. As a result of the lack of routes for legal redress, many of the displaced have taken to the streets, the internet and mass media to protest. The displacement, as a consequence, has become a continuing source of high profile social unrest. According to a report of Human Rights Watch (2004), a non-profit and non-governmental organisation conducting research and advocacy on global human rights issues, protests over demolition and displacement have escalated in both intensity and number in China. One family whose home was located in Chongqing city centre, to take an example, refused to be relocated for the construction of a six-story shopping mall. After two years' negotiation, the developer, to evict the family, cut their power and water, and excavated a 10-metre deep pit around their house. In late February 2007, the house owners, in response, broke into the construction site, reoccupied the house, and then flew a Chinese flag on the roof of the house to protest the treatment they received (Amnesty International 2012). In just a few days, the image of the family's house with a Chinese flag and a big-character poster expressing the owners' anger on its roof (see Fig 5.5) spread all over the internet. During March 2007, this incident was repeatedly reported by over one hundred media from all over the world (*Southern Weekly* 2007). The social unrest behind massive urban redevelopment in China, as a result, aroused extensive attention both at home and abroad, although the house owners eventually settled with the developer one month later.

[①] See: http://madaboutshanghai.blogs.com/mad_about_shanghai/2005/09/meet_vincent_lo.html
(accessed 24 November, 2016)

Fig 5.5 The house of the family that refused to be displaced for the construction of a

shopping mall

Source: baike.baidu.com

The social unrest caused by the expansion of commercial real estate development has posed an entirely new challenge to the leadership of the Chinese government and has promoted it to change rhetoric and policies in the pursuit of a more balanced development between economic growth and social and ecological justice. Then, under this circumstance, how should Chinese policy makers respond to the expansion of shopping malls? What are the policy implications of the rise of pseudo-public spaces? The following section discusses those questions.

5.5 Policy Implications

In the light of these tensions and contradictions in economy, society and environment, how to respond to the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China is a pertinent question. If the findings and discussions in the thesis are any guide, this question does not have simple

answers.

On the one hand, Western societies have a long influential tradition of looking for binaries and, in the context of this thesis, characterising social reality as merely public or private (Benn & Gaus 1983a; Edward 1979; Obeng-Odoom 2016b). In many developed Western countries, such as the U.S.[①], Canada[②], and the U.K.[③], shopping malls and open spaces in them are clearly framed as private property and, therefore, their owners are given the power to exclude activities they do not like. Some Western urban scholars (e.g., Mitchell 2003; Sorkin 1992; Voyce 2006), as a result, argue that the rise of pseudo-public spaces leads to the 'end of public space'. In turn, the solution to the problems described is to reintroduce public space, for example, through nationalisation.

However, as Le-Yin Zhang (2015) reminds us, the management and governance challenges in those developed countries are fundamentally different from those in the developing countries. In China, the cities are experiencing a transformation from a public ownership-based centrally planned economy to what Zhang (2006a) calls a 'market socialism' economy. This process has resulted in Chinese society and cities developing under relatively ambiguous property rights (Zhu 2002; Lai & Lorne 2014). It was only in 2007 that the first Property Law was implemented in China to clarify what rights people exactly have in 'their' property. Most of this law, however, focuses on macro-scale issues such as property structure and rural-urban land conversion, while micro-scale issues including people's everyday rights to get access to and use of the streets, plazas, and other urban public spaces are still dealt with in highly ambiguous ways. As a result, as findings of this research suggest, the rise of pseudo-public spaces does not necessarily lead to what Western scholars call the 'end of public space' in China. Instead, the relationship between pseudo-public spaces and public life is dynamic and reciprocal in Chinese cities. As revealed by the empirical assessments, private power does not always play a dominant role in the daily control of pseudo-public spaces in China. Besides, as discussed in this chapter, the rise of pseudo-public spaces erodes the centuries-long 'walled-in' tradition of Chinese

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[①] See law case: *Pruneyard Shopping Center v. Robbins (1980).*

[②] See law case: *McLachlin J, Committee for Cth of Can. v. Canada (1991)*

[③] See law case: *Appleby and others v. The United Kingdom (2003)*

cities and brings urban social life back to the city public realm. These new urban spaces, therefore, can serve as public places which provide the city with relatively freer environment in which the general public can meet, gather, stay and carry out their daily urban social life.

Thanks to these features, the rise of pseudo-public spaces significantly transformed the scope of public spaces in Chinese cities. Today in China, people no longer only see parks and public squares as places where they can conduct their daily urban life. Some pseudo-public spaces, such as Nanping Wanda Plaza and Times Paradise Walk, have also become stages on which everyday civil society occurs. As the nature of the public realm is changing speedily and the line between the public and the private are blurring quickly in Chinese cities, the ideas underpinning the policy-making process to balance urban economic development and social justice should accordingly be modified in the particular context of mainland China to overcome the limits of dyadic line of reasoning. It may be better to make more flexible legal arrangements, rather than simply draw a clear dividing line between the public and the private, to preserve the presence of civil society in pseudo-public spaces and to protect pseudo-public spaces' role as a stage for daily urban social life to occur in Chinse cities.

However, on the other hand, although it does not necessarily lead to the end of public space and public life, the rise of pseudo-public spaces, as revealed by the empirical assessments, produces many less public urban spaces in Chinese cities. Those urban spaces are physically designed to make non-consumers uncomfortable to stay. They are, to a degree, not supportive for the occurrence of public users. Moreover, pseudo-public spaces sometimes are communities of strangers whose resources and information tend to only accessible to filtered users, rather than the public in general. People's spontaneity and freedom are usually constrained to an extent in pseudo-public spaces. What is more, as we have seen, the rise of pseudo-public spaces is often realised by dispossessing the residents, displacing them and downgrading their conditions of lives. Meanwhile, the rapid growth of pseudo-public spaces is also a non-negligible contributor to air pollution and ineffective use of resources and land in China. Because of these negative consequences, the rapid

expansion of pseudo-public spaces must be managed more carefully.

How to do so, however, is not easy, because the driving forces of the expansion of pseudo-public spaces are deeply rooted in the unique ways in which Chinese cities are governed. Urban governance is a city development paradigm. It is, according to Schindler (2015), not simply about managing people in place but about transforming people, territory and place to promote growth, inequality reduction, and inclusive development. Unlike the concept of urban management which has prioritised managerialism, the defining feature of urban governance is that the management of cities is neither the sole preserve of government not of the private sector but is the preserve of a wide variety of actors that interact with one another (Maloutas & Malouta 2004). To overcome the weaknesses in existing frames of urban governance, Franklin Obeng-Odoom reframes urban governance as a cluster of interlocking meanings of decentralisation (D), entrepreneurialism (E), and democratisation (D), namely a DED framework (Obeng-Odoom 2012, 2013, 2017a) and, on this basis, argues that any one of these three components alone is incapable of grounding the paradigm of urban governance (Obeng-Odoom 2017a). In this framework, 'decentralisation' emphasises the role the state plays in urban governance. 'Entrepreneurialism' highlights the relationship between the state and the market. 'Democratisation' accords with the normative feature of governance as a process of decision making and implementation that embraces different actors. Democracy here is people's power or power wielded by the people. It is an ideal, rather than a form of government (Obeng-Odoom 2013, p.17). The DED concept of urban governance provides a framework for discussion.

In China, as we saw in Chapter 3, the central state has made a series of institutional reforms since 1979 to decentralise its control over local development affairs. The decentralisation transferred the power of decision-making and the responsibilities of promoting and managing local economic development to the local state. As a result of the decentralisation, the local state, on the one hand, becomes the *de facto* landlord in the land market (Hsing 2006) and, on the other hand, is allowed to retain almost all the land sale revenue generated locally (Wu 2015). Consequently, since the mid-1990s, urban land transactions have become the most important source of the local state's fiscal revenue.

Decentralisation, however, does not simply lead to a decline in central power, because the change in the central-local relationship is not merely a one-dimensional decentralisation but a much more complex power relation between fiscal decentralisation and political decentralisation (Zhang 1999). One important aspect of this complex power relation is that the central state does not relax its power on the selection and promotion of local government officials. In China, as Zhang (2006b, p.713) reminds us, while the country's 'fiscal system is largely decentralised', 'its governance structure is rather centralised with strong top-down mandates'. The central state still maintains direct and tight control over the election and promotion of government officials, especially high-ranking officials, in the local state. And importantly, local economic performance is the most important determinant of local officials' promotions and appointments in China. Here, it is necessary to notice the difference in political system between China and the many Western countries.

Unlike in many Western countries, the selection and promotion of political officials in China is through 'appointment', rather than 'election'. This causes a problem, because the abilities of a political official consist of a wide range of aspects, and most of these aspects are invisible and unmeasurable, such as courage and eloquence. As a result, when it comes to the evaluation of an official's political ability, the Party, the public and other local officials usually have different standards which lead to different understandings or even disagreements. This makes the reason behind the party's decision of the promotion of a local official unclear. Apparently, this unclarity could be dangerous as it significantly threatens the legitimacy and authority of the party. Therefore, it is vital for the Party to find a measurable and commonly acceptable standard as a criterion for the promotion and appointment of its officials. As we have seen, after the major political ideology shift in Deng's era, almost all the major institutional reforms the Party has made are aiming at promoting economic growth. Economic development has been central to the political life of China. Therefore, the Party chooses local economic performance which is quantitative and easy to measure as the common criterion to evaluate the political ability of local officials, and as the basis for their promotions and appointments. Local economic growth, therefore, becomes vital for local officials' personal political life and thus is given top priority by

Chinese local officials when making decisions.

Urban land transactions as the most important source of local fiscal revenue and the local economic performance-based political official appointment and promotion criteria combine lead to that urbanisation becomes not only the key economic lifeline for the local government, but also crucial for local officials' personal political lives. As a result, to maximise the profitability of the land resources within their jurisdictions, the local governments operate and manage their resources themselves in the way as big 'corporates'. This leads to the entrepreneurialism of Chinese local state. The entrepreneurialism makes the local state become an active actor that promotes urban land transactions in the land market. In this process, the local state's desire of extracting revenue from urban land transactions, as we saw in Chapter 3, meet capital investors expanding demand for commercial land. As a result, 'growth coalitions' between the local state and real estate developers who share the same desire form in China (Zhang & Wu 2008).

In the meantime, however, although democracy in China has much improved, urban democracy remains substantially limited when it comes to urban governance and planning. According to China's planning law, public participation is not required for commercial projects. The public, as a result, have very little, if any, chance to express their attitudes toward a commercial land-use plan or the construction proposal of a shopping mall or commercial complex. In my interviews with Chinese architects and urban designers, they all expressed that public participation did not occur in any of the pseudo-public space projects they have participated in. The consequence is, as one of my interviewees stated, 'developers have the dominant power to determine the spatial and functional design and plan of a commercial space' (interview #7). Developers, therefore, can, to a large extent, shape the pseudo-public spaces in the way that is most beneficial for themselves. Developers' dominant power on shaping pseudo-public spaces as they desire, as we saw in last chapter, has weakened certain social groups' right to access the urban commons. This right, however, is a foundational component of 'the right to the city' (Harvey 2003b).

In his book: *Rebel Cities*, David Harvey (2013) analyses how Henri Lefebvre's idea of the 'right to the city' can be used to animate urban economy. To claim the right to the city,

as Harvey (2013, p.5) explains, is to claim 'some kind of shaping power' over the process of urbanisation and over our daily urban social life in the city. The state, on its part, is supposed to support the process of claiming and obtaining this kind of power in various ways (Obeng-Odoom 2017a). However, in China, because of the 'growth coalitions', the local state tends to stand on the developer's side when it comes to the development and use of pseudo-public spaces. As previously discussed, urban 'renewal' and 'regeneration' are becoming the most often-seen ways in which developers can obtain large scale land for commercial developments in Chinese city centres. In those processes, displacing existing residents from the less developed and undesirable urban areas, as He (2007) reminds us, is often 'state-sponsored'. This is because under the banner of urban 'renewal' and 'redevelopment', the local state can remove all kinds of complexities associated with the socialist legacies, expropriate unclear property relations from existing users, and then create a 'clean sheet' for further accumulation (Shin 2016). In the displacement, as we have seen in the He family's case, the growth coalition had very strong power to push forward this process. However, on the other side, the He family had to face all the pressure from the local state-developer coalition all by themselves, because public demonstration, protest, and free speech are still prohibited or largely constrained in China even in urban public spaces such as the streets and parks. During the 2008 Olympics, for example, the Beijing police opened three parks in the capital as 'protest zones'. But when two 70-year-old women tried to apply for a permission to protest against the illegal demolition of their houses, they were informed that they would be sent to labour camp for charges of 'disturbing social order' (*NBC News* 2009). This, as a result, made the displaced families very weak to protect their 'rights to the city'.

To achieve democratisation in urban governance, apart from the state, civil society organisations such as community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations are desired and important (Kjaer 2004; Obeng-Odoom 2013). In China, however, a civil society between the state and the market that is strong enough to constrain the power of the 'growth coalitions' is absent. As the Chinese Communist Party is wary of any organisations it does control, the founding and operations of non-governmental organisations, especially

those agitating for human rights, are still strictly restricted in China (*The Economist* 2015). As Jianbo Ma (2013, p.149) states in his book: *The Land Development Game in China*, the roles of civil society organisations 'are extremely limited' in the Chinese urbanism and, in China, 'there are no civil society organisations capable of influencing policymaking, and the public is generally excluded from the land conversion process.' More recently, in the editorial of a virtual special issue of *Urban Studies*, He & Qian (2017, p.838), drawing on a review of the recent progress made in urban China studies, point out that, in China, the relation of power between state-capital coalitions and grassroots groups is 'unequal'. Therefore, 'rights-defending activism has generally achieved only modest results' and 'newly emerging social organisations have played only a very limited role in fostering resistant civil society in China to date.' As a result, because of the absence of a powerful civil society to constrain their desire, the 'growth coalitions' between the local state and the developer become almost 'unstoppable' in Chinese cities when promoting the processes of commercialising and privatising Chinese urban space.

In the current urban governance system of China, it is not difficult to see that, as long as local economic growth and revenue extraction are still largely based on land requisition and real estate development, local officials' enthusiasm for and pressure of promoting urbanisation will be unlikely to reduce. Meanwhile, if a strong civil society and meaningful public participation in the urban governance and planning processes are still absent, the local state and the developers' desires will hardly be constrained.

Therefore, if China wants to control and slow down the expansion of privatised and commercialised urban space, the country's national and local financial structure and political official appointment and promotion criteria would need to be overhauled to replace the current models. Besides, relaxations on founding and operating of civil society organisations and conducting public protests are necessary, because they are crucial for strengthening the power of the civil society and making it powerful enough to constrain the power of the 'growth coalitions'. What is more, as the spatial design is significant for a pseudo-public space's publicness, it is also necessary to establish a wider public participation mechanism in the urban planning system to make sure that the public's voices

are heard and their concerns and interests are properly considered in the planning and design processes of a commercial development.

There has been much international pressure on the Chinese state in this regard (Bello 2008), but far less attention has been given to nudging the Chinese state to more fully embrace the philosophy of Sun Yat-Sen (Lin 1974) and hence Henry George (1879). If successful, radical changes would follow. At the very least, the revenues from land would be put to public uses such as developing social protection programs. As Zhang (2016) shows, such revenue can fund sustainable urban development programs such as the expansion of public parks, the provision of public housing for the dispossessed, and public transport. Adopting a fuller Georgist policy would also mean directly improving labour conditions through, for example, removing income taxes.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter sought to address the last research question of the thesis: what are the socio-spatial, economic and environmental consequences of and reactions to the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China? To answer this question, the chapter has examined how the rise of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls is connected with the urbanisation-based economic reform and restructuring of China; the degradation of Chinese cities' environmental quality; the transformations of urban spatial form and social life happening in China; and gentrification and dispossession occurred in the rapid urbanisation process. Though looking into the connections between the rise of pseudo-public spaces and those widely discussed Chinese urban phenomena, discussions in this chapter show that, (1) economically, the rise of pseudo-public spaces and commercial spaces serves as an important driving force in China's urbanisation-based economic restructuring by, at the macro-scale, mobilising surplus capital to investment in the built environment and, at the micro-scale, expediting the circulation of money in the urban built environment in China; (2) Environmentally, the rise of pseudo-public spaces has contributed non-negligibly to the waste of resources and the increasingly alarming air pollution in China; (3) Socio-spatially, the rise of pseudo-public spaces has, on the one hand, eroded the centuries-long 'walled-in'

tradition of Chinese cities and brought urban social life which was largely confined to the walled wards out to the urban public realm. While, on the other hand, the rise of pseudo-public spaces has caused the displacement and dispossession of a large number of city households in China.

Based on those discussions, the chapter finds that the rise of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls is intimately connected with those broadly concerned urban phenomena happening in China and plays pluralistic roles in them. It argues that the rapid spatial transformation happening in China not only directly produces negative consequences such as severe environmental challenges, but also threatens to undercut any progress that the cities purport to have made. Raising pollution levels, massive evictions, and growing inequality illustrate the tensions and contradicts called forth by Chinese pseudo-public spaces. In response to those tensions and contradictions in economy, society and environment, the chapter has proposed some suggestions for policy-making. On the one hand, the rise of pseudo-public spaces does not necessarily result in the 'end of public space' in Chinese cities. Pseudo-public spaces in contemporary China are places where everyday civil society can occur. On the other hand, the rise of pseudo-public spaces does produce many less public spaces in Chinese cities and cause a series of negative consequences such as dispossession and displacement of original city residents and air pollution. The rapid expansion of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls, therefore, needs to be managed more carefully.

The ideas underpinning the policy-making process to balance urban economic growth with social and ecological justice could accordingly be modified in the particular context of mainland China to overcome the limits of dyadic line of reasoning. More flexible legal arrangements, rather than simply drawing a clear dividing line between the public and the private, need to be put in place to cultivate the presence of civil society in pseudo-public spaces and to transcend pseudo-public spaces' role as engines for growth. Modifying the current models of the central-local fiscal structure, the appointment and promotion criteria of local political officials; relaxing the stringent rules on founding and operating civil society organisations, encouraging free public protests; and establishing a wider public

participation mechanism in the urban governance and planning system may be effective ways to do so. While less discussed, using land-based revenues for social protection programs, investing some of such resources in sustainable development programs, and improving the social conditions of labour as advocated by Henry George and Sun Yat-Sen can be particularly effective in addressing much of the tensions and contradictions entailed in the expansion of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls.

Chapter Six
Conclusion

What's past is prologue.

—William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

This thesis sets out to answer three sets of research questions: (1) How did pseudo-public space, as a particular kind of privatised urban space, emerge in China; and why has it expanded rapidly in Chinese cities? (2) To what degree are pseudo-public spaces in contemporary China public; and how do pseudo-public spaces influence the publicness of Chinese cities? And (3) what are the socio-spatial, economic and environmental consequences of and reactions to the rise of pseudo-public spaces and shopping malls in China?

Drawn from contemporary debates about China and grounded in a theoretical framework that engages with but ultimately transcends (a) mainstream urban studies, (b) critical socio-spatial debates and (c) the complexity of the publicness of space in the urban process under capitalism, this thesis has presented original data and synthesised existing work to address the questions. I have written the thesis from a trans-disciplinary spatial political economy perspective based on which, to make capitalism itself survive, the urban process driven by capitalism has to establish land market, create new social demands and needs, and allow capital circulation concentrate spatially in the city. All these actions collectively result in new mode to organise and reorganise urban space, which leads to the emergence of new urban space. The newly emerged urban space then begins to expand and evolve in the city, as a result of the rise of the capital investors' economic power caused by

neoliberal capitalism. Within neoliberal capitalism, the state becomes financially dependent on capital investors. Meanwhile, the desires of consumers can easily guide capital investors to produce more new urban spaces. These relationships between capital investors, the state, and consumers then affect the ways in which those new urban spaces are designed, manipulated, and used, and all these collectively determine to what degree those urban spaces are public and how they will influence the publicness, spatial form, social and economic lives, and environmental quality of the city. To make the complexity and relativities of the publicness of urban space analysable, I developed a scoring index for empirically assessing publicness of space. Details of this approach can be found in Chapter 2.

This concluding chapter serves three purposes. First, it highlights the key findings and answers to the research questions. Second, the chapter stresses the contributions of the thesis to the empirical literature and theoretical debates on China and cities more generally. Third, the chapter clarifies the limitations of the thesis, while providing a compass for addressing them in future research.

6.1 Key Findings

Based on the framework developed in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 has explored answers to the first set of research questions. Drawing on institutionalism approach, in spatial political economy, the chapter provides answers to the historical investigation that begins from Mao Zedong's era (1949-1979) -when China was preoccupied by the communist ideological determination to eliminate private ownership and thus privatisation of urban space was hardly seen in the country- and ends in recent years –when a market economy that incorporates neoliberal elements interdigitated with authoritarian centralised control has been established in China and, as a result, urban space in the country has become highly privatised. The historical institutionalism investigation has shown that Chinese urban space began to be privatised since the late 1970s, and this process was driven by a series of major institutional fixes and reforms (locally, regionally, and globally) made after the country's turn to neoliberalism. Those major institutional fixes and reforms have brought significant

changes to the desires of and relations between the state, capital investors, and the public in China and to the roles they play in the Chinese urbanism. It is those changes that paved the way for the emergence and rapid expansion of pseudo-public spaces in China since 2001. Drawing on the empirical evidence from China, Chapter 3 has made the argument that the privatisation of urban space is a 'conventional process' driven by a series of institutional arrangements, rather than a mere natural marketisation process.

If Chapter 3 explains why pseudo-public spaces have expanded rapidly in China, it is Chapter 4 that answers that how the rise of this particular kind of urban space affects the publicness of Chinese cities, namely the second set of research questions of this thesis. Using the scoring index developed in Chapter 2, Chapter 4 has addressed those questions. This chapter has presented and discussed case studies of pseudo-public spaces and publicly owned and managed public spaces in two selected large Chinese cities: Shanghai and Chongqing. On this basis, it has empirically assessed the degrees of the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in the two Chinese cities. Empirical evidence from Shanghai and Chongqing has shown that, on the one hand, pseudo-public spaces, as a new kind of urban space, are designed, manipulated and used significantly differently from publicly owned and managed public spaces, and those differences collectively lead to that the levels of publicness of the two study pseudo-public spaces are noticeably lower than publicly owned and managed public spaces. However, on the other hand, while some pseudo-public spaces in China, like Xintiandi in Shanghai, have become affluent neighbourhoods which are in 'highly private' situation, there are also some pseudo-public spaces, such as Nanping Wanda Plaza in Chongqing, in where no strong demand for social segregation exists and thus no tight social control schemes applied. They serve as public places which provide the city with relatively freer environment in which the general public can meet, gather, stay and conduct their daily social urban life. Based on these findings, it has been argued that, although pseudo-public spaces are generally less public than publicly owned and managed public spaces, the rise of pseudo-public spaces in the particular context of mainland China does not necessarily result in what many western urban scholars call the 'end of public space' in the country. Perceptions of the disappearance of the public realm in contemporary

societies, therefore, may be exaggerated.

Based on the findings and discussions presented in previous chapters, Chapter 5 has examined the socio-spatial, economic, and environmental consequences of the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China, and discussed what implications those consequences have for policy-making. In so doing, Chapter 5 has drawn a broader picture of how the rise of pseudo-public spaces impacts Chinese cities. It has outlined the connections between the rise of this particular kind of space and some widely discussed urban phenomena occurring in China, including transformations of urban spatial form and social life, gentrification and dispossession in rapid urbanisation, urbanisation-based economic reform and restructuring, and the degradation of urban environmental quality. It has shown that the rise of pseudo-public spaces is intimately connected with those broadly concerned urban phenomena and plays pluralistic roles in them. It has been argued that the rapid spatial transformation happening in China not only produces severe environmental challenges, but also threatens to undercut any progress that the cities purport to have made. Raising pollution levels, massive evictions, and growing inequality illustrate the tensions and contradicts called forth by Chinese pseudo-public spaces. In response to those tensions and contradictions, Chapter 5 has suggested that the ideas underpinning the policy-making process to balance urban economic growth with social and ecological justice can be modified in the particular context of mainland China. More flexible legal arrangements can be put in place to nurture the presence of civil society in pseudo-public spaces and to protect pseudo-public spaces' role as a stage for daily urban social life.

It is this emphasis that characterises international engagement with the Chinese state. But, as Chapter 5 shows, a fuller embrace of Georgist and Sun Yat-Sun's philosophy can bring about propitious outcomes. Doing so would entail modifying the current models of the central-local fiscal structure and the appointment and promotion criteria of local political officials; making relaxations on founding and operating of non-governmental organisations and conducting public protests; establishing a wider public participation mechanism in the urban governance and planning system, and putting revenues from land to public uses and improving the social conditions of labour.

6.2 Contributions to the Existing Empirical Literature and Theoretical Debates

Contributions of this research to the existing empirical literature and theoretical debates are four-fold:

First, this research contributes to the ongoing debates on space and property and how they can usefully be (re)organised. As discussed in Chapter 1, in property rights research, the debates have been mainly focused on three issues, namely whether (1) private property is natural of conventional; (2) common property leads to better use of resources; and (3) private property is more suitable to a good society and the nature of humans. On the one hand, some scholars in the 'conventional school' believe that property was conventional not natural, and common property is more consistent with the primitive nature of human and the equality of society than private property. On the other hand, scholars in the natural rights school, or 'new property rights school', argue that the institution of property is natural and privatisation is a better way to organize the commons. A more explicitly urban-focused literature, as previously discussed, polarises along the conventional-natural rights school has also developed in the literature. Some urban scholars, from a natural rights school perspective, argue that the privatisation of urban public realm is a spontaneous process to limit usage caused by congestion, and the privatisation of public space will not necessarily lead to the 'end of public space', because the relationship between public spaces and city life is dynamic and reciprocal, as new forms of public life require new urban spaces. While other urban scholars, from a conventional school perspective, claim that the privatisation of urban public realm is a conventional process driven by ideological, political and economic forces. They criticise that the privatisation of public spaces advances private interests at public expense, and it leads to the 'end of public space' and 'fall of public man'.

Analyses of the empirical evidence from China show that the privatisation of Chinese urban space is not a spontaneous, market-based process. Instead, it is a conventional process largely driven by a major ideological shift and a series of landmark institutional fixes made after the country's turn to neoliberalism since the late 1970s. Meanwhile, case studies in selected Chinese cities show that the levels of publicness of pseudo-public spaces are much lower than publicly owned and managed urban spaces. These findings support the key

claims of the 'conventional school'. However, empirical evidence from China does not suggest the natural rights school's claims are entirely wrong. In China, the rise of pseudo-public spaces, as the evidence suggests, does not lead to the 'end of public space'. Some pseudo-public spaces in Chinese large cities are still playing a role in providing 'public places' for the society. These empirical findings suggest that the conventional-natural rights debates should not be understood in binary ways. To collapse the binary, this research puts the case of analysing space for a continuum approach. This approach leads to the second contribution of this research.

Second, this research extends the existing theories of political economy of space by building up a framework that can be used to study the rise of a new kind of urban space in a particular context and assess the degrees of publicness of urban spaces in various contexts. The trans-disciplinary theoretical framework building upon in Chapter 2 for the empirical investigation of pseudo-public spaces in China, I would argue, can be used in broader contexts. In other countries where rapid urbanisation is happening, such as India, the nature of the public realm in cities is also changing speedily. More pragmatic research tools are also needed to study the emergence and rise of new urban spaces in those countries and overcome the limits of dyadic line of reasoning in rapid urbanisation process. This trans-disciplinary theoretical lens has the potential to shed some light on the interpretation of the measurements of publicness of space in those countries.

Third, this research provides so far the first empirical assessment of the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in the particular context of mainland China. As suggested in Chapter 4, the visible presence of pseudo-public spaces is a worldwide feature of urbanism, and it has drawn great scholarly attention. However, in the existing literature, empirical studies on the design, management, and daily use of pseudo-public spaces and their impacts on the publicness of the city are mainly conducted in the U.S. and Europe, while only a few have been done in Asia. However, no substantial empirical study carried out in the particular context of mainland China can be found in the existing literature. This neglect is surprising because, as explained in Chapter 1, China is where the largest number of shopping malls/centres and commercial complexes exist and are growing at the fastest speed in the

world. Moreover, China is experiencing a transformation from a socialist public ownership-based centrally planned economy to a market economy. This transition shows that the political-economy and social-cultural contexts bearing on the design, management and use of pseudo-public spaces in China are manifestly different from those in the West. Those differences make China an important case study for understanding the impacts of neoliberal urbanisation on the publicness of urban space that requires careful analysis.

Fourth, this thesis outlines the connections between the rise of pseudo-public spaces and China's new form of urbanism. China's new form of urbanism has drawn great scholarly attention. In the existing literature, transformations of urban spatial form and social life; gentrification and dispossession in rapid urbanisation; urbanisation-based economic reform and restructuring; and the degradation of urban environmental quality are most broadly discussed urban phenomena happening in China. However, how the rise of pseudo-public spaces, a new kind of urban space emerged in China's new form of urbanism and intimately related to this process, is connected to those urban phenomena has not been made clear in the literature. This research, by discussing the economic, socio-spatial, and environmental influences of the rise of pseudo-public spaces, makes a substantial contribution to closing this gap.

6.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Nonetheless, the thesis is limited in a number of ways. Acknowledging them here helps to simultaneously contextualise my contributions and show how future research can extend the present thesis.

In this research, the empirical assessments of the publicness of pseudo-public spaces are mainly built upon case studies of ten specific pseudo-public spaces in five selected Chinese cities. Although analyses of these cases are able to clearly prove that the hypothesis that the rise of pseudo-public spaces will cause the 'end of public space' is not true in China, using a few cases still struggles to draw a comprehensive picture of how pseudo-public spaces -which is still a new kind of urban space but has already become very ubiquitous and keeps evolving in China- affect the publicness of Chinese cities. Now, this research has shown that

the rise of pseudo-public spaces does not necessarily lead to the 'end of public space' in China. On this basis, future studies can consider larger sample sizes, so that a fuller picture of the various ways in which pseudo-public spaces are designed, managed and used in China can be drawn.

Also, in developing the scoring index for empirical assessment, although I have tried my best to make the index and indicators as objective as possible by making the descriptors directly observable according to their presence and intensity, the assessment results are not purely objective. As Varna & Tiesdell (2010) point out, assessing the publicness of urban space can never be an exact science. The researcher's own subjective judgements always affect the results of the empirical assessments to an extent. To minimise the impacts of this limitation, future studies which empirically assess the publicness of pseudo-public spaces in China could either further refine the scoring index developed in this research or develop new scoring indexes or new assessment methods which are meaningfully distinct from what I have developed and adopted in this research. Through triangulating findings derived from different assessment methods and criteria, we can expect to get a more reliable picture of the publicness of Chinese pseudo-public spaces that is closer to reality.

Meanwhile, due to the difficulties in gaining access to managers of shopping malls and the limited time available for me to do fieldwork in China, managers of shopping malls and commercial complexes in China were not interviewed in this research. However, the managers have first-hand knowledge of how pseudo-public spaces are managed, controlled, and how their uses are manipulated on daily basis. Interviews with them, therefore, can enable researchers to develop additional perspectives and, in this way, enrich our collective understanding of the daily management and control of pseudo-public spaces in China. In pseudo-public spaces studies carried out in Western countries, interviews with the managers are often presented as an important source of data (e.g., De Magalhães & Freire Trigo 2017; Langstraat & Van Melik 2013). However, to the best of my knowledge, no interview with shopping mall or commercial complex managers in China about the daily management and control of pseudo-public spaces has been reported in the existing literature so far. For these reasons, it is necessary for future studies to consider carrying out interviews with managers

of shopping malls and commercial complexes in China.

Moreover, there is a common perception that a significant portion of the capital that flows through the land development process is syphoned off corruptly. Analytically, politics and corruption can have important impact on the use and management of privately owned urban spaces. This aspect of the process of urban development has not been a primary focus of this study in part because of the lack of clear data. Similarly, in this thesis, there is only negligible discussion of the role of political activity in pseudo-public spaces and its influences. Future studies could probe these important issues, focusing especially on the impact of corruption in China's land development process and political activity in Chinese shopping malls.

Finally, it is well accepted that people in different parts of a country and different segments of a society use public space in very different ways. However, because of the lack of relevant data, this study does not systematically differentiate the consumption of pseudo-public spaces by different socio-economic status or demographic characteristics. Future research can investigate precisely and systematically class, age and gender which can have meaningful impact on the use of pseudo-public spaces.

For now, however, this thesis represents a substantial and original contribution to debates on the rise, publicness, and consequences of pseudo-public spaces in Chinese shopping malls.

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Appendices:

Appendix I: Index Scoring for the 10 Study Pseudo-Public Spaces in Chinese Cities

(NWP=Nanping Wanda Plaza; TPW=Times Paradise Walk; TMC=The Mix C; PW=Paradise Walk; XTD=Xintiandi; K11=K11; SV=Sanlitun Village; SS=Sanlitun SOHO; TKH=Taikoo Hui; TKL=Taikoo Li)

Dimensions/Indicators		Study Spaces	NWP	TPW	TMC	PW	XTD	K11	SV	SS	TKH	TKL
Design and Plan Dimensions	Function	Support of unplanned use	2	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	2	2	0	2
	Urban-scale design	Location/ spatial Connection	2	2	0	0	2	-2	2	0	-2	2
		Visual permeability	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	-2	1
		Thresholds and gateways	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	2
	Architectural-scale design	Availability of facilities	0	0	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0
		Human needs	-1	1	1	1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	-1
Manipulation Dimensions	Ownership		-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2
	Agency		1	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2
	Interest		0	0	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	0
	Management & control	Purpose	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	0	-1	1	-2	0
		Methods and its Presence	-2	0	0	0	-2	-1	-2	0	-2	0
	Rules	Presence & Purpose	1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0
		Arrangement & enforcement	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-1
Use Dimensions	Perception	Cultural understanding	0	0	-2	-2	-2	-1	0	-2	-2	0
		Social engagement	-2	0	-2	-2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2
	Accessibility	Information	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
		Resource	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Users/ Uses	Variety	2	2	2	0	-2	0	0	2	2	2
		quantity	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	0	2	2
		quality	2	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	0	0	0	2
Overall score			**13**	**5**	**-12**	**-15**	**-20**	**-12**	**-5**	**-4**	**-11**	**7**

Source: based on fieldwork in Chinese cities

Appendix II: UTS Human Research Ethics Approval Letter

Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au

周五 2014/12/19 2:45

收件箱

收件
人: Spike.Boydell@uts.edu.au <Spike.Boydell@uts.edu.au>; Mike Wang <Yiming.Wang-1@student.uts.edu.au>;
Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au <Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au>;

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your response to the Committee's comments for your project titled, "Pseudo-Public Space and the Publicness of the City: A Chinese Perspective". Your response satisfactorily addresses the concerns and questions raised by the Committee who agreed that the application now meets the requirements of the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). I am pleased to inform you that ethics approval is now granted.

Your approval number is UTS HREC REF NO. 2014000754
Your approval is valid five years from the date of this email.

Please note that the ethical conduct of research is an on-going process. The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans requires us to obtain a report about the progress of the research, and in particular about any changes to the research which may have ethical implications. This report form must be completed at least annually, and at the end of the project (if it takes more than a year). The Ethics Secretariat will contact you when it is time to complete your first report.

I also refer you to the AVCC guidelines relating to the storage of data, which require that data be kept for a minimum of 5 years after publication of research. However, in NSW, longer retention requirements are required for research on human subjects with potential long-term effects, research with long-term environmental effects, or research considered of national or international significance, importance, or controversy. If the data from this research project falls into one of these categories, contact University Records for advice on long-term retention.

You should consider this your official letter of approval. If you require a hardcopy please contact Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au.

To access this application, please follow the URLs below:
* if accessing within the UTS network: http://rmprod.itd.uts.edu.au/RMENet/HOM001N.aspx
* if accessing outside of UTS network: https://remote.uts.edu.au , and click on "RMENet - ResearchMaster Enterprise" after logging in.

We value your feedback on the online ethics process. If you would like to provide feedback please go to: http://surveys.uts.edu.au/surveys/onlineethics/index.cfm

If you have any queries about your ethics approval, or require any amendments to your research in the future, please do not hesitate to contact Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Marion Haas
Chairperson
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee
C/- Research & Innovation Office
University of Technology, Sydney
T: (02) 9514 9772
F: (02) 9514 1244
E: Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au
I: http://www.research.uts.edu.au/policies/restricted/ethics.html
P: PO Box 123, BROADWAY NSW 2007
[Level 14, Building 1, Broadway Campus]
CB01.14.08.04

Ref: E13

Appendix III: Project Information Sheet Given to Experts

INFORMATION SHEET
(For experts)

Pseudo-Public Spaces in Chinese Shopping Malls: Rise, Publicness and Consequences
(UTS HREC REF NO. 2014000754)

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

My name is Yiming Wang. I am a PhD student at the University of Technology Sydney.

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

The purpose of this study is answering the following three questions:

Q1: What institutional and legal arrangements have been put in place to make pseudo-public spaces emerge and expand rapidly in China?
Q2: How public are pseudo-public spaces in China?
Q3: What are the consequences of the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China?

(In this research, 'pseudo-public space' refers to open spaces in large scale shopping malls and commercial complexes. This particular kind of urban space has two important features: (1) The private sector is to some extent involved in the design, management and use of this sort of urban space; (2) although publicly accessible and resemble public space, pseudo-public space is deliberately designed and managed for the purpose of profit-seeking, rather than public use.)

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?

I will ask you to have an open-ended interview about the use, management, and design of pseudo-public spaces in China.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS/INCONVENIENCE?

There are very few if any risks because the research has been carefully designed. The interview will be about and only about the three research questions of this study listed above. It will take up you about 1 hour time, and it will be audio recorded.

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?

As an expert, you are able to give me the information I need to find out about the use, management, or

design of pseudo-public spaces in China.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?

You don't have to say yes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

Nothing. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.

IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?

You can change your mind at any time and you don't have to say why. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I or my supervisor can help you with, please feel free to contact us on:

Yiming Wang (E-mail: yiming.wang-1@student.uts.edu.au; Tel: +61   ) or
Dr. Franklin Obeng-Odoom (E-mail: franklin.obeng-odoom@uts.edu.au; Tel: +61 2 9514 8886)

If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer on 02 9514 9772, and quote this number: UTS HREC REF NO. 2014000754

研究项目信息单
（专家使用）

研究题目：中国商业综合体中的伪公共空间：发展、公共性及影响
UTS HREC 批准编号: 2014000754

谁在进行该项研究?

澳大利亚悉尼科技大学的博士研究生王一名在进行该项研究。

这是一项关于什么内容的研究？

该研究有三个目标：

（1）分析在过去 30 年中伪公共空间为什么会在中国出现并快速扩张；

（2）评估"伪公共空间"的公共性程度；

（3）探讨伪公共空间给中国城市所带来的影响。

（"伪公共空间"指的是大型购物中心和商业综合体中的开放空间。这一类城市空间有两个重要特征：（1）私人资本总在一定程度上参与了这类空间的设计、管理和日常使用；（2）虽然向公众开放并与公共空间非常相似，但伪公共空间的设计和管理在本质上都是以盈利，而不是公共使用，为目的。）

如果我同意参与，该研究将要求我做什么？

研究人王一名将邀请您进行一次开放式的访谈。该访谈将涉及且仅涉及中国伪公共空间的使用，管理，和设计问题。

该研究会对我带来任何风险和不便吗？

该研究经过精心的设计，因此给你带来不便的可能性非常小。我将会邀请您参加一次访谈，访谈内容将仅限于上面列出的该研究的三项研究目标。这次访谈将会占用您大约一个小时的时间，并将被录音。

为什么要求我参与该研究？

因为您作为该领域的专家或从业者，能为这项研究提供关于中国伪公共空间的使用，管理，和设计方面的宝贵信息和意见。

我必须同意参加该研究吗？

您不是必须参加该研究。

如果我拒绝参加该研究，将会有什么后果？

没有任何后果。我感谢您到目前为止所花费的时间，并且将不会再询问您任何关于该研究的问题。

在我同意参加该研究之后，我还能改变我的主意吗？

您可以在任何时候无理由的改变您参加该研究的意愿。我感谢您到目前为止所花费的时间，并且将不会再询问您任何关于该研究的问题。

如果我有任何问题或者投诉，我需要如何做？

对于任何关于该研究的问题，如果您认为研究人王一名或者其导师能够提供帮助的，请随时联系他们：

王一名（电子邮箱：yiming.wang-1@student.uts.edu.au；电话：+61   ）
Franklin Obeng-Odoom 博士（电子邮箱：Franklin.Obeng-Odoom@uts.edu.au；电话：+61 2 9514 8886)

如果您希望能与任何该研究之外的人员联系，您可以拨打悉尼科技大学研究伦理办公室职员（Research Ethics Officer）的电话：+61 02 9514 9772。在通过该电话联系时，请告知该研究项目的 UTS HREC 批准编号：2014000754

Appendix IV: Project Information Sheet Given to the Public

INFORMATION SHEET
(For the public)

Pseudo-Public Spaces in Chinese Shopping Malls: Rise, Publicness and Consequences
(UTS HREC REF NO. 2014000754)

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Q3: What are the consequences of the rise of pseudo-public spaces in China?

(In this research, 'pseudo-public space' refers to open spaces in large scale shopping malls and commercial complexes. This particular kind of urban space has two important features: (1) The private sector is to some extent involved in the design, management and use of this sort of urban space; (2) although publicly accessible and resemble public space, pseudo-public space is deliberately designed and managed for the purpose of profit-seeking, rather than public use.)

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?

I will stroll in the study urban spaces, observe people doing their day-to-day businesses in the space and how they use the space, and have on-site conversations with them.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS/INCONVENIENCE?

There are very few if any risks because the research has been carefully designed. I will not disturb any of the people's activities in the study spaces, and not break any rules of using the spaces. The observation will be recorded through handwritten notes and photos. I will only record how people using the space, no personal information will be recorded. I will NOT take photos of people in the space specifically, and all the people's faces in the photo will be de-identified using Photoshop software.

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?

As a user of the pseudo-public space, how you are doing your day-to-day businesses in the space is able to give me the information I need to find out about the use, management, or design of pseudo-public spaces in China.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?

You don't have to say yes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

Nothing. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again. I will NOT record any of your information in any of my fieldnote.

IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?

You can change your mind at any time and you don't have to say why.   I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I or my supervisor can help you with, please feel free to contact us on:

Yiming Wang (E-mail: yiming.wang-1@student.uts.edu.au; Tel: +61   ) or
Dr. Franklin Obeng-Odoom (E-mail: franklin.obeng-odoom@uts.edu.au; Tel: +61 2 9514 8886)

If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer on 02 9514 9772, and quote this number: UTS HREC REF NO. 2014000754

研究项目信息单
（公众使用）

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UTS HREC 批准编号: 2014000754

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（3）探讨伪公共空间给中国城市所带来的影响。

（"伪公共空间"指的是大型购物中心和商业综合体中的开放空间。这一类城市空间有两个重要特征：（1）私人资本总在一定程度上参与了这类空间的设计、管理和日常使用；（2）虽然向公众开放并与公共空间非常相似，但伪公共空间的设计和管理在本质上都是以盈利，而不是公共使用，为目的。）

如果我同意参与，该研究将要求我做什么？

研究人王一名将会在该城市空间中观察并记录人们进行他们的日常工作生活行为,以及他们如何使用该城市空间。并和他们（您）进行简短交谈。

该研究会对我带来任何风险和不便吗？

该研究经过精心的设计，因此给你带来不便的可能性非常小。我将不会打扰您在该城市空间中所进行的任何活动，并且不会违反任何使用该城市空间的任何规定。该项观察将会仅以手写笔记和照片的方式记录人们如何使用该城市空间，并将不会记录任何个人信息。我将不会拍摄该空间中任何一个使用者的特写照片。
在您方便的情况下，我会就地和您进行交谈，谈话不会超过半小时，且内容将仅限于上面列出的该研究的三项研究目标。

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Appendix V: A Detailed Explanation of Features of 'Public' and 'Private' Space

Through an in-depth review of the existing literature, in Chapter 2 (see table 2.2), I summarise the features of 'more public' and 'more private' of the twelve dimensions of the publicness of urban space. A detailed explanation and summary of how these features are discussed in the existing literature is provided below.

A-V.1 Design and Plan Dimensions

Function

The designing and planning aspect of publicness includes 3 dimensions: function, urban-scale design, and architectural-scale design. Among them, the designed function has a fundamental influence on the publicness of a space. Carmona (2010a) identifies 20 types of spaces in the city, and ranges them from most public (Natural/semi-natural urban space) to most private (Internal private space). In his spectrum, if we compare their designed or planned uses, we can find that the higher degree to which the designed or planned functions are for public use, the more public the spaces could be. Parks and commons, for example, can be seen as generally designed for the use of all the public, so they are categorised as 'positive spaces' which locates at the most public end of this spectrum. However, shopping malls whose actual functions are seeking profit for the owners and providing services for customers, despite they always appear to be a place for public activates, are categorised as 'ambiguous spaces' which is the second most private category of urban space.

Furthermore, when the spaces have the same designed/planned function, there also may exist a hierarchy of publicness. It depends on the degree to which the unplanned spontaneous uses may occur in the space. By introducing the notion of 'loose spaces', Franck & Stevens (2006) describe the 'more public' spaces as have the ability or potentiality to encourage unplanned activities. They argue the design or planning of these spaces offers users more freedom of choice of activities and more means of carrying them out (Franck & Stevens 2006). In contrast, as what Sommer (1974) explains as 'tight spaces', the 'more private' spaces are only designed/planned for fixed functions and activities.

Urban-scale design

Varna & Tiesdell (2010) propose three key features to consider, regarding urban-scale design: centrality and connectivity; visual access; as well as thresholds and gateways. On this basis, they explain their understanding of 'more public' urban-scale design of a space as: being central and well-connected with potential for plenty of comings-and-goings by different groups; being visually permeable and connected to the public realm beyond the place itself; and not having explicit thresholds (Varna & Tiesdell 2010).

Meanwhile, Flusty (1997) identifies five sorts of what he describes as 'interdictory spaces': stealthy space, slippery space, crusty space, prickly space, and jittery space. The first three species of this classification offers a useful insight into the 'more private' situation of the urban-scale design dimension. According to his argument, the stealthy space cannot be found, is camouflaged or obscured by view impediments or grade changes; the slippery space is the kind of space that cannot be reached, because of contorted, protracted, or missing paths of approach; and crusty space is characterised as space that cannot be accessed, as obstructions such as walls, gates, and checkpoints are applied (Flusty 1997). Besides, based on a case study of three privately owned plazas in Los Angeles, Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee (1998) find out these spaces are 'more private'. The reasons, as they explain, are, for one thing, the exteriors of these spaces give few clues of the space within by using high enclosing wall, blank facades, isolation from the street, deemphasise of street-level accesses, major entrances through parking structure, and so forth; for another thing, these spaces are deliberately designed to be sharply distinct from their surroundings, and look or feel like being isolated or escaping from the whole urban context (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998). Similarly, Oc & Tiesdell (1999) point out one of the approaches to making cities feel safer is what they call 'the fortress', and, through using walls, barriers, gates, and other physical segregations, this approach has made some urban spaces separated from the urban context and become 'more private'.

Architectural-scale design

At the architectural-scale, the human needs in a public space can be summarised as

'comfort', 'relaxation', 'passive engagement', 'active engagement', 'discovery' (Carr 1992). The 'more public' architectural design is which can meet these needs (Varna & Tiesdell 2010). To be specific, Németh & Schmidt (2007) conclude six 'design and image' approaches to control what they called 'publicly accessible space', and three of them are architecture-design determined. These three approaches- restroom availability; diversity of seating types; and various microclimates- constitute a comfortable and relaxing space which encourages public use can be featured as: restroom are easily accessible, free public restrooms are not located in some places like onsite cafés or galleries which only available for paying customers or only keyed access to select patrons are provided; diverse and various seating places are provided; various microclimates including shielding from wind, overhangs to protect from rain, areas receiving both sun and shade during day, or trees, shrubs, or grass, and so forth are created to enlarge choice for users (Németh & Schmidt 2007). Besides, Whyte (1980) points out, to attract people to use them, the sitting places in a public space need to be located close to a pedestrian flow so as to provide more opportunities for people-watching which a typical 'passive engagement' activity. Moreover, the 'active engagement' activities including encounter and interaction in a space can be encouraged and supported not only by the design of facilities such as benches, fountains, and telephones (Whyte 1980), but by an 'intensity of contact' scale of the designed space as well (Gehl 2011). Finally, according to Varna & Tiesdell (2010), people's desire of 'discovery' of a space can be realised by the design of spaces which are able to offer new experiences, various urban scenes, and diverse or changeable activity spaces.

On the contrary, 'more private' architectural-scale design discourages or even is against human needs and desires in space (Varna & Tiesdell 2010). Such as what Flusty (1997) describes as 'prickly space' which cannot be comfortably occupied, and defended by details such as ledges sloped to inhibit sitting. Besides, other often-seen 'more private' architectural design features including deliberately designed uncomfortable sitting (Whyte 1988), and the lack of facilities that could appeal to certain people or encourage functions deemed undesirable (such as public restrooms, food vendors, and sand boxes) (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998).

A-V.2 Manipulation Dimensions

Ownership

Marcuse (2005) summaries six legal forms of ownership of public spaces, and provides typical examples for each of these forms:

- Public ownership, public function, public use (streets);
- Public ownership, public function, administrative use (city halls);
- Public ownership, private function, private use (space leased to commercial establishments);
- Private ownership, public function, public use (airports, gated communities, zoning bonus private plazas, community benefit facilities);
- Private ownership, private function, public use (cafes, places of public accommodations); and
- Private ownership, private use (homes).

Based on this spectrum, Varna & Tiesdell (2010) put forward the 'more public' situation for the ownership dimension is where it is owned by a public body mandated to act in the public/collective interest. while, the 'more private' situation is the space privately owned by an entity that is not publicly accountable, and for private uses. Similarly, by pointing out the ownership of a space is always related to its operation, Németh & Schmidt (2011) conclude four possible ownership and operation combinations. Among which, the 'more public' combination is 'publicly owned and operated', while the 'more private' one is 'privately owned and operated'. Besides, according to Kohn's (2004) argument, 'more public' spaces are featured as formally owned by the government or state. This is also what Gulick (1998) describes as 'public property', one of the three types of 'public' space in the city. Kohn further argues that the ones owned by individuals, groups, or corporates- no matter for profit or non-profit cooperatives- are 'more private'.

Agency

With a growing number of mixed ownership/operation spaces are emerging in the West

in recent decades (Katz 2006), we can see that the ownership of a space is not necessarily consistent with the nature of its agency. Even privately owned space can be operated by public agency (Németh & Schmidt 2011; Zhang & Yu 2010). Many Western commenters believe that public agents or agencies which act on behalf of a community, city, commonwealth or state are able to make urban spaces be 'more public' (Akkar 2005; Németh & Schmidt 2011). Whilst, as Zukin (1995) criticizes, urban spaces operated or controlled by private or for-profit agencies are always serving for a certain group of people to increase property values and economic spill-over, instead of attending the interest of the general public. So, they are 'more private', even though some are publicly owned and under the jurisdiction of public officials (Németh & Schmidt 2011).

Interest

The interest dimension has an intimate connection with the agency. According to Benn & Gaus' (1983) point of view, a private agency usually results in a 'more private' interest whose target beneficiaries is usually the proprietors or shareholders, or perhaps the directors of the space, and their advantages or profits are supposed to be the ultimately regulative end of the space's operations. While, a public agency is supposed to lead to a 'more public' interest by providing either a service to any or every member of the community or to the whole society considered as a *res publica*, and, as Akkar (2005) argues, the benefit of this service is controlled and received by all members of the society.

Management

'More public' management can be featured as encouraging freedom of use, access, and behaviour, such as making seating available and free (Németh & Schmidt 2011). However, this requires recognition that a public space is a shared space, and the freedom of action in the space is a 'responsible' freedom, which means everyone's use of this space should be respected and not be influenced by any other people's ability or desire to carry out their activities (Brain 2005; Carr 1992; Varna & Tiesdell 2010). In this sense, the four key tasks of managing a public space identified by Lynch & Carr (1979) can explain how to create a

'more public' management situation:

- Distinguishing between 'harmful' and 'harmless' activities, controlling the former without constraining the latter;

- Increasing the general tolerance toward free use, while stabilizing a broad consensus of what is permissible;

- Separating, in time and space, the activities of groups with a low tolerance for each other; and

- Providing 'marginal places' where extremely free behaviour can go on with little damage.

These tasks can be achieved through the specific management approaches with features such as what Oc & Tiesdell (2000) summarise as: explicit rules and regulations; temporal and spatial regulations; people presence and generators; a welcome ambience; cultural animation; inclusion; CCTV as a management, instead or control, tool; and ambassadors or city centre representatives in public space. As well as what Németh & Schmidt (2007) describe as lighting to encourage night-time/24-hour use; small-scale food vendors are available; and art, cultural, or visual enhancement are present.

Meanwhile, the 'more private' situation is where the management of the space is discourage public use, access, and behaviour (Németh & Schmidt 2011). Varna & Tiesdell (2010) argue that both over-management and under-management can make a space less public. But under-management is more likely to causes the decline of a space, which can be explained by Wilson & Kelling's (1982) broken windows theory. While, the 'more private' situation usually results from over-management which, as Carmona (2010b) points out, always lead to 'privatisation' or 'commercialization' of the space. In over-managed spaces, some 'direct' instruments which are usually used to control, rather than manage, the space, such as armed security guards, will be applied (Németh & Schmidt 2011). Apart from these overt instruments, more subtle cues and codes approaches are also often applied by over-managed spaces, such as temporary closures for corporate events (Whyte 1988), and design features which seek to achieve a subtle closure and screening of undesirable elements (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998).

Control

The main goal of spatial control is safety. In the West, to fulfil its potential, real and perceived safety of urban space have become not only a top concern for the public (Talen 2008), but the general consensus among planners, developers, and the governments as well, especially after September 11, 2001 (Németh & Schmidt 2011). This argument can be supported by Van Melik, Van Aalst & Van Weesep (2007)'s observation. They point out current projects to upgrade public spaces in the West are generally aiming at creating two sorts of urban spaces: secured space and themed space. According to their description, the secured public space can be found in central parts of many Western cities, and is characterized by measures it applied to generate a sense of safety. However, all these schemes, on one hand, are influencing people's behaviour in the space, and, on the other hand, attracting a more 'appropriate' groups while excluding those deemed less desirable (Flusty 1997; Whyte 1988). In this respect, the crucial feature to distinguish 'more public' and 'more private' control schemes is what safety they are protecting.

'More public' control, as Varna & Tiesdell (2010) claim, is for the safety of people, whilst 'more private' control is for the safety of property (or of an investment). They further explain 'more public' control is enacted in the wider interest of the public, collective, or community. It protects people, rather than property, from harm. And the feature of 'more public' situation is the lack or absence of an explicit control presence (Varna & Tiesdell 2010). In opposite, 'more private' control is enacted in a narrower private interest. It can be featured as rules to prohibit certain behaviours objectionable to certain groups for reasons of profitability or marketability. Specifically, such control schemes including security cameras, security personnel, secondary security personnel (such as maintenance staff, doorpersons, reception, cafe or restaurant employees, bathroom attendants, and so forth) can be featured as 'more private' (Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee 1998; Németh & Schmidt 2007). Besides, Flusty's (1997) notion of 'jittery space', which is a space cannot be utilized unobserved due to active monitoring by roving patrols and/or remote technologies feeding to security stations, also draws a picture of the feature of 'more private' control.

Rules

This dimension signals the appropriate or desirable use of a space and what sorts of people are allowed to enter and use it (Németh & Schmidt 2007). By categorising rule setting as one of the 'opportunity-reduction' technique, Oc & Tiesdell (1999) criticize that when the regulations of using a space explicitly establish the standards of what public behaviours are acceptable and what are not, they thereby remove potential 'ambiguity'. These rules discourage the spontaneous social activities, maximize managers' (or owners') control, and therefore lead to a 'more private' situation. Moreover, as Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee (1998) find out, the rules that either prohibit certain activities from happening or allow them only by issuing permits, programming, scheduling, or leasing are often used by the managers to eliminate certain deemed 'undesirable elements' form the space, which also result in a 'more private' environment.

However, it is very difficult to define the 'more public' situation for this dimension, because it is not simply removing all the above rules and regulations from the space. There is a general consensus that the feeling of safety is prerequisites for a viable and vital city, and freedom for all the users leaves each individual unprotected from the invasion of other's freedom (Oc & Tiesdell 1999). So the presence of rules to control users' behaviour is also necessary for a 'more public' environment.

In this sense, I am inclined to Németh & Schmidt's (2007) argument that the 'more public' rules and regulations should be featured as being able to balance liberty with personal security. In other words, 'more public' rules should be those only aim at maintaining the public order, rather than excluding certain groups of people or particular public behaviours. Moreover, they further argue that, in a 'more public' environment, rules should generally be objective and enforceable, like prohibitions against smoking or sitting on ledges. And these rules should be posted and made visible in the space to make every user not only is aware of their own freedom but others' as well. Furthermore, subjective rules should also be posted and made visible, to inform the users of what activities are prohibited after personal evaluations and judgments of desirability by owners, managers, or

security guards. As Németh & Schmidt (2007) exemplify, such rules include: no disorderly behaviour, no disturbing other users, no loitering, no oversized baggage, and so forth.

A-V.3 Use Dimensions

Perception

Urban common spaces have a cultural dimension (Wallin 1998). It determines how these spaces are perceived by their users, and this perception can profoundly influence the sense of publicness held by individuals and social groups (Varna & Tiesdell 2010), as well as the ways users engage with these spaces (Carmona 2010a). To measure the perception of the publicness of a particular space, Varna & Tiesdell (2010) propose an additional dimension, 'meaning', to their framework, and define the 'more public' situation of this dimension is where many social groups regard the place as a public space. Besides, the 'more public' spaces can also be described as Hall's (1966) concept of 'proxemic' spaces. These spaces are produced and controlled by culture, and, therefore, they can give the users a sense of community and animation which encourage both active and passive engagements. Consequently, the social engagements in this sort of space appear as what Gehl (2011) classifies as 'optional' and 'social activities' including leisure activities, observe others, interacting with other people, or simply walking through.

On the other hand, the 'more private' situation, according to Varna & Tiesdell (2010) definition, is where space is regarded as public by few social groups. Similarly, 'more privately' perceived space can also be characterised as Wallin's (1998) notion of 'dystemic space'. By introducing this notion, Wallin (1998) argues that the urban space in contemporary society has become a world of shopping malls, televisions, and worldwide web, and this world is build up on the basis of impersonal and abstract relationships. So, the dystemic is perceived as 'a community of strangers' who inhabit public space (see also Carmona, 2010a). Correspondingly, according to Gehl's (2011) classification, the social engagements in the dystemic spaces are mainly 'necessary activities' which are the things have to be done, including going to school, waiting for a bus, going to work and so forth.

Accessibility

It is widely accepted that the accessibility of a public space relates to not only the ability and freedom to get access to the physical space, but the information, resources, and to engage in the activities as well (Akkar 2005; Benn & Gaus 1983; Madanipour 1995; Young 1990). Based on this understanding, Akkar (2005) argues, in terms of the accessibility dimension, public space can be characterised as:

- A space which is accessible to all;
- A space where the activities and discussions taking place in it are accessible to all;
- A space where the information about it is accessible to all; and
- A space where the resources are accessible to all.

His argument illustrates what the 'more public' situation is. On the other hand, speaking of the 'more private' situation, access to a space can be denied by the manager through closing the space's gates or locking its doors when it is legally required to be open or keeps a space open only to employees (Németh & Schmidt 2007). Besides, the spaces can be barricaded behind plywood or be closed for construction with no information about how long it will last is clearly announced (Kayden 2005). Moreover, as Kohn (2004) points out, poor accessibility may result from the requirements of fee for service (such as cafe, bar, or restaurant) or membership (such as club and residential community). As these requirements prevent certain groups from participating in the activities in the spaces and make some resources of the space inaccessible for them.

Uses/users

As aforementioned, this dimension can be interpreted both quantitatively and qualitatively. In the quantitative way, Jacobs (1962) introduces her influential notion of 'eyes on the street' and asserts that an adequate number of users present in the space can deter criminals and maintain a safe environment which is vital for a 'more public' urban space. Corresponding to her argument, Whyte (1988) believes uses can attract more uses, which means, according to Németh & Schmidt's (2007) explanation, passers-by are more likely to enter a heavily used space, and the busier a space is, the more users it will attract;

and in the interpretation of Carmona et al (2010) interpretation, if people use space less, there will be less incentive to provide new spaces and maintain the existing ones. Consequently, these spaces are less likely to be used due to a decline in quality. So the more users occur in the space, the 'more public' it will be.

Meanwhile, the quantity of use or user alone is not enough to prove a space is more public, because it may simply be the result of a lack of meaningful alternative (Francis 1989). So, in the qualitative way, Loukaitou-Sideris & Banerjee (1998) point out the goal of creating a 'more public' space has to shift from merely increasing the amount of users, to creating place where diverse uses and users can be hosted. In this respect, the 'more public' feature of this dimension can be described according to Franck & Paxson's (1989) argument: 'the greater diversity of people and activities allowed and manifested in a space, the greater its publicness.'