Gender and Sexuality in China

Homosexuality has long been thought of – and officially classified – as a psychiatric disorder in the People’s Republic of China and was only finally removed from the Ministry of Health list of mental illnesses in 2001. Since the 1980s, however, LGBTQ individuals have been increasingly asserting their identities and rights and have appropriated the old Marxist term ‘comrade’ to self-identify. But to what extent have LGBTQ individuals been accepted in Chinese society? And, perhaps more importantly, to what extent are they able to come out of the closet to their families in the context of the one-child policy and a society that has long emphasised the necessity of marriage and carrying on the family line?

In two films, Mama Rainbow and Papa Rainbow, director and activist Fan Popo talks to parents about their personal journeys towards accepting their LGBTQ children’s sexuality and sexual identities. After the film screening, he will be available to discuss both the film and related questions about LGBTQ issues in China with Dr. Xiang Zairong (Universität Potsdam) and Dr. Gero Bauer (Universität Tübingen).

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