Learning to See With Ozu,
Or an Inquiry Into the Non-Modern Conditions of a Media-Anthropology of Gestures

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Abstract

Recent occidental research, following above all the work of Agamben (2000) has opened an inquiry into gesturality in general, and the gesture in and through cinema in particular. Much of this research has been done in media studies and linked, via Mauss, to anthropologies of technology and the image (Schüttpelz, 2010). Here, I aim to experiment with cosmotechnics (Hui, 2017) and will propose a way to rethink the concept of gesture in techno-modernity from within a Buddhist cosmology. This thought process will happen through the very concrete work of Ozu Yasujirō, who developed an idiosyncratic style that enables the appearance of gestures (Hasumi, 1997). In demonstrating how certain cinematic techniques tie in with Buddhist ways of thought and how they can engender a different attunement to the impermanence of not only the gestural, I will point towards the force of the technology of cinema in constructing different possible worlds within and without academia.

Keywords: Ozu Yasujiro; cosmotechnics; gesture; technology; Modernity; space-time

I. An Introduction of Sorts

While the implicit aim of this article is to argue for, and philosophically substantiate, the use of the cinema of Ozu as a pedagogical tool for attuning to the ephemeralities (for in the process of being formed, they disappear) that are gestures, I want to situate the emergence of its formal aspects and its contemporary use historically, in both socio-cultural and media specificity. The German media philosopher Lorenz Engell noted that: "Our ideas, according to Lichtenberg, are conditioned, dependent on external terms." (Engell, 2005, p. 285, own translation) And, as I conceptually engage technocultural artifacts (films) shaped in a different reality from my own, I will delineate as part of these external conditions a Buddhist tradition that can be discerned in the constitution of Ozu's formal concerns. This focus will further show that whatever happens with certain films today, it would be reductive to simply situate them in an unquestioned Occidental naturalism about what constitutes the real components of the world, separating Culture from Nature[1] The composition and experience of reality is multiple and whatever is, is so in more than one way. The work of research, in the decolonial ethos I follow, is to show how there is more than one way of situating and explaining something seemingly as simple as a gesture, and thereby to destabilize any certainty of having arrived at any ultimate truth, correct description or first cause. In following gestures as a unit of analysis, it brings the argument not only immediately into the "realm of mediality" (Noys, 2004) but also within Buddhist tradition in all its continuing differentiation, focused as it is onto performing correct gestures correctly (Swift, 2010). In his remarks on gestures, the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben defined them as "the process of making a means visible as

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[1] Here, I refer to the various ontological turns that have put the self-evidence of reality itself in question. For an overview see Jensen (2017).

such." (Agamben, 2000, p. 57) Extending this line of thought, the aim is to make certain perhaps unexpected connections beyond common naturalist references visible as such, meaning that I want to establish the concept of gesture so that it will explicitly connect elements that for modern common sense at first might appear unrelated. About Ozu's films, meanwhile, it has been claimed "that a distinct set of perceptual skills may be appropriate to his work." (Thompson 88: 341) Expanding on more typical film studies approaches, I stress that the skills acquired can be used in other material contexts than is the perception of (these) films. Since, "[w]hen perception is attentive every perception becomes an act of creation in which the perception opens as many circuits as there are memory images attracted by this new perception, making of every perception a qualitative multiplicity." (Olkowski, 1999, p. 114)

The task set before us here, is to follow the vagaries of gestural chains through a set of data composed around this very problematic. A set of data linked or perhaps rather operationalized by the imageric work of the iconic Japanese director Ozu Yasujirō. With a decolonial ethics in mind, I work at situating the problem of the gesture in a *de iure* Buddhist framework. Additionally, I will take a crucial detour into the gestural techno-modernization of what became the Japan imagined today. That is the ground against which Ozu innovated. The concrete *de facto* images that came into being through the work of the director and his collaborators were formed in this time and space, providing concrete solutions of then actual problems. As films, they travel through time, space and cosmologies. The analysis of his techniques then bears on today's viewer, even if differently than on his now mostly passed Japanese contemporaries, the likes of which, however heterogeneous, it can be presumed were the intended audience of his works the Buddhist aspects of whose cosmology I partly reconstruct. Overall, I argue for the singular qualities these artifacts operationalize and how they can act as guides for a novel attunement in quotidian life, certain kinds of research, especially ethnography, and beyond. Given that all is connected, the argument is not structured in a simply linear direction. Given that theory does not precede the empirical, but is part of it, emerges through it, and vice versa, an analytical argument would hide the co-constitution of that which comes to be.

The interest here is directed towards an element, namely gesture, that connects different media-spheres, and not just as gesture in Ozu's corpus of films. It is about relating films to their outside while at the same moment making them multiple, not as finalized entities, but as things composed of different parts. This also engenders a different kind of Buddhist theorizing, not one that points to this or that element as Buddhist or Zen,[2] but one that tries to formulate a Buddhist conception of an element, gesture, and show how it crosses different spheres. Hence most of the research on Ozu that is drawn upon, only takes gestures and the formal aspects of his cinema related to gesture as its topic. The works of the Japanese master are noted for "the sparing use of stylistic devices" (Hideyuki, 2010, p. 146), which is one of the reasons for the pervasive association with (Westernized) Zen.[3] Meanwhile, for this paper, the interest lies in what this formal minimalization makes appear that other cinemas do not, regardless of whether one wants to classify it as specifically Zen or not. This makes most research on Ozu of small relevance, as it covers elements found in the image or narrative that are not of immediate concern here. Even, indeed, Ozu's thematic preoccupations, such as the changing family, the cycle of life or modernization, remain largely tangential. The approach proposed here demonstrates an Ozu that is neither the social conservative nor the modernist, he is usually conceived as. Rather, by opening the films up through gesture, they become something that operates otherwise than the modern dichotomy between tradition and progress. And it is in this

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[2] Such analyses tend to be orientalist (cf. Needham, 2020, 13ff.).

[3] What is generally thought of and imagined as Zen in the modern Occident, was specifically made for Westerners and has only a tenuous relationship with the practices found in Japan. (Snodgrass, 2003, pp. 259ff.)

characteristic, that is in how it forms attention and makes possible to become conscious of minute gestural resistance, that Ozu's cinema can enact emancipation today.

The main argument is a text in two parts and an intermezzo. The first, a delineation of conditions external to the films themselves within which they came to be and the traces of which they carry; it is a media-anthropological perspective rooted in a Buddhist project. The second enters the space-time of cinema, the worlds Ozu created. The concept of the gesture connects both. The idea being to first formulate an understanding for the ontological importance of gesturing in a particularly non-Christian-Secular world, and more specifically how this different cosmotechnics accommodates cinema's media specificity. Yuk Hui defines cosmotechnics as "the unification of the cosmic order and moral order through technical activities." (Hui, 2017, p. 322) All reality is already a cosmology in the making, there is no neutral Western world and only then the other traditions to which technology is external. Having established some of these (in relation to each film external) conditions of emergence for the analyzed film forms in the first part of the argument, an investigation of the concrete procedures employed by the Japanese filmmaker will be undertaken. It is important to note that gesture as movement, much like the shot and editing in cinema, transforms space-time. The two parts comment on each other – it is not just that cosmotechnics condition cinema, but that cinema and the imagery produced therein condition their outside. And, as I will argue for in the conclusion, a conscious deployment of Ozu's films can serve as a pedagogy of attunement to the apparently ephemeral event of gesturing. For gestures, in their iterability, once they enter into circuits with (static) poses or postures, as formed in say Buddhist art, that is become explicitly mediated by material artifacts of pictorial and plastic imagination, come to act in temporalities for beyond their initial (dis)appearance. This insight is at least implicit in Buddhist traditions, focused as they are on practice and its correct preservation against the flow of time.[4] While working on this research, I came across a connection as unexpected as explicit, which is why I assign it a prominent space right here, almost at the very beginning:

"Inverting the traditional Western cliché that associates the Buddhist prayer wheel with mindless mechanicity, Benjamin sees in the ascetic integration of external rhythm, physical posture, and mental processes a source of the imagination and, therefore, of power. 'Hence [the yogis'] omnipotence [Allmacht],' he concludes – which, like a prayer wheel, returns the reader to the initial sentence on the vitalness of the pictorial imagination to the force of the will." (Hansen, 1999, 319)

TECHNOCULTURE
II. Japanese Buddhist Techno-Modernity

While I explicitly situate the argument within Buddhist tradition, I do not wish to imply it is the sole or determining influence to condition Ozu's cinematic practice. The awareness of the import of gestures, after all, is a notable component of Japanese cultural performance, as evidenced by the sheer number of words for a wide array of such acts (Tada, 2004; Doganis, 2012).[5] Meanwhile, Buddhist teachings, or rather the modernist construct of Buddhism, as anybody encountering Ozu is well aware of, are commonly evoked in readings of his cinema in orientalizing ways. Here, I want to offer a decolonial deployment of Buddhist tradition, in that I aim at destabilizing occidental certainty about ontological reality, hopefully without fixing the reality of some representable other. Importantly, the use of categories such as

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[4] What modern Occidentals call Culture, can then be understood as techniques to counter the pressure of time. Practices that preserve events or objects from different times. The British philosopher Nick Land (2014), similar to historical Buddhist concerns with the time passed since Buddha Shakyamuni achieved Nirvana, thus sees culture as human ways of staving off time as entropy, that is irreversible transformation.

[5] These include e.g. "looking down, shyly,' 'staying close,' 'sitting on the floor', and 'one's unconscious expressions'.

"Buddhism", "Japanese", "Asia", "Western" or "theory" (taking their beginning as Western notions) is relational and contextual (Fan, 2016), not representational of a reality out there. And by mixing different sources for doing research, the West and its theories become "one cultural resource among many others" (Chen, 2010, p. 223) and with that to enrich our (meaning the scientific community) "own conceptual repertoires by letting them be inflected by the concepts of those we study" (Gad & Jensen, 2016, p. 3). Here, more concretely it is the transformation of the concept of "gesture" through the encounter with Buddhist worlds and Ozu's imagery away from one tied to common notions of one-world realism. Occasional mentions of Christian-secular that is 'Western' conventions should render this even clearer, as only through such comparisons does the tacitly implicit appear. Again, this is an analytical practice that should not imply that there are such simple divisions to be simply found out there in the world.

The reconstitution of bodies in modernity as mediated by cinema has, apart from Europe been noted in Japan, including a consciously noticeable shift toward vision as a primary sense (Miyao, 2018). This change was additionally materially supported through the reconstruction of urban space after the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1932 (ibid., p. 24). Miyao further notes that the constitution of cinema-going as a primarily visual activity was not in any way a linear trajectory of historical necessity, but a concentrated effort by certain actors that tied together modernist state interests in its emerging nationalist version. He cites the film historian Joanne Bernardi who notes that a modernizing movement in the 1920s had as a goal "the attainment of an internationally viable level of narrational clarity for films also endowed with a comprehensible and distinct national and cultural identity" (Bernardi, 2001, p. 13). It was about reformulating cinema as a working-class diversion based on interaction with the audience as "'kinetic' participants" (Miyao, 2018, p. 25) into something worthy of presumably Euro-bourgeois respect. And this was explicitly tied to cultivating a sense of national identity. And this, by trying to separate different senses and reorder the cinematic experience as a primarily visual one. The one most of us are familiar with today. In other words, a somewhat coordinated reconfiguration of the structures of experience. Miyao further discusses how the early films of Ozu partly embarked on such a modernization, but critically, by creating images of the haptic and not seemingly purely visual. In other words, the films become a sort of alternative modernity, accepting the general nation-building tendency and change in the apparatus generating a different film experience than early cinema, while finding alternative ways of "remapping the body" (ibid., p. 34) within that shift. These include, following Miyao, a focus on hands, embodiment and as a necessary component of that constellation, gestures.

Thinking in the same period of time albeit in a different place, Walter Benjamin argued that cinema is not merely a technological apparatus creating passive viewers, integrating them into hegemonic projects, it has an emancipatory dimension or component: "The function of film is to train human beings in apperceptions and reactions needed to deal with a vast apparatus whose role in their lives is expanding almost daily." (Benjamin, 2008, p. 26) The technology of photography, and by extension, cinema, through enlargement, slow motion, and other devices, can make appear "physiognomic aspects of visual worlds which dwell in the smallest things" (Benjamin, 1979, p. 243), and are commonly hidden or, I would add, too unremarkable to be noticed. This he termed the optical unconscious. Inherent in this, I dare claim, is the capacity to reveal minutest movements. Miriam Hansen (2012, p. 79) noted that Benjamin considered this function to even be pedagogical and therapeutic, as in modernity, through the conventional separation of Nature and Culture, the accelerated constitution of technologies is being culturally passed over. These new material conditions did not find an expression in culture/discourse, and cinema, being itself highly technological, can abet this situation: "Film assumes this task not simply by way of a behaviorist adaptation of human perceptions and reactions to the regime of the apparatus (which seems to be the tenor of parts of the artwork essay) but because film has the potential to reverse, in the form of play, the catastrophic

consequences of an already failed reception of technology." (Hansen, 1999, p. 320) Unlike most approaches to cinema at the time, Walter Benjamin situated films on the side of play, of experimenting, instead of illusion (Hansen, 2012, p. 191). Cinema being a technology that "aims at interplay [Zusammenspiel] between nature and humanity, found in training, practicing, rehearsal." (Hansen, 1999, p. 320) I would like to point out that neither filmmaking nor cinema-going itself will bring about these emancipatory lines simply in and of themselves. The point is merely that there is the potential, the emergence of which is linked to other apparatuses with which the experience of and knowledge gained from cinema comes to appear in the first place.

Later in the article, I will take a look specifically at how Ozu's cinematic language developed (covering these early years of cinema) and how it relates to the generation and perception of gestures. Albeit that gestures are part of quotidian existence, they often remain relegated to the unconscious. The category of conventionalized and recognizable gestures with stabilized meaning is never entirely present and unambiguously clear, even as it gets habitually decoded just regularly enough to hide the potential of miscommunication. Cinema, by way of framing and montage can make gestures enter awareness and become a source for reflection and conscious intervention. Ozu's work can be seen as tracing these shifts.[6]

As observed by Mauss (1973), boundaries between a film and a non-film become blurred, gestures and bodily comportment circulate between mediaspheres. This happens as part of historical drift/change, but can become part of a more conscious effort. What I propose then, is that Ozu's cinematic techniques [7] amount to an activation of tacit (extra-)cinematic knowledge, and such an attuning can be only the result of cinephilia, of learning to see as a process built on repetition and variation, and not any immediate intellectual grasping presented in an article. This problematic, according to the Japanese film critic and theorist Hasumi Shigehiko (2004), is coded in the films themselves, insofar as the female characters in late Ozu enact gestures of quiet anger unnoticed by the patriarchal environment but are made perceptible through framing and montage. Such gestures, he argues, go unnoticed by the male characters (and most certainly the Western reception of Ozu's films) whose focus more often than not is on words as means of communication and a general bodily comportment, and not other, more minute bodily performances. Hasumi further argues, that these parts are intentional on the part of the creators, as they are made possible by the placement of certain objects such as towels and neckerchiefs. The images themselves thus contain not just the more obvious and commonly acknowledged patriarchal level, but also expressions pointing elsewhere. The difficulty in accessing these doesn't come as a surprise, as gestures, much like any other event, appear only against a ground (itself emerging as part of cosmotechnical histories) that makes them legible as figures in the first place, and, as the figure/ground relation is conditioned by distinct webs of associations, some groups of people might not be able to perceive certain signs emitted by gestures at all (Strathern, 2002). This is a common source of frustration for anthropological research and a source of defiance and alternative communication for subalterns, and is something that quite evidently conceptually, even ontologically precedes any simplistic empiricism.

As the focus of the article is a generally Buddhist conditioning, I will not dissect specifics of the infinite variance of Japanese Buddhist traditions. I am aware of both the necessity of and the obvious issues in presupposing any immediately, transparently shared ground for all Buddhist practices (especially given that I frame my work critically, in reference to the Western

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[6] Viviani (2017, p. 20) notes that concern with (quotidian) gesture appeared early in Japanese cinema. As is well known, one ought to keep in mind that Ozu was consciously drawing on mostly American cinema, hence there is an international enmeshment from the get go.

[7] "[Ozu] constructed a spatial system which is a complete alternative to the continuity style," which "forces the spectator to pay attention to space itself or become lost." (Bordwell & Thompson, 1976, p. 58)

construction of Buddhism, itself a very Christian conceptual practice).[8] What I do here is to construct a transcendental condition of Buddhist tradition that would emerge as a premise wherever Buddhist teachings become parts of worlds, that are enacted and thought with.[9] Such a conception of what is usually taken as a religious tradition takes it as a power to shape reality and is not concerned with the very Christian-secular issues of belief, conviction or scholastic argumentation, but correct practice and by extension ways of life (Swift, 2010, p. 5ff.). Therefore, I consider it legitimate, as this *de iure* transcendental condition is an ad-hoc analytical construction that enacts change in the here and now, but does not represent any *de facto* historical reality. Such a construct becomes the ground for perceiving, in historical and contemporary material, how and that it was shaped by Buddhist tradition, precisely because it destabilizes any easy understanding of empirical reality as simply there. Buddhist worlds become *de iure* real in spaces, material and immaterial, cinematic, and extra-cinematic, even though their *de facto* existence is never simply and exclusively Buddhist. Such effects are important to be aware of, since the human perceptive apparatus, as Benjamin noted, is plastic and changes throughout history. As Buddhist teachings, unlike Christian-secular ones, are not structured around a fundamental exclusion, but rather on connection, sentient beings can very well do Buddhist rites in the morning and Shinto or any other rites in the evening, and squeeze a Western style wedding in between – any employment of a Buddhist ontological framework becomes conditional and experimental.[10] Ozu's films can be understood within a Buddhist frame or a different one, and each will lead to the appearance of slightly different aspects. That is after all, the point of contingency. All of this fits well with Buddhist teachings, as all conditioned things come to pass, and no frame can be final or exhaustive. Apart from the four noble truths, that is; however the access to them is, in most teachings, variable through time. My contribution here, while focusing specifically on the question of gesture in cinema and techno-anthropology, also of necessity aims at reorienting how Buddhist traditions are thought in academia in general.

In general, then, the approach to the topic of Buddhism and cinema proposed here, is specific in the following ways. While I do to a certain extent focus on "text and context" in a classical sense, the main text is the concept of "gesture" as it links Buddhist and cinematic (formalist) concerns, and the context is one that straddles anthropological reconstructions of cosmological conditionings in general and questions surrounding the status of (technologically constituted) images in particular. This approach emerged from my continuing work on taking a different and infinitely varying tradition seriously in its reality-making powers and my attempts to think through various issues based on ideal-type (re)constructions of embodied non-Western/Buddhist thought practice. As such the article is also a conscious blend of different cosmologies (taken not idealistically but only as existing in actual historical webs of practices and technological artifacts), which by being gathered, I hope, will help invoke possible future paths for our contemporary world.

III. Movement, Mudras and Emptiness

The question well known to anybody engaging Buddhist thought I attempt to answer here is: If everything is empty, i.e. has no being/nature (skrt. *svabhāva* / jp. *jishō*) of its own, and is the product of co-dependent arising (skrt. *pratītyasamutpāda* / jp. *engi*), where is it possible to locate any sense of ever-changing continuity, i.e. the illusion of stability that Buddhist tradition has exposed as such? What I propose is to situate such continuity in (at least partly)

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[8] See Ladwig (2021) for a recent summary.

[9] The way I employ the concept of world here, is following articulations in anthropological STS, which are close to the ontological turn. They are composed, multiple and differ onto themselves. (cf. Law, 2015)

[10] For an overview of differences and influences between East Asian and Euro-Christian practices, see e.g. Rambelli & Reinders, 2012.

gestural repetition, here understood as form (itself empty). The shape of the gesture is what traverses different existences. Much like a flame that is and is not itself, retaining a certain consistency, while continuously changing and being able to be transferred to a different lamp wick, thus breaking down any easy notions of the continuum. As is evident, I build on a pre-philosophical common sense other than the one tacitly presupposed by Euro-Modernity.[11] This work is situated at crossroads of Deleuzian and Buddhist projects, mediated by Walter Benjamin, given that Deleuze alone and later in collaboration with Guattari sought to at the very least destabilize precisely these seemingly self-evident assumptions, the notoriously elusive common sense philosophers like to refer to as a last instance (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). As it is often put, the dogmatic image of thought, the one the two philosophers worked on changing, is "what everybody knows." That is, common sense, as the necessary, yet unacknowledged condition of thought. And one, that falls apart the moment one engages the world anthropologically and becomes conscious of the workings of differing common senses. Among the most infamous for Euro-Modernity is the Cartesian concept of the cogito, the "I think" which tacitly presupposes that 'we all know' what both thinking and the "I" is. The latter concept, the "self", at the very least, has continuously been unmasked by Buddhist teachings as precisely what it is: an unwarranted presupposition and that can by no means act as a stable ground for either intellectual thought or material practice. This points to the reason I draw on the works of the French philosophers: "There are no simple concepts. Every concept has components and is defined by them." (ibid., p. 15). Their work does not enable one to continue reading Buddhist thought and imagination on the ground of a Cartesian image of thought or generally naturalized Euro-Christian concepts, but rather employ it as a background for reading linguistic and imageric statements as conceptualizations taken from Buddhist teachings. What I write here is in line with the decolonial ethics of this project, aimed as they are at making visible the invisible tacit presuppositions of modern Western worlding (which includes making the very difference between the West and the rest, with theory being allegedly of solely Western provenance) as such.

While most academic encounters between Buddhist tradition and cinema focus on Buddhist symbols or ideas in films, the aim here is, as alluded to before, different; I locate Buddhist analysis in the media condition of cinema in its widest sense (thus rendering it specifically cinematic and not making out of cinema a symbolic epiphenomenon). In part, since I am working the intersectional field of media theory/anthropology and am seeking to articulate Buddhist notions of materialist mediation. Buddhist teachings dispense with the subject/self, and a logical consequence (although cause-effect are, as was argued by Nāgārjuna, and in the European context by Nietzsche, intertwined) thereof becomes the issue of where to locate the semblance of stability sentient beings commonly experience. This is linked to the infamous concept of *śūnyatā*, emptiness. From there emerges the focus on action (notice: karma at its root *kṛ* is etymologically linked to action) instead of being or essence in much of Buddhist thought (with thinking being to some degree always also action). Now, since subjectivity is an effect of karmic laws and the interaction of senses (of which the mind is the one that brings the others together, making the 'mind' more material than is commonly thought, that is, also a sense-organ), and ritual(ization) is an important aspect in Buddhist tradition,[12] it would follow that (gestural) repetition is central in producing the sense of subjective continuity in the first place. Hence, Buddhist teachings are typically considered to be orthopraxical. The argument is often framed in a pragmatic way, as in practical "orthodoxy" being necessary for the efficient organization of temple life, and implicitly contrasted with monotheist orthodoxy. However, in the framework I present, teaching correct rituals and

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[11] I understand Euro-Modernity as presupposing a type of thought built on identity and not difference, thus being representational, i.e., reducing anything in the world onto the ready-made model it tacitly performs as eternal and God given.

[12] For a discussion, see Fauré (2009) or Sharf (2015).

movements (for the attainment of nirvana or just better rebirth) turns into a not merely pragmatic, but also a soteriological issue. As has become evident of course, what is and is not pragmatic changes with the cosmological framework, so there is no simple pragmatism in our *world multiple*. Practice becomes a question of 'correctness' of formal (!) method, but not of 'belief' in any Christian sense (Stepien, 2019). Some methods are effective, while others are not. According to a Marxist framing of Buddhist teachings, "[r]eason is not absolute, only the objective action or experiment is the touchstone of reality." (Sankrityayan et al., 1981, p. 9) Some of the effectiveness can be tested ad hoc, much of it cannot (since immediate sense-impression and reality as such is conditioned) and thus one has to rely on a tradition of teachers whose gestures one repeats, extends in time. From this arises the importance of lineage in Buddhist organizations. Hence also the focus on gesture (as correct form). Notably, words, or rather the shape of words (written or spoken) follow this pattern too, become part of the system of reality production. The audible shape of words and phrases is important for efficacy, not their intellectual content.

Such an approach likewise gives actual creative power to mudras (skrt. *mudrā* / jp. *insō*), commonly understood as ritual gestures or poses. Joshua Hall lays out a central topic of Buddhist thought, where "constant motion is the only reality" in the following way: "[M]overs and motion are co-dependent in order to bear the descriptors 'motion' and 'mover.'" (Hall, 2017, p. 177) The difference between the two appears as a conventionalized linguistic construct and not in a reality out there. He further notes the following ethical imperative, one that could be discerned even in implicit aspects of Ozu's filmmaking: "[R]espond to temptation with warm gestures (rather than cold indifference) toward the other, including mindfulness of any gendered vulnerability." (ibid., p. 182) When everything is caught in the plastic cycle of gestures as a subcategory of motions, the ethical question becomes not one of gesture or no gesture, but of the shape, intensity, affection of the gesture. Only those no longer reborn are no longer gesturing, moving. If the world (or at least the continuation of sentient beings) is perpetuated through gestures, of which some, if executed correctly according to a model, can lead to a better rebirth, then having 'good' models in statues creates the conditions under which correct gestures can spread over much larger distances (in space and time) than any single sentient being could ever achieve. Statues, images, and other figurative artifacts too, become part of lineages. Famously, for Buddhist worlds it is said that the difference between thing and image is negligible, if made at all, because the concern is with effects and the relationships they create, not with essences, since all things are empty, *śūnyatā*. For *Mahāyāna*, the tradition most influential in co-shaping East Asia, this means that all things are empty of intrinsic nature, *svabhava*. Once there are no essences, entirely different questions appear, including the realization that to ask what Buddhism is, is a very non-Buddhist manner of ontologizing. This brings the whole discussion close to Derridean (1997) analysis, wherein *arche-writing* differentially precedes writing in general, being present yet absent, and makes apparent the relatedness of all kinds of lines and shapes, from creating paths in the forest to writing proper. Centering the mimetic faculty on repetition of correct gestures, the process can be grasped through the general condition for gestural emergence, arche-gesturing one might call it, where almost anything in the world turns into a potentially repeatable gesture: a prime example of ritualization through iteration as reality production. Carrie Noland (2009, p. 186) notes the etymological connection Derrida himself claims between iterability and the Sanskrit *itara* taken to mean 'other'. Relations with the other worlds discussed here keep creeping in. Things seem to be connected, even if they don't immediately appear to be so. As an example, from historical research, only indirectly following the work of Derrida, the Japan studies scholar Bryan Lowe (2017), in linking ritualization, writing and canon formation in ancient Japanese Buddhist temples, demonstrated this issue in pre-modern contexts. His study is not concerned with hermeneutics but with practices and social formation, and argues that Buddhism (qua practices and artifacts) has "penetrated wide swaths of Japanese society in the

ancient period" (ibid., 211–12), while keeping in mind that there have been multiple Buddhist lineages. Bodies come to be composed of gestures and do not act as pre-given wholes, but rather as a connection of gesturing parts iterating previous movements and through this very repetition making stability appear. The whole, if at all, comes after. Or phrased another way, either monk or layperson, even non-human animals, can repeat the gesture a bodhisattva made without resembling that entity as a whole.

The famed Japanese director Yoshida Yoshishige, himself starting out as Ozu's assistant director, made the variations of co-dependent becomings rather explicit: "Such an endless cycle of repetitions and differences was the unique expression that Ozu-san discovered in silent films. These peripheral and extremely subtle changes and differences in repetitious expressions would become a central motif in the later films of Ozu." (Yoshida, 2003, p. 24) He even notes the potentially parodic dimension of gesturing, reminding the reader of the fundamental instability of meaning within gestural chains. Modern reproductive technologies make a rather good fit, as worlds that are concerned with the effects and not the truthfulness (in relation to something beyond history and themselves) of images, the adoption would appear straightforward, while the intensification of reproduction, as described by Benjamin, would still lead, to put it in non-Benjaminian terms, to the creation of a new ontology compared to temporally pre-cinematic realities. Meaning that the proliferation of reproductive technologies makes for a world that works differently than one without them, one before cinema and photography came to be for granted parts of mundane reality. As opposed to Buddhist monks or other ritualists, filmmakers in general cannot be presumed to have soteriological aims; rather, more minimally, they share conditions for creation and practice by virtue of being shaped in a milieu. It is against this techno-cultural (though not 'total') background that I situate the activity of Ozu and the people he worked with created and organized images into iterable spatio-temporal sequences, which act to guide perception, both unconsciously and consciously.[13] And as such, this work can act to form a gesturally informed milieu far beyond its place of constitution.

INTERMEZZO
IV. Media Conditions of Modernity

In this part, extending some of the topics introduced earlier, I construct a brief media theoretical analysis to argue for Ozu's involvement in thinking the emergent conditions of technological modernity, by which I mean a world the ontology of which, following Schüttpelz (2010), is intimately enmeshed with a certain dispositif of image (re)production.

Cinema has since its inception conditioned new kinds of perceiving and thinking movement. Indeed, as has been argued, Mauss's now classic book on techniques of the body would not have been conceivable without this technology (Schüttpelz 2010). In a felicitous occurrence, it appears that Mauss in thinking this issue was doing so already under the influence of Indic teachings (Noland, 2009, p. 36). Movement as the mutual conditioning of time and space is by necessity composed by technologies in history. Walter Benjamin in his famous essay on technological reproducibility further wrote, at about the same time as Mauss: "The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well." (Benjamin, 2008, p. 23) And, in more recent times, Latour (2005) demonstrated in his musings on trains, time and movement, how without temporal repetition, there would be no space, as its seeming independence and givenness is generated by repetition. Conversely, without the temporary slowing down into space, no sense of time passing would be able to appear. Time and space are co-dependent, yet (largely, but not fully) distinguishable. As gestures are inherently temporal and spatial, the emergence of new technologies made it possible to consider and contemplate them

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13 Related work has been done on the action cinema of King Hu (Steintrager, 2014).

in ways hitherto unimaginable, no longer to be decomposed into static postures that are to be recomposed into movement.

I contend that some filmmakers have been particularly attentive to this new world and their works can teach us much about movement and gesture in ways that link smoothly with the anthropological project. Here, the focus being on Ozu Yasujirō, I will in the following section, make evident how he makes use of the possibility of stasis of the camera frame to reduce the constant change of the lived world so that human gestures are filtered in such a way from the ground that they become the figure. Such perception is further reinforced by reducing the depth of the image, as well as covering the vanishing point. When such techniques are approached from a cosmological understanding of the world, one that is aware that even pragmatism and utilitarianism are relational and not substantivist, it becomes apparent that the medium of cinema here serves to halt, or at least reduce the incessant movement of the world, as it is/used to be conceived in East Asian realities (Morris et al., 2005), in order to learn to see anew. It is this technique that proves useful to train the (not exclusively Western) researcher's perceptive apparatus to become more aware of movements and their (speculative) ties to other cosmic processes in research beyond the immediately cinematic.

CINEMA
V. The (Un)Realities of Ozu
Spatialities

Enter cinema. A technology so plastic as to manipulate (the perception of) space and time; to play with what is figure, what is ground; to make the optical unconscious appear for consciousness. It is written by some that within the proliferation of spaces that emerged with modernity, it is the properly cinematic space that stands apart from all others. "Cinematic space is changeable, flexible, mobile; or, said more precisely and radically: cinematic space is spatial change itself." (Engell, 2005, p. 287, own translation) Cinematic space is one of constant movement, both of the enframed and the frame itself. From any point of view, to any figure, to any gesture all are transitional. When space becomes (phenomenologically perceptible) change, it also becomes time. Cinema is space-time. The philosopher further notes that space is "the possibility for objects to lose their place," while time is "the compulsion of space to abandon its objects." (ibid.) This is a point of view on the problematic as seen from space, unlike that of Latour, who primarily disentangles these entanglements as conceptualized from time. These then are analytical separations of an intertwined reality, that act as conditions of thought about the issues I deal with here. Space is expressed through traditional movement and editing, time through camera-movements.[14] But what does this spatio-temporal movement of the apparatus mean for movement created for the apparatus? By moving, people and other sentient beings express change through dislocation within temporal dynamics. A gesture is an object losing its place and at the same time space abandoning its object. The two are inseparable, but only rarely perceptible as such. At least for historical beings formed by a Newtonian cosmology (which still shares far too much with the Aristotelian one), so foundational for capitalist Euro-modernity.

Which spaces enter into the cinematic apparatus? There is the cinematographic space within which a film is viewed. It is present mostly objectively, save for slight variations in angles/placements. Then there are the spaces that each viewers' perceptive systems are used to.

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[14] "Für den filmischen Raum gilt dann, dass er zunächst noch viel mehr Raum ist als jeder andere Bildraum vor ihm, weil er erstmals den Objekten im Bildraum gestattet, ihre Stellen in eben jenem Bildraum zu verlassen. Sobald aber die Kamera beweglich ist, sind es nicht mehr die Objekte, die sich innerhalb des Bildes an andere Stelle bewegen können, sondern es sind nunmehr auch die Raumstellen selbst, etwa filmisch markierte Raumstellen wie Blickpunkt und Focus, die ihre Objekte verlassen können. Und umgekehrt werden die Objekte in der Montage dem Zwang unterworfen, ihre Stellen aufzugeben um anderen, die an ihrer Stelle sichtbar werden, Platz zu machen. Raum- und Zeitmerkmale durchdringen einander." (Engell, 2005, p. 87)

Our eyes, embedded as they are in further circuits of perception, for example, are a history of their own, a history co-produced by the spaces we are reared in (including image-spaces). As Walter Benjamin noted decades ago: "Just as the entire mode of existence of human collectives changes over long historical periods, so too does their mode of perception." (Benjamin, 2008, p. 23) These are, for modern Western (urban) dwellers, dominantly structured according to Renaissance perspective.[15] Then there are the spaces in our memories – these can be symbolic, affective, even properly spatial (i.e. close to bodily perception of space). These would be called interior spaces and are in general less inter-subjective than the physiological spatialization of senses.

Approached from the other side, there is the space of the flat screen of cinematic images. This is the one described by Lorenz Engell and it is properly cinematic. Further there are the (hypothetical) spaces that were created by the cinematic apparatus in front of the camera. These may have been consciously created for the camera, as in classical studio films (and Ozu's later films), or lived-in spaces assembled through the camera/editing. They are often culturally specific (in their forms, colors, etc. – even functions, but these tend to be suppressed in their specificity within the cinematographic process). These spaces are mostly abstracted, or perhaps quotidianized in later Ozu. They do not signify more than themselves in their ideality, they are without history.[16] Not all spaces are conducive for gestures to appear and have effects. The busier a space, the more intense and varied the movements that happen, the more will gestures remain part of the ground without reaching a figurality of their own. The way spaces are composed has a direct bearing on which gestures can come to be.

Temporalities

Enmeshed as all is, there is time of the cinematographic space, the space that takes one out of quotidian temporalities and places one, so to speak, in another time, that of cinema. Cinema as the apparatus where one sits and as the films one enters watching, creates its own temporal rhythms. Cinema becomes a world of its own, a world of experimentation inaccessible otherwise. Somewhat out-of-joint with the world one just left. Slowing down physical movement of bodies so that they can become part of the projected worlds is one of the ways that film imposes its own time on those who join. The gesturality of one's own body is made to disappear, so as to heighten the ability to perceive gestures in the shapes projected. If one is a cinephile, like this author, this cinematographic time may have become part of everyday rhythms, and gestures generated in entirely different contexts might have become part of one's comportment. Then there is physiognomic time, the one our historicized bodies are capable of. This temporality presents itself more actively if the film one is viewing exceeds (in form and time) what one is accustomed to. Such films are generally labeled 'art' or 'experimental'. Furthermore, there is the time of one's own personal memories and cognitive abilities. The latter two, physiognomic and cognitive memory, are chiastically intertwined. Insofar as these are effects, the difference between habits acquired from everyday surroundings and films is, as in Buddhist teachings, practically irrelevant. Again, when approached from the other side, there is the time of the edited film. The properly cinematic time. And, the different temporalities of the scenes that came to be integrated through the apparatus into the film viewed. These temporalities are only partly integrated into the image, while a majority is excluded or transformed.

Gestures

One might claim that cinema is an intensification of conventional experience, where space and time become more plastic, through which new possibilities and problems appear. A

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15 For a discussion of very material differences in traditions, see Cox (2008).

16 Since Ozu minimizes filmmaking outside the studio, it can happen only rarely that a viewer recognizes their proper surroundings taking on a different reality from the one they are used to. Indeed, "Ozu's talent lies in choosing an image that can function poetically at a particular moment by being assimilated into the film, not by affixing to the film the image of an object that is considered poetic in a domain outside the film." (Hasumi, 1997, p. 122)

cinema that makes its own space-time, is one analogous to that of the gesture or of movement in general. Movement is change in space and time, it is always both, never just one or the other. We moderns seem to be habitualized to a perception of movement as taking part in front of a (seemingly) stable background. We access movement externally, as secondary to the apriori of space. This is the naturalized Renaissance perspective.[17] Cinema moves us into movement proper, it is the world as viewed from movement. Or, the world as movement. There is only slowing down and speeding up, as background and foreground keep transmuting. There is no stable point of reference, or rather an equilibrium within which Renaissance perspective would be grounded is the exception, the extreme slowing down, rather than the rule.[18]

Cinema is thus not just gestures of actors and movements of objects in front of a stable background. Cinematic space-time is perception of the world as movement and from within. One can see this in the early work of Yasujirō Ozu and it is a variation of both the Hollywood conventions that inspired him, and within what is generally conceived as 'Asian' understanding of space-time: I dare write that by now it has become a cliché that in Eastern Asian, and particularly Japanese traditions, space and time are not taken as separate (Berque & Sauzet, 2004, p. 29). Cinematic expression as elaboration of spatio-temporal fluidity thus ought to have appeared more 'naturally' within the context. However, even in Ozu's early works (like *I Was Born But …*) there is comparatively little camera movement. This tendency to eliminate camera movement became the basis for his late works. There Ozu elaborated a mise-en-scène that largely attempts to elide these typical traits, all the while remaining properly cinematic.

Late Ozu

Noel Burch famously dismissed Ozu's post-1942 work as instances of "academic rigidity" (Burch, 1979, p. 157). While the occasional camera movements found in the early 1930s films have entirely disappeared by now, some of the formal elements, such as incorrect eyelines and the pillow-shots, had become forces onto themselves. It is precisely in the post-war work that the formal organization makes the topics discussed here stand out. In these late films, Ozu elided any spatio-temporal movement of the cinematic apparatus almost entirely, save for that of human movement. While "in montage objects are subjected to the need to abandon their places to give way to other objects, that become visible in their place," (Engell, 2005, p. 287, own translation) in Ozu objects often do not lose their place. Rather, they persist in excess of conventionally realistic cinematic space. This formal technique of Ozu is as familiar as his static camera, which minimizes the tendency of "space to abandon its object".

Famously objects such as beer bottles should move from the left of the frame to the right in a shot-counter shot pattern, but they fail to do so. Things persist, it is space that cedes. This has the effect of stabilizing the visual flat space of the image, thereby shifting the focus of change on the performer's performances. Actors, especially in conversation scenes, fill in the same space within the image. All is kept constant save for the actors and their gestures, their reactions. Faces are not the primary locus of truth; they are one among many. This would be one of the reasons why he uses the *plan américain* without ever going into close-ups in conversation scenes. Minute differences within variations of gesture or differences in meaning within one performance become perceivable precisely through the elimination of most other differences. Furthermore, Ozu mobilizes the 50 mm lens with 35 mm film which is generally considered to be the one closest to the perception we are accustomed to (Bordwell, 1988, p. 74). Nevertheless, his shots often do not give the impression of depth. That is because there

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17 That Asian cinematic practice works on a different conceptualization of movement is most evident in action cinema. (cf. Morris et al., 2005)

18 We do move around in our regular capitalist lives too. But there are many socio-cultural techniques that form us on the basis of a stable perspective. Indeed, the educational system, where one is taught about the being-natural of the Renaissance perspective while being taught to sit still, that is to enact and to ground said perspective.

is no vanishing point, which is generally covered by people in the frame center, or by lines or flat walls.[19] His images are (in his color films) layered swaths of bold colors and patterns upon one other, not unsimilar to the genre of so-called 'pictures of the floating world', *ukiyo-e*: "Ozu's color films are as clear and bright as ukiyo-e prints. Both visually simplify and declutter the world: the arrangements of the mise-en-scène, the compositions are all designed to be uncluttered." (McIver, 2016, p. 225) These woodblock prints also famously eschew perspective, in favor of flattened images. In this style, it is very common for figures to figure prominently, to be set off from the background – not by shadows, but by clear lines and the complex forms of the human body.

Hasumi Shigehiko (1997) draws attention to further elements that contribute to the overall minimalization of the spatio-temporal movement of cinematic representation. He writes that Ozu's cinema is a cinema of sunshine, contrary to more common atmospheric conditions found in Japan, namely rain and fog (which figure prominently in the cinemas of Mizoguchi or Kurosawa) (ibid., p. 120). Not only is Ozu thus emulating Hollywood, California, the land of cinema, which he revered very much, it has profound effects on spatio-temporal presentation (ibid., 119). In such visual space there are no shadows, which of course are movement by way of sunshine. Another effect of almost constant sunshine is the abovementioned strong contours of objects typical of *ukiyo-e*. Furthermore, it makes colors pop. As in woodblock prints, things are not so much real objects, as blots of one color without any or with little gradation. This aesthetic is said to emerge from conventions that were elaborated in what we now call Japan, but it is a far cry away from notions of *wabi-sabi* and *mono no aware* which all too often serve as orientalist shorthand for anything Japanese and have been applied extensively in the Western (and Nippological) reception of Ozu's work (ibid., p. 121). It is difficult to find dark, shadowy, old segments in the image-sequences Ozu created. They are quite apparently present in the work of directors such as Mizoguchi, but not here. Hasumi even notes: "Nothing about the light in Ozu's scenes would lead someone to that kind of Japanese aesthetic sense. This atmosphere is not an expression of a subtle world that is for some reason difficult to grasp: under the sunlight of a fine day, everything is already clear." (ibid., p. 121) Neither is there generally any wind, which is surely diegetically motivated by using interiors. But after all, any film-object is a construction, the result of a process informed by habitualized decision-making. Ozu did not have to set most of his cinema in interiors. Many outside shots are framed in such a way that things generally moved by wind are kept outside the frame. Movement of the cosmos is reduced to a minimum.

It is also Hasumi (2004) who, in another essay, considers gestures in Ozu's work. He writes about the appropriation by some women of typically male objects, which they then use to express their opinions: "They show their emotional reaction not by raising their voices or changing their expressions – only with their bodily actions." (ibid.) Following academic literature on Japanese realities, this should not be surprising. In a putative Japanese tradition, expressing emotions and views analytically, through speech, is frowned upon. It is preferred to express things indirectly (for a logocentric culture) by symbols, things, movements (Berque & Sauzet, 2004, p. 35–36). The minimization of other movement organizes cinematic space in such a way to make these variations perceivable, to make human mimetic movement emerge, to stand out. Both Jiménez (2015, p. 96) and Hasumi (1997, p. 126) take note of the constant variation of gestures within Ozu's work. While most are ordinary, some are extraordinary. But to be able to notice a rather conventional gesture as special, it is necessary to have a constant flow of ordinary gestures from which some might emerge that have a special significance – be it symbolic or affective. What can be identified as an extraordinary gesture is one that is a radical variation on the generally small ones of other gestures. And perception of such gestures

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19 See also Kaul, 1983, p. 415.

is focused through Ozu's creation of a particular space-time coordination of the cinematic apparatus.

Ozu Beyond Cinematic Space-Time

And what if we leave cinematic space-time? After all, cinematic space-time is particular. It is one of many we inhabit. The world Ozu creates, has a complicated relationship with the one hypothetically regular viewers inhabit. His "talent lies in choosing an image that can function poetically at a particular moment by being assimilated into the film, not by affixing to the film the image of an object that is considered poetic in a domain outside the film." (ibid., p. 122) The images' meanings are immanent to the film, not transcendent. They emerge through variation within the films. Yet, these images (of space-time, as much as of spaces and objects) participate in the lives of those viewing the films, and perhaps even beyond. These connections can be approached through the concept of *En*, which "connotes ties or relations (*enishi*), invisible orders beyond human knowledge, which form webs around all things in the universe. One can neither predict nor comprehend the design and work of *En*. However, though usually invisible, the threads that connect humans and nonhumans may be brought to attention through unexpected meetings. Actualized through chance and coincidence, *En* forms the reason (*kotowari*) behind all things in the universe." (Jensen et al., 2016, p. 160) While the film form makes ordinary gestures emerge, so that they can become actively perceptible and thus possibly have an effect that exceeds the image, the two worlds – that of cinematic space-time and everyday space-time – are connected through invisible webs that may be actualized through unexpected meetings.

And Ozu makes sure that some connections become more affective than others, namely those of gestures. Ozu makes one notice the minutest variations in gestures. He teaches noticing. He teaches noticing of gestural variation by minimizing all other change. "With Ozu, all movements are caught in a flux of continual variations, of which the film is but an end or a block." (Jiménez, 2015, p. 97, own translation) And the gestures that thus become perceptible become forms that emerge from the film into life. Variation is similarity and difference. Through repetition one learns to perceive more finely, one begins to notice gestural variations that could otherwise remain hidden. Through this learning, through this becoming habit of the perception of gestural variation, the gestures as form emerge from the cinematic space into that of the physiognomic and cognitive apparatus of us, the observers. And that which emerges in such a way that it influences the flux of the lives of observers is a product of chance and coincidence – meetings of conventional gestures inside and outside cinema.

VI. Conclusion: Gesturing Images, Imaging Gestures

Among many topics, the attention of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben was moved toward thinking cinema on a gestural basis. He "claims gesture is the quintessential cinematic element, replacing the photograph as its fundamental unit." (Ó Maoilearca, 2017, p. 8) Developing a theory of 'gestural cinema,' he argues for gesture being the main element of cinema, replacing the image. He goes on to argue for gesture in a sort of extension of the Deleuzian movement-image, breaking down the image into gestures: "If the unity of the image has been broken, then we are left with only gestures and not images." (Noys, 2004) And these gestures, while being reified in the image, "preserve the dynamis intact." (Agamben, 2000, p. 55) Thus, in the same movement that a fragmentation of the image occurs, something precinematic remains to be transferred. In other words, something endures and, as phrased by Benjamin Noys: "It is neither a means in view of an end, nor an end without a means, it is means as such." (Noys, 2004) One might sense here unexpected connections to the Buddhist worlds described above. Perhaps even more surprisingly, Agamben in his historicizing mode, noted the

disappearance of gestures among the European bourgeoisie toward the end of the 19th century. He proposes the counter this loss of gestures in acts of recovery especially from silent cinema. Note that the filmmaker Yoshishige Yoshida, in a passage quoted earlier, stresses the exact same interest in the works of Ozu, in the cycle of subtle changes and repetitions decisive for gestural speech.

This can guide the movement back from form in cinematic space-time into the extra-cinematic: each gesture becomes realized in multiple, even diverging series of further gestures, in variations – in life as lived ephemerally. However, the cinematic apparatus makes it possible to revisit gestures, gestures completed within themselves in the process of change. They become apparent and one might through the habit of visual gesture become accustomed to a new, finer perception. Attuned to that which commonly disappears in an instant, the moment a gesture is made, it fades away. Training one's faculties with cinema, these fleeting appearances might be retained longer even when not captured by that technology. Even for filming, learning from the work of Ozu will make it easier to notice and to focus on gestures. As Agamben, from within an obviously Christian-secular and somewhat Bazinian framework, notes, images reify gestures, while preserving their power, their potentiality. The gestural is also figural: "Here the mimetic faculty apprehends dynamic systems of oblique relations connecting the spoken and the written, the written and the seen, and the seen and the heard in whatever combinations from whatever expressive materials. In other works, I have called this form of writing 'the figural.'" (Rodowick, 2017, p. 16) The perceptive apparatus of a human is historical precisely because it too, like cinema, is conditioned by the outside, while itself becoming the condition of its outside in (dis)continuous acts of perception. While contemporary media-technological realities might differ from those articulated by and through Ozu, the films themselves enact an attunement to the gestural ephemeral which is impossible to achieve without the aesthetic dimension of cinema, be it as gesture or as image.

Buddhist thought begins with emptiness. Emptiness conditions perpetual change. Cinema can elevate us from the transient world of writing in the sand to a comparatively less impermanent stability. For a soteriological Buddhist perspective, cinema could be all the worse, for it fosters attachment, and yet, it also teaches non-attachment. Still, what I am writing here does not aim at becoming a Buddhist treatise, merely a modest attempt at scientific writing. One that displays how gestures as images and mediated by cinematic images might travel between worlds and enable focused change. One that may aid in noticing the small and seemingly insignificant, which nonetheless might contain worlds of its own. I might have even managed to shed new light on the issue of whether Ozu was or was not conservative, a very popular subject in Ozu studies, in putting his works in an amodern framework, where the creation of conditions that enables the focus on minimal gestures in the exploding hyper sensualist sea of (post)modernity is both traditional (in that it is a category often unconsidered in modernity) and radical (as the focus on gesture opens up toward new futures [not to mention can be tied in with issues of factory work and alienation]). Gesture conceived as fleeting, yet intensified iterability – cinema and its consciously habitualized act of perception, thought and practice as ritualization. In other words, a formalization of patterns that takes one out of the direct pressures of history, for a while, and when returning to that everyday life, the passage makes possible worlds appear. I further suggest to take cinema as opening a space for experimentation with perception, here specifically, aided by Ozu's highly idiosyncratic, yet distinctly cinematic technique.

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