Spatiality, Governmentality and the Production of New Town Space in

Hong Kong

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master of Philosophy

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Hong Kong Baptist University

April 2005
This dissertation attempts to understand the production of new town space as the practices of colonial governmentality in Hong Kong, in which the dynamic relationship between space/power and everyday life in a new town is examined. The study suggests that the Foucauldian concept of ‘governmentality’, which incorporates the notions of spatiality, power and the self, gives a better understanding of how new town space is produced within the spatial imaginations in colonial Hong Kong. The production of new town space/order is the governmental practices of knowledge/power nexus that deploys various rationalities and spatial techniques according to high modernism. The ‘analytics of government’ could enrich the conceptual understanding of how this space is related to the reconfiguration of urban order as well as the population in the urban periphery that contributes to a stable society over the past decades in Hong Kong. Besides, the case study of Tin Shui Wai, as one of the new town project, is examined in depth to sharpen the process of producing an ‘abstract space’ and ‘abstract persons’ through modernist planning. It also elaborates how the governing of this space in practice, in its specific historical-political context, would lead to other problems found in this place, whereas space itself contributes the ‘self-government’. Thus, this space is considered as the interplay of power relations embedded in the practices of everyday life in place. In addition, in order to give a better understanding of the ‘governing of the self’ in a new town, the geographies of an immigrant, mother-worker in Tin Shui Wai are investigated. New town space/order is considered as it is reproduced through the everyday life in this place, where space is occupied through the making of daily geographies and of self representation there.
understanding and support during this period. Thanks to all who encouraged me to take this chance and who supported me until the completion of this research. Thank especially to my mother for her support and consideration. I must thank Suray for providing me with accommodation during my fieldwork in Tin Shui Wai. I also thank my dad, and my brothers Terry, Lancelot and Eric for their understanding when I spent less time at home because of my work.

In addition, I would like to thank some other important people who gave me support and help by offering advice. I especially thank Prof. Pamela Moss, who was so kind as to teach me how to conduct fieldwork through email. I also thank Dr. Leung Hon Chu and Dr. Pun Ngai, who spent their valuable time discussing the project with me. A deep appreciation also goes to Kelvin Sit, Dr Lam, Carol M. H, Iris Man and K.C.Y. who helped a lot in proof reading and formatting. Also, I thank Karen for her company and help with the photo taking.

Last but not least, thank you, all of my friends, who showed me a great deal of emotional support during this period. I want to thank Vienne Chau, another research student, for her support and company during the long and lonely process of the ‘MPhil’ life. This work has brought me so many meanings attached to this research that we become best friends. Also, I would like to say thank to Anne, Chris, Eric, Joyce, Pauline, Peter and Vivian.

Finally, a few, but the most important words: thanks to the Lord for the wonderful and fruitful life in the course of this study which has brought me a lot of meanings and emotions that can not be documented in words.
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