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Jamu's circulation to Taiwan: Dis-chantment, re-chantment and the fetish of medical terms

Commercialized jamu gained domestic prominence in the 1970s and has since been exported to over a dozen countries across Asia and Europe. Yet, despite its global reach, the transnational circulation of jamu remains an underexplored subject in scholarly discussions. Crucially absent are analysis of how jamu's circulation interacts with and reshapes local contexts, and how the classification of jamu in other counties contributed to jamu's epistemic crisis, and why, in Taiwan, its primary consumers and sellers are predominantly women. This chapter aims to address these gaps by using Jamu's circulation to Taiwan as an example.

This chapter takes the circulation and transformation of jamu in Taiwan as its focus, framing the analysis around three interconnected questions. First, why does jamu, unlike other traditional medicines, fail to maintain epistemic consistency when crossing national borders? I will trace the ways jamu has been retheorized and reinterpreted in Taiwan, becoming re-enchanted objects, a process that contrasts sharply with the Indonesian government's contemporary efforts to rationalize jamu. Second, how do classification systems in Taiwan shape jamu's identity? Upon its arrival, jamu was reclassified as food, a categorization that stripped it of its original epistemic grounding and enabled its valorization in divergent, often unexpected forms. Finally, I consider the curious phenomenon of medical terms fetishism in the marketing of jamu in Taiwan. Through this analysis, I aim to audibilize or en-charm this fetish and medicalize re-

enchantment, emphasizing the repetitive and obsessive use of medical terms in marketing jamu.