

# The Remaining Charm of Former Tian-hsin Cinema and Yingpan-Hou Business District

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**Abstract**—Hsin-hua, formerly known as "Tavocan", was an aboriginal settlement in the early days of Siraya Pingpu language, which means "land of the mountains and forests" in the ethnic language. The periphery connects Zuo-jhen, Nan-hua, Yu-jing, Shan-hua, and Hsin-shi areas, and is a transit center for the Tainan mountain line towns and a relay station from the flatlands to the mountains. Due to the advantage of its location, the flow of people and Money current has made Hsin-hua more and more lively. The prosperity is slowly expanding from Chung-cheng Road and Chung-shan Road, and from the mountain walls of the old Hsin-hua Street, you can read the private rivalry of the local rich in the past. Later on, with the development of Hsin-hua, the first reservoir in Taiwan, "Hu-tou-bei Reservoir", was built. Although the landscape of Hsin-hua is becoming more and more different, with construction changing the landscape. □ The historical traces left behind by the past have also become a pleasure for tourists to explore when they visit Hsin-hua. This paper will record the theaters that existed from 1968 to the present day, in order to get a glimpse of the artistic and historical style of Tian-Hsin Cinema in Tainan County, and to capture the remaining charm of the old theaters. □

**Keywords**—1968, cinema, Tian-Hsin Cinema, Tainan County.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Hin-hua was developed very early, dating back to the Dutch colonial period. During the Koxinga era, the soldiers and horses of Cheng-gong Zheng camped and cultivated in Tavocan, training and farming at the same time, gathering lessons and preparing to "Rebel against the Qing Dynasty and restore the Ming Dynasty". Hsin-hua Hei-xing-li is also called "Yingpan-Hou", which is the name of the place. During the Japanese rule period, "Hsin-hua Kun" was established under the jurisdiction of Tainan state, and the kun office was also located here. The foundation for the construction of Hsin-hua Town was laid during the Japanese rule period. As the town was prosperous and populated, there were three cinemas in the town, including Hsin-hua cinema, Hsin-guang cinema and Tian-hsin cinema.

hua Cinema and Hsin-guang Cinema. It represents the more recent development of the town of Hsin-hua and has a special contemporary significance. Since the theater is located at the roadside of Hsin-hua Town to Tainan City, the business was once quite good. Even after the closure of the Hsin-hua cinema in 1973, together with the Hsin-guang Cinema, it contributed to the development of the commercial district of Hsin-hua Town, which was quite helpful to the economic development of Hsin-hua.



Fig. 1. Side view of Tian-Hsin Cinema when it was completed.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, Tian-hsin cinema was the third cinema to appear on the streets of Hsin-hua Town, after Hsin-



Fig. 2. Side view of Tian-Hsin Cinema when it was completed. (Cont.)

In the 1950's, there was a movie tour group (film group) showing movies, and Taiwan opera and movies became the most common programs in cinemas in the Hsin-hua area. At that time, the most famous local people were Kang-Dapi's drama and Lin-Dapi's movie. Each play will be performed for 10 days, alternating with each other. In 1953, the government built a training centre for new recruits in Hutoupi. The arrival of solders made Hsin-hua Street more lively and the cinema business more prosperous.



Fig. 3. Bus stop of Hsing-nan Bus and Tainan Bus at Yingpan-Hou area

## II. HISTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CINEMA

Tian-Hsin was founded in 1968 by Mr. Lao-Tian Wang, the owner of Nandu Cinema in Tainan City. Since Mr. Wang had a good understanding of running a cinema, he wanted to expand his entertainment business in Tainan County, so he came to Hsin-hua. He found that in Hsin-hua at that time, as only Hsin-hua Cinema and Hsin-guang Cinema were left in the local area. There are few competitors, so it can be said that the development of the cinema is promising. So Lao-tian Wang approached the local gentry Da-jiang Hsu, Hsing Lin, De-yuan Tsai and others to propose, and got their support. After some research, I found that the end of Chung-shan Road, Yingpan-Hou area, is the busiest place in Hsin-hua Town. So he bought the land of his friend, Mr. Rong-Yi Liu, and used Lao-Tian Wang as the chairman of the board and Da-jiang Hsu and other people to run the business. Actively constructing the main exterior and interior of the cinema, the room can even accommodate 500 people. The building was completed in 1968 and opened for business in the same year.



Fig. 4. The building at the back of the mall is the former site of the Tian-hsin Cinema [3]

At the beginning, Tian-hsin Cinema mainly showed movies, and the source of the movies was the downgraded movies of Nandu's Cinema in Tainan, which was run by Lao-tian Wang. As shown in Figure 3, since the cinema is located near two major companies, Hsing-nan Bus and Tainan Bus,

the transportation to Tainan City is very convenient. Because of this, the cinema started its business with the intention of competing with the Hsin-guang Cinema.

At that time, even the midnight show was full, so the Tian-Hsin Cinema was like a night market after dark and was very busy. In addition, many soldiers from the Hsin-hua camp area were also important customers of the Tian-hsin Cinema. Many soldiers on vacation often come here, a movie, with a bowl of ice, is the best enjoyment of the summer afternoon. During holidays, the cinema is crowded with people, which in turn boosts the hotel and snack industries in the vicinity, contributing to the development of the nearby business district.

However, the scene of prosperity at Tian-hsin Cinema did not last long. After about a year or so, the cinema's business slowly declined, barely breaking even. After 5 years, the business situation was really bad, so the shareholders decided to rent out the cinema to businessmen to open a shopping mall. In 1977, Mr. Chun-Tian Wang, who was very familiar with the movie industry, was willing to reopen the cinema, so he bought it back, redecorated the interior and reopened the cinema. Since Mr. Chun-Tian Wang has a direct pipeline in the acquisition of film sources, whether it was a popular Taiwanese film, a foreign film with gunplay, or a Shaw's co. comedy, the selection of films at the Tian-hsin Cinema was no less than that of the Hsin-guang Cinema. The two cinemas are also engaged in a cut-throat battle over ticket prices, giving local residents more and cheaper options to watch movies.



Fig. 5. Side view of the building of Tian-hsin Cinema [3]

Between 1977 and 1980, the business of the Tian-hsin Cinema continued to thrive after its reopening. At that time, a movie was only shown for two to three days before it was changed, and during the New Year holidays, the movies with good reputation were selected for release. However, in the 1980s, as TVs and VCRs became more and more popular, people were less and less willing to go to the cinema to see movies. Under such circumstances, Tian-hsin cinema is still trying to change and attract customers with theatrical films in order to fight against the general environment. In 1983, the cinema's performance was already in serious deficit, and after the shareholders' discussion, it was decided to cease operation, which made the Tian-hsin Cinema truly enter into history. As shown in Figures 4 and 5, in 2005, the old building of Tian-hsin Cinema was leased to 3C Shopping mall.





Fig. 6. Cultural and educational buildings in Yingpan-Hou district [3]



Fig. 7. Cultural and educational buildings in Yingpan-Hou district (Cont.) [3]



Fig. 8. Circular ring of the Yingpan-Hou district [3]

Looking at the development and decline of Tian-hsin Cinema, Mr. Rong-Yi Liu, one of the shareholders at that time, believes that there are three reasons for the ultimate failure of Tian-hsin Cinema's business. First, the owner of the rival Hsin-guang Cinema, Mr. Chun-hua Tong, is really strong in terms of familiarity with movies and connections, so it is not easy to beat him. Secondly, many of the shareholders at that time were not specialized in the film industry and had many businesses, so they could not concentrate on the operation of the cinema. The third is the aforementioned change in the overall environment. However, even though the Tian-hsin Cinema has passed into history, it still has an indelible contribution to the development of the town of Hsin-hua.

### III. YINGPAN-HOU AREA

Hei-hsing-li is also called "Yingpan-Hou" in Hsin-hua District, which is how it got its name. In the early years, the Han Chinese went to Yangtse Port via Hsingang Creek

(around the present-day Hsu-hsian Creek) and settled in Tavocan, they drove a firewood cart and wore torn clothes to open up the mountains and forests.

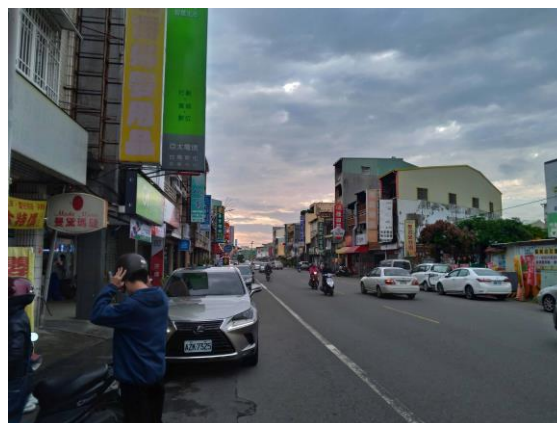


Fig. 9. Yingpan-Hou Business District [3]

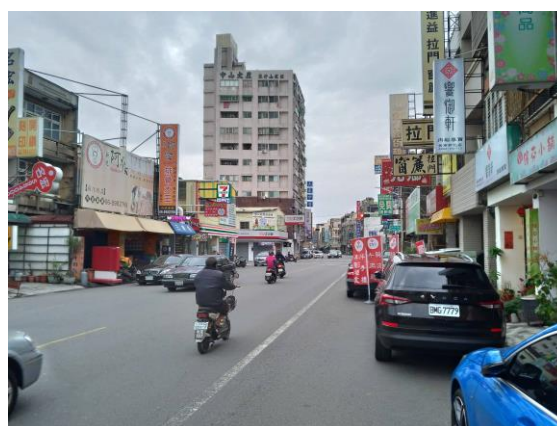


Fig. 10. Yingpan-Hou Business District (Cont.) [3]



Fig. 11. The National Army left the camp land unused, creating a dead zone of security in Yingpan-Hou District [3]

The Siraya were forced out by the Han Chinese and moved to the eastern mountains, mostly settling in Zuozhen and Ganglin. However, there are still descendants in the area of Hsin-he-zhuang and Kou-pi, Zhiyi-li, Hsin-hua. After all, we are all descendants of those who were instrumental in the development of the Tavocan region.



Fig. 12. The demolition and relocation of the three-section compound next to Chung-shan Road is underway [3]



Fig. 13. The demolition and relocation of the three-section compound next to Chung-shan Road is underway (Cont.) [3]

#### IV. CONCLUSION

As shown in Figures 6 to 13, Hsin-hua Town Street had a more prosperous development in the late 1970s to 1980. Many three-section compounds and farmlands along Chung-shan Road were gradually converted into stores and houses, and eventually developed into shopping areas. By now, as shown in Figure 11, some barracks are no longer in use due to the National Army's policy, but the vacant land left unused has become a dead end for the environment and security. It can be said that the development of Yingpan-Hou area was driven by the Tian-hsin Cinema. This shows how important the Tian-hsin Cinema is in the history of the town of Hsin-hua.

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- [3] Photographed by the author.