

## **Imagining Transgender China**

ISBN:

DOI: 10.1057/9781137082503.0005

Palgrave Macmillan

### **Please respect intellectual property rights**

This material is copyright and its use is restricted by our standard site license terms and conditions (see [palgraveconnect.com/pc/info/terms\\_conditions.html](http://palgraveconnect.com/pc/info/terms_conditions.html)). If you plan to copy, distribute or share in any format, including, for the avoidance of doubt, posting on websites, you need the express prior permission of Palgrave Macmillan. To request permission please contact [rights@palgrave.com](mailto:rights@palgrave.com).

# Imagining Transgender China

*Howard Chiang*

Sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld's *Die Transvestiten* (1910) and anthropologist Esther Newton's *Mother Camp* (1972) exemplify a rich tradition of scholarly thought and analysis on gender variance in the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, it was only in the last two decades that an explosion of academic interest in transgender topics became ever more pronounced. In the 1970s and 1980s, social, political, cultural, and intellectual trends paved the way for some transgender people to increasingly distance themselves from the women's movement and the gay and lesbian movement.<sup>2</sup> The emergence of queer studies as an umbrella field in the decade following these developments cultivated the growth and maturation of transgender studies.<sup>3</sup> Already in her seminal *Gender Trouble* (1990), philosopher Judith Butler used drag as a preeminent example to theorize the cultural performativity of gender, thereby reorienting women's studies beyond traditional concerns of feminist epistemology.<sup>4</sup> In *Female Masculinity* (1998), cultural theorist Judith Halberstam recentered women's relationship to masculinity, revealing a long-neglected undercurrent of Anglo-American literature and film.<sup>5</sup> Seven years later, the publication of *In a Queer Time and Place* (2005) enriched her problematization of the heteronormative alignment of sex and gender through the lens of subcultural practice.<sup>6</sup> This book has been deeply influential in establishing the centrality of transgender issues to queer studies.

Between *Gender Trouble* and *In a Queer Time and Place*, other important book-length contributions to the development of transgender studies include Vern and Bonnie Bullough's *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender* (1993), Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* (1993)

and *Undoing Gender* (2004), Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw* (1994) and *My Gender Workbook* (1998), Bernice Hausman's *Changing Sex* (1995), Leslie Feinberg's *Transgender Warriors* (1996), Zachary Nataf's *Lesbians Talk Transgender* (1996), Patrick Califia's *Sex Changes* (1997), Marjorie Garber's *Vested Interest* (1997), Riki Anne Wilchins's *Read My Lips* (1997), Don Kulick's *Travesti* (1998), Jay Prosser's *Second Skins* (1998), Viviane Namaste's *Invisible Lives* (2000), Joanne Meyerowitz's *How Sex Changed* (2002), and Henry Rubin's *Self-Made Men* (2003).<sup>7</sup> This early set of books laid down the theoretical and intellectual foundations for much of the transgender scholarship produced in the subsequent decade. More recent definitive books in transgender studies include David Valentine's *Imagining Transgender* (2007), Susan Stryker's *Transgender History* (2008), Patricia Gherovici's *Please Select Your Gender* (2010), Gayle Salamon's *Assuming a Body* (2010), and Genny Beemyn and Susan Rankin's *The Lives of Transgender People* (2011).<sup>8</sup> These newer studies demonstrate a remarkable measure of analytical sophistication and maturity, whether in terms of critical ethnography, synthetic history, clinically based psychoanalytic theory, materially grounded phenomenology, or social scientific empiricism.

Apart from monographic studies, the development of transgender studies, like the early phases of women's studies, has depended heavily on collaborative projects that brought together scholars and activists working independently on this marginal topic. The essays included in an early anthology called *PoMoSexuals* (1997), coedited by Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, bespeak the unique influence of post-modern theory on emergent critiques of gender dualism.<sup>9</sup> A formal joint endeavor in shaping the early contours of transgender studies first took place in 1998, when the leading journal in queer studies, *GLQ*, published its "Transgender Issue," guest edited by the trans activist-scholar Susan Stryker.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, other important voices challenging conventional sex dimorphism in social and cross-cultural settings came from such groundbreaking anthologies as *Third Sex, Third Gender* (1993), edited by Gilbert Herdt, and *Genderqueer* (2002), coedited by Joan Nestle, Riki Wilchins, and Clare Howell.<sup>11</sup> It was only by 2006, however, that the very first *Transgender Studies Reader*, coedited by Stryker and Stephen Whittle, appeared in print.<sup>12</sup> In the fall of 2008, a second set of critical essays devoted to transgender topics was published by the leading journal in gender studies, *Women's Studies Quarterly*.<sup>13</sup> And a recent collection of papers edited by Laurie Shrage, *You've Changed* (2009), took up the broader philosophical implications of sex reassignment.<sup>14</sup> By the beginning of this

century, studies began to not only move away from, but also even challenge the “scientific” sexological framework that dominated most of the scholarship on nonnormative gender expressions in the previous century.<sup>15</sup>

Above all, these books and volumes have turned transgender studies into a semiautonomous, though in many ways highly contested, area of scholarly research. As David Valentine has noted, “The earliest use of transgender (in its institutionalized, collective sense) in U.S. activism dates no further than 1991 or 1992.”<sup>16</sup> Despite the early 1990s rupture, the highly institutionalized and collective usage of the term “transgender” has important roots in the history of the feminist movement and the gay and lesbian movement, as well as in the historical dimensions of the categories of gender and sexuality. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, a neat conceptual separation between male homosexual identity (erotic attraction) and overt effeminate behavior (gender expression) did not exist.<sup>17</sup> Sexologists loosely put masculine women, feminine men, same-sex desiring subjects, transvestites, and all sorts of gender variant people under the category of “inversion.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the distinction between “passing women,” butches, and gender-normative same-sex desiring females had never been so clean and simple, but developed across the span of the entire twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, gay male activists pushed American psychiatrists to acknowledge the private nature of their sexual orientation, and anti-pornography and lesbian feminists condemned the public representation of female sexuality and nonnormative genders. Together, the gay activism in the aftermath of the DSM victory and the “sex wars” that eventually fractured the feminist movement began to define homosexuality *against what was visible* among gender/sexual subcultures.<sup>20</sup> These debates, in other words, began to distinguish the contemporary meaning of “transgender” from “homosexuality” by casting the former in terms of what the latter negated.<sup>21</sup>

By the 1990s, transgender studies came to be consolidated and widely recognized as an independent area of academic inquiry. Of course, debates ensued among activists, popular authors, academics, and other writers regarding what transgender precisely means (and the more general question of who fits into what categories has deeper historical ramifications in gay activism, feminism, and the civil rights movement). But with an expansive (even ambiguous), institutionalized, and collective notion of transgender, these actors nonetheless shared a commitment to advancing the political and epistemological interests of gender variant people. Moreover, as the twentieth century

drew to an end, it seemed rather useful—and perhaps helpful—to distinguish the range of community, political, and intellectual work centered on trans folks from those centered on gays and lesbians. In the emerging field of transgender studies, transgender-identified scholars took the lead in breaking the ground of research;<sup>22</sup> contributors came from diverse disciplinary backgrounds with a heterogeneous set of theoretical, rhetorical, and methodological positions; and, most importantly, fruitful conversations have been largely enriched by self-reflexive insights on and a unique preference for novel interpretations of the meaning of embodiment, specifically, and the possible boundaries of human experience more broadly.<sup>23</sup> As Valentine puts it, “The capacity to stand in for an unspecified group of people is, indeed, one of the seductive things about ‘transgender’ in trying to describe a wide range of people, both historical and contemporary, Western and non-Western.”<sup>24</sup>

Despite Valentine’s promising remark, the considerable measure of enthusiasm that fueled the making of transgender studies has been confined mainly to North American and European academic circles. It logically follows that this area of scholarship is heavily oriented toward exploring Anglo-American society and culture. The only exception is the still growing literature that uses anthropological data on gender diversity to elucidate the limitations of Western-centric frameworks of gender dimorphism. But even here, the primary focus has been Native America and Southeast Asia.<sup>25</sup> Scholarly, activist, and creative work on transgender issues in Northeast Asia remains relatively scarce. With a few notable exceptions, gay and lesbian topics—alongside the translation of Western queer theoretical texts—continue to dominate critical studies of gender and sexuality in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China.<sup>26</sup> Particularly missing from the field of queer studies is a sustained critical engagement with Chinese transgender identity, practice, embodiment, history, and culture.

Recently, a number of Sinologists from different disciplines have begun to balance the analytical horizon of transgender studies. A China-centered perspective makes it possible to expand the scope of transgender scholarship in terms of historical nuance, cultural-geographical coverage, and methodological refinement.<sup>27</sup> It is in the spirit of providing this long overdue perspective that the present volume brings together these Sinologists for the first time. Although each chapter can be treated separately in its own right, they must also be taken together as a joint endeavor that explores the possibility (and potential limitations) of excavating a field of scholarly inquiry that we might assign the label of “Chinese transgender studies.”

There is a consistent double bind in trying to consolidate a field under that name: the prospect of such an ambitious project brings with it key intrinsic perils or conceptual problematic. In the broadest sense, this merely echoes Susan Stryker's earlier comment that "the conflation of many types of gender variance into the single shorthand term 'transgender,' particularly when this collapse into a single genre of personhood crosses the boundaries that divide the West from the rest of the world, holds both peril and promise."<sup>28</sup> Although Chinese transgender studies promises to break new grounds and balance the existing insufficiencies in the broader field of transgender studies, it faces a politics of knowledge not unlike the set of problems it claims to exceed in the face of Western transgender studies. For instance, if the field of transgender studies was institutionalized only in the 1990s and, even more crucially, in North America, how can the category of *transgender* even with its widest possible definition, be applied to Chinese cultural and historical contexts? It should be added here that even in Western studies of transgenderism, scholars often traverse between treating the concept of gender as an analytical, thematic, topical, theoretical, historical, and epistemological category.<sup>29</sup> So the interest of venturing into new terrains of analysis is inherently fraught with questions of methodological assumption, categorical adequacy, and how they confound the fine line between research prospect and disciplinary closure. Independently and interactively, each of the following chapters reveals some of these major pitfalls and the corollary intellectual promises.

One way to imagine Chinese transgender studies is by adopting a focused definition of transgender to refer to practices of embodiment that cross or transcend normative boundaries of gender. This approach lends itself easily to identifying specific trans figures based on their self-representation, bringing to light concrete historical and cultural examples in which such identification occur, and stressing the importance of agency both in cultural production and with respect to the historical actors themselves who self-identify as trans. In "Gendered Androgyny," for instance, Daniel Burton-Rose takes a huge chronological sweep—over a period of nearly 25 hundred years—in isolating "concrete references to biological intersexuality as well as gender identities not necessarily paralleled in the physical body that did not conform to the available dominant categories." The examples that he uncovers in Buddhist, Daoist, and Classicist/Confucian sources serve as a pivotal reminder of the surprising fluidity of the gender and sexual ideations as depicted in these canonical Chinese texts. Perhaps there are scholars for whom some of these historical examples should

be more appropriately absorbed into the category of gay. Yet, this preference bears striking similarity to earlier competing efforts in Western LGBT studies that only helped stabilize, rather than undermine, the field of transgender scholarship.<sup>30</sup> Burton-Rose carefully pitches his study as “an inoculation against superficial attempts to locate an indigenous transgender discourse in Chinese culture,” but only so as “to enhance the potency of transgender and allied social movements.”

In contrast, the chapter by Pui Kei Eleanor Cheung on “Transgenders in Hong Kong” offers a more contemporary perspective and marshals an even more identification-based approach to chart the structural transformations of the sociohistorical context in which trans individuals in Hong Kong have reoriented their subjectivity—from shame to pride. Even though general attitudes toward transgender people have become less negative and less hostile, many of Cheung’s informants still experience great emotional distress and trauma on a daily basis, much of which could be attributed to the discriminations and prejudices that have survived from an earlier generation. The development of transgender subjectivity in Hong Kong corresponds to the Model of Gender Identity Formation and Transformation, or the “GIFT” model, which Cheung first delineates in her doctoral dissertation.<sup>31</sup> Like Burton-Rose, Cheung not only relies on a nominal notion of transgender to extend its analytical nuisance and possibility, but she also brings to light rare voices of Chinese transgender subjects that constitute a goldmine of thick ethnography.

In trying to imagine China in a transgender frame, Sinologists have famous examples with which to work. The area of Chinese culture in which cross-gender behavior has made the most prominent presence is none other than the theatrical arts. The best-studied example is perhaps the *dan* actors of traditional Peking opera. These actors start their professional training at a relatively young age and are the only qualified actors to perform the female roles in traditional Peking opera. Several scholars have explored in depth the historical transformation of their profession, social status, and popular image in the twentieth century.<sup>32</sup> In addition, although much has been speculated about the homoerotic subculture embedded within the broader social network of these opera troupes, we must not lose sight of the gendered implications of this male cross-dressing convention.<sup>33</sup> After all, the *dan* roles were traditionally played by men precisely because women were excluded from performing on the public stage.

Considering the important role of the theatrical arts in Chinese culture and history, the present volume sheds new light on some of

its transgender dimensions. Here, the purpose is to move beyond the well-known dan figure by highlighting other explicit examples of cross-dressing in Chinese theatrical life. Chao-Jung Wu's chapter, "Performing Transgender Desire," does this by bringing us to the other side of the Taiwan Strait. Wu provides a systematic ethnographic analysis of the Redtop artists in Taiwan, a group of male cross-dressing artists who took the Taiwanese theatre culture by storm in the 1990s with their infamous *fanchuan* (cross-dressing) shows. Based on their public performances and personal interviews, Wu argues that the Redtop artists provide a most telling example of the cultural performativity of gender as theorized by Butler and others. The homosexual subculture that saturated the troupe's quotidian rhythms and structural underpinnings also troubles straightforward interpretations of the gender subversive acts as conveyed by the actors themselves, especially since these behavioral patterns were highly imbued with misogynist attitudes and hidden hierarchies of power relations defined around the normativity of gender orientation.

Of course, the identitarian method of transgender studies discussed so far raises important questions about the politics of representation, some of whose origins can be traced to an earlier generation of debates in gay and lesbian studies. What forms of practice or embodiment ultimately count and should get represented as authentically transgender? Who get to be singled out as full-blown trans figures? And whose voice has the authority to properly address or even "resolve" these issues? In light of the above examples, we might add, how do we avoid holding up the dan actors of Peking opera, the male impersonators of Yue opera, or the Redtop artists in Taiwan as "role models" or the ultimate yardstick for calibrating the degree of transgenderness in other examples of potentially subversive Chinese figures, histories, embodiments, and cultural and artistic productions?<sup>34</sup>

As scholars, activists, and others debate these questions in the United States and Europe, the reconfiguring of our analytical prism with a focus on China would invariably complicate the politics of queer representation and its underlying ideological and social agenda, as well as the practical and political implications. A main objective of this volume is precisely to make a critical intervention in unpacking these kinds of issues and debates. Any conceivable answer to the above set of questions would be inherently problematic in one way or another. Perhaps this squarely marks both the ugliness and flexibility of identity politics. Nevertheless, this should not prevent us from thinking more creatively about different ways of conducting Chinese transgender studies and how they might make broader impact on

Chinese studies, transgender studies, and other cognate fields of scholarly inquiry.

An alternative approach to Chinese transgender studies is by building on case studies of gender ambiguity or androgyny, rather than concrete examples of gender transgression. This method considers transgender practices not simply as the root of cultural identity, but also in terms of their relationship to broader circuits of knowledge and power. A surprising example comes from the chapter by Zuyan Zhou, who delves into a familiar genre of Chinese literature, namely, the scholar-beauty romances of the late Ming and early Qing periods. But unlike previous studies, Zhou highlights an underappreciated androgynous motif lurking in the otherwise renowned narrative of heteronormative romance between a *caizi* (talented scholar) and a *jiaren* (beauty). This literary genre often construes its protagonists as embodying the attributes of both genders (perfect combination of masculinity and femininity) to project a persistent ideal of androgyny. Contrary to the dominant interpretations of this androgyny craze, which tend to trace its origins to the gender fluidity of the broader historical and cultural context of the late Ming, Zhou explains the pervasive literary presentation of *caizi*'s and *jiaren*'s gender transgression in relation to the contemporaneous development of the cult of *qing* (sentiment), noting that such gender transgression instead “originates from literati scholars’ recalcitrant impulses to assert their latent masculinity as institutionalized yin subjects.”

Centering on the Beijing-based artist, Ma Liuming, Carlos Rojas’s study carefully unravels the creative, social, and aesthetic expressions of Ma’s androgynous embodiment. Along with Zhang Huan, Ma is a representative figure of a newly emerging group of Chinese performance artists whose work continues to subvert hegemonic constructs of gender and sexual identity. Rojas takes Butler’s understanding of the iterative performativity of gender as a theoretical starting point and reflects more generally on the semiotics of corporeality—or the meanings and language of the body—based on a series of texts in the realm of cultural production, tracing the indigenous resources for Ma and Zhang’s aesthetic creativity to the literary depictions of male homoromance in the Chinese opera field. Central to his study are the following questions: “How may subjects use their bodies to challenge the representational regimes within which they are embedded? What is the role of these semiotic systems in demarcating the systems’ own conceptual limits?” In the examples found in Zhou’s and Rojas’s chapters, ideas and norms of gender are unsettled on the level of artistic genres—through manifestations of gender liminality

that are embedded within the form of art (literature or performance), rather than appropriations of the completely opposite gender in public appearance.

The most radical approach to developing something that we might want to call Chinese transgender studies is perhaps by leaving behind Western-derived meanings of gender altogether—or at least problematizing them. This would make an important step in identifying and understanding Chinese “gender” variance on its own unexpected terms. By making a distinct departure from a “trans/gender” epistemology rooted in Western culture, we are also reconceptualizing our categories from a fundamentally global viewpoint. Helen Leung’s chapter, for instance, begins with a conventional analysis of trans figures in Chinese cinema, but it ends with a radically suggestive interpretive strategy that restructures the very meaning of “trans” with respect to Chinese body modification practices. In “Transgenderism as a Heuristic Device,” Alvin Wong focuses on the cross-historical adaptations of a famous Chinese story, the *Legend of the White Snake*. By following how this story “transgendered” across its adaptations in different cultural venues over time, Wong reveals the promise of these transhistorical variants to produce unruly moments of transgender articulation. If Wong’s heuristic suggestion is based on historicity-crossing, Larissa Heinrich’s chapter invites us to reconceptualize gender-crossing through the framework of literary genre-crossing. This innovative rendition of transgender aesthetic demands an inherently fluid definition of gender and demonstrates its concurrent transformative possibility across literary and geocultural divides. Finally, Howard Chiang’s revisionist study of Chinese eunuchism offers a cautionary tale of the tendency to universalize transgenderism as a category of experience. He exposes the power, logic, and threshold of historical forces operating beyond the category’s analytical parameters, especially in light of the modernist/nationalist bias of even the most reliable sources on Chinese castration. Taken together, these studies reorient the imagining of a transgender China by *not* assigning Western notions of gender and transgender an epistemologically and ontologically privileged position.

If cultural data from non-Western societies are useful for reflecting on Euro-American orderings of trans/gender, that certainly should not be the sole purpose of this book. Contributors did not simply collect “anthropological” data about China and report back to us what they found “out there” (although some of their work do engage with ethnography on the level of disciplinary practice). Even the familiar debates on the North American “berdache” or other

“third sex/gender” people are oftentimes less about their experience, than about the theoretical preoccupations of Western academic discourses and identity politics.<sup>35</sup> Perhaps one of the major strengths of doing research on non-Western cultures, of which this anthology is an example, is the ability to capture a grid of knowledge and experience that exceeds the categorizations of gender, sexuality, and even transgender. Insofar as “the very constitution of the field of transgender studies *as* a field must remain a central question *in* the field,” the findings of the present volume should be viewed as having some central bearing on the definition and practice of (trans)gender studies itself.<sup>36</sup> Again, what matters less is how Western (trans)gender theory or framework “works” in China, or whether or not it applies to a non-Western context. Yet precisely because transgender studies is enabled and complicated by the indeterminacy of such key concepts as gender, sexuality, and transgender, the studies that form this book point to different possibilities of transforming the field vis-à-vis the very reorientations of these concepts. And perhaps these potential transformations also have something to offer for the rethinking of area studies. For example, one of the underexplored areas in Chinese feminist studies and historiography that this book addresses concerns individuals who do not conform to—and practices that put pressure on—hegemonic norms of gender.

In the emerging field of queer Asian studies, scholars are envisioning an ever more expansive apparatus that could account for the myriad potentials and possibilities within cross-cultural configurations of gender and sexuality as they play out in Asia and elsewhere, in scholarly discourses, subcultural practices, grassroots movements, or otherwise.<sup>37</sup> Studies are leaving behind the homogenizing/heterogenizing debate on global identity categories,<sup>38</sup> looking for new avenues of research that transcend traditional disciplinary and methodological constraints,<sup>39</sup> and, above all, addressing and building new alliances across the globe to make post-Orientalist regimes of cross-cultural thinking possible.<sup>40</sup> If the animating force of transgender studies comes from a broad, collective, and always mutating definition of transgender, the view from China only makes the promise of transformation all the more meaningful to our imagination.

#### NOTES

1. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Transvestites: The Erotic Drive to Cross Dress*, trans. Michael A. Lombardi-Nash (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991); Esther Newton, *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

2. David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 29–65.
3. Susan Stryker, “Transgender Studies: Queer Theory’s Evil Twin,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10, no. 2 (2004): 212–215.
4. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
5. Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).
6. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
7. Vern L. Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, *Cross Dressing, Sex, and Gender* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Kate Bornstein, *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Bernice Hausman, *Changing Sex: Transsexualism, Technology, and the Idea of Gender* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Leslie Feinberg, *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996); Zachary Nataf, *Lesbians Talk Transgender* (London: Scarlet Press, 1996); Patrick Califia, *Sex Changes: Transgender Politics* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997); Marjorie Garber’s *Vested Interest: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Riki Anne Wilchins, *Read My Lips: Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender* (Ann Arbor: Firebrand Books, 1997); Kat Bornstein, *My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You, or Something Else Entirely* (New York: Routledge, 1998); Don Kulick, *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Jay Prosser, *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Viviane Namaste, *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Transsexual and Transgendered People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Henry Rubin, *Self-Made Men: Identity and Embodiment among Transsexual Men* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2003); and Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004). Note that this list can only be selective rather than exhaustive. I have left out, for instance, Leslie Martin Lothstein, *Female-to-Male Transsexualism: Historical, Clinical and Theoretical Issues* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983); and John Phillips, *Transgender On Screen* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
8. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*; Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2008); Patricia Gherovici’s *Please Select Your Gender: From the Invention of Hysteria to the Democratizing of Transgenderism* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Gayle Salamon,

- Assuming a Body: Transgender and Rhetorics of Materiality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Genny Beemyn and Susan Rankin, *The Lives of Transgender People* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011). See also Sally Hines, *TransF orming Gender: Transgender Practices of Identity and Intimacy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Lori B. Girshick, *Transgender Voices: Beyond Women and Men* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2008); and Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman, *Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation* (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2010).
9. Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, eds., *PoMoSexuals* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997).
  10. Susan Stryker, ed., "The Transgender Issue," special issue, *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4, no. 2 (1998).
  11. Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History* (New York: Zone Books, 1996); Joan Nestle, Riki Wilchins, and Clare Howell, eds., *Genderqueer* (Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 2002).
  12. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds., *The Transgender Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006). See also Paisley Currah, Richard M. Juang, and Shannon Prince Minter, eds., *Transgender Rights* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Mattilda, ed., *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006).
  13. Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah, and Lisa Jeane Moore, eds., "Trans-," special issue, *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, nos. 3–4 (2008). For more recent journal special issues, see Katharine Harrison and Ulricha Engdahl, eds., "Trans Gender Studies & Theories: Building Up the Field in a Nordic Context," special issue, *Graduate Journal of Social Science* 7, no. 2 (December 2010); "Race and Transgender Studies," special issue, *Feminist Studies* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2011).
  14. Laurie J. Shrage, ed., *You've Changed: Sex Reassignment and Personal Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). For a more recent edited volume, see Sally Hine and Tam Sanger, eds., *Transgender Identities: Towards a Social Analysis of Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
  15. This is all the more striking considering Valentine's claim that "the 'gender' that underpins 'transgender' and marks it as distinct from the 'sexuality' of mainstream gay and lesbian politics is one rooted in a sexological rather than feminist tradition." Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 59.
  16. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 34.
  17. See, for example, George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of a Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994). For the broader historiographical implications, see David Halperin, *How to Do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

18. Vernon Rosario, ed., *Science and Homosexualities* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Lucy Bland and Laura Doan, eds., *Sexology in Culture: Labeling Bodies and Desires* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Halberstam, *Female Masculinity*; and Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
19. Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Penguin, 1991); Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline D. Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*; Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); and Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 46.
20. On the history of American Psychiatric Association's decision to remove homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), see Ronald Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987). For a more recent reappraisal, see Howard Chiang, "Effecting Science, Affecting Medicine: Homosexuality, the Kinsey Reported, and the Contested Boundaries of Psychopathology in the United States, 1948–1965," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 44, no. 4 (2008): 300–318. On the feminist "sex wars," see, for example, Elizabeth Wilson, "The Context of 'Between Pleasure and Danger': The Barnard Conference on Sexuality," *Feminist Review* 13 (Spring 1983): 35–41; Ellen Willis, "Feminism, Morality, and Pornography," in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York City: Monthly Review, 1983), 460–467; Ann Ferguson, "Sex War: The Debate between Radical and Libertarian Feminists," *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 10, no. 1 (1984): 106–112; Ilene Philipson, "The Repression of History and Gender: A Critical Perspective on the Feminist Sexuality Debate," *Signs* 10, no. 1 (1984): 113–118; Carol S. Vance and Ann Barr Snitow, "Toward a Conversation About Sex in Feminism: A Modest Proposal," *Signs* 10, no. 1 (1984): 126–135; and Lisa Duggan and Nan Hunter, *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995).
21. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 53–57. See also Stryker, "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin"; and Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *Radical History Review* 100 (2008): 144–157.
22. Susan Stryker, "(De)Subjugated Knowledge: An Introduction to Transgender Studies," in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, ed. Stryker and Whittle, 1–17.
23. See Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 143–172.
24. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 39.

25. Walter Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986); Serena Nanda, *Neither Man Nor Woman: The Hijras of India* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1990); Will Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991); Sue Ellen-Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds., *Two-Spirit People: Native American Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Sabine Lang, *Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998); Evelyn Blackwood and Saskia Wieringa, eds., *Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices across Cultures* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Peter A. Jackson and Nerida M. Cook, eds., *Genders & Sexualities in Modern Thailand* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 1999); Peter A. Jackson and Gerard Sullivan, eds., *Lady Boys, Tom Boys, Rent Boys: Male and Female Homosexualities in Contemporary Thailand* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1999); Kulick, *Travesti*; Serena Nanda, *Gender Diversity: Cross-Cultural Variations* (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1999); Martin Manalansan and Arnaldo Cruz-Malave, eds., *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Martin Manalansan, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Megan Sinnott, *Toms and Dees: Transgender Identity and Female Same-Sex Relationships in Thailand* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004); Ara Wilson, *The Intimate Economies of Bangkok: Tomboys, Tycoons, and Avon Ladies in the Global City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Gayatri Reddy, *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Saskia Wieringa, Evelyn Blackwood, and Abha Bhaiya, eds., *Women's Sexualities and Masculinities in a Globalizing Asia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); and Kale Fajardo, *Filipino Crosscurrents: Oceanographies of Seafaring, Masculinities, and Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
26. See, for example, Charlotte Furth, "Androgynous Males and Deficient Females: Biology and Gender Boundaries in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century China," *Late Imperial China* 9, no. 2 (1988): 1–31; Josephine Ho, ed., *Trans-gender* (Zhongli, Taiwan: Center for the Study of Sexualities, National Central University, 2003); Siu Leung Li, *Cross-Dressing in Chinese Opera* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003); Fran Martin and Josephine Ho, eds., "trans/Asia, trans/gender," special issue, *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 7, no. 2 (2006); Tze-lan D. Sang, "The Transgender Body in Wang Dulu's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*," in *Embodied Modernities: Corporeality, Representation, and Chinese Cultures*, ed. Larissa

- Heinrich and Fran Martin (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 98–112; Helen Leung, *Undercurrents: Queer Cultures and Postcolonial Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008), 65–84; Eleanor Cheung, “GID in Hong Kong: A Critical Overview of Medical Treatments for Transsexual Patients,” in *As Normal as Possible: Negotiating Sexuality in Mainland China and Hong Kong*, ed. Yau Ching (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 75–86.
27. The most poignant articulation of a “China-centered” approach to modern Chinese history can be found in Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010 [1983]).
  28. Stryker, “(De)Subjugated Knowledge,” 14.
  29. An example is the disagreement on the historical and epistemological salience of gender in the history of transsexuality. See Hausman, *Changing Sex*; and Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*.
  30. See, for example, Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.*, rev. ed. (New York: Meridian, 1992 [1976]); and Feinberg, *Transgender Warriors*. The most famous example of this reclamation politics between lesbians and trans men is probably Brandon Teena. See Jacob Hale, “Consuming the Living, Dis(re)membering the Dead in the Butch/FTM Borderlands,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 4 (1998): 311–328; and Judith Halberstam, “The Brandon Teena Archive,” in *Queer Studies: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Robert J. Corber and Stephen Valocchi (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 159–169. For an overview of the border wars between butch lesbians and FTMs, see Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 151–153.
  31. Pui Kei Eleanor Cheung, “Gender Variant People in Hong Kong: A Model of Gender Identity Formation and Transformation” (PhD thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2011).
  32. Joshua Goldstein, “Mei Lanfang and the Nationalization of Peking Opera, 1912–1930,” *positions: east asia cultures critique* 7, no. 2 (1999): 377–420; Li, *Cross-Dressing in Chinese Opera*; Joshua Goldstein, *Drama King: Players and Publics in the Re-Creation of Peking Opera, 1870–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Wenqing Kang, *Obsession: Male Same-Sex Relations in China, 1900–1950* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 115–144; John Zhou, “Crossdressed Nation: Mei Lanfang and the Clothing of Modern Chinese Men,” in *Embodied Modernities*, ed. Heinrich and Martin, 79–97; Andrea S. Goldman, “Actors and Aficionados in Qing Texts of Theatrical Connoisseurship,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 68, no. 1 (2008): 1–56; and Wu Cuncun and Mark Stevenson, “Speaking of Flowers: Theatre, Public Culture, and Homoerotic Writing in Nineteenth-Century Beijing,” *Asian Theatre Journal* 27, no. 1 (2010): 100–129.

33. See, esp., Kang, *Obsession*, 115–144; and Wu and Stevenson, “Speaking of Flowers.”
34. Jin Jiang, *Women Playing Men: Yue Opera and Social Change in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).
35. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 157.
36. Valentine, *Imagining Transgender*, 172.
37. Dennis Altman, “Global Gaze/Global Gays,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 3 (1997): 417–436; Peter Drucker, “Introduction: Remapping Sexualities,” in *Different Rainbows*, ed. Peter Drucker (London: Gay Men’s, 2000), 9–42; Chris Berry, Fran Martin, and Audrey Yue, eds., *Mobile Cultures: New Media in Queer Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Linda Garber, “Where in the World Are the Lesbians?” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14 (2005): 28–50; Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Beyond the Americas: Are Gender and Sexuality Useful Categories of Analysis?” *Journal of Women’s History* 18 (2006): 11–21; Ara Wilson, “Queering Asia,” *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context* 14 (November 2006); Evelyn Blackwood, “Transnational Discourses and Circuits of Queer Knowledge in Indonesia,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14 (2008): 481–507; Fran Martin, Peter Jackson, Mark McLelland, and Audrey Yue, eds., *AsiaPacificQueer: Rethinking Genders and Sexualities* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008); Josephine Ho, “Is Global Governance Bad for East Asian Queers?” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 14, no. 4 (2008): 457–479; Howard Chiang, “Empire of Desires: History and Queer Theory in an Age of Global Affect,” *InterAlia: A Journal of Queer Studies* 3 (2008/2009); Peter A. Jackson, “Capitalism and Global Queering: National Markets, Parallels among Sexual Cultures, and Multiple Queer Modernities,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 15 (2009): 357–395; Megan Sinnott, “Borders, Diaspora, and Regional Connections: Trends in Asian ‘Queer’ Studies,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 69, no. 1 (2010): 17–31; Petrus Liu and Lisa Rofel, eds., “Beyond the Strai(gh)ts: Transnationalism and Queer Chinese Politics,” special issue, *positions: east asia cultures critique* 18, no. 2 (2010); Yau, *As Normal As Possible*; Howard Chiang, ed., “Queer Transnationalism in China,” topical cluster, *English Language Notes* 49, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2011); Denise Tang, “Queer Asian Cultures,” *Sociology Compass* 5, no. 8 (2011): 688–695.
38. See, for example, Fran Martin, “Getting Over It: Beyond the Hetero(genizing)/Homo(genizing) Divide in Transnational Sexuality Studies,” *English Language Notes* 49, no. 1 (2011): 117–123. For the earlier debate on globalized gay identity in the China field, see Dennis Altman, “Rupture or Continuity? The Internationalization of Gay Identities,” *Social Text* 48 (1996): 77–94; Lisa Rofel, “Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China,” *GLQ: A Journal of*

- Lesbian and Gay Studies* 5, no. 4 (1999): 451–474; Dennis Altman, *Global Sex* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Lisa Rofel, *Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
39. Howard Chiang, “Sinophone Production and Trans Postcoloniality: Sex Change from Major to Minor Transnational China,” *English Language Notes* 49, no. 1 (2011): 109–116; Howard Chiang and Larissa Heinrich, eds., *Queer Sinophone Cultures* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming).
40. On the implication of this effort for the field of Chinese studies, see Rey Chow, “Introduction: On Chineseness as a Theoretical Problem,” *boundary 2* 25, no. 3 (1998): 1–24; Ien Ang, *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Chu Yiu-Wai, “The Importance of Being Chinese: Orientalism Reconfigured in the Age of Global Modernity,” *boundary 2* 35 (2008): 183–206; and Shu-mei Shih, “Theory, Asia, and the Sinophone,” *Postcolonial Studies* 13, no. 4 (2010): 465–484.

**This page intentionally left blank**