The Social Impact of Long Overdue Urban Redevelopment:

A Case Study of Yue Man Square

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decades, the Hong Kong government has introduced a series of inner-city redevelopment projects that sought to boost the local economy through the demolition and reconstruction of physical environment. Such a mode of urban redevelopment is clearly based on a physical and economic approach to study space. However, many scholars in urban studies have criticized that this type of urban redevelopment generates various destructive social impacts on existing neighbourhoods. This study draws upon the research conducted in Yue Man Square to demonstrate how this mode of urban redevelopment carries with it a destruction of social life and human association for long-term dwellers. The long overdue urban redevelopment project has aggravated the transient nature of the neighbourhood and stifled its original social life. The framework of production of space is applied to my analysis of this transformation. The analysis indicates that the social spaces of long-term residents in the neighbourhood were diminishing, and they were putting up desperate resistance to maintain their existence. The particular value of this study for the discussion of urban redevelopment lies in its supplements to the impact of long overdue urban redevelopment on human association in a neighbourhood before its commencement. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the need to assess the impact of urban redevelopment with a socio-spatial framework and suggests that research should be developed with due regard for people’s everyday life.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.................................................................................................................. i  
Abstract...................................................................................................................... ii  
Acknowledgments........................................................................................................ iii  
Table of Contents........................................................................................................ iv  
List of Figures............................................................................................................... vii  
List of Abbreviations................................................................................................... viii

Chapter 1  Introduction............................................................................................. 1

Chapter 2  Capital, Class and City Space – the Redevelopment of Built Environment and Restructuring of Social Landscape........ 6
  1. Physical and Economic Approach to Urban Redevelopment – Improvement of Space/ City Progress.......................................................... 9
     1.1 Improvement of Physical Environment, Efficiency of Land Use and Image of Neighbourhood......................................................... 9
     1.2 Reformation of Culture of City................................................................. 12
     1.3 Promotion of Economy of City................................................................. 13
  2. Political-economic Approach to Urban Redevelopment - Redefinition of Space................................................................. 17
     2.1 Urban Redevelopment in Class Dimension........................................... 19
         (A) Displacement of Lower-Class People.................................................... 19
         (B) Loss of Affordable Housing................................................................. 21
     2.2 Urban Redevelopment in Social Dimension......................................... 24
     2.3 Urban Redevelopment in Racial Dimension.......................................... 26
  3. To the Everyday Life of Human Beings under the Impact of Urban Redevelopment................................................................. 29
     3.1 Socio-spatial Framework of Henri Lefebvre........................................... 31

Chapter 3  Method and Data................................................................................. 34

Chapter 4  Economic Production, Urban Planning and Living Environment – The Spatial Structure of YMS......................... 39
  1. The Town Center for Industrial Production and Working Class................... 39
     1.1 The Commercial Centre of Kwun Tong.................................................... 41
     1.2 The Transportation Hub of Kowloon East.............................................. 43
1.3 An Open and Transient Neighbourhood of Lower-Class People…….. 45
2. Deindustrialization, Commercialization and Urban Redevelopment…………. 47
3. YMS (Kwun Tong Town Center) Redevelopment Project………………….. 48
3.1 The Compensation Policy of Urban Redevelopment Project and Three “Unwillingnesses”……………………………………………………… 50
(A) Unwilling to Live……………………………………………………. 52
(B) Unwilling to Sell…………………………………………………….. 54
(C) Unwilling to Lease Out……………………………………………… 55
4. The General Figure of the Social Landscape of YMS……………………… 57
4.1 Increase in Land Value and Rental Flats Containing Cubicle Apartments………………………………………………………………………………… 67
4.2 Influx of Middle-Class Businesses and Vanishing of Petty Local Stores…………………………………………………………………………………… 60
4.3 “Transient Residents’” Moving In and Stable Residents’ Moving Out…………………………………………………………………………………… 52

Chapter 5  The Haze of Urban Redevelopment – The Aggravation of the Transient Nature of YMS………………………………………………………………………………… 67
1. Rental Flat Containing Cubicle Apartments and its Separated Setting……. 68
1.1 The First Living Place – The Gate within the Flat………………………… 69
1.2 The Second Living Place – The Invisible Gate within the Flat……………… 73
2. Displacement of Meeting Places………………………………………………………… 78
2.1 A “Semi-retired” Watch Shop and its Disappearance…………………… 80
3. “Transient Residents” in YMS……………………………………………………. 84
3.1 Short-term Residence………………………………………………………… 85
3.2 Conception of Interim Accommodation…………………………………… 87
3.3 Reclusive Living Style………………………………………………………… 93
4. “Stable Residents” in YMS………………………………………………………….. 97
4.1 Moving to the Adjacent Areas……………………………………………… 98
4.2 Moving to Other Districts……………………………………………………… 104
5. The Development of an “Open Network Society”…………………………….. 110

Chapter 6  Erosion of Social Space – the Stifling of Existing Social Life of the Long-term Residents…………………………………………………………………………………….. 114
1. The Dying Out of Working Class Spatial Practices………………………….. 115
1.1 The Last “Cage Person” and the Collective Accommodation of Lower Working Class……………………………………………………………………………….. 117
1.2 The Dusk of Cage House………………………………………………………… 122
2. Upgrade of the Neighbourhood and Development of New Representations of Space……………………………………………………………………………….. 126
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>The Transformation of the Relation of Production and Rise and Fall of Street Hawking</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>The Construction of New Representations of Space and Invasion of Middle-Class Businesses</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>The Remaining Working Class’s Representations of Space in an Isolated and Bounded Space</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The Representational Space of a Stranger in the Familiar Neighbourhood</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Differentiation in Change</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>The Tree beside a River of People</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Urban Redevelopment as Homogenization to the Production of Social Space in the Neighbourhood</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 8 Conclusion

Appendices

Appendix I Methodology - Reflecting Ethnography and Position

Appendix II Tables of 2001 Population Census of YMS

References

Curriculum Vitae