

## Green Border: Cinematic Storytelling as History of the Present

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### Abstract

This article analyzes Agnieszka Holland's film *Green Border*, which addresses the migrant crisis at the Belarus-Poland border, exploring how Foucault's concept of "history of the present" applies to migration cinema. We argue that *Green Border* functions as a cinematic intervention that challenges audience perceptions of power structures and their resistance. The study also establishes criteria for analyzing films as "history of the present," focusing on characteristics such as the immediate relevance of depicted events, the documentation of social issues, the film's influence on public perception, and a multifaceted narrative construction. Ultimately, the framework shows how cinema reflects and shapes social, political, and cultural realities in real time.

**Keywords:** Green Border; migration cinema; history of the present; Belarus-Poland border; refugee crises



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# Green Border: Cinematic Storytelling as History of the Present

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## Introduction

This article seeks to analyze the film *Green Border*, directed by Agnieszka Holland, which focuses on the contemporary crisis at the Belarus-Poland border, where migrants from the Middle East and Africa face severe humanitarian challenges and political exploitation. We argue that through Foucault's conceptualization of "history of the present", *Green Border* is a moving example of this concept within migration cinema. This analysis allows us to understand the film not just as a depiction of a current crisis, but as a critical examination of the power dynamics that shape contemporary migration issues. *Green Border* may be seen as a historical intervention that influences how audiences perceive and respond to a contemporary issue.

Cinema, as a medium, encapsulates the notion of history of the present by reflecting and shaping contemporary social, political, and cultural discourses through its narratives. Thomas Elsaesser's analysis of New German Cinema (1989), for instance, illustrates how films like those of Fassbinder and Herzog critically engage with Germany's post-war identity and collective memory, effectively using cinema to examine present-day societal issues. Elsaesser's work emphasizes that cinema is an active participant in shaping cultural memory and addressing

unresolved societal issues (1989). Robert A. Rosenstone's *Visions of the Past* (1995) further contends that historical films do not merely represent past events but contribute to history writing offering a way of looking which contemporary audiences can see the past. Vivian Sobchack's (1992) phenomenological approach posits that the experiential nature of film viewing creates an interaction between the viewer's present and the historical moments depicted on screen. This interaction deepens the way viewers process history, memory, and personal experience, reinforcing how film functions as a medium that connects the present with the historical, making it both immediate and visceral. Wright (2019) notes that the visual representations of history in film have a significant impact on how the public perceives and understands historical events, which can shape collective memory and cultural identity. Moreover, she also posits that media commentary also plays a significant role in shaping the discourse around historical films, influencing public opinion and academic discussions about the portrayal of history on screen (Wright, 2019). Through specific case studies, Utterson (2020) illustrates how cinema tells its own history or histories, demonstrating an unwillingness to fade away, and instead finding surprising and enlightening ways to remain relevant in the present. In short, various scholars point out that cinema has a capacity to serve as a history of the present, providing a rich dialogue between past and contemporary realities in a mutually constructive way.

While analyzing *Green Border* on the above lines, this study also aims to establish criteria for analyzing a film as a history of the present and to explore what directors investigate and how they approach their subjects for a film to be considered part of the cinematic history of the present. By examining the key characteristics necessary for a film to act as a contemporary historical record—such as the immediate relevance of depicted events, the meticulous documentation of social issues, the film’s influence on public perception, and a multifaceted narrative construction—this study will provide a framework for understanding how cinema as a “history of the present” can reflect and shape current social, political, and cultural realities.

### Theoretical Background: Cinema as a History of the Present

The concept of “history of the present” is a methodological approach which proposes the idea that contemporary issues can be understood through historical analysis, suggesting that past events, practices, and power structures construct today’s social, political, and cultural conditions. Derived from Michel Foucault’s work, in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and *The History of Sexuality* (1978), this approach deconstructs the ways in which historical narratives and discourses influence our realities and subjectivities today.

In our understanding, writing a “history of the present” is not only the documentation and analysis of contemporary events but also “making” the present “reality” through the process of narrating it. This conceptualization is based on the premise that historical narratives are not

objective; instead they are instrumental in constructing social realities and influencing current and future perceptions and actions. How we interpret past events and represent them in our historical narratives are connected to the power structures and prevalent discourses of our time (Foucault, 1977). As a result, the historical narratives in academia, arts, media, or film construct our collective memory and social identity (Nora, 1989)<sup>1</sup>.

In our opinion, the concept of the “history of the present” in the cinematic experience occur within a liminal space, existing between memory and history, art and social studies. This liminal space is in between Pierre Nora’s notion of memory, which is inherently tied to the present, emotionally charged, and selective in its recollection of events and his description of history as a reconstruction of the past, a representation requiring intellectual rigor and critical analysis but always problematic and unfinished at the same time. As a medium, cinema conveys the urgency and emotional complexity of events (memory) while also providing a critical viewpoint to comprehend their historical origins and ramifications (history). Because of this dual ability, cinematic narratives are situated in a dynamic interplay between the analytical but problematic field of social studies and the subjective, affective field of art (Nora, 1989).

Therefore, a film on a current event will contribute to the creation of its social and cultural reality from the very beginning. By reflecting the migrants’ real-life experiences, migration cinema becomes a history of the present. It not only reflects the events, but it also makes us reconsider our

conceptions of identities and sociopolitical context of migration trends. Films like Aki Kaurismäki's *Le Havre* (2011); Stephen Frears' *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002), and Cary Joji Fukunaga's *Sin Nombre* (2009) show us how migration cinema may be considered as a history of the present through its narrative spaces where contemporary issues of migration, identity, and socio-political realities are explored and critiqued.

We believe that a film needs to include a few essential elements to function as a “history of the present.” First, the events portrayed are directly related to actual events. Through its emphasis on current affairs, chronicling continuing challenges, and exposing the policies to criticism, the movie serves as a modern historical record.

Second, it should carefully record social issues, highlighting the political opportunism and personal costs involved. This kind of documentation aligns with the “history of the present” approach, which seeks to understand current social issues through a historical lens. The film should be addressing and illustrating the affective life or response of the group it binds—which is to say, as “there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual” (Nora, 1989: 7; Burgoyne, 2013).

Third, the movie seeks to influence how people see the real-life events in question. By making the experience of migrants “seen”, cinema challenges audiences to ponder on the moral inferences of

their governments' policies. Thus, the filmmakers have the capacity to shape public perceptions towards migrants, migration and policy making.

Fourth, the narrative construction of the film should be multifaceted, presenting a comprehensive view of the crisis and/or real life occurrences. This approach emphasizes the interconnectedness of individual stories and broader political forces, which is central to understanding the present through a historical framework.

Cinema is a narrative construction of reality which may be connected to what Michel Foucault emphasizes about history writing. In his opinion the process of narrative construction means that writing history is an act of “making” the present, as it frames current events within particular historical contexts and discourses (Foucault, 1977). Cinema, as a form of representation, is always part of a discourse that shapes how societies understand themselves and envision their past and present. By selecting which events to document and interpreting them in certain ways through various ideologies, directors influence public consciousness and identity in the same manner as historians do. As a narrative construction and a history of the present, cinema can also be read as making the present by contributing to collective memory (McSweeney, 2014). This brings us to the analysis of *Green Border* in the light of the above discussion.

### Analysis: Immediate Relevance to Real-Life Occurrences

Examining *Green Border* using the standards set forth for a film to serve as a “history of the present” shows that it satisfies these requirements. The ongoing drama of migrants caught between the two countries, the challenges faced by humanitarian relief organizations, and the way border guards legitimize their actions and create narratives of threat are all vividly depicted in the film.

The film’s “historical” backdrop is based on the EU sanctions imposed on Belarus in June 2021, which intensified into a humanitarian crisis when thousands of migrants became trapped at the Belarusian-Polish border while attempting to cross into the EU. According to Frontex data, most of the migrants trying to cross from Eastern countries to the EU come from Iraq (also migrants from Syria and Afghanistan), and Belarusian authorities have been accused of transporting migrants to the border through visa-free travel arrangements and travel agents (BBC, 2021). Humanitarian aid groups estimate that there are 4,000 migrants in the camp on the Polish border and about 10-20,000 over Belarus in November 2021 (Pérez-Peña, 2021). Since the summer of 2021, the increase in the number of migrants arriving in Belarus to cross to EU countries has once again led to the escalation of events into a border crisis between Poland and Belarus in autumn and the use of human beings as an instrument in the security-humanitarian dilemma. According to Human Rights Watch, 55 people, including children, were killed in the pushbacks between Belarus and Poland. The government declared the border with Belarus a restricted zone and prevented



humanitarian groups from entering the area. Although the restrictions were lifted in June 2022, humanitarian groups were accused of illegal entry of migrants to Poland and networking with criminal groups (Gall, 2024). Many publications mention the denial of access to asylum procedures for migrants at the border, the systematic and sometimes violent pushbacks by Polish border officials, and the violence and abuse by Belarusian authorities. (UNHCR, 2021; Amnesty International 2022; ACAPS, 2021).

The crisis started politically as a bargaining tool between Belarus and the EU against the sanctions imposed on Belarus by the EU (Erdoğan & Karakoç Dora, 2022; Bharti et al. 2023). However, in the period that followed, Ursula von der Leyen's labelling of the incident as a "hybrid attack," the EU's increasing support for Ukraine, and its backing of Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland, alongside Iraq's repatriation of its citizens and the blacklisting of those involved in migrant transportation, revealed that the crisis had evolved into a complex, multidimensional issue. It now transcended the borders of Belarus and Poland, becoming a supranational concern that involved multiple actors and interests (Erdoğan & Karakoç Dora).

Following the 2015 "refugee crisis," the Belarusian-Polish border crisis once again tested the security of the EU's borders and the concept of EU solidarity. Additionally, the Russian-Ukrainian war, which began in February 2022 and resulted in a wave of Ukrainian refugees seeking asylum in Poland, highlighted the divide between "us" and "them," presenting migration as a threat. Since

2015, the prevailing discourse on refugees has centered around this dichotomy. While immigrants from the Middle East and Africa are often depicted as a threat, Ukrainian refugees are typically portrayed as part of “us” (Hargrave et al., 2023). In 2023, Poland accused Belarus and Russia of orchestrating a deliberate scheme to facilitate another influx of migrants across the Polish border to create instability (Agence France-Presse, 2023). The situation at the border remains unchanged, with an ongoing migrant crisis at the Belarusian-Polish border.

Green Border centers its emplotment on the above events on the Belarusian-Polish border. The film’s diegetic space encompasses the experiences of not only the migrants but also the border guards, humanitarian aid workers, and the ordinary people living near the Border. It portrays how the crises were actually “felt” by all those involved in these geopolitical tensions and humanitarian crises.

### Documentation of Social Issues

The movie is based on real events and focuses on the journey of the migrants. It concentrates on the experience of the migrants through their journey, reflect their harsh conditions and desperation, how they are treated by the authorities and exploited by political bodies. The audience witness the sociopolitical environment and are presented with a comprehensive portrayal of the crisis.

Apart from the two countries, the Belarus-Poland border crisis has taken on a supranational dimension linked to the EU and Russia. Ursula von der Leyen's tweet on 23 November 2021

stating that ““Belarus is leading a hybrid attack against the EU”” shows the political dimension of the incident, and the film also includes the EU's role in the border crisis with similar expressions (U. von der Leyen, 23 November 2021):

- Remember, this is classic hybrid warfare. (00:39:23)

The film presents and documents the struggle of migrants between life and death, the right to asylum, the construction of the discourse of threat, and the political power dynamics of the EU, Russia and Belarus based on the geopolitical importance of the region.

### Shaping the Public Opinion

In an effort to influence public perception, the film *Green Border* aims to humanize the experience of migrants and encourages viewers to contemplate the ethical implications of the acts taken by their respective governments. It is the intention of the film’s powerful narration and evocative imagery to create empathy and understanding among viewers, with the potential to influence social views towards migrants and to spark discussions on immigration policies and human rights.

In addition to visualizing the dramatic moments of being caught in the liminal area between life and death, which is mirrored by the physical border between the two countries, the film also makes the effort to alter the perceptions of the general public. These recurring pictures of refugees

attempting to make their way through the dangerous borderland force viewers to examine the ethical consequences of the measures taken by their respective governments. For example, the migrant family hiding in a field, on the verge of being crushed by harvesting machinery, highlights the immediate danger they face (2.06). Furthermore, the deeply moving scene of the elderly grandfather being repeatedly pushed between the borders until he gives up (1.33), as well as the heartbreaking moment when his grandson, a young boy, drowns in a swamp while trying to run toward a better future, powerfully depict the harsh stakes of living in this in-between space. The film humanizes the struggle of migrants by exposing these lived experiences, which has the potential to influence the society's views as well as the policy decisions.

For instance, in another scene, humanitarian aid workers find the migrant group in the forest, and provide them with hot chocolate, soup, and tend to their wounds. They also record the encounter on camera. Bashir, though his wife urges him to show his injuries at his back for the camera, hoping it might help their asylum case, refuses. Overcome with anger and sorrow, he exclaims, "Why should I show them? They've been watching our stories for the past ten years. Nobody did anything" (00:51:09). Another asylum seeker, reflecting on his own dehumanizing experience, adds: "Honestly, I don't know if I'm still human. They made me an animal here. My only sin is having the world's worst passport" (00:51). This scene where the migrants speak directly to the camera, each with their own unique stories, reveals the broader socio-political

dynamics and forces the audience to empathize with these people of various colours and ethnicities.

The dehumanization of migrants is a central theme in the film, which is deeply moving, and it has the potential of influencing public perception profoundly. This portrayal of parents trying to ease this process for their children evokes powerful emotions in the audience, shaping their response to the migrant crisis and highlighting the broader societal impact of such inhumane treatment.

One of the most emotional moments in the film is when the grandfather, who has been repeatedly pushed back between the two borders, finally gives up the struggle. This emotional scene unfolds as the family—also trapped in this liminal space—pleads with him to continue moving with them. However, after learning that his most beloved grandson has drowned in a swamp, the grandfather loses his will to live or be “saved” and knowingly stays behind. In this extended scene, the audience holds its breath as the elderly man remains seated on the ground, while the rest of the family is led to a vehicle meant to transport them, only to later be sent back. The grandfather is brutally struck by a guard, and his son, realizing his father didn’t board the vehicle, protests and is also beaten. The son’s shocked expression reveals the violence inflicted on his father, and though the beating is not shown, the sounds of the blows echoes in the silence. Later, the grandfather’s body is brought back to the liminal space, leaving the audience uncertain

whether he is still alive. Even if he survives the brutal assault, it is clear he remains trapped in this in-between space, hovering between life and death.

The film repeatedly highlights fundamental human security issues such as the scarcity of food, water, and medical supplies, as well as the challenges faced by humanitarian aid groups. It dramatizes the difficulties these groups encounter when attempting to provide assistance in restricted zones, while also shedding light on the government's hostile attitude towards both migrants and its own citizens. One particularly telling scene involves a member of an aid group who, after entering the exclusion zone, is detained, searched, and accused of human trafficking - a charge that could result in an eight-year prison sentence.

“- You entered the exclusion zone.

- I don't think so.
- If you admit it, the prosecutor will drop the sanctions...
- Are you kidding? What sanctions? Even if I entered the zone, it's only a misdemeanor.
- Then how about assisting with human trafficking? Article 264 of the Criminal Code, up to eight years in prison." (01:47:56-01:48:14)

This moment highlights both the challenges encountered by migrants and the dangers faced by humanitarian aid workers.

### Multifaceted Narrative Construction

The narrative structure of *Green Border* is complex, providing a thorough portrayal of the situation from the views of the various parties involved. The film mixes several storylines, including those

of migrants, border guards, activists, and locals, to demonstrate the interdependence of human lives and larger political forces. This approach emphasizes the complexity of the migrant crisis, showing how personal struggles are influenced by and contribute to larger socio-political dynamics. By providing a diverse range of perspectives, the film helps viewers understand the present crisis through a holistic and historically informed framework (McSweeney, 2014). However, the film reveals once again that vulnerable groups such as the elderly, pregnant women and children, who are constantly pushed between the two countries, are the groups most affected by migration.

The main theme of the film is “trauma” and its profound impact on human beings, transforming their lives regardless of their roles in the crisis. The film emphasizes that all parties involved, whether they are victims or authorities, experience the events as “traumatic”. Even though the guards represent the authorities and not the direct victims, they too endure the events as traumatic, mirroring the experiences of the victims. This narrative approach highlights the interconnectedness of human experiences, suggesting that witnessing or causing trauma elicits similar emotional responses. By focusing on this shared human emotion, the film explores our collective vulnerability and the deep emotional bonds that connect us all, regardless of our positions within a crisis. This shared experience is best conveyed through the perspective of the *Border Guards* showing that the crises transcend individual roles and affects everyone involved,

ultimately promoting empathy and a deeper comprehension of the human condition. It invites us to consider such a crisis as existential crises for us all, as we reflect on how we coexist in this shared world.

### The Perspective of the Border Guards

“The Green Border” suggests that “reality” is “made” by perception and the thematic narration of events. By presenting the differing viewpoints of each party, it reveals how reality is constructed by those in positions of authority for the others to live by. The constructed “reality” for Border Guards exhibits this phenomenon and can be evaluated within the context of securitization.

Securitization is a more extreme type of politicizing a problem in which the situation is framed as an “existential threat” requiring prompt action beyond standard processes (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 23-24). It entails politicizing a problem by portraying it as an existential threat, which justifies the use of emergency measures. In other words, an issue becomes a security concern not because of its natural character or relevance, but because it is presented as such (Karyotis, 2007). In parallel with this perspective, the authorities employ a highly charged, nationalistic narrative to educate and motivate border guards, casting migrants and asylum seekers as existential threats to the nation throughout *The Green Border*. This narrative antagonizes migrants, depicting them as villains or



instruments of foreign adversaries, and is filled with themes intended to provoke intense nationalistic and dehumanizing emotions among the guards.

The narrative goes further by stripping the migrants of their humanity, casting them as mere instruments of geopolitical adversaries: “They were found with terrorist, pedophile and zoophile materials! Have you seen the phones they have? You couldn’t afford...” Such extreme accusations serve to demonize the migrants, painting them as morally corrupt, insincere about their desperation and potentially dangerous. This dehumanization is critical in justifying harsh and inhumane treatment because it limits empathy and the possibility of viewing migrants as humans with legitimate needs and rights.

To convey this idea explicitly, the script includes an extended scene where the audience observes the orientation of the Border Guards. In this scene, the Chief Border Guard gives a speech that invokes the guards’ feeling of professionalism and national obligation, characterizing migrants as a direct and immediate threat to national security.

“You have to show professionalism. Because if you give them an apple, they’ll just say it was poisoned, and then what? This isn’t propaganda, it’s a real threat! One mistake, and in six months we’ll have an attack on the Warsaw subway” (00:55:20).

The authorities generate anxiety and urgency by referring to the possibility of a terrorist attack on a national symbol such as the Warsaw metro. This technique emphasizes how certain narratives,

and structured information may shape public comprehension of historical events, affecting collective memory and the recollection of the past. The film successfully illustrates how the threat of an assault, like to the Madrid train bombings (2004) and the London subway attack (2005) post-9/11, is employed to amplify public fear. This fear strengthens the dichotomy of “us” versus “migrant others,” fostering a defensive, nearly militant mentality among the guards, thereby ingraining the belief that they are the nation’s final barrier against disorder and violence.

The speech also aims to prevent any potential empathy the guards might feel towards the migrants, particularly the children: “And I don’t want to hear about their kids! They hire or buy children, and then blow smoke in their eyes to make them cry....” By suggesting that the children’s suffering is fabricated to manipulate the guards’ compassion, the authorities aim to suppress natural empathetic responses. This manipulation ensures that the guards remain detached and willing to follow orders without questioning the morality of their actions.

The climax of the speech intensifies the dehumanization of migrants, portraying them as weapons rather than people:

“We’re saving them. You have children of your own. What father would take his child down this road? They want to exploit our Polish compassion while Lukashenko rubs his hands. Remember, this is classic hybrid warfare. They aren’t people; they are weapons of Putin and Lukashenko. They aren’t people... they are live bullets!” (00:39).

Although the film is fictional, these statements closely reflect reality. During Poland's October election campaign, ministers from the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party made similar remarks, describing Middle Eastern migrants trying to enter Poland as part of a "special operation" orchestrated by the Kremlin (Safronova, 2024). In the 2023 elections, the conservative, nationalist, and often anti-EU Law and Justice Party, which had governed Poland for eight years, lost its majority in Parliament (France 24, 2023). However, newly elected Prime Minister Donald Tusk's comments about strengthening border defenses against Belarus, facing a "hybrid war," and addressing "illegal migration" have drawn criticism from members of his own party, who argue that this rhetoric continues the previous government's "inhumane" discourse (Pyka, 2024).

By characterizing migrants as "weapons of Putin and Lukashenko" and "live bullets," the authorities reinforce the idea that these individuals are not merely refugees seeking safety, but active threats to national security. This militaristic rhetoric justifies the actions of border guards, framing their behavior as necessary defensive measures rather than acts of cruelty, and aligning their duties with patriotic service (00:38-00:39). While the film hints at how Belarus is using migrants as political tools, it does not delve into the broader media discussions regarding Belarus' role in orchestrating the transport of migrants (Rosenberg, 2021; 'What Is Happening on the Poland-Belarus Border?', 2021). The Belarusian migrant crisis is a state-organized movement in which migrants are weaponized in response to EU sanctions. This crisis, in which people are used

as political instruments, has been approached predominantly from a security perspective, with little consideration for its humanitarian dimensions (Erdoğan & Karakoç Dora, 2022; Zander, 2021).

The border guard initially tries to maintain a “professional” detachment, but this stance weakens as they come face to face with the suffering of the families they encounter. The film delves into the internal conflict and sorrow experienced by the guards, showing how their sense of duty clashes with their humanity. A striking example is when a border guard chooses to leave the migrant family in the vehicle, knowing they might be saved. In a way, this subtle act of rebellion shows his quiet attempt to help, even within the rigid structures of his role. This moment highlights the moral dilemmas the guards face, as they oscillate between following orders and their instinct to show compassion.

## Conclusion

Cinema utilizes narrative emplotment, visual storytelling, and emotional involvement to build a connection with its audience in the domain of art. Cinema concurrently functions as a medium for social analysis, providing a critical evaluation of the conditions and frameworks that influence modern existence. Filmmakers frequently investigate historical backgrounds of the present events, socio-political processes, and address intricate subjects such as migration, identity, and justice. Films which illustrate these themes through a cinematic perspective, almost always offer a kind of

historiography that is both accessible and engaging, thereby bridging the divide between academic study and public understanding through art. They address contemporary concerns, draw upon and construct collective memories, and cultural symbols. In doing so, they elicit a sense of immediacy and intimacy, enabling viewers to engage with the lived experiences of the portrayed people.

This corresponds with Foucault's concept of "history of the present," which aims to reveal the genealogies of contemporary cultural norms and behaviors. Consequently, the cinematic portrayal of the "history of the present" holds a crucial transitional position, leveraging the emotional power of art and the analytical precision of social sciences. This interaction allows cinema to both reflect on and critique the present while fostering a more profound historical awareness. It emphasizes the significance of comprehending present concerns within their extensive historical backgrounds, cultivating a more enlightened viewpoint on the world. By synthesizing memory and history, art and analysis, cinema emerges as a powerful instrument for examining and recording the intricacies of the present.

We proposed that films functioning as a "history of the present" in cinema adhere to specific requirements. The events shown are of immediate importance, directly addressing present issues and reflecting their current significance. Secondly, these films systematically chronicle social and political issues, illuminating the impact of power systems and policies on individuals. Third, they shape public perception by offering intricate, multifaceted tales that compel audiences to engage

in critical reflection on the presented subjects. Ultimately, the narrative transcends individual accounts to elucidate overarching political and historical dynamics, fostering a discourse between personal experiences and institutional reality.

In conclusion, *Green Border* successfully fulfills the criteria for serving as a “history of the present.” It records immediate, real-world occurrences, illuminates urgent social issues, shapes public perception, and presents a complex narrative that links personal experiences with wider political circumstances. The film not only documents current problems but also contributes to societal comprehension and may influence policy decisions related to migration and human rights. The narrative structure of *Green Border* is complex, offering an extensive perspective on the problem. It intertwines several narratives, encompassing migrants, border guards, activists, and local inhabitants, to demonstrate the interrelation of personal experiences, trauma and overarching political dynamics. This narrative structure and the emplotment of the film highlight the intricacy of the migrant crisis, illustrating how individual hardships are shaped by and impact broader socio-political factors.

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#### ENDNOTES:

- <sup>1</sup> [Editor's Note]: An example of this can be found about the uses of memory, history and cinema in Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *The Wilde Pear Tree* (2018). See Adak and Akser (2023). Please cite as: Yakalı, D., & Erdoğan, Z. Green Border: Cinematic Storytelling as History of the Present. *CINEJ Cinema Journal*, 12(2), 244–268. <https://doi.org/10.5195/cinej.2024.680>.