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Cinematic and Literary Representations of Sexuality and the Male Self in China

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In this paper, new representations of sexuality in China will be examined in relation to the rise of post-socialist concepts of gender and the self. As a denial of the socialist construction of subjectivity, in which the self is collectivized and de-sexualized, in China today there is a re-invention of the self with much attention given to the roles body and sexuality play in the formation of the subject. The post-socialist male subject in China is not only a new ideological construct, but also a sexualized representation of the body expressed in psychical desires. In this paper, I will examine the films of Zhang Yimou and the novels of Zhang Xianliang and others to see how the male self is reconstructed in China with reference to new concepts of masculinity, body and the self. At the same time, I will use the film and literary texts to probe into issues of sexuality in what I argue to be China's post-socialist masculinity. Zhang Yimou's films such as *Red Sorghum* (1987) and *Judou* (1990), and Zhang Xianliang's novels *Half of Man is Woman* (1986) and *Mimosa* (1984). In the presentation, I will use clips from films to illustrate my arguments.

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