Fruit Chan’s Dumplings—New “Diary of a Madman” in Post-Mao Global Capitalism

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Abstract

This essay examines Fruit Chan’s 陈果 2004 horror film Dumplings, which uses cannibalism as a metaphor for Chinese tradition. In this respect, the film has inherited Lu Xun’s 鲁迅 criticism of Chinese tradition in his “Diary of a Madman” at the beginning of the 20th century. This tradition, however, has been changed radically through the modernization process. Dumplings presents contemporary Chinese culture as a hybrid combination, which has been transformed not only by Maoist legacy but also by the powerful influence of global capitalism.

In 1997 Hong Kong, the freest capitalist market, was returned to China, the most populated communist country. How should one write the following chapter? The situation seems so complicated: there may be as many responses as there are responders to this question. Instead of fearing for its loss of economic freedom, post-1997 Hong Kong has not only kept its “peculiarly advantageous position to profit from distortions and partial openings of China’s economic reform” but also served as a

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