

# Governing Sex, Building the Nation



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*The Politics of Prostitution  
in Postcolonial Taiwan  
(1945-1979)*

By

Wan-Chen Yen

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# ACRONYMS

## *Organisations*

GMD	Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang)
WDGMD	Women's Department of the GMD
ROC	Republic of China
CWLACSR	Chinese Women's League of Anti-Communism and Soviet Russia
TPAOPM	Taiwan Province Administrative Official Public Ministry
TPAWW	Taiwan Provincial Association of Women Writers
TPWA	Taiwan Provincial Women's Association
TPCMPFD	Taiwan Provincial Committee of The Movement for the Protection of Foster Daughters
TWVGC	Taipei Women Vocational Guidance Center

## *Regulations*

TPRMP	Taiwan Provincial Regulations of the Management of Prostitutes
TPRICAD	Taiwan Provincial Regulations for the Improvement of the Custom of Adopting Daughters
TPRSB	Taiwan Provincial Regulations of Specific Business
TPRWWPCTRH	Taiwan Provincial Regulations of Waiters and Waitresses in Public Canteens, Tea Rooms, and Hotels

# CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORICAL EVENTS, 1683-979

1683-1895	Taiwan ruled by Chinese Qing Empire.
1895-1945	Taiwan colonised by Japan.
1896	Licensed prostitution implemented in Taiwan.
1912	Qing Empire overthrown in China. Republic of China established in China.
1945	R.O.C. led by GMD took over Taiwan from Japan.
1946-1947	Licensed prostitution abolished in Taiwan.
1947	228 Incident occurred, Taiwanese anti-GMD Government uprising.
1949	Licensed prostitution re-implemented by GMD.
1949	GMD defeated by the Chinese Communists in China. R.O.C. reorganised in Taiwan.
1951-1976	The Movement for the Protection of Foster Daughters.
1951-1965	American economic-aid period.
1956	Reformed licensed prostitution implemented and prostitute reform agencies established.
1961-1972	Export-oriented policy implemented.
1962	Entertainment places Acts.
1965-1972	American Rest & Recreation programme in Taiwan.

- 1971 R.O.C. left United Nations.
- 1979 R.O.C. ended diplomatic relation with US.

## GMD PROSTITUTION POLICY IN TAIWAN, 1945-1979

1896	Japanese implemented licenced prostitution in Taiwan.
1945	Republic of China led by the Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang, short for GMD) took over Taiwan.
1946-1947	GMD abolished licenced prostitution.
1949	GMD established licenced prostitution, special wine houses.
1949	GMD retreated to Taiwan.
1951	The Movement for the Protection of Foster Daughters launched.
1951	Expanded medical inspection on waiters/waitresses (TPRWWPCTRH).
1951	Military brothels established.
1956	TPRICAD and TPRMP enacted. Special wine houses replaced with licenced brothels and prostitute reform centres established.
1960	Unlicenced prostitutes targeted for reform.
1962	Acts for Specific Business enacted (TPRSB).
1965	US R&R programme began. Bar girls targeted for tighter VD control.
1960s	Moral regulations of specific business establishments practiced.

- 1968 Restricting the expansion and ownership transfer, freezing licences to new applications and raising business tax for specific businesses.
- 1972 US R&R programme ended.
- 1976 The Movement for the Protection of Foster Daughters ended.
- 1979 GMD ended diplomatic relation with US.

# MAPS OF EASTERN ASIA AND TAIWAN

Map 1: Map of Eastern Asia



Map 2: Map of Taiwan





## CHAPTER ONE—INTRODUCTION

# THE SEXUAL POLITICS OF NATION-BUILDING IN TAIWAN

The aim of this research is to explore 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. In the period following Japanese colonisation (1895-1945), US-backed nationalism was intensively promoted by the GMD in Taiwan to construct “Free China” in opposition to the mainland Chinese communist regime (1945-1979). 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, and yet also created a market for prostitution and turned it into political opportunities that served a variety of nationalistic interests.

Broadly situated in the Asian struggle with colonial powers over the issue of prostitution, this study provides accounts of official perspectives and tactics toward prostitution in a Taiwanese context. Comparisons will be drawn with the views and campaigns around prostitution-linked issues in many Asian countries by feminists or civil activists (discussed in the later part of this chapter). Taiwan’s historical speciality also differentiates this book from mainstream postcolonial studies, which highlight Western colonialism and Indian/African postcolonialism, by exploring Japanese and Chinese colonialism, and the Eastern Asian experience of postcolonialism. This investigation will manifest more diverse approaches to postcolonial nation-building and a more complex interaction between colonial powers and the colonised society than those highlighted by postcolonial studies. Bringing the study of the politics of nationalism and postcolonialism into the study of prostitution policies, as this book endeavours to, not

only modifies the emphasis on Western feminist debates on prostitution in Taiwanese studies, but also contributes to the understanding of prostitution in a once-colonised society in contrast with the broadly recognised gender and sexual politics of prostitution in the Western context.

Since this research is structured based on the Chinese nationalism in Taiwan, it is necessary to contextualise Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese society. Thus, the political and social contexts within which this study is located will be introduced. With this background in mind, discussion will shift to prostitution in the political project in broad connection with prostitution in Asia.

## **Chinese Nationalism in Taiwan**

To understand Chinese nationalism in Taiwan, knowledge about Taiwanese society and Chinese nationalists is required. In this book, “Taiwanese” refers to those people living in Taiwan before the Chinese Nationalist Party (*Guomindang*, known as the GMD) took over this island in 1945. Apart from the minority aboriginal groups, the majority of “Taiwanese” are descendants of early Han Chinese immigrants. “Chinese”, refers to people who emigrated from mainland China to Taiwan with the GMD government. Despite bio-genetic links between the Taiwanese and Chinese, geographic and historical separation created cultural and political barriers between them, largely shaping the operation of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan.

The formation of the “Taiwanese” as a group is closely linked to the history of the island they inhabited. Prior to the seventeenth century, Taiwan was mainly populated by aboriginal peoples, usually now labelled as “Austronesians”. No permanent Chinese communities settled in Taiwan until the importation of large numbers of Chinese immigrants during the period of Dutch colonisation (1624-1662) and the Zheng Chenggong regime (1661-1683). In 1683, Taiwan was integrated into the Manchu Empire in China (recognised as the Qing Dynasty), causing thousands of Chinese to immigrate to Taiwan. Accordingly, Chinese came to outnumber the aboriginal peoples and now constitute the main population of this is-

land and also transformed Taiwan's cultural characteristics from aboriginal to Chinese (McCaghy and Hou 1993). Despite inheriting Chinese tradition, the established Chinese immigrant society in Taiwan gradually departed from mainland China with the development of "indigenisation" and increasingly built a strong identification with Taiwan as their homeland, forming the geo-social self-identity of "Taiwanese" rather than "Chinese" (Chen 1984). Yet, such indigenisation under the Qing Dynasty did not form a "Taiwanese" sense of national identity. Scholars argue that Taiwanese national identity was and remains contested and fractured. Some regard that Taiwanese national identity appeared when Taiwan was ceded to the Japanese following Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. Being colonised by a different national and ethnic group gave the Taiwanese a sense that they were not part of the Japanese community and created a political independence movement (Chen 1968; Wu 2003). Others argue that Taiwanese national identity was fostered by the GMD's differentiating and oppressive rule, leading some Taiwanese to advocate political independence from the Chinese nationalist regime (Lo 1994; Fix 1993). Despite the contested opinions on the occurrence of Taiwanese national identity, the experience of Japanese colonisation indeed created difficulties for many people living in Taiwan in identifying with Chinese nationalism.

A half-century of Japanese colonisation (1895-1945) contributed to creating Taiwan's sense of separation from China. Colonisation did have its benefits, as industrialisation, a sanitation system, public school system and local self-governance system were all introduced, creating a favourable view amongst many Taiwanese toward the Japanese Empire. Yet, the severity of Japanese rule and the racial hierarchy of placing Japanese over Taiwanese through a divisive schooling system and the speaking of the Japanese language, also turned some in Taiwan toward political unification with the political regime in mainland China. No matter how divisive Taiwanese views on the Japanese were, after the Chinese nationalist government took over Taiwan as a result of the Second World War, many people in Taiwan found it difficult to identify with the "Chinese" regime as they either recognised that the Chinese administration was not as modern nor efficient as that of the Japanese or felt disappointed at the GMD's differentiation between the Taiwanese and the new mainland immigrants.

The appearance of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan was closely linked to China's political transition. In 1912, revolutionist nationalists led by the GMD's founder, Dr. Sun Yatsen (*Sun Yixian*), replaced the Qing Dynasty government, which had been exploited by internal rebellion and foreign imperialism, with the Republic of China (R.O.C.). The semi-colonised status of China made the GMD recognise the necessity of Western material civilisation to strengthen the nation. National subjugation also focused nationalists' attention on promoting Confucian beliefs, the important constitution of Chinese culture, and fighting against backward Chinese traditions and Western culture for their obstruction of China's progress or their interference with Chinese mores. Yet, the dream of building a rich and moral China was never fulfilled. Much of the GMD's rule in China, under the leadership of Sun's successor, Chiang Kaishek (Jiang Jieshi), was taken up by military confrontation with the warlords (1915-1928), the communists (1927-1949) and the invasion of the Japanese (1937-1945). A centralised power structure also made the ruling party become rampantly corrupt. Economic devastation by war and the political inability to convey an impression of a revolutionary and clean government enabled the GMD's nationalism to be exploited by Chinese communists in their victory in the Chinese civil war (1927-1949).

These historical transitions have set the nationalistic scene in Taiwan. The GMD reorganised the R.O.C. in Taiwan in 1949 and engineered a nation-building project, aiming to construct a powerful and recognised "Free China" (*Ziyou zhongguo*) to compete with its communist rival for the political and cultural legitimacy of China and finally to retake the mainland. Based on these nationalist requirements, political coercion, cultural unification, economic development and international cooperation were taken as the main approaches to the Chinese nationalism movement.

Political coercion aimed to tackle political opposition, particularly caused by ethnic mistrust and conflict. After Taiwan was taken over by the GMD, many people living in Taiwan felt let down by the GMD's administration. Taiwanese were viewed as not "Chinese" and "beyond the passes" (meaning outside the pale of Chinese civilisation) because of their tainted and degraded cultural identity formed by Chinese ex-rival, the Japanese

(Kerr 1965, 72). Also, many Taiwanese came to consider the mainland Chinese as more backward and corrupt than the Japanese after their experience of rampant corruption, loose military discipline and severe inflation in the new administration. Local resentment against the GMD mounted quickly and reached a climax with the 228 Incident<sup>1</sup> (*Ereba shijian*) in 1947, ending with a massacre of Taiwanese<sup>2</sup>. Alarmed by national disunion in mainland China, the GMD employed authoritarian one-party governance in cooperation with martial law to keep Taiwanese society static and under tight control, creating a blunt political repression called the “White Terror” (*Baise kongbu*); thousands were imprisoned or executed for their real or perceived dissent. Little distinction between the government and the ruling party also solidified the party’s power over the governed.

Chinese nationalists were an ethnic minority, therefore, to stabilise their rule they implemented an ethnic hierarchy by placing mainland Chinese above Taiwanese in cultural, economic and political aspects (Huang 1998, 4; Yin 1999). Taiwan’s traditions and language were prohibited and replaced with the mainlanders’ language and cultural practices. Around 1.2 million mainlanders immigrated into Taiwan with the GMD, consisting mainly of soldiers, GMD party members, civil servants, and intellectual and business elites; this new ruling class was given preferential economic treatment in housing, education, and job opportunities. Mainlander immigrants also dominated the political positions in the government, official organisations and the ruling party. However, to carry out its political agenda, the GMD did not merely rely on a repressive and separating apparatus but attempted to enlist the cooperation of and identification from the majority Taiwanese population. They did this through political, social and economic policies, including policies around culture, leisure and welfare; prostitution policies were linked to all these strategies.

The GMD opened political opportunities for Taiwanese and promoted cultural unification to gain their support. As parliamentary elections were frozen after 1949, the GMD opened lower-level elections to Taiwanese elites and local factions. This policy increased the GMD’s local membership tenfold by the end of the 1960s (Roy 2003, 81), amongst which 70 percent were Taiwanese (Tien 1989, 85), although they mainly remained

in the lower ranks of the party. In addition, large efforts were made by the GMD to integrate the Taiwanese into its Chinese community through the enhancement of cultural and moral identification. The Chinese nationalist historical struggle with regionalism and colonialism motivated the GMD's political and cultural programmes aimed at nationalising Taiwanese people as citizens of a Chinese nation and eradicating Japanese influence (Wilson 1970). Sinicised projects were intensively performed via the promotion of Confucian moral rules, Chinese culture, and the Mandarin language in a tightly state-controlled schooling system and citizenship education (Phillips 2003, 47–8, 140–41). Between 1951 and 1967<sup>3</sup>, the GMD also launched a series of social campaigns or reforms (see Chapter 3), aimed at replacing unorthodox and improper social, hygienic, cultural and leisure practices with Chinese moral values or practices.

In addition, economic frustration in China and Taiwan's economic achievement under Japanese colonisation taught the GMD to realise the necessity of economic development in bolstering legitimacy, strength and support for its nation-building project. A vigorous export policy was launched to attract Western capitalistic investment and broaden its international support, particularly seen in the GMD's alliance with and subordination to the US, which provided the requested international recognition, and military and economic aids programmes to stop communist invasion and stabilise Taiwan's status in the free world under the Cold War structure. The GMD faced a dilemma in its closeness to neo-colonialism, that is, Western capitalistic and American military power, which reactivated colonialism through expanded markets, foreign capital, and military deployment in order to exercise economic, cultural or political power over weaker countries (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989, 162-163; Lawson 2010, 6). As this book will show, the nationalist regime requested the political and economical support of neo-imperial powers and yet cultural independence from colonial influence, both Japanese and Western; this shaped the GMD's tense yet cooperative interaction with imperialism in its nationalist project. Illustrated by this book, such complex interactions with different colonial powers had significant effects on the formation of the GMD's controversial policies around prostitution during the nation-building period.

The nationalists' efforts and dreams were finally ruined in the 1970s when the GMD lost international recognition in a series of significant diplomatic discomfitures, including leaving the United Nations in 1971 and ending diplomatic relations with its most important ally, the US in 1979. Thus, 1979 is generally recognised as the end of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan. However, as this book explores, various nationalist approaches to postcolonial nation-building profoundly shaped the way prostitution in Taiwan was constructed and governed. To understand the sexual politics of Chinese nation-building this book wishes to explore, prostitution in the Taiwanese context will be outlined, focusing on the period between the 1940s and 1970s. The following discussion will move on to analysing nationalist views and policy of prostitution under the nation-building project in relation to the broader situations of prostitution in Asian contexts.

## **Prostitution in Taiwan (1940s-1970s)**

Before the GMD came to power, prostitution in Taiwan prospered and was treated by the Chinese immigrants in the Qing Dynasty (1683-1895) and the Japanese colonials (1895-1945) as a natural outlet for men's sexual urges. More than a simple sale of sexual services, prostitution was connected to a variety of hierarchical social networks, relations and rituals. The hierarchal forms of prostitution during the Qing Dynasty also developed from courtesan houses, wine shops, to brothels.

During the Japanese colonial period and the Second World War, through colonisation and military expansion, the Japanese organised prostitution across Asia (Taiwan included). In Taiwan, the Japanese forms of prostitution varied from "comfort women systems" for soldiers (Lai et al. 2005; Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (*Taipeishi funü jiu yuan jijinhui*) 2005), geisha houses for officials and gentry, and wineshops and brothels for low-level sexual consumers (Lin 1995; Liang 2002). These sexual establishments were operated under a licence system and largely confined to *Yūkaku* (red light districts), except brothels for soldiers. To safeguard the sexual pleasure and health of male colonisers, the Japanese colonial regime instituted medical check ups on licenced prostitutes to control the spread of venereal disease. The geographies of *Yūkaku* overlapped those of red light

districts developed in the Qing Dynasty, for example, port areas, where Han Chinese entered and congregated in Taiwan, such as Wanhua in Taipei and Yancheng in Kaohsiung (See map2, xvii). There were also newly developed sexual spaces around hot spring areas due to Japanese hot-bathing culture, in which Beitou, in the outskirts of Taipei city, was particularly famous. In the 1930s, with economic development and the introduction of Western fashions by the Japanese, new-type leisure industries emerged outside *Yūkaku*, such as tea rooms and coffee shops, mainly in city areas, Taipei in particular. These establishments, and the women working in them as “hostesses” (*shiyingsheng*), soon became a new route to sexual consumption for men.

### “Problematic” and “Thriving” Prostitution

Under the GMD rule prostitution was no longer conceived as a part of social life by official activists but challenged as a social and national problem. However, prostitution was simultaneously rendered commercial and profitable. Although nationalists attempted to distance themselves from the Japanese during the 1940s and 1950s, the organisations and regulation of prostitution under the GMD regime arguably had much in common with Japanese practices. Prostitution was legalised through the forms of special wine houses (*tezhong jiuji*) (1949-1956) and licenced brothels (*gongchang guan*) (1956-2002). Yet, illegal prostitution was also active in public canteens, tea rooms, and hotels. The maintenance of licenced prostitution was closely linked to the immigration of an estimated 1.2 million Chinese mainlanders, amongst which two thirds were men, soldiers in particular (Lin 2002, 9, 13). The majority of these mainland soldiers and civilians were young and single, who had marital restrictions under military rule<sup>4</sup> or were not welcomed by Taiwanese families in the marriage market due to perceived ethnic distrust. Licenced brothels were divided into military and civil brothels purely for R.O.C. soldiers and male civilians respectively.

In the early days of GMD rule, the legal sex sector focused on brothel-type establishments and mainly served domestic sexual demand. The scale of licenced prostitution generally increased and sexual geographies spread throughout Taiwan. Based on the records of a police journal (discussed

in detail in Chapter Three and Seven), there were 53 special wine houses in 1950 with 540 special hostesses, established in half of the 21 counties of Taiwan (*Police and People Gazette (Jingmindaoobao)* 1950, 11). Civil brothels, established all over Taiwan, almost doubled in number from 249 in 1957 to 453 in 1962 (Department of Statistics, MOI (*Neizhengbu tongjichu*) 1992, 81), with the number of licenced prostitutes reaching 2,060 in 1962. The scale of military brothels, established around garrisons, is unclear due to the inaccessibility of military data.

With the establishment of the prostitution system, prostitution also became “problematic” for nationalists in terms of the way girls entered prostitution. At this stage, economic considerations and family factors were important for female participation in prostitution. Influenced by Chinese preference for sons and Confucian filial tradition, girls in Taiwan often became part of the family’s economic resource. When economic hardship occurred, many girls were given up for adoption, sold, or expected to work to support their own family. “Female fosterlings” (*yangnü*) were girls who were taken into other families in the name of adoption but often sold into the sex industry for their adopters’ financial needs or for profit. They worked in various but mainly low-consumption settings, such as wine shops, tea rooms and brothels, popular in city and rural areas. This exploitative situation aroused the Chinese nationalists’ attention in the early 1950s. Female fosterlings became constructed as a symbol of national shame and an important breakthrough point for intervention in prostitution by the GMD, particularly by its women’s groups, as this book explores.

In the 1960s, prostitution in Taiwan grew quickly under the state’s economic policies of export and tourism, taking the new form of commercially organised sex tours and entertainment sectors particularly in urban areas. Apart from emerging sexual consumers in the economic sector, international sex tourists, such as American soldiers, East Asian tourists, and foreign traders, also expanded the Taiwanese sex market. Alongside the licenced brothels, leisure businesses, such as tea rooms, coffee shops, wine houses, and bars were also legalised with hostesses working in such sexual establishments. Amongst them, tea rooms and coffee shops were considered low-priced consumption places, commonly seen in city or rural areas,

while bars and wine houses were high-priced sexual spaces, mainly located in cities. Apart from these leisure industries, different forms of prostitution were covered by multifarious settings, such as call houses, bathhouses and saunas, massage parlours, tourist guide agencies, dance halls and night clubs, often cooperating with each other to organise sex consumption for tourists. The prosperity of the sex industry is shown in the number of prostitutes involved. Based on official statistics, the number of registered prostitutes and hostesses increased from 2,060 in 1962 to 23,018 in 1970, while those potentially engaged in prostitution in unlicensed settings was approximately 105,000 (Xie 1972, 416).

The increase in the number of registered prostitutes and hostesses reflected the generally restricted availability of employment for women in other areas. Under the GMD's export-oriented policy (1961-1972), thriving urban industrial and commercial development encouraged the migration of rural peasant girls into cities to look for job opportunities. Yet, many women were mainly drawn into low-paid work in light industries, such as the electronic, textile and clothing industries as such industries were considered to be suitable for girls and because girls generally were not qualified for high-level service sector positions. Based on an official survey conducted in 1970, 86 per cent of the workers in the textile industry were female (Huang 1977, 21). Compared with low wages and unsatisfactory working conditions in rural agricultural or urban factories, prostitution provided a promising income approximately twenty times greater than other occupations (Xie 1973, 30), drawing many peasant girls to fill the vested interests of the financial nature of the sex industry. The restrictions that women suffered in terms of job opportunities were largely decided upon by their lower education. Prior to 1968, when compulsory education was extended to junior school level, the highest proportion of girls in the junior school system only reached one-third of all students; the percentage of girls studying at university level was also extremely low (Zhang 1999, 43). Other than the general prioritisation of boys' education in families due to the tradition of boy preference, the GMD's gendered educational principles also contributed to women's social marginality. Although female participation in economic activities was encouraged, to mobilise women for national reconstruction, the GMD promoted women's gender roles as mothers

and wives within the domestic setting through schooling systems, enhancing female subordination to fulfil domestic duties and “feminine” work rather than the pursuit of self-achievement. Nationalist domesticisation of women’s gender identity also created obstacles for women’s social participation. Female participation in “non-domestic” and “unconventional” space and activities, emerging city areas or urban leisure consumption, for example, was little appreciated and encouraged by the authorities because of the presumed threat of such activities to traditional virtues and women’s sexual chastity (Zhang 1998, 70). The state’s encouragement of women’s conjugal sexual activities and birth control<sup>5</sup> also revealed a clear intention of confining women’s sexuality within families so it was moral and functional. Thus, the increased visibility of prostitutes and the perceived prosperity of the urban sexual leisure industry in the 1960s made the nationalist regime’s control of women’s gender and sexual roles more challenging. Illustrated in this book, many nationalists became enraged with the booming sex industry. Rather than being viewed as a problem of the urban poor looking for economic alternatives, many Chinese nationalists, particularly GMD women’s groups and officially-supervised newspapers, saw prostitution as a moral/gender decline into materialism. Thus, prostitution under the GMD regime continuously embodied the controversial nature of being “thriving” and yet “problematic”.

## Controversial Sexual Governance

The GMD’s policing of prostitution was controversial. Prostitution was sanctioned and even prospered under the state’s policies, yet, nationalists also employed different regulations and tactics in attempts to “minimise” the scale or ease the “harm” of prostitution. The means the GMD employed to legally regulate prostitution included licensing prostitution, arresting illegal prostitutes, rescuing women in coerced prostitution and reforming prostitutes. For licenced prostitution, women needed to apply for a licence from their local police station and practise the sex trade within brothels under relevant rules regarding their rights and obligations, in which their health, income, and will to prostitute themselves were protected by regulations. The form of this licencing largely remained unchanged from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Arrest, rescue and reform were interlinking strategies for managing prostitution. Rescuing aimed to save women from coerced prostitution, mainly carried out in the 1950s when foster daughters, supposedly in forced prostitution, became a concern. By law, rescued women could be accommodated in, or voluntarily entered, reform agencies. Reforming centres were founded with the idea that women in prostitution were in an immoral state, thus, their goal was to train and instruct women to leave prostitution (Hong 2001). Arrest was used against prostitutes practising the sex trade outside licenced spheres. Although licenced prostitution was the only legal form of sex trade, practising prostitution without a licence was technically not a criminal offence but was handled as a police offence under The Police Offence Law (*Weijing fafa*) (Huang 2004). Police could punish those who attempted to make a profit from carnal relations and have carnal relations with an “unlicenced” prostitute, without benefit of a trial, by detention of no more than seven days or by a fine of maximum NT 450 dollars<sup>6</sup>. The use of The Police Offence Law to tackle illegal prostitution was practiced throughout the GMD’s nationalist project but became tighter and more punitive after the 1960s. The police force was authorised to arrest habitual unlicenced prostitutes and send them to reform agencies for compulsory reform programmes.

Legal regulation demonstrates the two-edged nature of the GMD’s sexual governance. Prostitution became legalised and prosperous under governmental policies while it also became constructed as “problematic”, requesting various regulatory routes to reduce its harm. The following discussion will show such phenomena were closely linked to contradictory nationalist views and policies on prostitution in relation to their nation-building requirements and the broader contexts of Asian prostitution.

## **Prostitution and Postcolonial Nationhood in Taiwan**

As explored in this book, during the 1940s and 1970s, prostitution in Taiwan aroused considerable political attention as a symbolic social and national problem, and yet formed an indispensable element of the nationalist project. As Taiwanese and civil society were largely silenced by political coercion, the main activists in framing and making policy on