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Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore

Brenda S.A. Yeoh

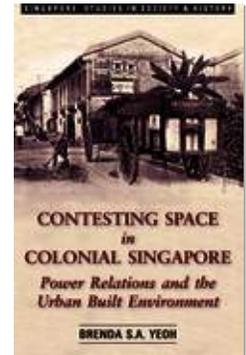
Published by NUS Press Pte Ltd

Brenda S.A. Yeoh.

Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment.

Singapore: NUS Press Pte Ltd, 2013.

Project MUSE. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.<http://muse.jhu.edu/>.



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Acknowledgements

With the re-issue of this book, the trail of debt has lengthened considerably since the writing of the first acknowledgements. Research is ultimately a humanized activity, dependent first and foremost on human connectivity and ingenuity. I am thus grateful for the filaments that connect me to my colleagues and students within the research community at the National University of Singapore. I would like to renew my thanks to colleagues at the Department of Geography, particularly those whom I have had the privilege and pleasure of standing shoulder to shoulder in ploughing the research field over the last decade. At the University's Asia Research Institute, I have benefitted from the liveliness of intellectual discussions among committed scholars and would also like to thank the support staff — in particular Verene Koh, Leong Wai Kit and Theresa Wong of the Asian MetaCentre — for the myriad small and not-so-small ways in which they have aided me in my work. It is also clear in my mind that without the energies of Peter Schoppert and Paul Kratoska at the Singapore University Press, this re-issue will not have happened. To Peter and Paul, I am very grateful.

Some things do not change. I wish to re-dedicate the book to my husband Andrew for always being there for me.

Singapore
October 2002

BRENDA S.A. YEOH

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Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment. Book. Jan 2003. Brenda S. A. Yeoh. View. When Thomas Stamford Raffles planned to develop town at Singapore, he had to separate town into two parts, European quarter and Asian quarter. European population in Asian colonies was in ruling side, but was always minority, and so needed Asian neighbours to maintain their life and business. Raffles designed both quarters, European one followed ordinary colonial town planning of central government area in grid settlement pattern, while Asian one consisting of ethnic origins. In the British colonial city of Singapore, municipal authorities and Asian communities faced off over numerous issue. As the city expanded, disputes arose in connection with sanitation, housing, street names, control over pedestrian 'five-foot-ways', and sacred spaces such as burial grounds. The two perceptions of the city frequently clashed, and the author reads the cityscape of Singapore as the result of this contest between discipline and resistance. Drawing on meticulous research and a theoretically sophisticated use of cultural and social geography, post-colonial historical discourse, and social theory, the author offers a compelling picture of a critical stage in Singapore's past.