

Gender, Health, and History in Modern East Asia

Edited by

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Christine Goes to China

Xie Jianshun and the Discourse of Sex Change in Cold War Taiwan

Howard Chiang

An Episode of Transnational Spectacle

On August 14, 1953, the *United Daily News* (聯合報, *Lianhebao*) announced the striking discovery of an intersexed soldier, Xie Jianshun 謝尖順, in Tainan, Taiwan. The headline read “A Hermaphrodite Discovered in Tainan: Sex to Be Determined after Surgery.”¹ By August 21, the press adopted a radically different rhetoric, now trumpeting that “Christine Will Not Be America’s Exclusive: Soldier Destined to Become a Lady.”² Considered by many as the “first” Chinese transsexual, Xie was frequently dubbed as the “Chinese Christine.” This allusion to the contemporaneous American ex-GI transsexual celebrity Christine Jorgensen, who received her sex reassignment surgery in Denmark and became a worldwide household name immediately afterward due to her personality and glamorous looks, reflected the growing influence of American culture on the Republic of China at the peak of the Cold War.³ Within a week, the characterization of Xie in the Taiwanese press changed from an average citizen whose ambiguous sex provoked uncertainty and anxiety throughout the nation, to a transsexual icon whose fate indisputably contributed to the global staging of Taiwan on a par with the United States. Centering on the making of Xie Jianshun’s celebrity, this chapter argues that the publicity surrounding her transition worked as a pivotal fulcrum in shifting common understandings of transsexuality, the role of medical science, and their evolving relation to the popular press in

1. “Nanshi faxian yinyangren jiangdong shoushu bian nannü” [A hermaphrodite discovered in Tainan: Sex to be determined after surgery], *Lianhebao* [United Daily News], August 14, 1953, no. 3.
2. “Burang Kelisiding zhuanmei yuqian dabing jiang bianchen xiaojie” [Christine will not be America’s exclusive: Soldier destined to become a lady], *Lianhebao*, August 21, 1953, no. 3.
3. On Christine Jorgensen, see Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002). For the coverage of the Jorgensen story in Iran, see Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Professing Selves: Transsexuality and Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Iran* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

mid-twentieth-century Sinophone culture.⁴ Undergirding this volume is the central theme of competition for biomedical advancement in various postwar East Asian societies. The ascendance of Xie into the limelight—epitomizing what Francesca Bray calls “the biological turn” in the introduction of this volume—precisely captures the driving forces of such forms of competition crucial to the shaping of scientific modernity in 1950s Taiwan.

The feminization of the Chinese Christine became a national story in Taiwan at a pivotal juncture in the making of Cold War East Asia. Predating the Jinmen shelling crisis of August 1958, this episode of sex transformation commanded public attention at the conclusion of the Korean War (1950–1953) and the nascent “liberating Taiwan” campaign (1954–1955) on the Mainland. The Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) involvement in the Korean and First Indochina Wars further consolidated the US-Guomindang (GMD) alliance and amplified the longstanding CCP-GMD tensions, while achieving what historian Chen Jian identifies as Mao’s aspiration for continuing the momentum of his communist revolution at home and abroad.⁵ Between 1951 and 1965, Taiwan received a steady annual support of US\$100 million from the United States. American interest in stabilizing Taiwan’s military system and economic growth was folded into the USAID Health Program drafted and distributed in 1954. In the next two decades, American guidance and recommendations would gradually replace the Japanese model and play a central role in shaping the long-term public health policy and priorities in Taiwan.⁶ Meanwhile, the CCP and the US-backed GMD engaged in repeated confrontations across the Taiwan Strait in the 1950s, thereby making this area one of the main “hot spots” of the Cold War. It was within this historical context of postcolonial East Asian modernity—providing the conditions for such mimetic political formations as the Two Koreas and the Two Chinas—that the mass circulation press introduced the story of Xie Jianshun to readers in Taiwan. This chapter offers a preliminary glimpse of where the parallel contours of culture and geopolitics converged in early Cold War Taiwan.

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4. By the Sinophone, I follow Shu-mei Shih’s definition to refer to Sinitic-language cultures and communities outside of China or on the margins of the hegemonic productions of the Chinese nation-state or Chinese-ness. See Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Shu-mei Shih, “The Concept of the Sinophone,” *PMLA* 126(3) (2011): 709–18; and the essays collected in Shu-mei Shih, Chien-hsin Tsai, and Brian Bernards, ed., *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013). See also Howard Chiang and Ari Larissa Heinrich, eds., *Queer Sinophone Cultures* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
 5. Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 165–71.
 6. Tsui-hua Yang, “Meiyuan dui Taiwan de weisheng jihua yu yiliao tizhi zhi xingsu” [US aid in the formation of health planning and the medical system in Taiwan], *Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History* 62 (2008): 91–139.

Dripping with national and trans-Pacific significance, Xie's experience made *bianxingren* 變性人 (transsexual) a household term in the 1950s.⁷ She served as a focal point for numerous new stories that broached the topics of changing sex, human intersexuality, and other atypical conditions of the body.⁸ People who wrote about her debated whether she qualified as a woman, whether medical technology could transform sex, and whether the two Christines were more similar or different. These questions led to persistent comparisons of Taiwan with the United States, but Xie never presented herself as a duplicate of Jorgensen. As Xie knew, her story highlighted issues that pervaded post-World War II Sinophone society: the censorship of public culture by the state, the unique social status of men serving in the armed forces, the limit of individualism, the promise and pitfalls of science, the relationship between military virility and national sovereignty, the normative behaviors of men and women, and the boundaries of acceptable sexual expression. Her story attracted the press, but the public's avid interest in sex and its plasticity prompted reporters to dig deep. As the press coverage escalated, new names and unfamiliar medical conditions grabbed the attention of journalists and their readers.⁹ The kind of public musings about sex change that saturated Chinese culture earlier in the century now took center stage in Republican Taiwan.¹⁰

7. The word "transsexual" was first coined by the American sexologist David Cauldwell in 1949. Cauldwell wrote, "When an individual who is unfavorably affected psychologically determines to live and appear as a member of the sex to which he or she does not belong, such an individual is what may be called a *psychopathic transsexual*. This means, simply, that one is mentally unhealthy and because of this the person desires to live as a member of the opposite sex." David Cauldwell, "Psychopathia Transsexualis," *Sexology* 16 (1949): 274–80. In 1966, endocrinologist Harry Benjamin used the word "transsexual" in his magnum opus, *The Transsexual Phenomenon* (New York: Julian Press, 1966). This book was the first large-scale work describing and explaining the kind of affirmative treatment for transsexuality that he had pioneered throughout his career. On the intellectual and social history of transsexuality in the United States, see Bernice L. Hausman, *Changing Sex: Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*.
8. In this chapter, I adopt the feminine pronoun when referring to Xie both generally and in the specific contexts after her first operation. I use the masculine pronoun to refer to Xie only in discussing her early media publicity, because she expressively refused sex reassignment before the first operation.
9. See Howard Chiang, "Gender Transformations in Sinophone Taiwan," *positions: asia critique* 25, no. 3 (2017).
10. On the vibrant discourse of sex change in Republican China, see Frank Dikötter, *Imperfect Concepts: Medical Knowledge, Birth Defects, and Eugenics in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 74–81; Howard Chiang, "The Conceptual Contours of Sex in the Chinese Life Sciences: Zhu Xi (1899–1962), Hermaphroditism, and the Biological Discourse of Ci and Xiong, 1920–1950," *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* 2(3) (2008): 401–30; Howard Chiang, "How China Became a 'Castrated Civilization' and Eunuchs a 'Third Sex,'" in *Transgender China*, ed. Howard Chiang (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 23–66; Alvin Ka Hin Wong, "Transgenderism as a Heuristic Device: On the Cross-historical and Transnational Adaptations of the *Legend of the White Snake*," in Chiang, *Transgender China*, 127–58.

Discovering Xie

When the story of Xie first came to public spotlight, it established a direct reference to Jorgensen: "After the international frenzy surrounding the news of Miss Christine, the American ex-G.I. who turned into a lady after surgery, a *yin-yang* person [hermaphrodite] has been discovered at the 518 Hospital in Tainan." This opening statement reflects the popular tendency to conflate sex change surgery with the medical treatment of intersexed conditions in the 1950s. During the initial disclosure of Xie's biographical information, the *United Daily News* released an article suggesting that Xie had in fact been fully aware of his feminine bodily traits since childhood, but had kept it a secret until its recent "revelation" under the close attention of doctors in Tainan. A native of Chaozhou, Canton, the 36-year-old Xie joined the army when he was 16, lost his father at the age of 17, and lost his mother at 18. He came to Taiwan with the Nationalist army in 1949. "At the age of 20," the article continued, "his breasts developed like a girl, but he had hidden this secret when serving in the military rather successfully. It was finally discovered on the 6th of [August], upon his visit to the Tainan 518 Hospital for a physical examination due to regular abdominal pains and cramps, by the chair of external medicine Dr. Lin. He has been staying at the hospital since the 7th [of August]."¹¹

The initial national excitement focused on deciphering Xie's sex, sexuality, and gender. In their first impression of Xie, the public was given the opportunity to imagine his sexually ambiguous body with extensive somatic descriptions: "According to Dr. Lin, the abnormal bodily features of the *yin-yang* person include the following: protruding and sagging breasts, pale and smooth skin, soft hands, manly legs, squeaky and soft voice, a testicle inside the left lower abdomen but not the right, a closed and blocked reproductive organ, no [male] urinary tract, a urethra opening between the labia, a small symbolic phallic organ, and the capacity to urinate in the standing posture." Xie's "head appears to be normal, mental health is slightly below average, facial features are feminine, personality is shy, other bodily parts and dietary habits are normal." According to Dr. Lin Chengyi (林承一), a graduate of the Tokyo Zhaohe Hospital and the external medicine department of the Jingjing Medical School, Xie's first operation was scheduled to take place on August 20 and would involve the following three major steps: exploratory laparotomy (the opening of the abdominal cavity) to detect the presence of ovarian tissues; labia dissection to examine the vaginal interior, determine the length of the vagina, and confirm the presence (or absence) of the hymen; and finally, "if ovaries and vagina are found inside the womb, removing the penis can turn Xie into a woman; otherwise he becomes a man." From its premise that Xie intentionally concealed his biological femininity, to

11. "Nanshi faxian yinyangren."

its detailed description of Xie's physical makeup, and to its presentation of the criteria involved in Xie's sex determination (or transformation), the press operated as a cultural vehicle through which medical biases towards Xie's body could be expressed liberally. Through and through, Xie was *assumed* to be a biological woman trapped inside a male body, whose feminine-like features gradually revealed themselves under the fingertips of medical experts and in the eyes of the public.¹²

On the day following the public "discovery" of Xie, the media immediately signaled a radical departure of his experience from the familiar story of the American Christine. Whereas the American transsexual celebrity had a deep-seated desire to become physically transformed into a woman, the Republican Chinese soldier had an unshakable longing to remain a heterosexual man. The headline declared, "*Yin-Yang* Person Uncovers a Personal Past and Hopes to Remain a Man." The article stressed that "the *yin-yang* person Xie Jianshun is still in love with his lover of more than two decades—the rifle" and that he "personally desires to become a perfectly healthy man." Most tellingly, the paper disclosed Xie's heterosexual past by offering an account of his relationship experience with women, including graphic descriptions of his past sexual encounters. The *United Daily News* narrative reminded the reader of, rather than downplayed, Xie's physical defects: "At the age of seven, Xie fell sick. At the time, his penis was tied to his labia, but given his living situation in the countryside, going to a doctor for surgical intervention was not immediately feasible. His mother therefore simply tore them apart by hand. From that point on, he urinated from both secretion openings."¹³

According to the article, Xie's "unpleasant experience with his physiological abnormality" started at the age of twelve. That year, his grandmother introduced him to a girl, whom he was arranged to marry. Although he was just a child, his fondness for the girl grew by day. One day, when no adult was in the house, he initiated an intercourse with the girl but ultimately failed because of his "biological defect." They ended up getting around the problem "by using their hands" (動手動腳的). Since then, Xie "acquired the habit of masturbation without the ability to produce sperm, being in a state of more physiological pain." After joining the army, he fell in love with another girl. Her father even accepted their marriage proposal. This seemingly positive news, however, upset Xie. Given his "physiological shortcomings" (生理上的缺陷), Xie wanted to avoid leading the girl into an unhappy union. At the time, he still did not have the courage to come clean about his reproductive problems. He therefore ran away from the girl and the

12. Ibid.

13. "Yinyangren xisu wangshi yuan cishen chengwei nan'er" [The hermaphrodite reveals his/her past: Hopes to remain a man], *Lianhebao*, August 15, 1953, no. 3.

relationship, a decision some writers interpreted as “a comedy of marriage escape” (逃婚喜劇).¹⁴

The most significant message that this biographical synopsis seems to convey is squarely concerned with his (forthcoming) sex determination or transformation. Will Xie turn into a man or a woman? What does *he* want? The article ended with a confident note: “He firmly hopes to remain male, to be able to return to the army and pick up the rifle again” to “defeat mainland China and eliminate the communists” (反攻大陸，消滅共匪).¹⁵ Indeed, the paper mentioned in passing that Xie “experiences ‘sexual’ desire when interacting with women, but none towards men.”¹⁶ Construed as a respectable citizen of the Republican state, Xie was heterosexualized and masculinized as a national subject fulfilling his duty, even as he faced the possibility of being stripped of his manliness within a week. At least for a brief moment, Xie was able to articulate through the mainstream press his desire of *not* wanting to change his sex. And it was the first time that readers heard his voice. The remark, “If my biology does not allow me to remain a man but forces me to become a woman, what else can I do?” marked the first appearance of his opinion in the press. On the second day of his media exposure, readers started to sympathize with Xie and considered him, unlike the American Christine, a rather normal, however unfortunate, heterosexual man.

If doctors and reporters hastened to purport a clear picture of Xie’s hidden sex and normative sexuality, they tried to uncover his gender orientation in a more cautious fashion. As soon as the 518 Hospital scheduled Xie’s first “sex change surgery” (變性手術), the relevant experts proposed a plan to determine Xie’s gender self-awareness. They sent a group of women nurses to mingle with Xie five days before the operation. Given Xie’s longtime career involvement in the military, “the hospital considers his previous social interactions with men insufficient for determining how Xie feels deep down inside as man- or woman-like. In preparing for Xie’s sex reassignment surgery, a number of ‘attractive’ nurses were asked to keep Xie company and chat with him on August 15.” Through Xie’s interaction with these nurses, it was hoped that “a better understanding of his/her inner sense of self as a man or woman could be reached by drawing on the clues from his emotions and facial expressions, which should reflect his inner sense of self.” It is worth noting that neither the medical profession nor the popular press locked him into a particular gender persona at this juncture. Despite their assumptions about Xie’s biological hidden (female) sex, doctors at the 518 Hospital actually believed that they had adopted a more careful and “objective” approach to determining his psychological gender. And

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. “Nanshi faxian yinyangren.”

despite its covert announcement of his heterosexuality, the press refrained from reaching any conclusion yet about Xie's gendered sense of self.¹⁷

The First Operation

The first turning point in the framing of Xie Jianshun's story in both medical and popular discourses came with his first operation. Again, the press collaborated with Xie's physicians closely and kept the public informed about their progress. On August 20, the day of Xie's first operation, *United Daily News* published a detailed description of the surgical protocols scheduled for three o'clock that afternoon: "The operation scheduled for today involves an exploratory laparotomy, followed by a careful examination of his lower cavity to detect the presence of uterus and ovary. If Xie's reproductive anatomy resembles that of a typical female, a second operation will follow suit as soon as Xie recovers from this one. In the second operation, the presently sealed vaginal opening will be cut open, and the vaginal interior will be examined for symptoms of abnormality. If the results of both operations confirm that Xie has a female reproductive system, the final step involves the removal of the symbolic male genital organ on the labia minora, converting him into a pure female (純女性). Otherwise, Xie will be turned into a pure male (純男性)."¹⁸

By bringing the reader's eyes "inward" toward Xie's internal anatomical configurations, the press repeated the epistemological claims of the medical operation intended for the determination of Xie's sex. Step by step, the newspaper article, presumably relying on the information provided by Dr. Lin and his team, told its reader the surgical procedures and criteria for the establishment of Xie's female sex. Yet no symmetrical explanation was given for establishing a male identity for Xie. The narrative only concluded with the brief remark, "Otherwise, Xie will be turned into a pure male." One wonders what would happen then if Xie's interior anatomy was found to be drastically different from the normal female sex. What were the doctors planning to do then with his "sealed vaginal opening"? If Xie could be transformed into a "pure female" by simply cutting off his "symbolic male genital organ," what would turning him into a "pure male" entail? Would that also involve the removal of something? Or would that require the adding on of something else? Even if female gonads were found inside his reproductive system and the second operation followed suit, what happens next if his vaginal interior showed signs of anatomical abnormality? On what

17. "Yinyangren bianxing shoushu qian zhunbei hushi xiaojie qunyu tanxiao miqu xinli fanying ziliao" [Before the hermaphrodite's sex change operation: Chatting with nurses to reveal psychological data], *Lianhebao*, August 16, 1953, no. 3.

18. "Yinyangren Xie Jianshun jinkaidao biancixiong" [Hermaphrodite Xie Jianshun: Sex determined today through surgery], *Lianhebao*, August 20, 1953, no. 3.

grounds would the doctors evaluate the resemblance of his vagina to that of an average woman at this stage? To what degree could his vagina deviate from the internal structure of a “normal” vagina before it is considered too “abnormal”? The newspaper passage answered none of these questions. Under the pretense of keeping its readers informed, it actually imposed more assumptions (and raised more questions) about Xie’s “real” sex. By the day of his first operation, the medical and popular discourses congruently prepared the lay public for a sensational outcome of this unprecedented sex change episode in Chinese culture. Xie’s sex was arguably already “determined” and “transformed” before the actual surgery itself. This reciprocated the ambiguity surrounding the purpose of his first operation: Was its goal the determination or transformation of his sex?

On the following day, the Taiwanese public confronted a lengthy coverage of Xie’s surgery in the news billed “Soldier Destined to Become a Lady.” This echoed the headline of the New York *Daily News* front-page article that announced Christine Jorgenson’s sex change surgery back in December 1952, “Ex-GI Becomes Blonde Beauty.” The *United Daily News* piece included a more telling subtitle: “The Yin-Yang Person’s Interior Parts Revealed Yesterday after Surgery: The Presence of Uterus and Ovaries Confirmed.” From this point on, Xie was frequently dubbed as the “Chinese Christine” (中國克麗斯汀). Whereas reporters had always used either the masculine pronoun “he” (他) or both the masculine and the feminine pronouns (他 [她]) during the first week of press coverage, they changed to the feminine pronoun entirely to refer to Xie in all subsequent writings. In his discussion of Xie’s operation, Dr. Lin asserted that “Xie Jianshun should be converted into a woman in light of his physiological condition” and that this procedure would have “a 90 percent success rate.” The article described Xie’s first surgery with remarkable detail:

Xie’s operation began at 3:40pm yesterday. Dr. Lin Chengyi led a team of physicians, including Le Shaoqing and Wang Zifan, and nurses, including Jin Ming. Because this is the first clinical treatment of an intersexed patient in Taiwan, Dr. Lin permitted out-of-town doctors and news reporters to observe the surgical proceeding in the operating room with a mask on. After anesthesia, Dr. Lin cut open the lower abdominal area at 3:50 and examined its interior parts. The operation ended successfully at 4:29, with a total duration of 39 minutes. It also marked a decisive moment for determining the sex of the *yin-yang* person Xie Jianshun.¹⁹

This excerpt thus brought the reader back to the clinical setting of Xie’s surgery, thereby reinforcing Xie’s status as an object of medical gaze even after the surgery itself. Ultimately, this careful textual restaging of Xie’s medical operation translated its *clinical* standing into a glamorized *cultural* phenomenon in postwar Taiwan.

19. “Burang Kelisiding zhuanmei yuqian.”

Xie's growing iconicity as a specimen of cultural dissection also hinged on the detailed public exposure of the surgical findings. According to the press coverage:

After a thirty-minute inspection of the [lower] abdominal region, the *yin-yang* person is confirmed female given the presence of ovarian tissues. The uterus is 6cm long and 3.5cm wide, which is similar to the uterus size of an unpenetrated virgin (含苞未放處女), but slightly unhealthy. Not only are the two ovaries normal, the existence of Fallopian tubes is also confirmed. Upon physical inspection prior to the surgery, no testicle can be detected on the lower right abdominal region and only an incomplete testicle can be found on the left. Because Xie Jianshun once had chronic appendicitis, her appendix is removed during this operation. The five viscera are identified as complete and normal. Based on the above results, have [the doctors] decided to perform a [sex change] surgery on Xie Jianshun? The answer is with 90 percent certainty.

According to what her physician in charge, Dr. Lin, told the reporters following the operation, the [sex] transformation surgery will take place in two weeks after Xie Jianshun has recovered from this exploratory laparotomy. The procedure for converting [him] into female begins with the cutting open of the presently closed *labia majora* and *labia minora* (將閉塞之大小陰唇切開). After that, a close inspection of [her] vagina will be necessary to see if it is healthy and normal. Anyone with a uterus has a vagina. After both the *labia majora* and *labia minora* have been split open and the symbolic phallic organ has been removed from the latter, [Xie]'s transformation into a pure woman will be complete.²⁰

Based on these descriptions alone, the reader was able to join Dr. Lin's medical team and examine Xie's physical body, not unlike what happened on the previous day at the 518 Hospital. This narrative even made it possible to anticipate and imagine a future for this unprecedented medicalized sex change in Chinese culture. Although one type of interrogation was conducted in the "private" (closed) space of the operation room and the other was carried out in the "public" (open) domain of printed publications, medical science and the popular press ultimately converged as mutually reinforcing sites for the anatomization of Xie's sex transformation. One policeman could not hide his excitement. He publicly declared his admiration for Xie and interest in dating her after the operation.²¹

As the outcome of Xie's first operation attracted growing publicity, the press further aligned itself with the medical profession by keeping Xie in a public "closet." This "closet" was characterized in a way different from what gay and lesbian scholars have typically conceived to be the staple features

20. "Shoushu shunli wancheng gaizao juyou bawo" [Surgery successfully completed: Alteration is feasible], *Lianhebao*, August 21, 1953, no. 3.

21. "Yinyangren yiyou zhiyin" [Hermaphrodite already has an admirer], *Lianhebao*, August 24, 1953, no. 4.

of queer lives in the past: hidden, secretive, and “masked.”²² Instead of concealing one’s (homo/bi)sexuality in public, Xie’s closet allowed the public to hide his transsexuality from himself. Following the surgery, to quote the exact words in the *United Daily News*, “‘Miss’ Xie Jianshun opened her eyes and looked with a slightly painful expression at her surrounding visitors. But she seems to be in a good psychological state. While not a single word has slipped out of her mouth, and although she has not consulted the doctors about the outcome of her surgery, she is at present oblivious of her fate—that she is destined to become a lady.” When a photo of the surgical proceeding and a photo of Xie became available for the first time in public on August 22, the news of future medical plans to change his sex (including female hormonal therapy) still remained unknown to Xie (see Figure 8.1).²³ Xie was finally “brought out of the closet” nine days after the exploratory laparotomy, which many deemed a success.²⁴ On the afternoon of August 29, Dr. Lin discussed the result of the surgery with Xie, and, being the last person to know about his fate, Xie agreed to cooperate in all subsequent medical procedures that would eventually lead to a complete sex reassignment.²⁵ Prior to that, by maintaining his sex change operation as a secret from Xie himself, both the doctors involved in his case and the press that reported on it generated a public “closet” that delineated a cultural division between the desire of the transsexual individual and the desire of others. Only in this case, however ironically, Xie, the transsexual, had once expressed his *reluctance* to change sex.

Why did the medical team not inform Xie of its decision immediately following the operation? As Dr. Lin explained it, his colleagues learned from the nurses that Xie expressed great anxiety about turning into female after having lived as a man for more than thirty-six years. Given his strong desire to remain biologically male, Dr. Lin’s team was afraid that, if Xie found

22. On the significance of cultural concealment in American gay history, see John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); John Laughery, *The Other Side of Silence: Men’s Lives and Gay Identities: A Twentieth-Century History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998); Martin Meeker, “Behind the Mask of Respectability: Reconsidering the Mattachine Society and Male Homophile Practice, 1950s and 1960s,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 10(1) (2001): 78–116; Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s–1970s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). For an analytical rendition of the “closet” more salient to the history of transsexuality, see David Serlin, “Christine Jorgensen and the Cold War Closet,” *Radical History Review* 62 (Spring 1995): 136–65.

23. “Xie Jianshun kaidao hou zuori qingkuang zhengchang” [Xie Jianshun’s operation proceeded normally yesterday], *Lianhebao*, August 22, 1953, no. 3.

24. “Yinyangren daokou chaixian” [The hermaphrodite’s stitches removed], *Lianhebao*, August 28, 1953, no. 3.

25. “Yinyangren Xie Jianshun tongyi gaizao nüxing” [Hermaphrodite Xie Jianshun agreed to be turned into a woman], *Lianhebao*, August 30, 1953, no. 3.

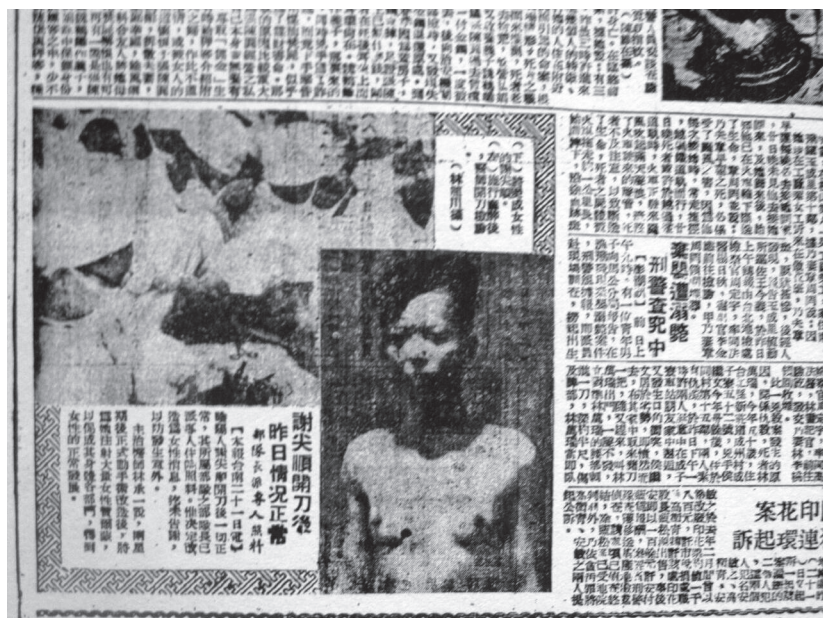


Figure 8.1

Photo of Xie Jianshun after the first operation. Source: *Lianhebao*, August 22, 1953.

out about their decision to convert his sex so abruptly, he would commit suicide, which was implicated in his earlier conversations with the nurses.²⁶ Although the doctors attempted to uncover Xie's gender orientation (by sending a group of "attractive" women nurses to socialize with him) just a few days before the first operation, the surgical outcome—reinforced by the sensationalist tone of the press—nonetheless suggested that for them biology trumped psychology.²⁷ Despite the fact that Xie's condition was really a case of human intersexuality, the doctors insisted time and again that they were surgically transforming his sex.

From the beginning, the exploratory laparotomy operation lacked a clear objective. Although the doctors announced their attempt to determine Xie's sex based on his internal anatomical configurations, they repeatedly proposed a series of surgeries to be performed on Xie's body and called them "sex transformation" operations. After the exploratory laparotomy, bolstered by the breathtaking accounts that stormed the newspapers nationwide, they successfully maintained a "public closet" that prevented Xie from intervening their plan to change his sex. Xie's refusal to be transformed into a woman shifted from public knowledge to an open secret. The doctors continued to push for an opposite surgical outcome, and, as the journalistic

26. "Shoushu shunli wancheng."

27. "Yinyangren bianxing shoushu qian zhunbei."

sensationalism surrounding his ambiguous medical condition accumulated, they behaved as vanguards of medical science in the Republic of China by hinting at their ability to alter Xie's sex just like the doctors abroad. In the shadow of Christine Jorgensen, the construction of Xie Jianshun's (trans) sexual identity was driven less by his self-determination and more by the cultural authority of the surgeons involved and the broader impact of the mass circulation press.

The Chinese Christine

Nine months after the New York *Daily News* announced the sex change surgery of Jorgensen, readers in postwar Taiwan were told that they, too, had their own "Chinese Christine." A newspaper article titled "The Chinese Christine" provides a poignant cross-cultural comparison of the two transsexual icons.²⁸ The writer, Guan Ming, began by describing Jorgensen's situation in the United States, noting the substantial measure of fame and wealth that her sex-change surgery had brought her. Guan also rightly noted how the Jorgensen story became harder to "sell" when news of her incomplete female anatomy went public. (Jorgensen did not undergo vaginoplasty until 1954, and, prior to that, many physicians considered Jorgensen's sex change unsuccessful.) Indeed, after Jorgensen returned from Denmark, American journalists soon questioned her surgically transformed sex. *Time* declared, "Jorgensen was no girl at all, only an altered male," and *Newsweek* followed suit.²⁹

In contrast, Guan observed, "Our 'Chinese Christine,' Xie Jianshun, has turned into a 100 percent biological woman, succeeding the 'incomplete female' Christine Jorgensen." Unlike the American celebrity, Xie was inclined to continue living as a man, "let alone earning money [with a dazzling transsexual embodiment]." Guan added that Xie was even "afraid of losing his privilege to stay [in the military] after sex reassignment." Based on these differences, the author concluded, Jorgensen's transformation generated an international sensation in part because of her "opportunistic inclinations" and the "widespread curiosity in society"; Xie's sex change operations, in contrast, proceeded as a proper medical solution for a congenital bodily defect. "But no adequate social resources were yet available for people like Xie," wrote Guan.³⁰ At the time of expressing his views, Guan of course could not anticipate the kind of spiritual and financial support

28. Guan Ming, "Zhongguo Kelisiding" [The Chinese Christine], *Lianhebao*, September 1, 1953, no. 6.

29. Joanne Meyerowitz, "Sex Change and the Popular Press: Historical Notes on Transsexuality in the United States, 1930-1955," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4(2) (1998): 159-87, on pp. 173-74.

30. Guan, "Zhongguo Kelisiding."

that Xie would eventually receive from various military units in southern Taiwan on a sporadic basis.³¹ More problematically, Guan had mistaken Xie's first exploratory laparotomy operation for a full sex transformation surgery. He also overlooked the convention among experts in the Western medical profession, in the years before Jorgensen, to declare sex change surgeries as acceptable treatment for intersexed conditions.³²

Nonetheless, Guan's comparison of the two transsexual icons nicely illustrates how sexualized bodies circulating in the early Cold War-era public milieu represented an ambivalent platform on which claims about national similarities (e.g., between the United States and the Republic of China) could simultaneously infuse broader claims about cultural (and perhaps even civilizational) divergence between "China" and the West.³³ On the one hand, by systematically referring to Xie as the "Chinese Christine," Taiwanese journalists and public commentators interpreted her medical condition and Jorgensen's transsexual experience as more similar than different. On the other hand, they brought Xie's intention to remain biologically male to full public disclosure and, at one point, even suggested the possibility that Xie may be a "true" hermaphrodite and Jorgensen only a "pseudo" one.³⁴ For Guan in particular, whereas the global reputation of Jorgensen's transsexuality could be attributed to the social norms of "opportunistic" thinking and curiosity in the West, Xie's publicity in postwar Taiwan reflected the ethical responsibility of Chinese doctors to provide proper care for exceptional medical conditions. In either case, the popular press portrayed Xie's condition and her sex change surgery as a rare and important event in medical science, thereby modeling such advancement in postwar Taiwan after the latest surgical breakthrough in Western biomedicine. In this way, the story

31. See "Nanbu junyou fenshe weiwen Xie Jianshun" [Soldiers from the southern station console Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, September 4, 1953, no. 3; "Zenkuan Xie Jianshun buwang abingjie" [Donating to Xie Jianshun: Never forget the female soldier], *Lianhebao*, September 21, 1953, no. 4; "Xie Jianshun xiaojie jiang beilai kaidao" [Miss Xie Jianshun coming to Taipei for surgery], *Lianhebao*, October 29, 1953, no. 3; "Wei qiuzheng shengli yi diding yinyang" [To validate physiology and yin or yang], *Lianhebao*, December 5, 1953, no. 3.

32. See Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*; Alison Redick, "American History XY: The Medical Treatment of Intersex, 1916–1955" (PhD diss., New York University, 2004); Christina Matta, "Ambiguous Bodies and Deviant Sexualities: Hermaphrodites, Homosexuality, and Surgery in the United States, 1850–1904," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 48(1) (2005): 74–83.

33. For theoretical considerations of the problem of civilizationalism, see Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72(3) (1993): 22–49; Kuan-Hsing Chen, "Civilizationalism," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23(2–3) (2006): 427–28. For another example of the Xie-Jorgensen comparison, see "Hebi ruci feijing" [Why go through so much trouble], *Lianhebao*, March 26, 1954, no. 3.

34. "Xie Jianshun jue laibei kaidao xinan yinü nanding duankan erci shoushu" [Xie Jianshun has decided to relocate to Taipei for surgery: Sex determination depends on the second operation], *Lianhebao*, November 27, 1953, no. 3.

of Xie Jianshun helped to situate Taiwan on the same global horizon as the United States.³⁵

Despite the prevailing tendency to compare the two transsexual icons, Xie reacted to her unforeseen publicity in a manner radically different from that of the glamorous American Christine. Whereas Jorgensen enjoyed her international fame, collaborated with various media agents to help shape it, and took other deliberate measures to promote it, Xie did not seize the press coverage of her genital surgery as an opportunity to boost her own reputation. To Xie, the popular rendition of her body as a valuable medical specimen and a concrete ground for US-Taiwan idiosyncratic comparison were less important than her desire to be treated properly and resume a normal and healthy life. Little did Xie realize that the significance of her celebrity came not only from the direct comparisons with Jorgensen, but also from the underlying similarities between the evolving perceptions of transsexuals in the popular imagination (due to her publicity) and the subsequent flood of other stories in Taiwan. Both the Christine analogy and the surfacing of other similar sex change stories in Taiwan were, in many ways, inflected by the global reach of the Jorgensen narrative. As the nominal label of “Chinese Christine” suggests, “the power behind the culture of U.S. imperialism comes from its ability to insert itself into a geo-colonial space as the imaginary figure of modernity, and as such, the natural object of identification from which the local people are to learn.”³⁶

The Second Operation

As the Republican government officials took a more serious interest in her case, Xie resisted their top-down decisions. Xie’s second operation was initially scheduled to take place within two weeks after the first, but the only news that reached the 518 Hospital four weeks after the exploratory laparotomy was a state-issued order to transport her to Taipei. The reporters wrote, “In order to ensure Xie’s safety, and in the hope that a second operation will be carried out smoothly, it has been decided that she will be relocated to Taipei. After being evaluated and operated upon by a group of notable doctors in a reputable hospital, [Xie’s sex change] will mark a great moment in history.” Xie refused, however. She immediately wrote to bureaucrats to express her preference for staying in Tainan and being operated upon there again.³⁷

35. Guan, “Zhongguo Kelisiding.”

36. Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 177.

37. “Xie Jianshun gaizao shoushu huo jianglai Taibei kaidao” [Xie Jianshun’s alteration surgery might take place in Taipei], *Lianhebao*, September 24, 1953, no. 3.

To her dismay, Xie paid a price for challenging the authorities. They neglected her and delayed her operation for at least three weeks following her request. The press reappeared as a viable venue for voicing her dissent. On October 17, Xie disclosed the anxiety she had developed from her last menstrual experience, which occurred roughly a month ago. "Given her vaginal blockage, wastes could only be discharged from a small [genital] opening, leading to extreme abdominal pains during her period," an article with the title "The Pain of Miss Xie Jianshun" explained. Since another menstrual cycle was just right around the corner, she urged Dr. Lin, again, to perform a second operation as promptly as possible. But Dr. Lin despairingly conceded that he must receive a formal response from the central government before he could initiate a second surgical attempt. All he could do at this point, as one might have expected, was to re-forward Xie's second request to the higher officials and wait.³⁸ At the end of the month, Xie's former captain, Fu Chun 傅純, paid her a visit, bringing her \$300 to help her get by during this difficult period.³⁹

By late November, the prolonged waiting and the accumulated unanswered requests forced Xie to agree reluctantly to relocate to Taipei. The newspapers announced the fifth of the following month as the date of her arrival and the Taipei No. 1 General Hospital (台北第一總醫院) as her second home. A medical authority from the Taipei hospital anticipated their takeover of Xie's case: "In light of Xie's biology, there should be no leap of faith in how successful the second operation will be in completing Xie's transition. The only thing that remains to be determined is whether Xie is a fake or true hermaphrodite [偽性或真性半陰陽]. This can be accomplished by taking a sample from one of Xie's incomplete testes [一顆不完全的睪丸] and determine whether it could produce semen." The doctor reinforced the popular perception of Xie's condition as an extraordinary phenomenon of nature by labeling it "truly rare in the world's medical history."⁴⁰

In early December, the *United Daily News* announced "Chinese Christine Coming to Taipei Today for Treatment," and many gathered around the Taipei main station that day expecting to greet the transsexual celebrity in person.⁴¹ Despite the great measure of patience and enthusiasm with which her Taipei fans waited, the papers reported on the following day, on December 6, that their hopes ended up in despair: Xie's anticipated relocation failed to materialize, which disappointed those who were eager to witness the legendary transsexual icon. Journalists reported that "Xie's Taipei trip might have been canceled or postponed due to unknown reasons" but offered no estimation

38. "Xie Jianshun xiaojie de yintong" [The pain of Miss Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, October 17, 1953, no. 3.

39. "Xie Jianshun xiaojie jiang beilai kaidao."

40. "Xie Jianshun jue laibei kaidao."

41. "Wei qiuzheng shengli yi diding yinyang."

of her new arrival date.⁴² To the public's dismay, it would be at least six more weeks before Xie quietly showed up at the No. 1 General Hospital in Taipei.

The media had heretofore functioned as a key buffer among the medical professionals, Xie Jianshun, and the Taiwanese public. The national dailies in particular served as the primary means through which readers could learn Xie's thoughts and opinions. Those who followed her story closely relied mainly on the press for the ins and outs of her medical treatment. Recall that doctors even allowed news reporters to witness the first exploratory laparotomy operation and, afterward, publicly disclosed their decision to turn Xie into a woman before telling Xie herself. Similarly, Xie considered the press as the most immediate (and perhaps reliable) way to publicize her desire to remain biologically male before the operation and her unwillingness to leave Tainan afterward. Almost without the slightest degree of hesitation, both Xie and her physicians readily collaborated with journalists to escalate the initial scoop of media reporting into a nationwide frenzy.

Although the reporters continued to clamor, the coverage took a dip near the end of 1953. In 1954, only three articles in the *United Daily News* and none in either the *China Daily News* (中華日報, *Zhonghua ribao*) or the *Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News* (台灣新生報, *Taiwan xinshengbao*) followed up on Xie's situation. After the cancellation of her December trip, the first update on Xie's health condition came in as late as mid-February 1954. It was only by that point that her reticent move to Taipei on January 16 was revealed to the public. The name of her new surgeon in charge at the No. 1 General Hospital was Jiang Xizheng 姜希錚. Yet, despite the surprising news that Xie was now in Taipei, the closest impression one could gain from reading this article was a description of the hospital room in which she was staying: "Xie Jianshun's room features simple decorations, with one bed, a tea table, a long table, and a chair. There is a window at the end of the room, but the curtains are almost always closed in order to prevent strangers from taking a peek at [her] secrets."⁴³ What these words reflected was not only the physical distance between Xie and any curious-minded visitors at the hospital; these words also captured the metaphorical distance between Xie and the readers who found it increasingly difficult to gather information about her situation and the concrete plans for her second operation based on the newspaper reports alone. Even as the *United Daily News* indicated that Xie was now taking hormones so that she was closer to becoming "the second Christine," it failed to identify who exactly provided that information and the degree of its reliability.⁴⁴

42. "Zhongguo Kelisiding zuori wei beilai" [The Chinese Christine did not arrive at Taipei yesterday], *Lianhebao*, December 6, 1953, no. 3.

43. "Xie Jianshun bingfang shenju jingdai shoushu ding yiyang" [Xie Jianshun residing in the hospital room: Waiting for sex-determination surgery], *Lianhebao*, February 15, 1954, no. 3.

44. *Ibid.*

The long silence in the press coverage might suggest that the public's interest in Xie's story had begun to wane. However, the next *United Daily News* article, which appeared roughly a month later in mid-March, indicated otherwise and put forth a more plausible explanation:

The hospital has been especially secretive about the exact location of her room so as to avoid unsolicited visits from intrusive strangers. Meanwhile, perhaps as a result of her male-to-female transformation, Xie Jianshun has become increasingly shy in front of strangers, so she has asked the hospital staff not to disclose any further information about her treatment to the public while she is hospitalized. Deeply concerned with her psychological wellbeing, the doctors agreed as a matter of course.⁴⁵

In other words, the dip in the press coverage had less to do with the public's declining interest in Xie, than with a mutual agreement between Xie and her attending physicians to refrain from speaking to journalists and reporters. This constituted the second turning point in the evolving relationship between the medical profession and the reporting of Xie's sex change in the mass media. The popular press no longer played the role of a friendly mediator among the public, the doctors, and Xie herself. To both Xie and her medical staff after the first operation, the publicity showered on them seemed to impede rather than help their plans. Xie, in particular, might have considered the authorities' indifference toward her earlier request to stay in Tainan as a consequence of nationwide media coverage, thereby holding her prolonged waiting against the reporters. Apart from a brief comment about how Xie displayed "more obvious feminine characteristics" post hormonal injections, the March *United Daily News* article included no new information on her situation.

As the voice of the newspaper accounts became increasingly speculative, and as the mediating role of the press gradually receded to the background, to the readers, available information about Xie's second operation proved to be less certain and more difficult to ascertain. The tension between the reporters and those who tried to protect Xie from them peaked around late June, when the *United Daily News* reported on Xie's story for the third and final time in 1954. The article opened with a sentence that mentioned only in passing Xie's "more 'determinant' operation performed recently at the No. 1 General Hospital." Framed as such, Xie's "second" operation was barely publicized, and even if readers interpreted this line to mean that Xie had undergone a second operation, the doctors withstood giving an update on it. When the reporters consulted Xie's medical team on June 24, they were met with a persistent reluctance to respond to any questions and to permit visitation rights for nonmedical personnel. A staff at the No. 1 General Hospital

45. "Xie Jianshun youju daibian yijue de titai jiaorou" [Xie Jianshun secluding herself and becoming feminized], *Lianhebao*, March 18, 1954, no. 3.

was even quoted for saying, "We are not sure if Xie Jianshun is still staying with us at this hospital."⁴⁶

In contrast to the sensationalist tone and mundane details that dominated the discussion of Xie's first surgery, the way that the media discussed the second operation was less fact oriented and more congested with suppositions. The major newspapers glossed over any information that would support the claim that Xie had become more feminized after relocation. Despite the best intentions of the hospital staff to distance the media people from Xie,

A journalist has conducted an investigation inside the hospital and found signs that suggest that Xie Jianshun has become more lady-like and that she is undergoing an accelerated metamorphosis. . . . Despite the high surveillance under which Xie Jianshun is monitored, sometimes her face can still be seen. According to an individual who claims to have seen Xie Jianshun in person lately, it is difficult to discern whether Xie Jianshun has transformed into a woman completely. Nonetheless, based on what he saw, Xie's hair has grown longer, and her face has become paler and smoother. The general impression one would get from looking at Xie now is that Xie Jianshun has transformed into a woman gradually over time [謝尖順已日漸傾向於女性型].⁴⁷

Not only did this account fail to mention what the second operation entailed, it only *surmised* the outcome based on some unknown secondary source. Unlike the step-by-step recounting of the surgical protocols involved in the first operation, the doctors' strategy for pursuing Xie's bodily transformation in the immediate future remained opaque.

Transformation Complete

The mysterious aura surrounding Xie Jianshun's fate did not last long. The public's avid interest finally pushed medical experts to step up and come clean about Xie's situation. In January 1955, a newspaper article with the headline, "Xie Jianshun's Male-to-Female Transformation Nearly Complete: The Rumor of Surgical Failure Proved to be False," shattered any doubts about the stunted progress in Xie's physical change. After the first operation, given the way that Xie's doctors had intentionally refrained from leaking any word to the press, the public was left with an unclear impression of what was going on inside the hospital specifically and how Xie was doing more generally. Rumor soon had it that the doctors' long silence meant Xie's transition was ultimately unsuccessful. According to the article, the cause of this rumor "can be traced to an incident reported last month in Tainan of a

46. "Xie Jianshun jiju nǚ'ertai qinsi mantou fenbaimian youju mishi yizeng xiu" [Xie Jianshun appears extremely feminine], *Lianhebao*, June 25, 1954, no. 5.

47. Ibid.

yin-yang person. The general public's memory of Xie was refreshed by this story of the *yin-yang* person in Tainan, and as a result of this reminder, the public began to revisit the question of whether Xie had succeeded in being transformed into a woman." In an attempt to dispel any doubts, doctors from the No. 1 General Hospital were quoted for confirming that "the rumor is definitely false." They clarified that "Xie Jianshun's sex transformation has in fact proceeded rather successfully and is reaching its final stages." Xie, the doctors promised, "is living a perfectly healthy life." But when the reporters requested to speak to Xie in person, they were turned away and were told by the hospital staff that this kind of request "could only be fulfilled with a permit from the state authorities."⁴⁸

The initial upsurge of the renewed interest in Xie survived only briefly. It would take another eight months—after the doctors had performed Xie's "third" and final operation—before her name would make headlines again.⁴⁹ On August 31, 1955, the *United Daily News* carried an extended front-page article with the headline, "A New Chapter in the Nation's Medical History: The Success of Xie Jianshun's Sex Change Surgery."⁵⁰ On the following day, the newspapers teased the public by announcing that "The Details of Xie Jianshun's Sex Change Operations Will Be Publicized Shortly." According to Xie's physician in charge, "Contrary to a number of fabricated claims, Xie Jianshun's final operation took place very smoothly on the morning of August 30. With respect to the protocols and results of this decisive surgery, the medical team promises to release all of the relevant information in a formal report in due course." The papers glossed over the aim of this operation with the succinct words "to unclog her Fallopian tubes," the obstruction of which had caused her periodic discomfort for months. Apparently, Xie felt dizzy after the operation but recovered by the next morning. The representatives from the No. 1 General Hospital explained that both Xie's own request and the uniqueness of her case constituted their main reasons for holding off on disclosing the clinical details underpinning her case. Since Xie had explicitly asked the medical staff to abstain from speaking to journalists and reporters, the doctors assumed the responsibility of protecting her privacy from media exposure. On the other hand, the doctors believed that her sex change operations "promise to mark an important medical breakthrough in the country" (此一手術尚為我國醫學界之創舉), so they wanted to be extra

48. "Xie Jianshun younan biannü shoushu yi jiejin chenggong" [The surgery of Xie Jianshun's male-to-female transformation almost complete], *Lianhebao*, January 9, 1955, no. 3.

49. I put the word "third" in quotation marks here (and only here), because the official report released later in the year will contradict this count and indicate that this was actually Xie's fourth operation. See below.

50. "Woguo yixue shishang de chuanguji Xie Jianshun bianxing shoushu chenggong" [A new chapter in the nation's medical history: The success of Xie Jianshun's sex change surgery], *Lianhebao*, August 31, 1955, no. 1.

careful in making any kind of public statement. Silence seemed to be the best demonstration of their precaution before the final verdict.⁵¹

On the following day, the papers declared “the success of Xie Jianshun’s sex change surgery,” pitching it as “a fact that can no longer be shaken.” Although the staff at the No. 1 General Hospital pledged to disclose the surgical specifics in the near future, readers in Taiwan had already learned a great deal on the day following the operation. Xie’s popularity first skyrocketed two years ago, in August 1953, when doctors, scientists, the press, and the lay public “discovered” her. Despite the detailed coverage of her first operation, or because of it, Xie and the people in her immediate circle became much quieter in their dealing with reporters. As its media coverage began to thin out in 1954, the Xie story grew more and more mysterious, while other stories of uncommon body morphology abounded in the press.⁵² Even the timing and completion of her second operation were never thoroughly announced until this point. The pertinent newspaper article now clarified that, in the months following her first operation, Xie not only resisted relocating to Taipei but ardently opposed changing her sex. The second operation eventually took place in April 1954, and it involved “the removal of the two symbolic male gonads” (割除其左右鼠蹊部內象徵性的睪丸). After the second operation, Xie “began to develop stronger female sexual characteristics” (體內女性生理性能轉強), which included the enlargement of her breasts and the onset of regular menstruation. Because Xie’s reproductive system lacked a full vaginal canal, her periodic menses caused regular discomfort when excreted with urine through the urethra. As she “started to learn how it feels to be a woman” (開始嘗到做女人的滋味), these physiological reorientations made her more reluctant to identify as a woman. After wrestling with the idea of relocating to Taipei, she struggled with and eventually failed to convince her surgeons not to transform her sex.⁵³

Amid a world of uncertainties brought about by World War II and its immediate aftermath, the media used the metaphor of the Cold War to depict Xie’s relationship with the doctors. If the rough timing of the second operation were true, sixteen months had elapsed before Xie entered her recent surgery. To quote the exact words used to frame this extended period of time, “[T]he Cold War between Xie Jianshun and the hospital lasted until April 5 of this year.” What got frozen during this period was not only Xie’s reaction to the decisions made by her physicians in charge, but also the overall fate of her medical treatment (or sex transformation). Distinguishing

51. “Xie Jianshun bianxing shoushu jingguo duanqi zhengshi gongbu” [The details of Xie Jianshun’s sex change surgery to be publicized shortly], *Lianhebao*, September 1, 1955, no. 3.

52. Chiang, “Gender Transformations in Sinophone Taiwan.”

53. “Xie Jianshun de nǚ’erjing qì xumei busheng xiunao huai jilǚ jìngnián fāngjiē” [Xie Jianshun’s anxiety about menstruation problems finally resolved], *Lianhebao*, September 2, 1955, no. 3.

her ambition from the intent of her doctors, Xie requested a second relocation to a different hospital, but her request was ultimately denied. What “ended this Cold War,” according to the newspapers, was a letter that she wrote to the president, Chiang Kai-Shek, in which she expressed her disdain toward how the doctors handled her case and the absence of adequate nutrition administered at the hospital.⁵⁴

In response to the letter, the Ministry of National Defense sent two representatives to the No. 1 General Hospital to resolve the tension between Xie and the doctors. Xie’s complaint about how she was mistreated at the hospital, they found out, was a misleading “expression of her wrong set of mind” (內心理不正常發出的牢騷). They told her that the regular cramps that she experienced were due to the menstrual periods, which typified the bodily experience of the female reproductive system. In order to alleviate this somatic (and not psychological) discomfort, the doctors needed to construct a functional vaginal canal for her. Ultimately, the two National Defense representatives succeeded in persuading Xie to accept the doctors’ advice and complete her sex transformation with one final surgery. The newspapers speculated that “perhaps it is due to her prejudice against the hospital staff, or perhaps it is due to her loyalty to the military, she agreed to a third operation after contemplating for only ten minutes or so.”⁵⁵ The year-long “Cold War” thus ended with the direct intervention of not the medical experts but state authorities. Whereas, according to historian Elaine May, the contemporaneous structural norms of American families helped offset the nation’s domestic and foreign political insecurities, Cold War’s metaphoric power, as evident in the example of Xie’s transsexuality, was diffused in the public discussion of sexually malleable bodies in the context of postwar Taiwan, situated on the fringes of China and Chineseness.⁵⁶

Before the doctors released their official report of Xie’s case, details of the third operation and its influence on Xie were already openly discussed by those in her immediate circle. The new surgeon in charge, Zhang Xianlin 張先林, for example, uninhibitedly expressed his view of the nature of Xie’s latest operation. Whereas most people considered this operation the most critical and fate determining, Zhang regarded it merely as “a simple reconstructive surgery” (簡單的矯形手術而已). Because Xie’s reproductive system was already confirmed female, according to Zhang, the operation involved the enhancement of her female biology by “removing her symbolic phallic organ” (把她那象徵性的陰莖予以割除) and, more importantly, “the construction of an artificial menstrual canal” (開闢出一條人工的排經道), which would allow her to release menses normally. The operation, which

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

Zhang considered to be a breeze, began at eight o'clock in the morning and ended at ten after nine.⁵⁷ To assess the effect of the operation on Xie, the doctors vowed to administer an X-ray examination in two weeks.⁵⁸ When the *United Daily News* in Taiwan and the *Kung Sheung Daily News* (工商日報) in Hong Kong published half-nude photos of the “post-op” Xie on September 8, representatives from the No. 1 General Hospital quickly dismissed them as a sham.⁵⁹ As a sign of their interest in looking after Xie’s psychological well-being, within three weeks after the operation, the Ministry of National Defense awarded Xie 1,000 New Taiwan Dollars to help her defray the cost of purchasing new feminine attire.⁶⁰ This generous sum offered Xie greater freedom in constructing a social image—and a new sense of self—that aligned cogently with her new biological sex.

On October 28, 1955, the *United Daily News* carried a front-page story that finally proclaimed “The Completion and Success of Xie Jianshun’s Sex Change Operation.”⁶¹ The story continued on page 3, which contained a full-length official report on Xie’s medical treatment released by the No. 1 Army Hospital. The official report revealed numerous aspects of the Xie story that overthrew earlier speculations. Of these revelations, the most surprising was probably the fact that Xie’s most recent operation was actually her fourth and not her third operation. Recall that Xie’s second operation received little publicity in the previous year. By June 1954, from reading the scattered newspaper accounts, interested readers could gain a vague impression that doctors in Taipei had performed a second surgery on her, but its date, nature, and purpose lacked transparency. According to this official report, however, Xie’s second operation, which was also an exploratory laparotomy but with the additional step of removing parts of her male gonadal tissues, took place on April 10, 1954. Based on the samples extracted from her body during this operation, the doctors confirmed Xie’s status as a true hermaphrodite, meaning that she had both ovarian and testicular tissues in her gonads. The doctors also clarified that by that point, her “testicular tissues were already deteriorating and unable to generate sperm” (睪丸的組織，已呈萎縮的狀態，並且已經沒有精子形成的現象), but her “ovarian tissues were still functional and able to produce eggs” (卵巢的組織，卻仍然有排卵的活動). In light of a stronger presence of female sexual characteristics, the medical team

57. “Xie Jianshun de nü’erjing.”

58. “Xie Jianshun bianxing shoushu hou yishi liangzhou hou kexue yan quansheng” [Doctors will examine Xie Jianshun’s body scientifically two weeks after sex change operation], *Lianhebao*, September 3, 1955, no. 3.

59. “Xie Jianshun luoxiong zhaopian zhengshi xi gongpin” [Xie Jianshun’s half-nude photo: A hoax], *Lianhebao*, September 10, 1955, no. 3.

60. “Banfa yingbianfei qianjin zeng hongzhuang” [Awarding Xie for building her new feminine look], *Lianhebao*, September 21, 1955, no. 3.

61. “Lujun diyi zongyiyuan xuanbu Xie Jianshun shoushu chenggong” [No. 1 Hospital announces the completion and success of Xie Jianshun’s sex change operation], *Lianhebao*, October 28, 1955, no. 1.

performed a third operation on August 26, 1954. After the surgery, Xie's penis was replaced by an artificial vaginal opening. All of this happened more than a year prior. Taking place on August 30, 1955, Xie's most recent and fourth genital surgery was simply a vaginoplasty. Now with "a normal woman's vaginal interior" (陰道內腔與正常女性一樣), Xie Jianshun's "transformation from a soldier into a lady is now indisputable."⁶² Brought to light by the report, Xie's personal triumph encapsulated the postwar fears and hopes about the possibilities of medical science.⁶³

On the same day, the second page of *United Daily News* included the sixteenth installment of "The Story of Miss Xie Jianshun," a biography of Xie that had been serialized daily since October 13.⁶⁴ The concluding installment appeared on November 18, which meant that for more than a month, Taiwanese readers were exposed to Xie's life story with familiar moments and surprising details.⁶⁵ This extended exposure seemed to reflect the fact that the Xie story continued to sell even two years after the initial frenzy. No less significant, again, was the similarity in the marketing strategies of the Taiwanese and American presses. The stylistic objective of "The Story of Miss Xie Jianshun" closely resembled that of the series "The Story of My Life," which appeared in *American Weekly* three days after Jorgensen returned to the United States from Denmark. Jorgensen's series was billed as "the story all America has been waiting for," which would have been an equally appropriate description for the Xie installments with a nominal substitution of the word "Taiwan" for "America."⁶⁶ But the two series bore significant differences as well. Whereas the first-person confessional format of the American version gave Jorgensen a chance to convey her own voice, the third-person observational tone of the Taiwanese version allowed the writer, Yi Yi 憶漪, to narrate Xie's experience with a unique voice that was at once authoritative and yet absorbing. This mode of narration, of course, built on the earlier public image of Xie, who had been constantly portrayed as a nationally and transnationally significant figure but never for reasons

62. "Sici shoushu yibianerchai Xie Jianshun bianxing jingguo" [Male to female transformation after four surgeries: The sex change experience of Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, October 28, 1955, no. 3.

63. For voices that challenged the propriety and authority of the official report, pointing out that its explicit content was too invasive of Xie's privacy and that its "scientific" tone did not pay sufficient attention to Xie's post-op psychology, see, respectively, "Fabiao Xie Jianshun mimi weifan yishifa buwu shidangchu" [Publicizing Xie Jianshun's secret goes against the legal regulation of medicine], *Lianhebao*, October 29, 1955, no. 3; and "He yi wei Xie Jianshun" [How to console Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, October 29, 1955, no. 3.

64. Yi Yi, "Xie Jianshun xiaojie de gushi" [The story of Miss Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, October 13, 1955, no. 3; Yi Yi, "Xie Jianshun xiaojie de gushi" [The story of Miss Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, October 28, 1955, no. 2.

65. Yi Yi, "Xie Jianshun xiaojie de gushi" [The story of Miss Xie Jianshun], *Lianhebao*, November 18, 1955, no. 2.

66. Quoted in Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 65.

acknowledged by herself. Although Jorgensen's full-length personal memoir was eventually published in 1967 and its film adaptation released in 1970, by that point Xie had lost all contact with the press and faded from the public sphere.⁶⁷ The final media blitz surrounding the Xie story occurred in the late 1950s, during which it was reported that Madame Chiang Kai-shek had visited her in Taipei and that she had begun working at the Ta Tung Relief Institute for Women and Children (大同婦孺教養院) under the new name Xie Shun 謝順 after *nine*, not four, surgeries.⁶⁸ Ever since the birth of "the Chinese Christine," the comparison of Xie to Jorgensen had intrigued, satisfied, and resonated with observers time and again, but never without its limits.

Conclusion

In their initial diagnoses of Xie, doctors frequently spoke of a hidden "female" sex. In contrast, the press provided a cultural space for him to articulate a past heterosexual romantic life and the desire of *not* wanting to change his sex in a masculinist voice. Early on, both medical and popular discourses adhered to a neutral position in discussing his psychological gender. Both discourses were fundamentally reoriented by the time of his first operation. The pre-op coverage of the details of his first surgery only foreshadowed a highly sensational outcome—the characterization of Xie as the "Chinese Christine," the first transsexual in Chinese society. By elevating Xie's iconic status as both the object of medical gaze and the specimen of (trans)cultural dissection, medical and popular discourses foreclosed any space of epistemic ambiguity concerning Xie's "innate" sex, gender, and sexuality. Many believed that Xie was destined to become a woman. Or, more aptly put, he became nothing but a transsexual star like the American Christine. In the following two years, the press covered Xie less and less, and began to report more widely on other surprising accounts of unusual bodily conditions. After her fourth surgery in May 1955, Xie's popularity as the first transsexual in Chinese culture, on top of these other pathological "symptoms" of

67. Christine Jorgensen, *Christine Jorgensen: A Personal Autobiography* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 2000 [1967]); *The Christine Jorgensen Story*, directed by Irving Rapper (Los Angeles: United Artists, 1970).

68. "Xiri daling tongzhi jianglai fulian huiyuan" [Former soldier comrade: A future member of women's association], *Lianhebao*, October 10, 1956, no. 3; "Yishi chuangzao nüren wunian duding qiankun" [Doctors building a woman: Sex determined in five years], *Lianhebao*, September 4, 1958, no. 4; "Xiri shachang zhanshi jinze jingru chuzi" [Former battle warrior: A present quiet virgin], *Lianhebao*, September 17, 1958, no. 4; "Xiaoyangnü Fu Xiuxia zhu Tatong Jiaoyangyuan" [Little girl Fu Xiuxia boarding Ta Tong Relief Institute], *Lianhebao*, June 7, 1959, no. 3; "Xie Jianshun guanxiongfu" [Xie Jianshun adjusting to feminine psyche], *Lianhebao*, November 11, 1959, no. 4.

postcolonial modernity, helped establish the global significance of Taiwan vis-à-vis the neocolonial hegemony of the United States.

In the spirit of marking out “a space in which unspoken stories and histories may be told, and to recognize and map the historically constituted cultural and political effects of the cold war,”⁶⁹ this chapter has raised a series of interrelated questions that challenge the various categorical assumptions that continue to haunt a “China-centered perspective.”⁷⁰ Was Xie Jianshun’s transsexuality “Chinese” or “American” in nature? Transsexuality in whose sense of the term? Was it a foreign import, an expression (and thus internalization) of Western imperialism, or a long-standing indigenous practice in a new light? How can we take the Republican state’s administrative relocation in the late 1940s seriously? Is it possible to speak of a “Republican Chinese modernity” that challenges the familiar socialist narrative of twentieth-century Chinese history? Which China was alluded to by the Chinese-ness of the label “Chinese Christine”? In the yet-to-appear discourse of Taiwanese nativism, did the Republican regime exemplify settler colonialism, migration, immigration, or diaspora? To better comprehend the historical context, we might also ask “Is the [GMD] regime a government in exile (which would mean that it resides abroad), a regime from another province, a defeated regime, or simply a Cold War regime?”⁷¹ Evidently, the complexity of the history far exceeds the common terms used to describe the historical characteristics of postwar Taiwan. To call the GMD a regime from the outside or a colonial government only partially accounts for its proto-Chineseness or extra-Chineseness, and precisely because of the lack of a precedent and analogous situation, it is all the more difficult to historicize, with neat categorical imperatives or ways of periodization, the social backdrop against which and the epistemic condition under which people began to talk about the first Chinese transsexual.

It is interesting to note that in the context of the 1950s, the Chinese term *bianxingren* carried almost none of the psychopathological connotations that distinguished its English counterpart, *transsexual*. This probably reflected the relatively late involvement of Taiwanese psychiatric experts in dealing with patients diagnosed with *bianxing yuzheng* (變性慾症, transsexualism).⁷² In this regard, the national spotlight on the male-to-female (MTF) transsexual Jiang Peizhen 江佩珍 in 1981 opened a new chapter in the history of

69. Chen, *Asia as Method*, 120.

70. For a historiographical rendition of the “China-centered perspective,” see Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past*, new ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010 [1984]).

71. Chen, *Asia as Method*, 154.

72. Hsu Su-Ting, “Bianxingyuzheng huanzhe bianxing shoushu hou de shenxin shehui shiying” [The physical, psychological and social adaptation among transsexuals after sex reassignment surgery: A study of six cases] (MA thesis, Kaohsiung Medical University, 1998).

transsexuality in Taiwan that lies beyond the scope of this chapter (which concerns specifically its emergence). According to Jiang's psychiatrist and past superintendent of the Tsyr-Huey Mental Hospital in Kaohsiung County, Dr. Wen Jung-Kwang 文榮光, the story of Jiang Peizhen made a huge impact on enhancing the public awareness of transsexualism in Taiwan in the early 1980s. Her case pushed doctors, especially the psychiatrists, to come to terms with patients requesting sex reassignment or showing symptoms of gender identity disorder, and to consult the Harry Benjamin Standards of Care that had been adopted by American medical and psychological experts since 1979.⁷³ Personal testimonies of transsexuals attested to the breadth, significance, and cultural reach of the Jiang story. Miss Lai 賴, a former MTF patient of Wen, noted how the possibility of sex reassignment surgeries was brought to her attention only by the time of the media coverage of Jiang.⁷⁴ In the 1980s, Xie Jianshun and her surgeons had disappeared altogether from the public sphere, and this seemed to confirm that one era had ended. For the new generation of transsexuals and doctors like Miss Lai and Wen, the hero(ine) from the 1980s onward was Jiang.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the saga of Xie Jianshun and other sex change reports that sprung up in the Taiwanese press exemplify the emergence of transsexuality as a form of modern sexual embodiment in Chinese-speaking society. Xie's story, in particular, became a lightning rod for many post-Second World War anxieties about gender and sexuality, and called dramatic attention to issues that would later drive the feminist and gay and lesbian movements in the decades ahead.⁷⁶ In a different way, these unprecedented stories of bodily transformation bring to light a genealogy that exceeds, even subverts, familiar historicizations of Taiwan's postcoloniality. They illustrate the ways in which the Chinese community in Taiwan inherited a Western biomedical epistemology of sex from not only the Japanese colonial regime (a conventional reading of Taiwan's colonial past), but also, more importantly, the intellectual complexity of the earlier scientific globalism that characterized

73. Personal interview with Jung-Kwang Wen on March 20, 2008.

74. Personal interview with Miss Lai on March 22, 2008. I thank Dr. Wen for introducing me to Miss Lai.

75. See Josephine Ho, ed., *Kuaxingbie* [Transgender] (Jungli, Taiwan: National Central University Center for the Study of Sexualities, 2003); Liu Dao-Jie, "Biannan biannü bian bian bian" [Transsexualism and sex-reassignment surgery in Taiwan] (MA thesis, National Taiwan University, 1993). For a thick ethnographic study of contemporary transgender embodiment in Taiwan, see Josephine Ho, "Embodying Gender: Transgender Body/Subject Formations in Taiwan," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 7(2) (2006): 228–42.

76. Yu Hsin-ting, "Taiwan zhanhou yiduanxing/shenti de guanshi lishi: Yi tongxinglian han yinyangren weilie, 1950s–2008" [Regulating deviant sexualities and bodies in Taiwan, 1950s–2008: The cases of homosexuality and hermaphrodites] (MA thesis, Kaohsiung Medical University, 2009). It is interesting to note that Xie was never described as a "human prodigy" (*renyao* 人妖) in the Taiwanese press. On the history of this concept in postwar Taiwan, see Howard Chiang, "Archiving Peripheral Taiwan: The Prodigy of the Human and Historical Narration," *Radical History Review*, no. 120 (2014): 204–25.

the Republican period on the Mainland.⁷⁷ This genealogy from Republican-era scientific modernity to postwar Taiwanese transsexuality, connected via the Sinitic language but also made possible culturally by the migration of over 1 million people from the Mainland in the late 1940s, underscores the ways in which the Nationalist government regained sovereignty in Taiwan beyond a monolithic framing of Japanese postcolonialism.⁷⁸ Parallel to British colonial Hong Kong, Taiwan experienced the highly institutionalized establishment of Western biomedical infrastructure under Japanese occupation.⁷⁹ In the 1950s, when Mao “nationalized” Chinese medicine in continental China, both Taiwan and Hong Kong represented the most advanced

77. On the legacy of Japanese colonialism in the healthcare system of postwar Taiwan, see, for example, Michael Shiyung Liu, “Zhanhou Taiwan yiliao yu gongwei tizhi de bianqian” [The transformation of medical care and public health regime in postwar Taiwan]. *Huazhong shifan daxue xuebao* 49(4) (2010): 76–83; Fu Daiwie, *Yaxiya de xinshenti: Xingbie, yiliao yu jindai Taiwan* [Assembling the new body: Gender/Sexuality, medicine, and modern Taiwan] (Taipei: Socio Publishing, 2005). On scientific globalism in Republican China, see Frank Dikötter, *Sex, Culture and Modernity in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1995); Danian Hu, *China and Albert Einstein: The Reception of the Physicist and His Theory in China, 1917–1979* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Frank Dikötter, *The Age of Openness: China before Mao* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Sigrid Schmalzer, *The People’s Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-Century China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Chiang, “The Conceptual Contours of Sex in the Chinese Life Sciences”; Howard Chiang, “Epistemic Modernity and the Emergence of Homosexuality in China,” *Gender and History* 22(3) (2010): 629–57; Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Constructions of the Chinese Nation-State, 1900–1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Grace Yen Shen, *Unearthing the Nation: Modern Geology and Nationalism in Republican China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Bridie Andrews, *The Making of Modern Chinese Medicine* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014); Sean Hsiang-lin Lei, *Neither Donkey nor Horse: Medicine in the Struggle over China’s Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); and the essays in Jing Tsu and Benjamin A. Elman, eds., *Science and Technology in Modern China, 1880s–1940s* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
78. For a detailed study of the Nationalist migration from mainland China to Taiwan, see Meng-Hsuan Yang, “The Great Exodus: Sojourn, Nostalgia, Return, and Identity Formation of Chinese Mainlanders in Taiwan, 1940s–2000s” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2012).
79. See Michael Shiyung Liu, “1930 niandai rizhi shiqi Taiwan yixue de tezhi” [Taiwanese medicine during Japanese occupation in the 1930s], *Taiwan shi yanjiu* 4(1) (1998): 97–147; Michael Shiyung Liu, “Building a Strong and Healthy Empire: The Critical Period of Building Japanese Colonial Medicine in Taiwan,” *Japanese Studies* 23(4) (2004): 301–13; Fan Yan-qiu, *Jibing, yixue yu zhimin xiandaixing: Rizhi Taiwan yixueshi* [Diseases, medicine, and colonial modernity: History of medicine in Japan-ruled Taiwan] (Taipei: Daw Shiang Publishing, 2006); Michael Shiyung Liu, *Prescribing Colonization: The Role of Medical Practice and Policy in Japan-Ruled Taiwan* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2009); Hui-yu Caroline Ts’ai, *Taiwan in Japan’s Empire-Building: An Institutional Approach to Colonial Engineering* (New York: Routledge, 2009). Although the activities of the Canadian missionary George E. Mackay represent an effort to introduce modern Western biomedicine to Taiwan before Japanese colonialism, many critics have pointed out its limited role in the formation of Taiwan’s modernity. On Mackay’s activities, see Fu, *Yaxiya de xinshenti*, chapter 2. On the issue of Mackay’s representativeness, see Daiwie Fu, “How Far Can East Asian STS Go? A Position Paper,” *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* 1(1) (2007): 7.

regions in modern Western medicine situated on the geo-margins of the Sinosphere.⁸⁰ Adding to its catalytic role in the transmission of Western biomedical knowledge and practice, British colonialism was instrumental for establishing Hong Kong as a more permissive cultural space when other parts of mainland China were strictly governed by a socialist state.⁸¹ These historical factors thus allowed for the immense media publicity showered on Xie Jianshun and sex change more broadly. Together, the rapid technology transfer of Western biomedicine and the availability of a fairly open social and cultural milieu enabled the Sinophone articulation of transsexuality to emerge first and foremost across the postcolonial East Asian Pacific Rim.

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80. On the nationalization of Chinese medicine in early communist China, see Kim Taylor, *Chinese Medicine in Early Communist China, 1945–1963: A Medicine of Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2005). For a recent study of “the Sinosphere” vis-à-vis Japan, see Joshua A. Fogel, *Articulating the Sinosphere: Sino-Japanese Relations in Space and Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
81. John M. Carroll, *A Concise History of Hong Kong* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), 140–66. For examples of queer cultural production in Hong Kong in the 1960s, see Weixing shiguan zhaizhu, *Zhongguo tongxinglian mishi* [The secret history of Chinese homosexuality], 2 vols. (Hong Kong: Yuzhou chuban, 1964 and 1965). Scholars have begun to reconceptualize the history of love, intimacy, and sexuality in socialist China, but most revisionist readings are limited to discussions of heteronormative desires. See Men Yue, “Female Images and National Myth,” in *Gender Politics in Modern China: Writing and Feminism*, ed. Tani Barlow (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 118–36; Harriet Evans, *Women and Sexuality in China: Female Sexuality and Gender Since 1949* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1996); Wendy Larson, “Never So Wild: Sexing the Cultural Revolution,” *Modern China* 25(4) (1999): 423–50; Emily Honig, “Socialist Sex: The Cultural Revolution Revisited,” *Modern China* 29(2) (2003): 153–75; Yunxian Yan, *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949–1999* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Everett Zhang, “Rethinking Sexual Repression in Maoist China: Ideology, Structure, and the Ownership of the Body,” *Body and Society* 11(3) (2005): 1–25.