



Governing Sex, Building the Nation: The Politics of Prostitution in Postcolonial Taiwan 1945-1979

Wan-chen Yen

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Governing Sex, Building the Nation explores the sexual politics of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan between 1945 and 1979, focusing on the politicisation of prostitution and its role in the reproduction of postcolonial nationhood. This book examines the political struggle over prostitution policy that was framed within and through contested knowledge, rationales and tactics underpinning the nationalist project, constructing and policing prostitution as a social/national problem, yet also creating a market for prostitution and turning it into political opportunities that served a variety of nationalistic interests. Locating this in the larger Asian struggle with colonial influence on prostitution, the author provides interesting and rare accounts of official perspectives and tactics regarding prostitution in the Taiwanese context, in order to explore the interlinkages between post/colonialism, prostitution and nationalism. Featuring insights into Japanese and Chinese colonialism and the Eastern Asian experience of postcolonialism, this book shifts academic attention from mainstream postcolonial studies, which highlight Western colonialism and Indian and African postcolonialism. It thereby discovers more diverse approaches to postcolonial nation-building and a more intricate interaction between colonial powers and the colonised society, and, as such, adds new depth to postcolonial studies. Bringing the politics of nationalism and postcolonialism into the study of prostitution policies, this book also provides an understanding of prostitution in a once-colonised society in contrast to the broadly recognised gender and sexual politics of prostitution in the Western context.

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