

Analyze the two movies and their themes, compare and contrast the themes and rela...

[History](#)



Analysis of Movies The drama film, Not One Less, is a production by Shi Xiangsheng's story A Sun in the Sky. He wrote this story in 1997 and based on that, the director Zhang Yimou produced this film in 1999. The film is based on a teacher who is only 13 years old. She has been demanded to replace another village teacher for a period of 30 days in the outskirts of a city in China (Wei, Zhang and Tian).

She was just a substitute teacher and hence she was told not to lose any students. But suddenly, one of her students, set out to the city in order to search for jobs. She followed him in order to find him. In this way, the director depicts how educational reforms in China were taking place. It also highlights the economic disparity that existed between the urban and rural people. Because the film is produced with every day actors, people can better feel, understand and relate to the film since it catered on a few pressing issues of China at that time. This also included a bureaucratic culture. The main motive behind producing this film is to highlight the difficulties faced by the rural people in gaining education. There are many people in China who are forced to leave schools at the hands of poverty and through donations only a few of them get a chance to return back. It also poses criticism to the everyday hurdles that an ordinary Chinese has to face because of the strict bureaucratic culture.

There was a deep meaning behind the production of this movie. As soon as China entered into the 1990s, more emphasis was placed on the basic and primary education for children. Many people in China (approximately 160 million) could not acquire proper primary education because of the Cultural Revolution occurring from 1960s-1970s. After that, education was made

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mandatory for a period of nine years on all the citizens of China. In 1966, the Cultural Revolution actually started. It was started when many bourgeois elements started entering China with the intention of restoring capitalism. In order to stop this from happening, the Cultural Revolution came into action. This documentary thus has a historical context and explains to its viewers the importance of easy and fair education for all Chinese as they have already struggled a lot during the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution was believed to be ended by 1969. One of the major problems that faced China was that a majority of rural school children left school only because they wanted to start working.

Dealing with the huge distinction between the quality and education levels of rural and urban populations was another challenge. The overall quality of teachers in urban cities was much better than the simple and under educated teachers of the rural population. Through this film, it was also portrayed that Media is a very important tool of communication and is needed for educating the poor rural population about the high lifestyles of the urban cities.

The book *China Second* by Patricia Buckley Ebrey is used as a standard text book for historical courses in China. It contains many personal narrations, records, documents which historians tend to ignore. So this is a source of true and pure knowledge about the history of China for Chinese children.

*Qui Ju* is another movie by the same director and based on a novel called the *Wan Family's Lawsuit* (Gong, Liu and Yang). The film is about a poor woman called *Qui Ju* who was pregnant when his husband got severely beaten up by one of the chiefs of the village over a very petty issue. *Qui Ju* then sets out to

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the city to find justice for her husband. After going through many difficulties at the hands of the local police, she finally finds justice from the court. It was found from her husband's medical reports that he had a broken rib as a result of the beating. Hence, the chief was sent to jail. This film highlights many important issues which include the bureaucratic culture of China before the reforms, the wide discrimination between males and females, the unnecessary respect given to officers and the new reforms which tried to uplift the status of poor people and provide justice to all.

Both the films discussed above have the same motive and that is to educate the viewers about the disparity of urban and rural life. They call upon the viewers to work for their own betterment and the best way to do this is through acquiring proper education. In the first film, the screen play is presented in quite a serious manner and real problems are highlighted deeply. However, in the second film, *Qui Ju*, the harsh realities of life for the rural population of China are depicted in quite a comical way. It draws a criticism on the wide variation between lives, the strictness and inflexibility of the admin and higher authorities in a much interesting manner through a better plot. The real meaning remaining the same, these films are very good eye-openers for the secluded and stigmatized rural population of China.

#### Works Cited

Wang 2002, p. 346. n. d.