

When a Director Remakes His Own Film : A Comparative Analysis of Ozu Yasujiro's A Story of Floating Weeds and Floating Weeds

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When a Director Remakes His Own Film: A Comparative Analysis of Ozu Yasujiro's *A Story of Floating Weeds* and *Floating Weeds*

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It's interesting to see a performer portray a performer. It brings out the best in even a lousy actor, because he's a performer himself. The sadness of entertainers just oozes out of him, whether he realizes it or not.

-Dazai Osamu, "Merry Christmas", trans. Ralph McCarthy, *The Oxford Book of Japanese Short Stories*, Oxford, p.228.

1. Comparing two texts

Jorge Luis Borges's "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote", is not only a fascinating short story about literature, it offers a lesson on literary criticism, especially comparative analysis. The narrator analyzes the work of a marginal 20th century writer, Pierre Menard, who decides to write (not rewrite) *Don Quixote* from his perspective without relying on the original. It is based on the premise that Menard's work is, for a number of historical and intertextual reasons, superior to Cervantes's novel. In Borges's words: "The text of Cervantes and that of Menard are verbally identical, but the second is almost infinitely richer. (More ambiguous, his detractors will say; but ambiguity is richness.) It is a revelation to compare the Don Quixote of Menard with that of Cervantes¹". In just a few pages, Borges questions many of the assumptions of modern critical literary theory, especially those related to historical contextualization, reader's response theory, and intertextuality. The fictional writer of Borges's text argues that the same sentence written in

¹ Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote", trans. Anthony Bonner, *Ficciones*, New York, Grove Press, 1962, p.52.

two different historical contexts by two different people who lived two different lives expresses completely different meanings in the eyes of a literary scholar. Borges's narrator emphasizes, in what can be considered a very ironic take on comparative literature, Pierre Menard's superiority over Cervantes at the level of meaning simply because he takes into account, even if it is on the unconscious level, a richer intellectual tradition. For this narrator, Cervantes is just a clever novelist, while Menard is to be considered a true thinker in the modernist tradition who conquered through hard work the difficulties related to recreating (even if he might sometimes be clumsy!) the Spanish language of the 17th century. Although, Borges's goal is not to invalidate some conceptions associated with modern literary theory, this short story is a cautionary tale for the critic who wishes to compare two identical or similar texts that have been separated by the flow of time. *Don Quixote* is the perfect novel for this demonstration because it is one of the most analyzed novel of world literature and because it has a metafictional dimension which is explored throughout the novel.

Pierre Menard can also be read as a critique of the author as a source of meaning. Within the narrative Cervantes and Pierre Menard are obviously to be considered as two distinct individuals, having nothing in common except their interest in writing *Don Quixote's* novel. Their daily lives, their experiences are completely separate, but they somehow achieve almost the same result². Nevertheless, the knowledge about their lives informs our reading of their respective novel. Borges describes an extreme case where two individuals produce the same work, but we can use this story to also question how we analyze the way individual writers or artists change during the course of their life and how it affects their work,

² Menard dies before completing his version. The death of the writer seems to put an end to his work. Although, within this short story it might be considered to be a new beginning especially since Pierre Menard does not have to physically rewrite the whole *Quixote*. We could probably just reread Cervantes' novel as being written by Menard. The death of a writer signifying the end of his work has been source of questioning for many historians of literature. In the case of popular culture, even after a famous author's death, pastiches or sequels to previously written novels can be read by some to be part of the body of work of this writer or, at least, part of the universe the author created (often called the "canon"). The most famous examples in English literature are probably Arthur Conan Doyle, J.R.R. Tolkien and Frank Herbert (the sons of the latter two chose to devote their lives to complete their work). We can also consider Frank Kafka's death to be the beginning of his career as a novelist because his friend Max Brod decided to edit and publish three unfinished novels (*The Trial*, *The Castle* and *Amerika*) against his wishes.

especially the way they choose to change or redo some of their previous texts³.

In this paper we will focus not a novelist, but a movie director. Analyzing the work of a movie director raises similar questions as the ones derived from Borges' short story, but we also need to take into account that making a movie is a collaborative work, influenced by a great number of people, from the studio executives to the actors. In this sense comparing two versions of the same movie is not unlike comparing two versions of the same play (for example, see the comparisons between the quarto and the folio versions of Shakespeare's *King Lear*), although because of all these influences, the movie director is often less in control of the final product as is a novelist or a playwright. The author's conception as a producer and arbiter of meaning is often seen as less valid in the context of film studies. This does not mean that we have to avoid any comparison based on the director's point of view. It just means that we have to be more cautious.

With that in mind, I intend to compare two versions of the same movie filmed by the same director: Ozu Yasujiro's silent and black-and-white film *Story of Floating Weeds* (*Ukikusa monogatari*, 1934) and his remake with sound and color *Floating Weeds* (*Ukikusa*, 1959)⁴. I will try to understand Ozu's evolution as an artist without emphasizing the psychological change he might have gone through as a person. I will compare the two movies as texts and take into account the changes in the way film is conceived as media. I will show how elements of the plot and the way they are filmed tell us about film as a media and how it relates to other art forms and to society. In this sense I will oppose some of the conceptions expressed by Donald Richie in his comparative analysis of SDF and FD, especially the way he frames his conclusion:

The main difference is internal. The earlier version seems the more bitter of

³ In French literature, for example, one of the most famous case would be the writings of the Marquis de Sade. To give one example, he wrote extended versions of one his novel *Justine*, reworking a republishing existing material. Furthermore, his whole body of work is very eclectic, encompassing erotic novels published under a pseudonym, as well as official writings published under his own name that do not have the same subversive aspect. Today, his unofficial novels are often studied by scholars, but his more official work is often neglected. We construct an image of Sade that suits the needs of our time.

⁴ From now on, except for quotes from other writers, I will use the abbreviation SDF for *Story of Floating Weed* and FD for *Floating Weeds*.

the two. Toward the end of his life, Ozu mellowed, and one does not, for example, see or feel in *Floating Weeds* the pain of the once-again abandoned mother. To be sure, Haruko Sugimura is by no means happy about further betrayal, but she has become philosophical. Choku Iida in *A Story of Floating Weeds* shows us a bleak despair rarely seen in Ozu's more expansive later work. In 1934, Ozu felt deeply and personally the wrong that life inflicts. Twenty-five years later, he felt just as deeply, but perhaps less personally⁵.

Richie, as a specialist of Ozu, wants to understand the changes between the two movies through the lens of author's theory. Thus, the internal changes described are caused by an evolution in Ozu's personality and style. He needs to relate these two films to an entire body of work and will neglect aspects of these movies that do not conform to the general evolution he wants to emphasize. This is probably the major problem of author's theory: on a macro level, the critics choose movies they think represent best their idea of one director's style to the detriment of other works that are later labeled as minor or unrelated to the general evolution of his or her aesthetic, on a micro level they emphasize specific traits within a movie as long as it relates to other important movies included in the director's body of work. The quest to explain an original style limits the scope of the inquiry and often ignores how media informs the production of texts.

This is especially true in the case of a movie remake made by the same director. It is not unheard of for movie directors to remake their own movies, but it is not as frequent as writers rewriting a novel or playwrights reworking a play. The reason for this is simple: the cost behind movie-making is so prohibitive that studio executives need to make sure that the public will be willingly to see the same story shot by the same movie director twice. Usually, for this to happen, a reasonable amount of time between the makings of the two films is necessary. Also, a major technical change (silent to sound film, black-and-white to color, 2D to 3D)

⁵ Donald Richie, *Stories of Floating Weeds*.

<http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/320-stories-of-floating-weeds> This does not mean that I disagree with everything included in this well-researched essay. Richie, especially at the beginning of his text, acutely analyses important aspects of the two films and Ozu's conception of cinema. His explanation of the ellipse as rhetorical figure is crucial to understand Ozu's style. He also identifies the main influence for the making of these two films, *The Barker* (1928) by George Fitzmaurice.

or a change in the country where the film is produced (Hollywood often asks foreign directors to remake with American actors in an American setting films they made in their home country) is often required to justify these kinds of remake. Some famous examples of directors remaking their movies are Julien Duvivier (*Poil de carotte*, 1925 silent version, 1932 sound version) Alfred Hitchcock (*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 1934 British version, 1956 American version), and John Woo (*Once a Thief*, 1991 Hong Kong version, 1996 American version).

In Ozu's case, even though some of the stories and characters of many of his movies are similar (for example, *I was born, but...* (1932) and *Good Morning* (1959)) he only officially did one remake, FD being the remake of SDF. One is from his silent period the other is made with sound and color. These two important technical changes are useful to justify the remaking of the film, and give us some hints on how the changes in the movie as a media think themselves through movies. When looking at both films, similarities in characters, plot and even filming (many of the shots from the original film are kept in the remake) are often cited, but changes brought by new aspects of the media do not seem to be considered by many critics to be of great importance⁶. I will try to emphasize those changes in my analysis.

2. Story Summary and essential differences and similarities

SFW and FW are both structured around the same story. A small kabuki troupe returns to a remote village the members have not visited for over a decade in order to present a play. The head of the troupe, Ichikawa Kihachi (SFW) or Arashi Komajuro (FW), uses his free time to visit a woman living alone with her son. He is actually the father of the boy although he pretends to be only a relative. Because of the rain, the troupe cannot move from the town⁷. His current mistress, when

⁶ In films studies in general and in the case of Ozu in particular, critics tend to neglect sound as creator of meaning. This is due in part by the desire to show film as a distinct medium and avoid comparisons especially with theater. Ozu is also well-known for his unwillingness to do talking pictures (he made silent movies until 1936, almost ten years after the debut of *The Jazz Singer*). Richie, in his essay on SFW and FD considers the use of color, but completely ignores the addition of sound which has an important impact on the film as a whole.

⁷ The rain is an important motif in the movie and is used for dramatic effect especially when the head of the troupe and his mistress fight during a downpour. Obviously, the sound of rain also adds another dimension to that effect.

she discovers the truth, asks one of the pretty actresses to seduce the illegitimate son. The son and the actress fall in love and, after a few changes of hearts by the actress, decide to spend their life together. Hearing about the relationship, the head of the troupe, wanting to spare his son the difficulties of being a traveling actor, tries to break their relationship, but to no avail. He then decides to disband the troupe in order to stay with his son and his mother. In order to have a real family he then reveals to the angry boy his true identity, but the son cannot accept this new relationship. The head of the troupe has no choice but to leave his family and go back on the road. He reunites with his mistress at the train station and they decide to work and live together once more.

As it has been explained before, both movies are very similar, but there are also meaningful differences. When looking at the story and the setting, one of the most important is, without a doubt, the location of the village. In SFW and FW both take place in seaside villages, but in the 1959 version Ozu decided to set the movie in Mie (where he spent his childhood). FW starts with a shot of the sea and a lighthouse, emphasizing the seaside location, but SFW starts with the actors on the train (both movies end with the image of a train departing). The fishing scene with the father and the son in the SFW is in a river, but in FW they fish in the sea. We get a better feel of the relation between the villagers and the sea in the second version, and shots of the sea and the lighthouse add to the isolation of the characters as well as give a poetic undertone to their trials.

Furthermore, the characters in the second version speak in mix of what can be considered generic kansai-ben with some specificities of the Mie region⁸. This is important because the silent version, even though it has a lot of written dialogues, does not show the same desire to recreate spoken words.

Most of the actors in the movies, except one, are different (Mitsu Koji who plays the son in SFW and one of the actors of the troupe in FW). This is obviously due to the passage of time; the actors can hardly play the same character after 25 years.

⁸ According to Richie, Ozu's original choice for the location of the second movie was not Mie, but the Hokuriku region. Ozu wanted to change location for visual reasons: instead of the sea and the rain, he wanted to film the snow, but because of the lack of snow that year he had to abandon this project. Nevertheless, the dialogues in the kansai dialect add a new dimension to the movie. The importance of representing dialects grows with sound film that have to reproduce long conversation through dialogue.

It is also caused by the change of studio: Shochiku for the 1934 version and Daiei for the 1959 version. The main character is played by Sakamoto Takeshi in SFW and in FW by Nakamura Kanjiro the Second, a famous kabuki actor. This change is crucial considering that Ozu in both films takes a lot of time to show not only scenes at the theater (spectators arriving, actors preparing, etc.), but also scenes where the actors perform in a sort of metatheatre⁹.

The length of the movie is also different, 86 minutes for SFW and 119 minutes FW. The extra time is used by the director to lengthen some scenes, mostly to produce comic effects or to give time for dialogue. For example, the interactions between the actors from the troupe and the locals are filmed in greater details. The film shows how the male actors' failure to seduce attractive young women from the village leads to a series of comical scenes. Actually, the 1959 movie portrays much more explicitly male and female relationships, especially between the illegitimate son and the actress. In the later version, it is made clear that they have had sexual relationships, but the 1939 version tries to ignore it completely¹⁰. The social changes allowing (sometimes even requiring) more explicit representation of male-female relationships in movies is the main reason for this change. Although we must not forget that Ozu, as usual, does not go as far in the depiction of sexuality as some of his contemporaries. The difference in representation of sexual relations is not important enough to alter our perception of the whole story.

3. Sound and theater

The changes we have explained above are important, but, as we have mentioned before, the aim of this paper is to emphasize the importance of sound as a producer of meaning in order to understand the difference between the two versions.

⁹ Metatheatre is a common process in many plays. The most famous example is probably Shakespeare who used metatheatre in plays like *Hamlet* or *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. In French or in Japanese, the expression *théâtre dans le théâtre* or *geki-chu-geki* is usually used to describe this literary device. In Ozu's film we could talk about a theater within a movie. This aspect of SFW and FW will become more important in the next section.

¹⁰ Both actors portraying the son, Mitsui Koji in SFW and Kawaguchi Hiroshi in FW have almost the same age at the time of the shooting, respectively 24 and 23 years old, but the son in SFW seems less confident and less manly. In FW, although he is still a student, the son does part-time work at the post office and he seems more confident than in the previous version. For some spectators, they may seem too old for the part they play.

This is often ignored by critics for two reasons: first, as a general rule, sound is not considered to be important to understand movies in general and directors that are seen as creating only through images, like Ozu, second, even though Ozu was interested in sound film, for mostly technical reasons, he adopted sound many years after its introduction and relatively late in his career, reinforcing his image as a silent film *auteur* who only considered sound as an accessory¹¹.

Even if many critics still choose to ignore sound in the case of some filmmakers like Ozu¹², sound was such an important aspect of the debates surrounding the nature of movies since its beginnings that we have to acknowledge that it was a source of concern for most filmmakers and that these debates sometimes affected the narrative as well as the representation of this narrative. It is especially true in Japan because, even before the invention of sound films, the *katsudo-benshi*, or film commentators, were narrating and playing different characters, imitating male and female voices in an effort to create the illusion of sound coming from the film. Although film narrators were not unique to Japan (recent research have found evidence of people doing similar type of performances in France, Africa or Canada), they had unparalleled role in the development of cinema within Japanese society. Even though they were very popular with Japanese movie goers, they were often attacked by movie critics and intellectuals because their comments and explanations were judged to be often inaccurate and a distraction from the images of the screen. For these critics, cinema had the potential to be a true universal art form because it could tell stories with the universal language of images. Sound, in the form of comments from the *benshi*, was negating this aspect of films by adding an unnecessary dimension that could distract the viewers from the truth

¹¹ At the beginning, making *talkies*, or sound film, was a costly and technically difficult process that could hinder creativity for some directors instead of offering new possibilities. The way of making movies was altered and it took some time for the industry to adapt. Although caricatural, the best representation of these difficulties is probably the comedy *Singing in the Rain*. The film shows how the whole industry changed after the introduction of sound and how moviemakers who could not adapt were forced into oblivion. Furthermore, makers of silent films had achieved a good command of the medium in the 1920's, making many critics believe that the best days of the silent movies were ahead and that sound was not necessary. In this context, we can better understand the reasons why Ozu decided to delay the change to sound film.

¹² In some cases, filmmakers question within their movies the relationship between image and sound. The most obvious examples are David Lynch (*Mulholland Drive*, 2001), Francis Ford Coppola (*The Conversation*, 1974), George Lucas (*American Graffiti*, 1973).

conveyed on the screen. In Japan, this criticism was often directed at the *benshi*'s explanation of foreign films and the culture these films were portraying. They were considered to be inadequate and unnecessary translators of a culture. According to critics of *benshi*'s performances, they often made up facts to explain the actions of foreign actors on the screens. These "lies", often told to a young audience, had the risk to perpetuate falsehoods about foreign cultures, still unknown in Japan at the time¹³. In the rest of the world, the introduction of sound was also criticized from an intellectual standpoint. Many intellectuals, who defended cinema since its beginnings, saw this new art form as a way to oppose some of the alienating aspects of modern life. But, for some of them, sound transformed cinema in an agent of modernity. As Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener explain:

For many critics in the late 1920s, then, sound film did not represent the perfection of film as an art form, but rather of film as merely adding a layer of (vulgar) illusion. Along with this disappointment came the feeling of loss of that special aura: had the cinema not managed to "silence" the already (too) loud and noisy world of modernity¹⁴?

For all these reasons sound and cinema were not seen as completing each other. These debates illustrate how cinema, as a new media, was defined, in part, by its independence from sound. This was also a way to differentiate this new art form from theater, which relied a lot on written words. In Japan, especially, many intellectuals (often associated with the pure film movement) wanted to stop production companies from making movies of theater representations or movies based on plays, especially kabuki. Actually, there was a strong production of movies based on kabuki plays in Japan. This was associated with a lack of understanding of cinema as an independent art form. Although, these movies based on theater were

¹³ These anti-*benshi* positions, as well as the importance of moving images as a universal medium that did not need sound are associated with the pure film movement in Japan. This movement and their intellectual positions are analysed by Aaron Gerow in *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895-1925*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2010. We could add that film was perceived by some as a media that did not need a translator, or a filter, to be understood.

¹⁴ Thomas Elsaesser, Malte Hagener, *Film Theory: An Introduction through the senses*, London, Routledge, 2010, p.135.

frowned upon by some intellectuals in Japan, for some people outside of Japan, theater, in particular Japanese theater, was used to better understand cinema in general as well as the relationship between cinema and sound in particular. In 1929, Sergei Eisenstein, a film director and critic, wrote about Japanese culture, especially theater, in relation to montage as well as the nascent technique of sound film:

The most interesting link of the Japanese theater is, of course, its link with the sound film, which can and must learn its fundamentals from the Japanese—the reduction of visual and aural sensations to a common physiological denominator. [...] In its cinema Japan similarly pursues imitations of the most revolting examples of American and European entries in the international commercial film race. To understand and apply her cultural peculiarities to the cinema, this is the task of Japan! Colleagues of Japan, are you really going to leave this for us to do¹⁵?

In this essay, Eisenstein's argument is that Japanese culture as a whole is based on montage and that kabuki theater, more than any other art form, understands the relationship between image and sound (also a form a montage). Unfortunately, according to Eisenstein, Japanese cinema is not as interesting as kabuki or the Japanese culture that precedes it. He hopes that Japanese filmmakers will use Japanese tradition to make films that reflects the idea of montage and the importance of the relationship between image and sound. Even though he writes this text in 1929 based on limited viewings of Japanese films, and even though some of his analysis of Japanese culture have a certain dose of orientalism, his criticisms sometimes echoed and completed the ones expressed by some Japanese intellectuals.

When looking at Ozu's films SFW and FW, we can better appreciate the relationship between theater and film as well as image and sound. Ozu tries to integrate a play within the general economy of the film, rather than use film to show a play.

¹⁵ Sergei Eisenstein, *Essays in Film Theory: Film Form*, trans. Jay Leyda, San Diego, Harvest Book, 1949, p.44.

Furthermore, the play within the film is used to address problems inherent to cinema. It is a metatheater in the sense that the parts of the play that are shown are only interesting when they are seen as being part of the whole film. It doesn't work as a stand-alone play. This is true for SDW as well as for FW.

In both films, Ozu gives a lot of time to show the performance of the actors from the troupe (more than 5 minutes). Both films show different plays, putting emphasis on different characters from the troupe, although both films use a little boy as a source of comic relief¹⁶. The filming of each scene is very important. The plot of the plays does not mirror the life of the characters or their inner feelings, like it is often the case in metatheater. Instead, it illustrates the relationship between the actors and the spectators, as well as the relationship between film and theater, through two important elements: the gaze and the voice.

Scenes of theatrical performance are first shot from the perspective of the spectators. We can see the stage as well as the back of the spectators sitting in the front. Ozu does not try to hide, as it is often the case of movies filming plays, the other spectators. Here, filming the theater as a place and the spectators as being part of that place is more important than filming the play. He recreates the experience of being in the theater and watching a play. Then, after the actors have given part of their performance, we can see reaction shots of the spectators¹⁷. We can see them looking, enjoying, reacting to the play. In both films, spectators, following the kabuki tradition, react to famous lines or body movements from the actors by screaming at them directly. Even in SFW, Ozu does not hesitate to use intertitles to express the reaction of the spectators precisely, even though these sentences do not help understand the story of the film. By doing this, Ozu recreates in a silent film the dynamic of kabuki. This is, so far, a simple relationship between spectators and actors. But Ozu adds another layer to this filming of the gaze. The male actors, before they go on stage peak through the curtains in order to see the

¹⁶ Actually, the content of the play in SFW is much funnier than in FW. More importantly, FW does not show us the performance of the head of the troupe, portrayed by a real kabuki actor, Nakamura Kanjiro the Second. This can be read as a way to avoid the impression that the film's goal is to portray kabuki.

¹⁷ Obviously, this representation of a play and the reaction of the spectators is not unique. For example, during the same period François Truffaut's *The Four Hundred Blows* (*Les quatre cents coups*, 1959) shows the reaction of children to a traditional French puppet theater play (Guignol). Furthermore, in the film, movie theaters are the only place the protagonist can find solace from a foucauldian.

audience, especially the beautiful women. We can also see some spectators looking at each other. The theater then becomes a place of a multiplicity of gazes. They try to break the usual power relationships associated with theater. The actors try to conquer the gaze of the villagers through their desire for the female spectators. The play becomes part of the village's life, extending beyond the time of the representation (the actors will try to seduce the beautiful women who attend the play). It is a place for social interaction.

This effect of a multiplicity of gazes can only be accomplished through montage, an important characteristic of cinema: the different perspectives cannot be all shown at once, thus the need to be organized through a meaningful layout¹⁸. Through a theater representation associated with montage, Ozu shows the importance of montage in cinema, and shows how cinema can express different issues related to space, time and sound. Although present in both movies, this reflection on cinema through metatheater within cinema becomes more important in FW. Words and sounds associated with the kabuki are completely recreated in the scenes of FW, emphasizing the montage dimension of kabuki. There is an overlap between the sound of the play and montage that illustrates Eisenstein theory on montage and films in relation to kabuki. Furthermore, FW gives more time to monologues by the actors, standing there with a minimum of movements. During these monologues, the camera sometimes shows use the face of spectators looking at the scene while we still here the words spoken by the actor. This is a form of montage where images and sound from different places are associated in the same shot. This really represents Eisenstein visions of sound and image, especially when the representation of Japanese theater is considered. In the end, these scenes of metatheater tell us more about cinema than kabuki.

Thus, we can say that FW expresses even more potently the difference between cinema and theater. It may seem paradoxical, but it is through sound in FW that

¹⁸ This is not to say that cinema is superior to theater for Ozu. It only means that both art forms have distinctive grammar and ways of framing reality. Within SFW and FW, theater has a special status because it allows actors and villagers to interact during and after performances. In SFW and FW, cinema (in the form of a movie theater for example) is never mentioned. Other forms of live-entertainment (for example, striptease shows in FW) are talked about by the characters, but they never mention cinema. This shows that these two films are not about cinema as a place for social interaction. Cinema within the narrative is a sort of blind spot. It can only express itself indirectly, through a comparison with theater.

we can fully grasp that difference. The organization of sound and images, especially during the theater scenes, are not only there to represent reality, but also to show two distinct forms of montage. It emphasizes the importance of the gaze to understand cinema and it shows that cinema represents reality differently.

4. *A Story of Floating Weeds and Floating Weeds and Borges's Pierre Menard*

This paper tried to show how the remake of a film by the same director can generate new meaning without relying on an author-based analysis. Debates about the nature of cinema as a new art form have always been important since its beginning and I believe that movies tend to reflect, within their narrative as well as their representation of that narrative, different points of view on what cinema should be, and its relation to other media. The changes between SFW and FW are the result of a desire to express more directly a conception of cinema, than an altered conception of life.

These two movies by Ozu are texts that interact with each other as well as with other texts that preceded or that will follow them. They are part of a semiotic network. Not unlike Pierre Menard's *Don Quixote*, the same movie scene filmed by the same movie director can convey a different meaning with the passage of time. Movies and film theories evolve together and affect each other. Our perception of what movies should be changes with time. We believe that Ozu's *A Story of Floating Weeds and Floating Weeds* are a good example of that change at the level of representation.

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