

“ More than what meets the eye and certainly more than what rings the ear”

At a glance, one could say that the film is about what kids do when they are left alone, but that is of course, not the take we are interested in. On the surface, it's a typical game of class struggle, the rich oppressing the poor.

After my second viewing, I realized that it has more to it than what it seems to deliver. The film was made at the time of the Vietnam War, which had managed to capture the whole world's attention, and Satyajit Ray happened to be at his peak at that time. Through this film, it seems that Satyajit Ray attempts to give a miniature representation of the actions of the geopolitical chessboard.

The lucky kid represents America's pride, while the poor kid is the personification of Vietnam's resistance. The rich kid shows off his toys just as America at that point showed off its weapons.

A little earlier in the film, the kid was bored, indicating that just after the world war concluded, America was tempted to show the world the power of the new and improved weapons and its military.

The kid then peeks outside the window to an open ground, a ground that doesn't belong to him and puts up a competition against a kid who had posed no harm to him whatsoever. This indicated that America too attacked a place that wasn't even remotely in their jurisdiction, and didn't do anything to evoke them as well.

Moving further into the film, both the kids were showing off their toys and here, even though the toys the rich kid had, surpassed far more in value than those of the poor kid, but the poor kid didn't show any interest in giving up.

Mr. Ray tries to indicate that even though Vietnam was nowhere close to having the military power and an economy as good as America, it didn't give up and gave America a befitting reply for the land they had attacked. Near the end of the film, the less fortunate kid was seen happy and smiling, flying a kite, when the rich kid shoots the kite down with an air rifle.

Mr. Ray has very smartly depicted that America was not happy by the way Vietnam was a happy and prosperous country, and thus they (America) returned to its policy of "if it's not mine, then it's nobody's".

America had destroyed Vietnam in the name of war and it was very sorry in the upcoming years for what they had done.

This part is depicted in the film where the rich kid is sad after the other kid goes away in teary eyes, dragging his shot-down kite in his hands.

The poor kid ends his fight, then and there, understanding that continuing it anymore would just end in more loss and destruction. The fortunate kid, with all his possessions, sits down on the bed.

While the buildings and toys around him topple over, he thinks about the grave mistake he had made.

The movie two is about contrast. Contrast between the two shades of happiness, one materialistic and one that comes from within. It is the contrast between the two shades of war, the happiness of being victorious, and the sadness of the loss and destruction. And at the mere eye level, it is a contrast between two kids, made up of the same blood flesh and bones, but one was born with a golden spoon and one did not.

This film is pretty much a definition of "You don't need to say something, in order to mean something".

ALTERNATIVELY,

British Raj did whatever it could to oppress Indians and even resort to violence to break their backbone (the shooting down of the kite by the rich kid is an interesting comparison to that), but just like the poor kid who attempts to pick himself up after his kite gets shot down, Indians too continued their struggle even after being subject to subjugation and emerged victorious at the end.