**TRANSLATING TONGZHI:
SPLINTERING SEXUAL IDENTITY
IN HONG KONG**

Desmond A.D. O'Doherty

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INTRODUCTION:

Tongzhi 同志 (*tóngzhì*) is literally translated as 'common will' or 'common purpose' and is an adaptation of the Chinese term 'comrade.' This term was introduced by Sun Yat-sen, leader of the 1911 Revolution in China, as a label for his followers and used extensively within the context of political parties during the People's Republic of China (PRC).¹ It has since been appropriated from the Chinese *tóngzhì* 同志, meaning comrade, to the anglicized *tongzhi*, acting as a self-identification term and synonym for LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) identity in Hong Kong, and rejects existing colonial labels for those that live non-heterosexual lifestyles. The term '*tongzhi*' has also been recognized as an ideal symbol and label for Hong Kong's sexuality-based social movement which represents a public, collective, and political front encompassing the identity of a specific, localized, temporized social movement of LGBT+ citizens. In this literal translation, the term has adopted a political and social connotation. During its usage by the *tongzhi* movement the term '*tongzhi*' has been translated across three distinct waves undergoing alterations to act as a tool of resistance and subversion in response to certain events concerning sexual minorities. This article surveys the transformations of the term '*tongzhi*' during its usage by the *tongzhi* movement. There are several events worth noting that have influenced the *tongzhi* movement and the transformation of the term '*tongzhi*' in Hong Kong. These events include: the criminalization of 'buggery' (a British term that refers to sodomy) in 1842 when Hong Kong was handed over to Great Britain which brought about the formal delineation of same-sex desire that was undefined prior to colonization; the death of police inspector John MacLennan in 1980, which initiated the legal debate concerning whether homosexual conduct ought to be decriminalized; the decriminalization of homosexual conduct in 1991; the amendment to the age of consent from twenty-one to sixteen in 2005, and the addition of same-sex partners to domestic violence legislation in 2009.

As the translation of the term '*tongzhi*,' the splintering of sexual identity and development of non-normative sexual identities/desires, and the *tongzhi* movement can best be understood through their historically layered growth, this article examines three waves: 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. These waves illustrate the way in which the *tongzhi* movement has developed and utilized the term '*tongzhi*' through translation emphasizing important influences such as the concept of sexual citizenship and locales of power. I begin with a discussion of sexuality and nationalism, establishing working definitions for the context of Hong Kong. Next, I introduce the concept of sexual citizenship and discuss the three locales of power through which it is deployed. Then, I examine the *tongzhi* movement across three distinct waves to illustrate the splintering of sexual identity and development of homosexual identity in Hong Kong, highlighting the transformation of the term '*tongzhi*.' Finally, I conclude with a brief discussion of the future of *tongzhi* in Hong Kong.

1 Andrew D. Wong, "The Trouble with Tongzhi: The Politics of Labeling Among Gay and Lesbian Hongkongers," *Pragmatics* 18, no. 2 (2008): 278.

SEXUALITY AND NATIONALISM:

The connection between sexuality and nationalism is undoubtedly a complex one with a plethora of scholarly inquiries into the connection of these two subjects.² To discuss the ways in which sexuality and nationalism are developed, deployed, and normalized on behalf of the nation-state in its construction of sexual citizenship, those concepts must be defined. When theorizing sexuality in the Hong Kong context, biological and social factors must be considered. Much of recent writing on sex and sexuality in relation to nationalism has conceived of sex as a product of social construction via discourses, historical contexts, and ideological impositions, with little attention given to the role biology plays.³ Very few, if any, scholars of sex would insist that sex is an unchanging object of knowledge based upon an archetypal form of conduct. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the biological is unimportant. Alternatively, I propose, drawing upon the work of Michel Foucault, that sexuality is a polemical exchange between biology and society regardless of the composition of the encounter.⁴

What should be included within the scope of the term ‘sexuality’? When approaching this question, social constructionism presents several noteworthy accounts of sexuality that illustrate its association with a variety of practices and products (from speech patterns to fashion preferences) within modernity that have developed its sphere of classification. Following Foucault, it is evident that power (social and biological factors) and sexuality cannot be partitioned from one another. So, while there exist a variety of motivations for sexual acts in each circumstance (pleasure, love, and power), the question asked should not be concerned with what the sexual acts and their motivations are, but rather the importance of them. Thus, sexuality will be defined as referring to the conduct and interest, as well as values and norms that are considered sexual within a particular context: that is, a form of knowledge that goes through historical shifts and maintains an interrelationship between the social and biological. It contains aspects of homosexual and heterosexual conduct, identity, and relationships, as well as the issues related to them.

Nationalism can be understood as a set of discourses and practices that work to crystallize the beliefs and values of defined communities framed as nations. Nationalism usually does this work by promoting the concepts ‘insider’ and ‘outsider,’ extinguishing internal divisions, and arranging groups of insiders in prescribed roles. For this project, George L. Mosse’s concept of nationalism shall be employed.⁵ Within Mosse’s nationalist framework, men are framed through brotherly and comradely homosocial relationships, and women are conceptualized as wives and mothers who have the responsibility of acting as the custodian of tradition via the production of offspring. Mosse identifies LGBT+ individuals as having troubled nationalism historically as they operate outside of this heteronormative framework. Thus, within this nationalist model, homosexuals are considered abnormal and outsiders. As the outsider must be identifiable to face excommunication or punishment, laws are required to condemn and regulate homosexuals. Mosse’s model of nationalism provides a lens through which heterosexism in (post-)colonial Hong Kong constitutes the (re)productive heterosexual couple as the national ideal and makes it possible to identify the differences in the nation’s behaviour towards *tongzhi* males and females. Additionally, it presents a starting point for investigating Hong Kong’s treatment of *tongzhi* in the realm of citizenship rights.

2 For examples see Aihwa Ong’s *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (2009), and Carol J. Peterson’s *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Hong Kong: A Case for the Strategic Use of Human Rights Treaties and the International Reporting Process* (2013).

3 For examples see Jeffrey Weeks’ “The Sexual Citizen (1998) and Travis S. K. Kong’s *Chinese Male Homosexualities: Memba, Tongzhi, and Golden Boy* (2011).

4 Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1990, 27.

5 George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe*. New York: H. Fertig, 1985, 86-7.

SEXUAL CITIZENSHIP, RIGHTS, AND LOCALES OF POWER:

The notion of citizenship can at times be fraught with heteronormative, ableist, classist, sexist, and racist presumptions that influence and determine what the prototypical citizen is understood to be. This narrow comprehension of citizenship does not adequately attend to the marginalization of the lower-class, disabled, women, people of colour, migrants, and LGBT+ folks.⁶ Sexual citizenship problematizes the notion of a prototypical citizen that is often characterized as an individual assimilated into heteronormativity, acting in accordance with traditional norms, beliefs, and values concerning gender and sexuality. To trace the development of the term 'tongzhi' and sexual citizenship in (post-)colonial Hong Kong this article draws on Diane Richardson, who identifies three main sub-streams of sexual rights discourse. The first is conduct-based rights, that is, rights to forms of sexual practice in personal relationships (e.g., campaigns for sexual freedom and safety); the second is identity-based rights, that is, the splintering and development of individual identities and rights via self-definition (e.g. the right to be lesbian and gay; female sexual autonomy); and the third is relationship-based rights, that is, rights within social institutions as well as public acceptance of forms of sexual relations (e.g. same-sex marriages).⁷ By utilizing Richardson's theorization of sexual citizenship this article outlines the splintering of sexual citizenry and transformation of the term 'tongzhi' starting with the creation of the homosexual type in the 1980s, followed by tongzhi community building in the 1990s, and finally tongzhi citizenship building in the 2000s.

When tracing the splintering and development of sexual citizenship there are three areas of power that must be noted as they are involved in the regulation of tongzhi identity and politics in Hong Kong. The first area is the Hong Kong government. Whether under colonial rule (British protectorate 1841-1997) as colonial subjects or during the (post-)colonial Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government era (1997-present), tongzhi could only obtain a sense of partial citizenship rather than the concept of citizenship found in liberal democracies. The second area is family. Hong Kong families act as an oppressive site for tongzhi due to the deep-rooted Confucian teaching of *filial piety* 孝 (*xiào*) which prescribes family duties that require individuals to look after their elderly parents and produce children to continue the family line. This centralized heteronormativity causes many tongzhi to choose to not disclose their sexual orientation to their family to avoid familial conflict.⁸ The third area is religion. Certain groups of Catholics and Protestants (specifically evangelical activists) regard homosexuality as an abhorrent, sinful, and immoral lifestyle.⁹ While only ten percent of the population in Hong Kong is Christian, seventy-five percent of the top administrative positions (which influence legislation) in the government are held by Christians.¹⁰ Following the handover of Hong Kong in 1997, several evangelical activist groups that reject homosexuality and homosexual rights claims have been established. It is important to note that government, family, and religion should not be considered three separate areas, but rather, a confluence wherein they work together to form and outline sexual morality in Hong Kong. Having established the terms of reference, this article can now trace the development of tongzhi citizenship, and the alternations and deployment of the term 'tongzhi' during each wave of the tongzhi movement in the campaign for conduct-, identity-, and relationship-based rights for the LGBT+ community.

6 Jyl J. Josephson, *Rethinking Sexual Citizenship*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2016, 18-37.

7 Diane Richardson, "Constructing Sexual Citizenship: Theorizing Sexual Rights," *Critical Social Policy* 20, no. 1 (2000): 107-8.

8 Wah-Shan Chou, "Homosexuality and the Cultural Politics of Tongzhi in Chinese Societies," *Journal of Homosexuality* 40, no. 3-4 (2001): 27-46.

9 Day Wong, "(Post-)Identity Politics and Anti-Normalization: (Homo)sexual Rights Movement," in *Remaking Citizenship in Hong Kong*, ed. Agnes S. Ku and Ngai Pun. New York: Routledge, 2004, 200.

10 Angela W.C. Wong, "The Politics of Sexual Morality and Evangelical Activism in Hong Kong," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 14, no. 3 (2013): 343-44.

THE FIRST WAVE (1980S) JUSTICE:

It has been argued that homosexuality was somewhat tolerable in Imperial China.¹¹ However, with the handover in 1842, the colonial government made ‘buggery’ a crime and in effect labelled same-sex desire which was previously unspecified. According to H. J. Lethbridge, it is generally argued that in Hong Kong homosexuality was not recognized as a social issue by the populace prior to the 1980s, which means that the colonial government found no purpose in decriminalizing homosexual activity as it would be considered too liberal.¹² In the 1980s negotiations between Great Britain and the PRC were taking place concerning the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997. During this time sexuality-based social movements were nearly non-existent. Homosexual conduct was a criminal offence carrying a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and there was a police unit whose sole responsibility was enforcing this law and monitoring non-heterosexual activity. The absence of any legal consequences for discrimination against sexual minorities left them susceptible to prejudice at school, work, and in the community.¹³ Within these social conditions, sexual minorities kept a low profile in colonial Hong Kong and maintained a distinct apolitical position as they did not accept the non-heterosexual labels imposed upon them by the colonial government and opposed the undue attention sexuality had received due to colonization. As Lethbridge points out, “the homosexual minority is... respectable, conformist in most things, and strongly pro-Establishment. Given the state of the law in the Colony, this is perfectly understandable.”¹⁴

Public deliberation concerning homosexuality emerged when John MacLennan, a police inspector who was employed by the colonial police force, was charged with committing homosexual acts. This charge led to MacLennan’s apparent suicide in his apartment on January 15, 1980. However, some onlookers indicated that his death was in fact a murder that was the result of a police cover-up which turned the case from that of personal and private into a sociopolitical scenario.¹⁵ This claim incited media attention and an inquiry into the justice and rectitude of the colonial government and generated debate over homosexuality laws. In response to this, the colonial government appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the case and charged the Law Reform Commission of Hong Kong with examining laws governing homosexual activity. In 1981, the Commission of Inquiry concluded that the case of John MacLennan was that of suicide and the Law Reform Commission published a report on June 8, 1983 which proposed that the laws concerning homosexual activity should be abolished.¹⁶ Similar to the Stonewall Riot in New York in 1969 that represented the beginning of the LGBT+ movement in the United States, the suspicious death of MacLennan was important in paving the way for Hong Kong’s sexuality-based social movement, the *tongzhi* movement. MacLennan’s death provided an opportune political climate that enabled various social segments to investigate the pervasiveness of homosexuality and assess the propriety of laws concerning homosexual conduct in private.¹⁷ Thus, the first wave of the *tongzhi* movement emerged in the 1980s and focused on the conduct-based assertion that sex between two consenting homosexual adults in private should not be illegal. It is important to note that very few people who identified as part of a sexual minority were publicly involved in this movement as they were unwilling to ‘out’ themselves, while others remained apolitical as they rejected the colonial delineation of homo/sexuality and chose to remain neutral. Due to this aversion, the term ‘tongzhi’ was employed to denote sexual freedom and safety as well as to decolonize sexuality through resisting and subverting sexual minority labels instituted by the colonial government

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- 11 Bret Hinsch, *Passions of the Cut Sleeve: the Male Homosexual Tradition in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, 169.
- 12 H. J. Lethbridge, “The Quare Fellow: Homosexuality and the Law in Hong Kong,” *Hong Kong Law Journal* 6, no. 3 (1976): 309.
- 13 Carol J. Peterson, “Equality as a Human Right: The Development of Anti-Discrimination Law in Hong Kong,” *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law* 34, no. 335 (1996): 383.
- 14 Lethbridge, “The Quare Fellow,” 321-22.
- 15 Wah-Shan Chou, *Tongzhi: Politics of Same-Sex Eroticism in Chinese Societies*. New York: Routledge, 2007, 67.
- 16 Phil C. W. Chan, “Same-Sex Marriage/Constitutionalism and their Centrality to Equality Rights in Hong Kong: A Comparative-Socio-Legal Appraisal,” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 11, no. 1-2 (2007): 38-45.
- 17 Andrew D. Wong, “(Post-)Identity Politics,” 200.

that did not capture the indigenous features of Chinese same-sex relations. Thus, during the first wave of the movement, the term 'tongzhi' was devoid of identity, as the main concern of this movement was to secure the right for lesbian women and gay men to partake in consensual sex in private rather than the 'coming out' of tongzhi identity. Tongzhi was altered to be indicative of the campaign for sexual freedom and safety, and focus on politics of privatization, which restricted tongzhi rights to the realm of personal rights (private sector) instead of human rights (public sector).

Near the end of the legal deliberation concerning the decriminalization of homosexual conduct, social and moral debates concerning tongzhi permeated Hong Kong. A variety of actors that were involved in this discourse (e.g., government, parents, religious organizations, educators, lawyers, and journalists) whether for or against homosexual activities, provided a spectrum of binaries: normal versus abnormal, masculine versus feminine, heterosexuality versus homosexuality, and Chinese versus Western culture. These binaries resulted in a divide between heterosexual culture and homosexual subculture, within which the homosexual type was produced. It is precisely this homosexual type that gave rise to the proliferation of identities such as: *jī* 基 (gay) and *lěisī* 蕾丝 (lesbian). With the creation of the homosexual type in Hong Kong, the construction of a tongzhi community as an identity group was now possible and the term 'tongzhi' would undergo its second transformation to assist in the construction.

THE SECOND WAVE (1990S) SOCIAL SOLIDARITY:

The approaching handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997 dominated the political sphere during the 1990s. The 1989 Tiananmen Massacre in Beijing acted as a critical juncture that prompted the colonial government to present the citizens of Hong Kong with more political and civil rights.¹⁸ For example, the Bill of Rights Ordinance was enacted on June 8, 1991 and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was established in 1996. For many years, the women's movement lobbied unsuccessfully to have legislation enacted that prevented discrimination based on gender, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. Following the initial introduction of the Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance, women fervently took part in the consultation process with the intention of using the bill as a tool to fight against discrimination.¹⁹ The Bill of Rights consultation process enabled women to educate legislators and the community about the scope of sex discrimination in Hong Kong. In 1994, Anna Wu, a Legislative Councillor, introduced the Equal Opportunity Bill that prohibited discrimination due to race, family status, gender, sexuality, disability, and religion. However, it was speculated that anti-discrimination legislation would interfere with Hong Kong's *laissez-faire* economy, so it was strategically delayed.²⁰ Fearful that Wu's Bill could be ratified, the administration introduced its own Sex Discrimination Ordinance (SDO) (1994) and Disability Discrimination Ordinance (DDO) (1995) to appease requests for anti-discrimination legislation, but anti-discrimination legislation concerning sexual orientation was not enacted.²¹

A large portion of individuals who identified as a sexual minority in Hong Kong felt it was necessary to continue to hide their identities because those who took part in 'coming out' put themselves at risk of eviction, employment termination, and social ostracization. The failure to enact legislation against discrimination was a direct result of the colonial government's lack of sympathy for sexual minorities. This lack of sympathy led the tongzhi movement in the 1990s to shift its focus from conduct-based rights to identity-based rights and alter the meaning of the term 'tongzhi' from sexual freedom and safety to self-definition and individual identity. Thus, the tongzhi movement sought to acquire the right for sexual minorities to reveal their

18 Andrew D. Wong, "(Post-)Identity Politics," 200-1.

19 Hong Kong, Hong Kong Bill of Rights Ordinance 1991, Cap. 383, THE LAWS OF HONG KONG.

20 Phil C. W. Chan, "Same-Sex Marriage/Constitutionalism," 44; Day Wong, "(Post-)Identity Politics and Anti-Normalization," 201.

21 Fanny M. Cheung, *Engendering Hong Kong Society: a Gender Perspective of Women's Status*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1997, 389; Phil C. W. Chan, *Equality in Asia-Pacific: Reality or a Contradiction in Terms?* New York: Routledge, 2007, 73.

sexual identity without being discriminated against.²² The tongzhi movement's shift in focus and campaign to challenge the colonial government's censorship of discussions regarding same-sex desire in public led to the development of a variety of tongzhi groups (e.g., Horizons (1991), the Hong Kong Ten Percent Club (1992), 97 Tongzhi Forum (1992), and XX Gathering (1994)) that initiated the process of community building in Hong Kong. The tongzhi movement made the application of pink capitalism possible. Pink capitalism here refers to the incorporation of the tongzhi movement and sexual diversity into the market economy and capitalism.²³ The targeted inclusion of the LGBT+ community meant that tongzhi were regarded as having acquired sufficient purchasing power which enabled the development of a market specifically fixated on them. The implementation of pink capitalism resulted in the splintering of community spaces (e.g., clubs, bars, shops, guest houses, online chatrooms/forums) and representation of tongzhi in popular culture (e.g., radio programs, literature, and film). Thus, the second wave of the tongzhi movement emerged in the 1990s where the term 'tongzhi' was altered for the second time to symbolize self- and individual-identity as the movement focused its attention on challenging barriers preventing discussions concerning same-sex desire from taking place in the public realm and the development of identity-based rights.

THE THIRD WAVE (2000s) RECONCILIATION:

As the second wave of the tongzhi movement during the 1990s focused on identity-based rights and community building altering the term 'tongzhi' to denote self- and individual-identity, the tongzhi movement in the 2000s (post-)colonial Hong Kong focused its attention on relationship-based rights and sexual citizenship building. The harmonious family model presented by the Hong Kong SAR has the traditional heteronormative concept of nuclear family as its foundation, which is not a reflection of Chinese culture where polygamy was accepted, but rather a Christian model and colonial imposition. To assist in its campaign against all three areas of governance (government, family, and religion) tongzhi was transformed for the third time to be indicative of those advocating for rights within social institutions and public validation of alternative sexual relations. Following the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997 there has been a new generation of evangelical Christians dedicated to influencing the public with their beliefs and values. To monitor social developments in (post-)colonial Hong Kong, evangelical activists established organizations such as the Society for Truth and Light (STL) in 1997 and the Family Value Foundation of Hong Kong Limited in 2007.²⁴ Evangelical activists argued that individuals in Hong Kong no longer adhered to the traditional heteronormative concept of nuclear family and that society had become sex-saturated resulting in the moral decline of the state. While only ten percent of the general population in Hong Kong is Christian, seventy-five percent of the top administrative positions in the government are filled by Christians.²⁵ Consequently, Christianity's influence in Hong Kong policy making should not be underestimated. One of the most influential legal challenges to laws regarding relationship-based conduct is the *Leung TC William Roy v. Secretary for Justice* 梁威廉訴律政司司長 (*Liáng wēilián sù lǜ zhèngsī sī zhǎng*) case in 2005.²⁶ As the age of consent for heterosexuals was sixteen, the High Court deemed the age of consent for homosexuals (twenty-one) unconstitutional. It is worth noting that while there was legal progress for sexual minorities, there was still tension as Donald Tsang, the second Chief Executive and a self-identified Catholic, rejected the court's ruling and petitioned the decision, claiming that the ruling was a threat to society and Chinese culture. Tsang asserted that the High Court's ruling threatened to undermine familial and social harmony, which are guiding principles in Hong Kong society. However, the Court of Appeal upheld the High Court's ruling on September 20, 2006.

²² Andrew D. Wong, "(Post-)Identity Politics," 201-2.

²³ Rahul Rao, "Global Homocapitalism," *Radical Philosophy* 194, no. 1 (2015): 47-8.

²⁴ Angela W.C. Wong, "The Politics of Sexual Morality," 341-42.

²⁵ Ibid, 344.

²⁶ *Leung TC William Roy v. Secretary for Justice*, [2005] CACV 317/2005 (CA).

One of the first considerable clashes between the tongzhi movement and evangelical activism took place during the proposed amendments to the Domestic Violence Ordinance (DVO) in 2008. The DVO was enacted in 1986 to provide civil remedies to protect married and cohabiting heterosexuals from domestic violence. In 2008, the government proposed amendments to the legislation that would provide legal protection for homosexual couples. In response to the proposed legislation, evangelical activists rallied to surround the Legislative Council and mailed letters to schools requesting that parents form pressure groups and assist in persuading the government. The evangelical activists argued that if the proposed amendments were passed, they would condone same-sex relationships. To compromise with evangelical activists, the government chose to rename the DVO the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationship Violence Ordinance (DCRVO) to make it explicit that cohabitation is not homologous with marriage, thereby circumlocutorily negating same-sex relationships as credible intimate relationships and authentic family models.²⁷ Following this compromise, the DCRVO was enacted on December 16, 2009 and provided same-sex couples with the right to protection from domestic violence, effectively recognizing tongzhi as partial citizens.

These obstacles have led to the construction of three events that have been essential in promoting the visibility of the tongzhi community and in the splintering of Hong Kong citizenship and development of tongzhi citizenship in Hong Kong, namely, the International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) since May 17, 2005; the Hong Kong Pride Parade since December 13, 2008; and Pink Dot since June 15, 2014. IDAHO, the Hong Kong Pride Parade, and Pink Dot promote a form of post-identity politics whereby these events are not centered around a particular identity (e.g., sexual identity) in order to avoid the effects of homogenization. These events are instead focused on particular goals, issues, struggles, and demarcated principles, such as equal opportunity and discrimination against homophobia, that bring together a broader audience with the intention of connecting tongzhi and non-tongzhi. Through upholding a politics of difference that commends diversity, IDAHO, the Hong Kong Pride Parade, and Pink Dot support the participation of both parties (tongzhi and non-tongzhi) in connecting the tongzhi movement with a broader network of social movements such as Amnesty International, Association for the Advancement of Feminism, and HKFS Social Movement Resource Center and Women Coalition of HKSAR. Social groups including the Women Coalition of HKSAR and HKFS Social Movement Resource Center have organized events with the purpose of introducing the tongzhi movement to a broader range of social movements. The confluence of politics produced by IDAHO, the Hong Kong Pride Parade, and Pink Dot as well as the efforts on behalf of tongzhi and non-tongzhi typifies the third wave of the tongzhi movement. Within this political and social sphere created by the events and groups discussed above, the tongzhi movement on behalf of LGBT+ folks for rights within social institutions and public validation of sexual relations, fulfilled the necessary requirements to initiate citizenship building. Following the initial transformation of the term 'tongzhi' to denote sexual freedom and safety during the crusade for conduct-based rights and the decriminalization of homosexual activity in private, the first requirement was fulfilled with the creation of the homosexual type. The next alteration of the term 'tongzhi' to self-definition and individual identity in the campaign for identity-based rights, that is, the right for sexual minorities to reveal their sexual identity without being discriminated against, led to the construction of tongzhi communities and fulfilled the second requirement. The final alteration of the term 'tongzhi' to be emblematic of those advocating for rights within social institutions and public validation of alternative sexual relations in the quest for relationship-based rights and the splintering of Hong Kong citizenship and development of sexual citizenship led to implementation of post-identity politics within the tongzhi community, fulfilling the third requirement.

27 Domestic Violence and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance (Amendment) Bill, [2009], Hong Kong SAR Government.

CONCLUSION:

This article has investigated the complex interaction between the tongzhi movement and the broader society, marking the transformation of the term 'tongzhi' during each wave of its usage while highlighting the battles for sexual citizenship within three crucial intersecting areas of power: the government, the family, and religion. Through utilizing Richardson's theory of sexual citizenship, this article argues that tongzhi in Hong Kong have acquired sexual citizenship as illustrated through the tongzhi movement's usage of the term 'tongzhi' as a tool of resistance and subversion during its quest to acquire conduct-based, identity-based, and relationship-based rights for sexual minorities. It is through the combined efforts of the three waves of the tongzhi movement that it has been possible for tongzhi to fulfill the necessary requirements to obtain sexual citizenship in (post-)colonial Hong Kong. These are the campaigns for the decriminalization of homosexual conduct (conduct-based rights) that led to the creation of the homosexual type in the 1980s. This is followed by the crusade for legislation against discrimination on the basis of sexual identity (identity-based rights) that initiated community building in the 1990s, and the legal challenge to the homosexual age of consent, as well as access to domestic violence protection for same-sex couples (relationship-based rights). The final wave is the implementation of pink capitalism, which incorporated the tongzhi movement and sexual diversity into the market economy and capitalism, and resulted in the splintering of community spaces and representation of tongzhi in popular culture.

While tongzhi individuals in Hong Kong splintered citizenship to develop and obtain sexual citizenship for the community, the lack of legal protection and benefits makes it clear that the non-normative tongzhi sexual citizen is considered partial in comparison to the normative heterosexual full citizen who has access to resources that sexual minorities are refused. As long as the barriers created by the three locales of power (government, family, and religion) are in place it will be difficult for tongzhi to acquire full citizenship in Hong Kong. With that said, these aforementioned events indicate the development of a post-identity politics that has been fostered by the tongzhi movement through its usage and alteration of the term 'tongzhi' which has acted as a tool of resistance and subversion during its battles against the (post-) colonial government. This post-identity politics as constructed by the tongzhi movement makes possible a coalition between all parties (tongzhi and non-tongzhi), signifying the possibility of tongzhi individuals in Hong Kong being recognized as full citizens in the future.

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