

Foreword

The Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch is happy to include *Villages and Market Towns in Hong Kong: Settlement and History* in its Hong Kong Studies Series. The Hong Kong Studies Series is aimed at making widely available important contributions to the local history, culture, and society of Hong Kong and the surrounding region. Generous support by the Sir Lindsay and Lady May Ride Memorial Fund enables the Society to subsidise the publication of suitable high-quality academic works of lasting value, expected to appeal to both scholars and informed general readers with a deep interest in and enthusiasm for the area and its history and society.

A full list of the books published in the Series can be found in the Society's website, at www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk.

Helen Tinsley
President
Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch
2024

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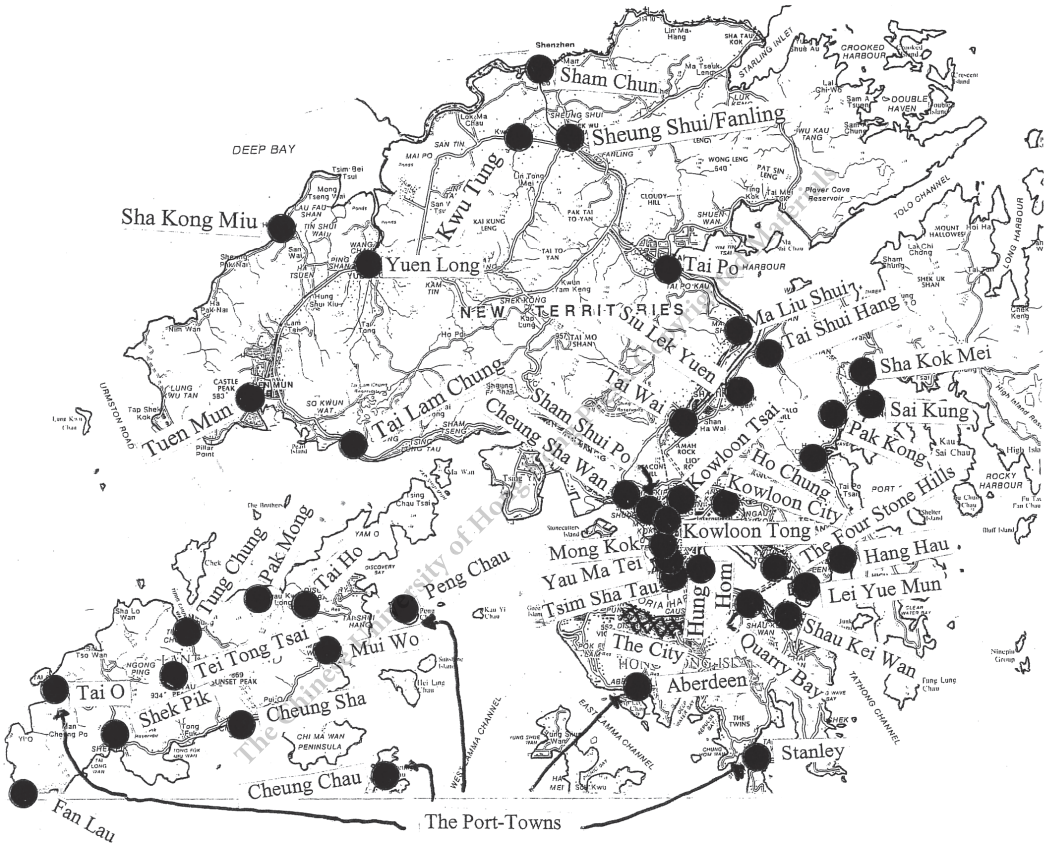
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Preface

This volume follows on from my *Settlement, Life, and Politics: Understanding the Traditional New Territories*, published in 2020 by the City University of Hong Kong Press with the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch, in the Hong Kong Studies Series. This current volume comprises six essays on the history and development of specific areas in Hong Kong. Work on some of these six began 30 years ago, but all of these essays have been completely reworked and rewritten, and are published here for the first time; others were written for this volume. All represent my heartfelt view that local history, the history of local communities and their development, is vital to any truly balanced programme of historical research and study.

I wish to thank, above all, the late Dr. James W. Hayes (1930–2023) for his assistance with the production of this volume. Dr. Hayes has written a number of masterly articles on Cheung Chau, Tai O, and Peng Chau. I have long felt, however, that these could be drawn together into an analytical study of the port-towns as a whole. Dr. Hayes graciously agreed, and allowed me to rework this material into a new study for this volume. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for this. Dr. Hayes also, and equally graciously, allowed me to rework his articles on “Old British Kowloon”, “The Cheung Sha Wan Villages”, and his study of the Four Stone Hills community, without which the articles in this volume on “West Kowloon before the British” and “Beside the Strait of the

Map 1. Places mentioned in text.



Sea-Perch” could not have been written. I have also used the work of the late Rev. Carl Smith on Sham Shui Po very extensively. My thanks are heartfelt but inevitably inadequate.

Map 1 shows the sites of the village communities studied here, and some other significant places referred to in the text.

All place-names of places within Hong Kong referred to in this volume are given as in *A Gazetteer of Place Names in Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the New Territories* (Hong Kong Government, 1960), with characters given on first appearance in a chapter. Place-names of places within China are given in Pinyin, with Chinese characters on first appearance, or, for places within Guangdong Province, in standard Cantonese Romanisation, with, in each case, characters and Pinyin on first appearance. Chinese personal names of members of New Territories clans and other Cantonese-speaking persons are given in standard Cantonese transliteration, with characters on first appearance; others are given in Pinyin, with characters on first appearance. Chinese expressions are given in standard Cantonese Romanisation where necessary, with Chinese characters on first appearance. A glossary is also included giving all Chinese expressions used or alluded to in the text. An index of all personal names referred to in the text is included, with a further index of all place-names referred to.

My thanks are also due to the many village elders who took their time to answer my questions, and to explain to me the many places where I needed guidance to understand what to them was self-evident. I am extremely grateful for their time and forbearance. There are more than a hundred of them: far too many to name individually here, but I am deeply grateful to all of them.

Finally, I wish to thank the dedicatee of this volume, Tim Ko, for his invaluable help with the plates, and his vital assistance with the translations, but even more for 25 years of friendship. He has helped me time and again by encouraging me to continue in what has, at times, felt to me to be a depressing and even pointless exercise; that it has been concluded at all is due to Tim’s much appreciated positive attitude towards the volume. Thanks are inadequate, but very gratefully offered.