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2010

We are the ... of Communism = 我們是共產主義省略號

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Recommended Citation

Lau, M. Y. J., Sheng, H.m Suen, T. L., & Yan, C. I. (2010). We are the ... of Communism = 我們是共產主義省略號. Hong Kong: Department of Visual Studies, Lingnan University.

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We are the ... of Communism

Director: Cui Zi'en

China / 2007 / 94 mins

Director's profile

Name: Cui Zi'en

Gender: Male

Religion: Catholic

Education: Chinese Academy of Social Science with an MA in Literature in 1987

Working experience: Teacher at Beijing Film Academy (1987-1991)

Cui lost his job after the disclosure of his homosexuality in 1991. He had produced many fiction films, such as *Star Appeal* (2005) and *Only Child* (2007); and only two documentaries: *We [...]* (2007) and *Queer China* (2008).

Background of the film: Migrant workers and their children's education in China

Most migrant workers' incomes are below market price¹. They and their children do not have urban residential registration so they do not enjoy social welfare or access to urban public-education. The "experimental schools" established by migrant workers are designed for the kids without government permission and employ certified teachers supported by donations from charities and NGOs. In Guangzhou, more than 70% of migrant workers' kids are studying in experimental schools.²

Synopsis

The government forced ALL experimental schools to close between 2006 and 2007 because of the Beijing Olympics in 2008. In September 2006, the government shut down the Yuanhai Experimental School, 720 students were expelled and had no place to study. Officials cracked down on their studies, so the students had "guerrilla" classes which shifted from place to place. As a result, some students transferred to public schools with expensive fees. Some students even gave up their studies. At the end, only 16 students and 1 teacher were left in Yuanhai.

Production History

It took half a year, from August 2006 to February 2007 to make the film. It is a low budget production involving a handheld DV camera. There is no music and no background narration.

The meaning of *We are the ... of communism*

"..." has an implicit meaning. Ironically, the government leaves out many things and "root" is one of them which means the kids, the young or new generation in China.

Types of documentary

The dominant type is observational as Cui used his camera to capture the scenes and adopted the role of a hidden observer. The expository mode also applies as Cui used a voice-over to convey some commentaries and to explain the situation.

Distribution

The film was screened mainly overseas at such events as the 4th Reel China Documentary Biennial (Columbia University, 2008), Filming East Festival (Oxford, 2008) and Mini Film Festival about Cui at Indie Space (Korea, 2009).

1. Haiyuan Lu, 2004, *Zou jin cheng shi : nong min gong de she hui bao zhang*, Beijing : Jing ji guan li chu ban she, p.2.

2. Xiaoming Sui, 2005, *Zhongguo mingong diaocha*, Beijing : Qun yan chu ban she, p.284.



A 100% worth watching film

In Hong Kong, many students take education for granted; *We [...]* provides them with a perspective suggesting that some children do not have the right to study. Besides, *We [...]* has the potential to encourage students from mainland China as they might have similar experience. Moreover, the children in *We [...]* open up a new vision of what happiness could be which contrasts with the materialistic world of Hong Kong. More importantly, *We [...]* gives us a more comprehensive understanding of China; we need to know the dark side of China and to be critical, so as to avoid chauvinism.

Reception - Chinese

"...external criticism of China isn't going to help³.
Ao Kong

"...long term confrontation which cannot be solved in a short period of time. We should also look at the dark side of our country in order to get a more comprehensive viewpoint⁴." Edith Chiu

Reception - Foreign

"...good job without overly moral or patronizing tones. I'm amazed by the fact that there are people like Cui, who tackle very current social problems⁵" Dr. Nakajima

"...reaffirms many of the West's assumptions about the Chinese government...⁶" Dr. Hooper

Interview with Cui (Q - Question, C- Cui)

Q: The word "communism" is very sensitive in China. Do you meet any obstacles in using it?

C: We did worry that the government might intervene because of the word "communism". But, this is really a key word for us to express the meaning. So, we insisted on keeping "communism".

Q: Did the government intervene in your production?

C: Not really, there were no interventions from the central government, but local officials did interrupt the process.

Q: Why do you film the migrant worker's children instead of homosexuals?

C: Both groups are marginalized, disadvantaged and oppressed.

Q: How did audiences respond to the film?

C: I have been to America for screenings. The audiences generally felt sad and the film reminded them of their childhood, especially in the case of the Chinese Overseas.

Questions for secondary school students

Junior

1. What do you feel after watching 'We'?
2. What is it that you might not have, but they do have it?
3. What if you were the kids in the film?
4. Is 'going to school'(education) a child's right?
5. What is the social status of this group of children and teachers?
6. Should we give up the study opportunities of the kids in order to run the Olympics?

Senior

1. What comments do you have?
2. What do you think is/are the problem(s) if the children do not get a chance to have an education?
3. Why do you think the responses from Chinese and foreigners are so different?
4. Should we give up the study opportunity of the kids in order to get economic benefits or world recognition?
5. Is it possible to relate the issue of children's rights to the issue of Liu Xiaobo?

3. Columbia Daily Spectator (assessed October 30)

4. Ms. Edith Chan, e-mail message, November 3

5. Dr. Seio Nakajima, e-mail message, November 1

6. Dr. Don Hooper, e-mail message, November 1



我們是共產主義省略號

導演：崔子恩

中國 / 2007 / 94 分鐘

導演簡介

姓名：崔子恩

性別：男

宗教信仰：天主教

學歷：中國社會科學院文學碩士(1987)

工作經驗：曾於北京電影學院任教(1987-1991)

崔子恩因為於1991年對外公開他是同性戀者，導致他失去大學教席。他主要拍攝劇情片，例如《星星相吸》(2005)和《獨生子，向上向下向前向後向左向右》(2007)。至今他拍了兩套紀錄片，分別是《我們是共產主義省略號》(2007)和《誌同志》(2009)。

紀錄片背景：中國民工和其子女的教育

中國大部分的民工收入比市場價格為低¹。由於他們和其子女沒有城市戶口，因此不能享有社會福利和入讀城市公立學校的資格。在這情況下，為民工子弟設計的「實驗學校」就此產生。「實驗學校」由民工成立，由慈善機構和非政府組織資助。可是大部份「實驗學校」卻未能得到政府的辦學許可，而老師更欠缺師資認可。但據資料顯示，在廣州有超過百分之七十的民工子弟在「實驗學校」就讀，可見民工對「實驗學校」的需求頗為殷切²。

故事大綱

為迎接二零零八年的北京奧運，北京市政府在二零零六年至零七年期間，強制關閉了當地的實驗學校。零六年九月，市政府關閉北京市大興區的「源海實驗學校」，七百二十個學生不能回到學校，在市政府官員不斷打壓下，師生們需以「遊擊戰」的方式，不停轉換地點繼續上課。在這樣的狀況下，一部分學生被迫轉到城市公立學校就讀，但需承擔較高昂的學費；一部分學生則需要放棄他們的學業。影片結束時，只有十六名「源海實驗學校」學生，在一位已沒有受薪的義務老師家中繼續上課。

製作背景

崔子恩導演用了半年時間，由2006年8月到2007年2月用手提攝錄機拍攝了這部低成本的紀錄片。

「我們是共產主義…」的意思

「…」具省略的意思，這反映中國在追逐現代化發展的過程中，那些被省略遺忘的一面，如中國的新一代；另外，省略號亦表達出導演對此的無奈。

紀錄片形式

這紀錄片主要是以觀察形式拍攝，導演於這紀錄片中扮演一個觀察者的角色，他只運用攝錄機去拍攝及紀錄他所看見的情景。此外，導演亦運用了闡述形式拍攝，他運用旁白來作出實況報導和解釋事件發生的經過。

分佈

這部紀錄片主要在海外放映，例如第四屆當代中國紀錄片雙年展(哥倫比亞大學，2008)，東方國際電影節(牛津，2008)和首爾獨立電影院(現已關閉)舉辦的崔子恩迷你電影節(韓國，2009)。

1. 盧海元《走進城市：農工民的社會保障》頁2，北京：經濟管理出版社，2004。

2. 隋曉明《中國民工調查》頁284，北京：群言出版社，2005。



推薦原因

很多香港學生視讀書為必然，《我》讓香港的學生明白不是每個人皆有就學的權利。此外，內地學生到本港就學的情況愈趨普及，在身份上他們可能更有共鳴。還有的是我們常常形容香港是一個著重物質生活的城市，《我》正好提供一個對比，說明快樂是很簡單的事。更重要的是，一個國家不會只有美好的一面，《我》讓香港學生更認識自己祖國內的陰暗面，從而認識一個更立體的中國。

反應 - 中國人

「…外界對中國的批評對中國的現況沒有用…」³

江小姐

「…這是長時間的抗爭。我們了解中國富強一面的同時，也要知道中國的陰暗面…」⁴ 趙小姐

反應 - 外國人

「很好的作品…沒有過份標榜道德或譁眾取寵。我很驚訝在現實中還有人像崔子恩一樣，勇於處理現今社會問題。」⁵ 中嶋博士

「…再確認了西方對中國政府的假設…」⁶ 胡珀博士

訪問崔導演

問題：當你以「共產主義」命名紀錄片時，有遇到甚麼障礙嗎？

崔：我們曾擔心政府會干涉我們使用「共產主義」一詞，但我們認為這是表達影片主題的重要字詞，因此我們堅持保留。

問題：政府有干擾你的製作過程嗎？

崔：中央政府沒有干擾我們，但地方官員卻從中不停阻撓拍攝過程。

問題：在主題上，同性戀和民工子弟兩者有沒有共通之處？

崔：因為兩者皆被社會邊緣化，得不到政府或社會支持。

問題：觀眾對這套紀錄片有什麼回應？

崔：我曾到過美國的一些放映會，部分觀眾感到哀傷。同時片中的小朋友令海外華僑回想起自己的童年，因此產生共鳴。

討論問題

初中生

1. 看完這套電影後，你有甚麼感覺？
2. 你認為片中的學生具備甚麼香港學生缺乏的特質？
3. 如果你是片中的學生，你會怎麼辦？
4. 你認為上學是兒童應有的權利嗎？
5. 片中的學生和老師們屬於社會上哪個階層？
6. 為了舉辦奧運會，我們應放棄兒童的就學機會嗎？

高中生

1. 看完這套電影後，你有甚麼意見？
2. 如果兒童沒有接受教育的機會，你認為會有甚麼問題發生？
3. 為什麼中國和外國觀眾的反應會有所不同？
4. 為了經濟發展和世界認同，我們應怎樣處理兒童的就學機會嗎？
5. 你認為兒童權利和劉曉波事件之間有沒有關連？

3. 節錄於哥倫比亞每日觀察，10月30日，年份不詳

4. 趙小姐，電郵信息，11月1日，二零一零年

5. 中嶋聖雄博士，電郵信息，11月1日，二零一零年

6. 唐雅胡珀博士，電郵信息，11月1日，二零一零年