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Sacrifice for the Sake of Life

If we consider cinema as a tool for learning, we would find ourselves in a state of deception. Cinema is not a cognitive art, it rather is that of *re-cognitive*. Cinema (in any genre, style or form) does not allow itself to be analyzed during its presentation. It is only after its presentation that it opens up for discussions. Such is cinema's effect on *intellectual re-cognition*. Another one of cinema's influences is its effect on *emotive re-cognition*. Cinema (i.e. moving images) relies on constant visual and graphic movements. Even the films by Andrei Tarkovsky, Kenji Mizoguchi, Krzysztof Kieslowski, etc. that rely on extreme long takes are inevitably engaged in graphical and visual changes that not for a single moment allow the audience to cognize the film, but rather fully allow them to *feel* the changes that occur in the world within the frame. Cinema thus puts the audience in a blank state in which feelings are imposed by the medium and emotions are re-cognized by the audience. Thus, for its re-cognitive affects, cinema cannot be a tool for learning but a medium for re-cognition. Cinema puts the audience in a blank metaphysical state; cinema is non-cognitive, its presentation is not related to concepts or any purpose. Captivating close-ups in Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966) have no purpose in telling the film's narrative (its structural and conceptual background), but they are what elevate *Persona* as one of great films ever filmed, if not the greatest, simply because the close-ups in that film impose certain feelings that evoke particular emotions within the audience that are not shared amongst them but individually re-cognized. Cinema by itself does not, and cannot, teach – it only evokes re-cognition by experience.

The experience of cinema closely resembles the art of sculpting (process of manifesting a sculpture, but not the sculpture itself) in a sense that the art is already within the block. A sculptor, with his vision, cognizes a form beforehand and, with his intuitive feelings (what I call "creativity"), carves out the layers that cloud his vision and re-cognizes, at the end of the process, the art that was already within the block. In cinema, emotion is already within the frame. To repeat, cinema disallows the audience to cognize the film during its presentation and puts them into a blank metaphysical state in which feelings are imposed by the world within the frame and emotions are re-cognized. In short, the block and the art in sculpting are respectively the frame and emotions in cinema. Both sculpting and cinema are linked by the artist's vision. From a block to a work of art is sculptor's persistence on carrying out his vision. Identically, from a frame to emotion is filmmaker's persistence on executing his vision. Ideas are simply those that facilitate persistence. And because emotions are already within the frame, filmmakers should not consider how to make a scene emotional, but rather consider how to carve out the layers within the frame that cloud the initial vision, which ultimately is the emotion within the frame. The tools that filmmakers have for carving are ideas.

In filmmaking, however, the word that better describes "to carve" is "to isolate." Because image is not a physical thing but that which is visual, filmmakers cannot carve but can only isolate the images that they want to see and present – that their visions call for. The frame isolates a segment of our reality (which we may call such segment a "set") and reveals it as another world. Cinema is an exposure of a small world that had been

ignored within an established world at large. That small ignored world comes to light only through the camera that isolates its life from constructs such as politics, economics and social structures – Culture. As a result of camera's function to isolate a world from Culture, cinema is intrinsically psychological and emotional by its own nature. The close-up of a human face is thus the most powerful element of cinema, for it isolates a human from Culture and approaches directly towards his psychological and emotional state. The close-up of a human face is even a smaller world within a small world isolated by the camera. It is an image that went through double isolation. The camera first isolates a small world from an established Culture. The close-up then isolates a human being from that small world. The blank metaphysical state of the audience slowly becomes full with the individual state of the isolated human being, emotionally re-cognizing that Culture is the manifestation of sacrifice for the sake of life.

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