FATEMI, SEPEHR

KINDNESS OF STRANGERS - A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF AKI KAURISMÄKI'S LE HAVRE

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**Abstract**  
The narrative of *Le Havre* (2011) by Aki Kaurismäki can defamiliarize our understanding of illegal immigration in Europe. While much of the refugee debate in the media makes reference to statistics and politicians’ comments, *Le Havre* shows a man named Marcel when he tries to assist an underage asylum seeker, running through Europe, in reuniting with his mother in England. The impact of the film on the viewer can be considered to be in sympathy with Marcel’s cause.

This research was an attempt to closely analyse this film by using social semiotics. Social semiotics would enable the viewer to talk back and question the ways in which social reality is represented, rather than only be overwhelmed by what it is. The research questions were designed in order to decide if cinema has been exploited to favour one ideology or whether the mechanisms involved in the presentation of the narrative in *Le Havre* have avoided political propaganda and remained faithful to realism. The study involved an initial discussion of key concepts in film studies, including those of realism, auteur, mise en scene, etc. Later, the film was objectively looked at and means of representation of filmic narrative was systematically analysed. The focus of the study was on filmic techniques and their impact on the audience’s meaning making processes. In this way, the film was initially divided into its 89 scenes. Then each scene was firstly discussed with regards to what it represents. Then, of all the scenes, those which contain an element that may attract a semiotician were detected, and the ways in which that content is shown to the audience were discussed. In arguing the potential impact of a cinematic tool on the viewer, relevant literature on visual and cinematic methods were used as reference.

A careful analysis of scenes with an orientation element in them revealed that the director has been relatively faithful to realist approaches to film making. Little use of techniques was found in the film that cross the borders of simplicity in the representation of the narrative. In conclusion, *Le Havre*, overall, is a film that gives the viewer the choice to depend less on filmic tools but more on his/her own reading in the meaning-making of the artefact.

**Keywords**  
Aki Kaurismäki, Auteur, Film analysis, Film studies, Finland, Le Havre, Semiotics, Social semiotics
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I specially owe the EdGlo community- both my teachers and the 2014 fellow EdGlo students- for the changes that have happened in my viewpoints on world matters. Without needing to claim that these changes have been for the better, I am grateful because I personally feel more in peace with my outlook on the planet that we live in. While I used to be a fan of extremely liberal economic and political approaches, the program of Education and Globalisation, amongst other factors, helped me improve my skill in better empathizing with others, including the underdog.

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This thesis is submitted in the memory of Abbas Kiarostami, whose cinema was the inspiration behind conducting this research.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The narrative of *Le Havre* (2011) by Aki Kaurismäki can defamiliarize our understanding of illegal immigration in Europe. While much of the refugee debate in the media makes reference to statistics and politicians’ comments, *Le Havre* shows a man named Marcel when he tries to assist an underage asylum seeker, running through Europe, in reuniting with his mother in England.

My thesis analyses this film. My choice of this subject draws heavily on my personal interest in at least three things: cinema as a medium for artistic creation, Aki Kaurismäki as a favourite director of mine, and Finland as a country I respect deeply.

I have been watching Kaurismäki’s films since I came to Finland to study in August 2014. To me, his films proved a path to learn more about the Finnish culture. Also, knowing that Aki Kaurismäki was a fan of my favourite renowned Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami convinced me even more to conduct my research about the Finnish director, also to learn his cinema better.

To date, Aki Kaurismäki has directed 18 feature films, with *The Other Side of Hope* (2017) currently on air in Finnish cinemas. Having watched most of them, I find certain common features repeated, so vividly clear that one could work out a pattern between similarities and differences in Kaurismäki’s cinema. However, this research is only about *Le Havre*. My choice is also inspired by the asylum seekers’ crisis in Europe in the past few years and the fact that *Le Havre* can add to the open debate.

Despite my personal interest in the director, this research attempts to remain objective and systematically analyse means of representation of filmic narrative in *Le Havre*. My aim is to decide whether cinema has been exploited to favour one ideology or whether the mechanisms involved in the presentation of the narrative have avoided political propaganda and remained fair to the reality. In other words, I attempt to see if the filmmaker is operating in good faith, or if he has designed a machine of manipulation. In simple words, my objective is to see if the film is an honest discourse.

The impression a film leaves on the viewer is determined by not only what the viewer sees in the film but also by the ways that content is presented to the audience. In this way, we
can look at a film either to simply enjoy it, or else to systematically analyse how the reali-
ties in that film are represented. Respectively, content analysis of “filmic text” is not lim-
ited to thematic analysis. It can go beyond the themes and also attempt to understand the
semiotic features. The impact created by a film is, then, the effect of more than just what is
seen. My research- in its methodology- is strongly inspired by the visual analysis approach
applied by Rick Iedema (2001) in chapter 9 of Handbook of Visual Analysis (Idema, 2001,
p.183-204).

The method is called social semiotics and, unlike traditional semiotics where the focus is on
signs, here the focus is on socially meaningful and entire processes- “texts”. Additionally,
the analysis is not mere theoretical abstraction, but a sociopolitical relevance, meaning that
the reading position of the reader- film viewer in the case of my research- would guide her
through the interpretations.

Accordingly, the following two research questions have been produced:

- How does the choice of the narrative, and ways of representing the reality in *Le Ha-
vre* give weight to one viewpoint and diminish the other with regards to the asylum
seekers’ debate?
- From a social semiotics point of view, to what extent can *Le Havre* be considered as
political propaganda?

In the following chapters and pages, in order to answer the research questions, I will first
discuss the theories that this research will depend on, give an outline on how the filmic text
will be studied systematically (methodology), present and analyse my collected data, and
finally give a conclusion.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To conduct my research I reviewed the literature on film theories in general and those relevant to the cinema of Aki Kaurismäki in particular. I also read about qualitative research and, more importantly, content analysis and social semiotics. In what follows, I will give a brief picture of each of these key areas that this research is built on.

2.1 Aki Kaurismäki

The fact that Aki Kaurismäki is indeed a significant Finnish artist with global reception in artistic cinema circles is hard to deny. For example, Kaurismäki is ranked 19th among Guardian’s world’s 40 best directors, the only Finnish director on the list (The world's 40 best directors, 2011).

Additionally, over the last three decades, Aki Kaurismäki’s films have found some sort of outlet internationally through film festivals and art-house distribution. In 2007, the British art-house label Artificial Eye released a three volume DVD box-set edition of Aki Kaurismäki’s films, a sure sign of a certain critical and commercial success. (Kääpä, 2010, p.1) Aki Kaurismäki has also been nominated four times for Palme d'Or in the Cannes Film Festival. He won the FIPRESCI Prize for Le Havre in the same festival in 2011 (Aki Kaurismäki awards page on IMDB, 2016).

Born in 1957, Aki Kaurismäki became internationally established no sooner than 1990 or so, around which point he was already regarded as the leading talent of Finland’s miniscule film industry (Cardullo, 2006). His characters are generally removed from the mainstream. They are marginalized human beings and typically alone. Kaurismäki states that the middle-class life does not interest him. Instead, he is attracted to what he calls losers, the Finnish working class, and the people who are hidden—“the ugly people”. Kaurismäki says he does not make films about the ideas, but based on stories and the people in them. He is known by many as a realist filmmaker. He himself admits he is against using theatrical acting in his works and that he expects his actors not to identify themselves with the roles they play. This will make the audiences be provoked to “draw intellectual conclusions instead of becoming just emotionally attached to what they see” (Cardullo, 2006). Additionally, Kaurismäki
strongly opposes “Hollywood”, reiterating that he has no esteem for films called entertain-
ment in which people are slaughtered with guns. He says he prefers to leave a deep impact
on only one person rather than a superficial impact on two million people (Cardullo, 2006).

2.2 Kaurismäki as an Auteur

I would like to start this paragraph by immediately claiming that Kaurismäki is an auteur.
This means he is a filmmaker who controls all aspects of a collaborative creative work, a
person equivalent to the author of a novel or a play. Auteurs are filmmakers or directors who
have a recognizable style or thematic preoccupation. Unlike mainstream cinema of Holly-
wood in which the director is one engineer working with other technicians in making the
final product, auteur directors’ personal filmmaking features are more clearly available in
the final product. A film by an auteur is easier to detect the director of, even without being
informed about the name of the director. This is because certain elements are so vividly
visible and so frequently used that an informed viewer can attribute them to the creator of
that film. For instance, in the cinema of Aki Kaurismäki it is extremely common to see in
the narrative smoking characters sitting in local bars. Or, from a visual perspective, Abbas
Kiarostami’s cinema is easily recognized by longshots of empty roads in nature. On the other
hand, one drawback of stating that the film-maker and his films are one, according to Bazin,
is that there can be no mediocre films, as the worst of them will always be in the image of
their creator (Bazin, 1957, p.249).

Auteur theory is rooted in the French film criticism of the late 1940s. In 1948, critic and
filmmaker Alexandre Astruc called for a new age of cinema, which he identified as the age
of camera-pen. He predicted that cinema would "gradually break free from the tyranny of
what is visual, from the image for its own sake, from the immediate and concrete demands
of the narrative, to become a means of writing just as flexible and subtle as written language”
(Monaco, 1977, p.331). Auteur theory was dubbed by American film critic Andrew Sarris.
Such critics invented the concept as a way of distinguishing French New Wave filmmakers
from studio system directors that were part of the Hollywood establishment. According to
Sarris, as can been seen in Figure 01, there are three premises to 'auteur' theory: the technical
competence of the director, the director's distinguishable personality, and interior meaning.
He says that three concentric circles can represent the three premises, of which the outer one
represents technique, the middle one - individual style and the inner one - interior meaning.
The director's interrelated roles can be designated as the roles of the technician, stylist, and the 'auteur' respectively (Sarris, 2007).

Accordingly, I would like to argue that Aki Kaurismäki's meaning can be detected inside his works, distinguishing his films from the films of other directors. In my understanding of the theory an auteur, Kaurismäki included, is an author whose writing tool is the cinematic tools. He uses the cinema as a medium in order to speak his meanings, and not a produce a commodity to sell. This does not mean that I am claiming that Kaurismäki and his works are not separable from each other, but that even in their most independent existence from the auteur, Kaurismäki’s films have features so typical of him that I could hypothesize the film’s director by only watching some scenes. In short, I would like to wrap this section up by referring to Bazin’s *politique des auteurs* which states that in the cases of auteur directors we can always choose the personal factor in artistic creation as a standard of reference, and then assume that it continues an even progresses from one film to the next. True that there do exist certain important films that escape this test, but these will systematically be considered inferior to those in which the personal stamp of the auteur can be perceived even minutely (Bazin, 1957, p.255).
2.3 Le Havre

In its plot, *Le Havre* is a film about an illegal immigrant child entering Le Havre. On the map, Le Havre is a major port in northern France's Upper Normandy region, where the Seine River meets the English Channel. Even without watching the film and by only Googling the location, it could well be imagined that the port is popular with illegal human cargoes that head for England. The film depicts how the child is helped and protected from the law by a local guy called Marcel. In the film, Marcel Marx lives in the city of Le Havre. He leads a simple life with his wife Arletty. Also, he seems to be living a Bohemian life enjoying his favourite bar with his humble occupation as a shoeshiner. The narrative presents its conflict when the police find a container filled with illegal immigrants, and a young boy manages to escape from being arrested. The cops announce a manhunt. As Arletty suddenly becomes seriously ill, the life of the film’s hero, Marcel's, crosses with the underage illegal immigrant from Africa. Marcel and his friends and contacts help to hide the boy from the police, and help him reunite with his mother in England.

Brooke (2012) argues that *Le Havre* features some departures from the director’s earlier works. For example, it is set in France unlike Kaurismäki’s former films in Finland. Apart from that, one of the central characters is a Gabonese child, and the film’s major theme is illegal immigration. In the same interview, Kaurismäki (perhaps humorously) explains his choice of location was because he cannot imagine anybody to be so desperate that they want to be a refugee in Finland (2012, p.16).

2.4 Pure Cinema

Depending on how much a film borrows from other forms of culture, filmmakers belong to different categories. If a film gives too much space and time to music, for example, it is borrowing from the art of music and is therefore less pure. In this way a big question is how we can determine what in cinema is exclusive to it and what is not.

In defining cinema in an exclusive way, I found a figure in Mocano’s *How to read a film: the art, technology, language, history and theory of film and media* (1977) very helpful. Figure 02 has been taken from page 342 of that book and shows what in cinema is specific to the medium and what is shared with general culture and theatre. Narration, for example, also exists in literate and is therefore not exclusive to cinema. Montage, on the other hand, is unavailable in theatre or any other form of culture and is therefore a component that distinguishes cinema from other domains.
Understanding what cinema actually is, and what in cinema is actually not cinema but borrowed by cinema is a first step in knowing what we mean by filmic data.

Figure 02. Cinema’s distinctive features that make it different from other forms (Monaco, 1977)

If some codes or features are specific to cinema and some are not, then of those specific codes some are shared by all films and some by only a few, while others are unique to certain individual films. In other words, the extent to which a single film goes beyond the medium of cinema and enters other domains is case specific and there is no general rule. Similarly, the well-known French director Robert Bresson’s Notes on the Cinematograph can better elaborate on the issue. Bresson (1975) states in his notes on cinema:

“{There are} two types of films: those that employ the resources of the theater (actors, direction, etc...) and use the camera in order to reproduce; those that employ the resources of cinematography and use the camera to create” (p.15). The purest form of cinema in Bresson’s style is one that is minimized to the combination of image and sound. Bresson’s cinematography does not rely on theater, nor does it rely on the novel or painting. For him, “what the cinematographer captures with his or her own resources cannot be what the theater, the novel, painting capture with theirs” (p.20).
2.5 Classic Film Theory

In reply to why the study of films is important, I could refer to the Kantian aesthetics that separates sensation from contemplation (Kant, 1790). Accordingly, one could argue that the enjoyment or the aesthetic ecstasy one gains through films is not mere sensuous gratification but also the contemplation that follows or happens at the time of the sensation (Hill et al., 2000, p.49). So, a film leaves an impact on the viewer. That impact can change the audience or make her/him think twice about certain social traits, for example.

There are two main approaches to films: the creationist, and the realist. Creationists (also referred to as formalists) believe that cinema goes beyond reality, while realists propose that cinema is mere representation of reality. Among creationists, Rudolf Arnheim refutes the assertion that cinema is a mechanical reproduction of real life (Arnheim, 1933). Although some of his arguments that were made in the 40s may not be valid nowadays- that cinema unlike real life is not three-dimensional, for example- his argument that cinema works through montage is not deniable. Montage or editing is a sequence of shots that is obtained after editing. Editing makes something available to someone watching a film that could never be seen by an empirical viewer of what was originally filmed (Hill et al., 2000, p.50).

Unlike formalists, such as Arnheim, who believe cinema goes beyond reality, realists, a key scholar among whom is Andre Bazin, emphasize the objective nature of cinema as its core trait. Bazin's theories are clearly realist in organization, but perhaps what Bazin is after should be called "functionalism" rather than simply realism, for running throughout his argument is the important idea that film has significance not for what it is but for what it does. For Bazin, realism is more a matter of psychology than of esthetics. Bazin notes that photography and cinema involve embalming. The primary role of embalming in any case is to "embalm time, rescuing it simply from its proper corruption." This leads to a simple conclusion: The history of photography and films is less a matter of their aesthetic but essentially the story of resemblance, or realism" (Monaco, 1977, p.329).

What is common between both realists and formalists, however, is the fact that both views have the common assumption that cinema does, irrespectively, contain “reproduction” as a component. Formalists would, however, value cinema to the extent that it goes beyond that reproduction, while realists confine themselves to the reproduction stage (Hill et al., 2000, p.50).
The history of film theory was later affected by three theoretical interventions: semiotics, Marxism, and psychoanalysis. A semiotic approach to film theory—which greatly depended on Saussure’s linguistic theories—focused on film as text, as a result weakening concerns over realism/formalism distinctions that were discussed in the paragraph above. In fact, cinema is itself considered as a form of textuality that can be studied (Hill et al., 2000, p.50-51). My study on Aki Kaurismäki’s film can best be categorized within this theory. Here, film is text, and I have read the text to find patterned similarities so as to analyse it.

2.6 Mise en Scène

If montage is the heart of cinema for formalists (creationists), mise en scene is the crux of the realist film. By mise en scene, realists mean specifically deep focus photography and the sequence-shot; these techniques allow the spectator to participate more fully in the experience of film. Deep focus is a cinematographic technique which makes use of a large depth of field. Depth of field is the front-to-back range of focus in an image. In deep focus the foreground, middle-ground and background are all in focus. Thus Bazin finds the development of deep focus to be not just another filmic device, but rather "a dialectical step forward in the history of film language" (Monaco, 1977, p.330). He suggests that depth of focus brings the spectator in closer relation with the image than he is with reality." This implies consequently "both a more active mental attitude on the part of the observer and a more positive contribution on his part to the action in progress." Moreover, deep focus rules out ambiguity of expression. What we see is what there is. Filmic content is, therefore, strongly denotative. In addition to depth of focus, Bazin focuses on the two concepts of the presence and reality of space. Bazin suggests that the essential difference between theater and cinema lies in this area. There is only one reality that cannot be denied in cinema—the reality of space. The implications for cinema are that, since there is no irreducible reality of presence, "there is nothing to prevent us from identifying ourselves in imagination with the moving world before us, which becomes the world." Identification then becomes a key word in the vocabulary of cinematic esthetics. Moreover, the one irreducible reality is that of space. Therefore, film form is intimately involved with spatial relationships: mise en scene, in other words (Monaco, 1977).

The importance of new views in film theories, those that were developed or inspired by Bazin’s, lies in the fact that cinema could now focus on function rather than form. The French New Wave was strongly influenced by this emphasis on function and on the importance of
the auteur. Cinema was moving from theories of abstract design to theories of concrete communication.

However, even mise en scène was not unanimously believed to be totally innocent in showing the reality. Godard, for example, believed that mise en scene can be as untruthful as montage when a director uses it to distort reality. He also argued that montage is not necessarily evidence of bad faith on the part of the filmmaker. In fact, Godard brought in a new concept, that of “intellectual reality”. Intellectual reality is a term coined in relationship with the phrases of “plastic reality” and “psychological reality”. Plastic reality addresses the filmmaker's concrete relationship with his raw materials while psychological reality is about the filmmaker's manipulative relationship with the audience. Intellectual reality, however, is the filmmaker's dialectical, or conversational, relationship with the audience. No doubt, reality is thought to be served by mise en scene, which is believed to be more honest than montage. But Godard has redefined the limits of realism so that we now no longer focus on techniques like mise en scene and montage to be of main interest (Monaco, 1977, pp. 332-333).

2.7 Film Realism

Can we assume that fictions are not documentaries and, therefore, stop even relating fictions-including Le Havre- to real life issues because of their not being representations of the real? In other words, should we stop considering a fiction movie significant enough to be studied in relation to real life problems? How can a fiction movie convey information just like a documentary does, and where is the distinction between the two genres? A simple answer might be that a movie about real life is called a documentary. And that is precisely the problem; documentaries are about real life; they are not real life. They are not even windows onto real life. They are portraits of real life, using real life as their raw material, constructed by artists and technicians who make decisions about what story to tell to whom, and for what purpose. Then, we might modify the definition by saying any film that does not manipulate real life is a documentary. And yet, there is no way to make a film without manipulating the information. Selection of topic, editing, and mixing sound are all manipulations. Broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow once said, “Anyone who believes that every individual film must represent a ‘balanced’ picture knows nothing about either balance or pictures” (Aufderheide, 2007, p.2). So, not even do we have a real documentary in cinema that can claim
truthfulness. Even documentaries are manipulated representations of reality and not the reality itself. Likewise, fictions are not mere fictions and do inevitably include some reality in them. In fact, there is no clear-cut dichotomy between documentary and fiction and any film would rather present to us a hybrid entity that enjoys some of each. In my review of relevant literature, I came across an essay by Grodal (2002), in which it is argued that realism is mainly a word used in order to describe the relationship between representations and a physical and social 'reality' exterior to such representations. Therefore, realism may be applied both to fictitious and non-fictitious representations, because realism does not imply that what has been represented is true and 'real' in all aspects. It only implies that the representation is experienced as being a concrete representation that is, or might be true. The evaluation of realism in a given representation is based on the preexisting understandings and no definite decisions can be made on a particular film.

In social semiotics, the aim is to discover how visual, audio, and narration techniques have been applied to implicitly favour one viewpoint, for example. Or, else, how these techniques yield a fairly equal exposure of the audience to both sides of the story. There is no aim to distinguish between real and fake, or claim realism or reject that concept in a particular fiction.

2.8 Paradigm

My research falls within the category of constructivist paradigm. According to Mertens (2010), a paradigm- as a way of looking at the world- is defined when four questions with regards to that are answered. What is the nature of ethics? (Axiology), what is the nature of reality? (Ontology), what is the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be-known? (Epistemology) How can the desired knowledge be obtained? (Methodology) (Mertens, cop. 2010)

Ontologically, and in the context of my thesis, I do not follow the belief that there is one reality out there that my research aims at finding. Instead, my assumption is that my understanding of the reality in the context of this research is strongly affected by my suppositions and features as the viewer of the film. Therefore, my interpretation is guided by my reading position. Despite this, however, as also said by Idema (2001), I do claim to be able to support my claims with systematic evidence on which I will base my arguments.
Epistemologically, I am interlocked in an interactive process with the text, influenced by it when making my interpretations. The constructivist therefore opts for a more personal, interactive mode of data collection. Here, instead of being claimant of objectivity, I am to claim that any interpretation I make of Aki Kaurismäki’s *Le Havre* is also rooted in me as the reader. However, it has been strongly attempted that a strong logic be followed in the assembling of those interpretations. (Mertens, cop. 2010, p.1-46)

And finally, methodologically, my paradigm leads me to choosing a hermeneutic approach, specifically social semiotics, the aim of which is to provide systematic interpretations of visual content, filmic text.

### 2.9 Qualitative Content Analysis

My research is applying social semiotics to systematically study a film. Accordingly, this involves studying some content. As a result, social semiotic can be considered a sub-category to content analysis. Any material can be analysed. Film is material and is no exception.

Schreier (2012) specifies that content analysis in qualitative research is comprised of two components: the text, and the interpretation of the text. Text in this context does not merely include verbal data, but can as well be making use of visual data; images for example. In the case of my thesis, for example, data collected from *Le Havre* which is filmic text would fall in the same category. Such data will be regarded as a ‘text’.

Content analysis is a process of translating the obtained data into the categories of a coding frame, unlike the everyday intuitive understanding of data which is based on our presuppositions and former knowledge. This is how systematicity is achieved in the research process. Also, Qualitative Content Analysis reduces data to what is needed and sought (Schreier, 2012).

With the data in hand, in my case scenes from a film, the question is what we should do with the information. In Qualitative Content Analysis a focus is essential. This is because qualitative material in general provides a lot of information one can easily get lost in. To avoid this pitfall, the material should be classified as instances of the categories of a coding frame. Moreover, the extent to which interpretations made upon such information can be generalized is crucially significant to consider (Schreier, 2012). I would accordingly believe, in qualitative content analysis, a researcher should beware of making any conclusions of a bigger picture than the one she has studied. If I take 5 scenes out of the whole film, for example,
I should be careful not to extend my claimed understanding to other film segments, nor am I well-advised to jump to other-than-the-focus conclusions about the same scenes. However, this does not necessarily mean that small scale research within qualitative methods gives us no information about larger scales; it is, in fact some caution that should always be taken when involved in such methods.

As mentioned earlier, film as one type of material culture can be considered as content and analysed systematically. Study methods of interpretation can then focus on context definition, the construction of patterned similarities and differences, and the use of relevant social and material culture theory” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Additionally, a film content can be studied with respect to how the content is presented to the viewer. So, film content can be analysed either in response to the questions of what it shows or alternatively in response to the question of how it shows what it shows. My research focuses on the latter rather than the former.

2.10 Social Semiotics

Social semiotics is a subset to semiology. The concern of semiology is to decode the hidden meaning in visual works. In other words, it aims at decoding the culture material, a film for example (Rose, 2012, p.105). Unlike content analysis, however, which claims being scientific due to being quantitative, replicable, and valid, semiology claims being scientific by systematically showing the prejudices beneath the smooth surface of the beautiful. A good example where semiology has been applied often is in the meaning making process of advertisements. To many of us, advertisements seem to be just ordinary and are taken for granted, while semiology attempts to show that adverts are in fact not as innocent as they appear to be. They, on many occasions, contain ideologies that are hidden behind the surface. It is, therefore, the work of semiology to work out that hidden meaning through critical visual analysis (Rose, 2012, p.106-107). Likewise, in my research I have the assumption that there is one common fallacy when people think of visual materials, films for example. That fallacy is the camera cannot lie. Astruc says the difference between the cinema and anything else - including the novel - is, primarily, the impossibility of telling a lie in the cinema (1985, p.266). The fact, however, is humans, the agents who wield cameras, can and do lie. In films, for example, editing can change the sequence of events or remove certain events and give focus to certain others. The power of montage and its effect on filmic realism was briefly discussed in the previous sections of this study. What is more, even at the level of mise en
scene, the choice of the camera angle and the choice of the lens’s focal length can yield certain effects and diminish certain others (Loizos, 2000, p. 95). So, even in the most radical realist approaches to cinema, those of Kiarostami or Bresson for instance, absolute realism is only a myth. Without remembering the exact source, I can quote someone who once said the only perfectly truthful form in cinema is the video recorded on a closed-circuit television camera. Whether we agree or disagree with this statement, the fact that realism in visual products is very hard to achieve is undeniable.

Films are out of time and space. They show us only what the film-makers have found necessary. As a result it is correct to claim that films are smaller pieces of reality. What we see is a less complete than the reality itself (Metz, 1974, p.98). Le Havre, for example, shows the lives of the characters within a few day span, until the asylum seeker is finally helped out of town. However, the whole film lasts no longer than 90 minutes. In this way, the representation of the reality has been selective and limited only to personal choices made by the director. A film is a compressed reality, accordingly (Metz, 1974). The compression occurs through editing, and editing makes use of different techniques, one of which is continuity-editing. Through this technique, the film maker makes us believe the events are connected and that we have a full grasp of the reality in terms of its time, and place (Nicholas, 1981, p.85). Montage, as already discusses, is related to the same technique. The importance of continuity lies in the fact that this is how the viewer is made to construct the reality. Social semiotics pays attention to such techniques not only to discuss what is shown but to go further to point to the pieces of reality that have intentionally been left out.

As mentioned, my analysis in this study is social semiotics. According to Van Leeuwen et al. (2001, p.187), social semiotics centers on how the audience is positioned by the film in question, and how certain social values are promoted over others. Social semiotics would enable the viewer to talk back and question the ways in which “social reality” is represented, rather than only be overwhelmed by what it is.

Social semiotics is a branch of the field of semiotics. Semiotics, itself, is described as the “study of signs.” Harrison (2003) says for a sign to exist, there must be meaning or content (the signified) manifested through some form of expression or representation (the sign). For example, a photo of a cup of coffee is not reality but artifice—in other words, a representation or sign that brings to our mind “a cup of coffee” (p.47). Another common example is that of the green light in a traffic signal as a sign, meaning “go” within the semiotic system.
of traffic control; words are signs in the semiotic system of language; gestures are signs within the semiotic system of nonverbal communication; and so on. Among these examples, “language” is very central in semiotic studies not only as yet another sign that can be approached semiotically, but also as an example idea on which basis semiotics is created in the first place. In the semiotics of film, I personally think of frames as words, sequences as sentences, and the whole film as a text. Monaco (1977) says it would seem that the fact of montage offers the easiest comparison between film and language in general. What makes film distinctively separate from other languages is the fact that in the case of film, signifier and signified are nearly the same whilst in language they differ in essence. In order to use a language one must be able to understand its sounds and meanings, both its signifiers and its signifieds. But this is not true of film. Signifier and signified are nearly the same: what you see it what you get (p.341).

Film semiotics intends to be a science, depending heavily on the practical detailed analysis of specific films—parts of films. In this respect, semiotic criticism is far more concrete and intense than any other approach (Monaco, 1977, p.339). From a historical point of view, film semiotics initially looked at films only from a linguistic perspective. Later, in the early seventies, semiotics concentrated on the study of production. The semiotics of the process, of the making of texts, was central here, and political ideology became part of the semiotic equation. Beginning in 1975, attention shifted from production to consumption, from the making of filmic texts to the perception of them. In this stage, film semiotics was greatly influenced by Freudian psychology. In brief, semiotics which initially aimed at quantifying and offering the prospect of complete and exact analysis of the phenomenon of film, later and gradually worked its way backwards to the basic question of “how we know what we see” (Monaco, 1977, p.340).

As said above, social semiotics is a sub category to semiotics. It goes farther in what it does. I personally like Lemke’s definition for social semiotics especially because this definition clearly draws a line that shows how social semiotics can be distinguished from semiotics: “Social semiotics is a synthesis of several modern approaches to the study of social meaning and social action. One of them, obviously is semiotics itself: the study of our social resources for communicating meanings. Formal semiotics is mainly interested in the systematic study of the systems of signs themselves. Social semiotics includes formal semiotics and goes on to ask how people use signs to construct the life of a community” (1990, p. 183).
Social semiotics can address images and ask what meanings images can construct. It can apply semiotic resources and see what can be said and done with images and other visual means of communication and how the things people say and do with images can be interpreted. To better explain this through exemplification, I am presenting an example semiotic analysis here. The example frame has been taken from *Le Havre* to open the door to data presentation which will follow later in this study.

Figure 03 is a frame I have captured from a scene in *Le Havre* where the inspector first meets Marcel. Here is an example of how visual social semiotics can be used as a tool in analyzing a frame in a film to see how means of representation can leave a particular impact on the audience, constructing a meaning that goes beyond the simple activation of the reality signified by the signifier. A social semiotician would note a significant aspect of this frame in the film, its point of view. The shot is taken from a low-angle, placing Inspector Monet at a high angle from the viewer. This angle allows the image to glorify the inspector by emphasizing his dominance and power. The angle compels the viewer to look up at the inspector, a statement about the power of the state and the law. It should be noted that Aki Kaurismäki had other perspective choices that could have altered this “power statement” about the inspector. For example, we could have seen the inspector from a bird’s-eye viewpoint, making him look smaller, and within the context of his surroundings. Alternatively, we could have had a photograph of the inspector from above, a perspective that would imply lack of power and control. But the auteur of the film has decided to use a low-angle. Even if this has not been caused by a conscious or a deliberate choice, its effect on the viewer is, regardless, expected to be the same.
Figure 03. A social semiotician could argue that Inspector Monet is shown at a high angle from the viewer, causing the image to glorify the inspector by emphasizing his dominance and power.
3. RESEARCH DESIGN, RELIABILITY, VALIDITY

One first step in conducting this research is defining what I mean by the cinema of Aki Kaurismäki. How can cinema be defined as a text that can then be studied and analysed? In fact, a definition of film text is necessary. As mentioned by Hill, Gibson, Dyer, Kaplan, & Willemen (2000), text can be defined as “a coherent delimited, comprehensible structure of meaning” (p.10). Film text, thus, is broad in what it can refer to, considering that such text-texts can be studied from a physical, narrative, economic, or cultural perspective (Hill et al., 2000). In my study, the focus has been on text as narrative in its visual form. I will look at what we see in the films. The images and the events in the plot make up the “text” in my study.

3.1 Research Design

To make systematic analysis possible, I have done three things. Firstly, I have divided the film into its scenes. This is because I have chosen “scene” to be my film level to study. Le Havre consists of 89 scenes. I have numbered all the scenes of the film from 1 to 89, and specified the time when one scene is cut into the next one (Available in the appendix). Secondly, among the chosen scenes, I have made an analysis of those on which a semiotician could have comments. In other words, any scene in which techniques or film-maker decisions have manipulated the innocent representation of reality has been studied. Finally, to make conclusion possible, I have looked for repeated elements in film-making and narration techniques that constitute a pattern in Le Havre.

To elaborate, I should first discuss what is meant by film levels. In brief, a frame is the smallest film segment and is a single still from a shot. Frames merge into shots. To define, a shot is a section of film that is recorded within one camera take. Provided that they occur within one time and place, two or more shots make a scene. A sequence is composed of a group of scenes having thematic unity. In other words, a scene is a combination of two or more shots as long as there is a time/place unity between them. A sequence, by contrast, has thematic unity in two or more time/place settings. Sequences will then make up a stage, which is that element which tells us where we are in the overall filmic text. For example in narratives two typical stages could be thought of, the occurrence of a problem and the resolution of that problem. In expository genres, by contrast, an introduction could be followed by arguments that will ultimately end in a resolution. The whole of a filmic text constitutes
its genre, of which there exist two main ones: factual (or expository) and narrative genres (Oumano, 1985, p.160). As it sometimes becomes tricky to tell between a scene and a sequence, in my study scenes and sequences have not been distinguished between. Inspired by what was just discussed, I have created a Venn diagram (Figure 04) where film levels are shown and the level I will be studying is filled in red.

![Venn diagram showing film levels and the level analysed in this study](image)

**Figure 04.** Film levels and the level that has been analysed in this study

Having been chosen to be my analysis level, each scene is then described in two ways. Firstly, in regards to what it shows (representation) and secondly with regards to how it shows what it shows (orientation). The orientation remarks have been given only when there is a significance in the representation method that is relevant to my thesis. In my study, the
“how” of representations is more important than the “what” of them. In other words, I have been more concerned with the ways the audience is exposed to the cinematic narrative.

As mentioned and shown, in levels, filmic text consists of 6 levels: frame, shot, scene, sequence, stage, and genre. Moreover, the text can be analysed at any of the given levels, also with regards to any of the three meta-functional questions: What does the film represent? (Representation) How is the content represented? (Orientation) How is the content structured as a whole? (Organization) In other words, in addition to the given six levels of segment analysis, social semiotics works with yet another tool: the hypothesis that all meaning-making always does three things simultaneously. These three metafunctions are: representation, orientation, and organization.

In addition to film levels and the “representation, orientation” dichotomy discussed above, in the analysis of films, three layers can be thought of: Content analysis, above-content analysis, and below-content analysis. In content analysis, the emphasis is on what film is about, while in above-content analysis due attention is given to the sociopolitics of the reading position. In below-content analysis, on the other hand, structural importance of subject selection, framing, and editing is the concern (Idema, 2001, p.186). My research belongs to the third category of this model, where the structural decisions by the filmmaker are of importance and need to be analysed.

On this basis, social semiotics here comes to help my research by answering one important question. Could there be another side to this story that Aki Kaurismäki has created? Can means of representation have been exploited systematically so as to favour the viewpoint of asylum seekers and neglect the viewpoint of the state?

Considering all the given categorizations, potentially my research method could involve a six-level analysis of film segments multiplied by a three-dimensional analysis of functions (Idema, 2001, p.183-204). Totally, I could analyse 18 film components. For example, I could analyse frames in terms of what they show (representation), in terms of how they show what they show (orientation), and in terms of how they are put together to make a whole (organization). That gives me 3 options for frame analysis only, for example. Similarly, I could run the same analysis to shots, scenes, sequences, stages, and the genre in the three given aspects.

However, and in the case of my thesis, I have chosen to narrow down my study and analyse the scenes in Le Havre and skip the other five levels. My project involves firstly focusing on what the scenes show the viewer (representation) and secondly attending to the techniques
of representation used (orientation). In other words, of the 18 segments I could potentially analyse according to Idema, 2001 model, I have limited my study to two components: representation of scenes and orientation of scenes (See Table 01). Accordingly, the following questions are addressed to be answered, both of which can then be used as evidence in my later discussion for answering the main research questions:

1. What do the scenes in Le Havre show the viewer?
2. How are these scenes represented?

Table 1: Analytical segments. This table shows in what aspects I can potentially analyse Le Havre from a social semiotics perspective. It also shows the two segments I actually have analyzed in my thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels / metafunctions</th>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frame</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sequence</td>
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<td>Stage</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Reliability

Social semiotics belongs to qualitative research. It is also in one way or another the analysis of content. Qualitative content analysis of verbal content, for example, is more focused on implicit meaning within the text as opposed to the explicit denotational meanings of lexical items. So is social semiotics. It is to go beyond what images show and address the tricks that have been applied in the showing of those images. This can cause a reliability issue though. Unlike quantitative content analysis where manifest meaning consideration leads to a higher reliability simply because two people would less possibly fall for different understandings, in qualitative content analysis context considerations can yield less consistency in the way two different people would see the same fixed text. Likewise, in social semiotics, there is a strong interpretive component at work. The analysis is not straightforward. It is true that the formal features of the material are first identified in a rather technical manner. However, making sense of these features is subject to interpretation (Iedema, 2001, p.200). As also
further argued by Iedema (2000), this potential inconsistency in how the interpretations are made could be rooted in the fact that social semiotics is primarily concerned with and is explicit about ‘textual’ structures and not with categories of viewers and their readings of the text (p.200).

To improve reliability through the process of my research, I took great care to avoid including personal understanding that may lack consistency over time and is not supported by a theory in film studies. Not only can my personal understanding of the material vary from day to day, but the way I see Le Havre can well be different with the way others would see the same thing, both of which would harm the reliability of my research. To tackle this issue I constantly re-tested my claims over time and assessed at all time if my attributing of a visual technique to a certain category is consistent and solid enough. Only in this way is it feasible for qualitative content analysis to achieve a reliable status. There is never a one hundred percent reliability, however. According to Iedema (2000), social semiotics rejects the idea that there is a gap between the text and the audience. They are seen together. As a result, any analysis is a reading that has been strongly influenced by the reader’s social, ethnic, economic, gender, etc. backgrounds. (p.187) So, I make no claims of truth for the results of my thesis, but I do claim to have the ability to support what I say with systematic evidence and base my arguments on that evidence.

Additionally, if we look at my research as one of content analysis, Schreier states that Qualitative Content Analysis can produce quite reliable results by reducing the data to only those directly relevant to the designed categories. The researcher must be ready to drop a large portion of the data gained and only limit herself to the coding frame in question. Otherwise, and it can often be the case, the produced results will lack consistency and will therefore be to some extent unreliable (Schreier, 2012). Accordingly, my choice of the text has been narrowed down to that of scenes in the film and the unwanted elements have not been studied.

3.3 Validity

One important question in the designing of my research plan was how to make sure the meaning making that happens to me when watching Le Havre is based on the film itself and not based on my personal background and other factors that are involved in my decoding the cinematic data. This concern is important as in the study of films we are also inevitably
studying culture. Meaning-making in the audience when exposed to cinematic culture depends not only on the data that comes from the film but also on her own background knowledge. From my former master’s studies in English Language Teaching, I perfectly remember the Schema Reading Theory and would like to relate this theory to the comprehension of films. The theory says in the comprehension of texts, readers depend a lot on their former knowledge and not only on the data that they receive from the text itself. Former knowledge stored in the brain is referred to as schemata. Schemata are created through experience with people, objects, and events in the world. They can be seen as the organized background knowledge, which leads us to expect or predict aspects in our interpretation of discourse (Chastain, 1988).

In this regard, my concern is how much of my interpretation in watching Le Havre has been affected by my stored schemata. To minimize the effect of background knowledge on my analysis, I have limited my interpretation of the components of Le Havre to those elements that can systematically be based on a theory or accepted trend in the domain of cinema. For example, when I argue that the camera angle has a particular effect on the viewer of the film, I have made a reference to Ascher & Pincus (2007)’s argument on the impact of camera angle.

As known, validity is the extent to which a research or an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Hatch & Farhady, 1985) When it comes to film analysis, there is always one considerable challenge in making sure the analysis is valid: Relating abstract social interpretations and audience effects with the technical features present in the film is never easy (Bateman, 2014, p.326). My research claims, or is supposed, to measure the degree to which the audience of the film Le Havre have been exposed to those film making techniques that will lead them to like one character more than another, or to favour one side of the represented reality and neglect the other side of the coin. Social semiotic analysis is an interpretive task. It is not a search for scientific proof but a description of how texts can construct realities. Social semiotics is descriptive of what it sees. My findings are based on established theories in film studies and visual interpretation methods. So, I can claim that my research is measuring what it claims to measure, and therefor is valid.
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In *Le Havre*, we see that an illegal immigrant in Europe needs to struggle to find his way to where his mother lives so as to reunite with her. There are generally two groups of characters in the film. The first group, protagonists, consist of Marcel, his wife, his friends, and the asylum seeker. The opposing group consist of the police, and those who help the authorities to arrest the running asylum seeker.

Representation is about meaning insofar it tells us about the world in some way (Iedema, 2001). Depending on where we stand, we might decide to argue that *Le Havre* is about a man who wants to help an underage asylum seeker, or about the problem of illegal refugees in Europe, or about a bohemian man and his wife and friends. Thus, regarding representation we could answer what meanings are present in a particular frame, shot, scene, sequence, stage, or the whole film. For example, we could deal with one scene in which Marcel is having dinner, with his wife watching him. We could ask what the shots in this scene portray, what verbal content is exchanged, what music is played, and what objects are seen. A scene consists of many frames, meaning that a similar question can be asked about a single frame.

For example in Figure 05, one frame has been taken out of scene number 78. If we ask the same question of what this frame represents, we can have so many answers, for example:

- Three characters are seen.
- The protagonists are on the right of the frame and the assumed antagonist is on the right.
- The boy is closest to the camera, followed by the inspector. Marcel is in the background.
- The camera angel is level.
- It is a medium shot, most similar to what we see in the real world with our eyes.
4.1 Detailed Analysis of One Scene

To elaborate on the above through exemplification, I would like to analyse the whole scene from which the above frame was taken. In what follows I will apply social semiotic techniques to discuss how Aki Kaurismäki has used visual and narrative tools to depict each of the two given forces. Later, I will relate the discussion to my research questions and try to answer them.

The scene I have chosen to analyse, as an example, here is one close to the end of the film when inspector Monet visits Marcel’s house to give him a heads-up about danger. This is the scene in which the audience may start to have doubts about the roles of the main characters and even question whether they have been correct in their judgments about the inspector. Up to this moment of the film, the audience has made their decision on who the good and bad characters of the film are. Marcel is the protagonist, who is trying to help the boy, and is even making sacrifices towards to goal. By contrast, Inspector Monet is like a pain in the neck, and functions as the barrier to Marcel’s goal. He is the force who can ruin the child’s plan to reunite with his mother in England. Now let us talk about the scene. Firstly the scene begins with a longshot of inspector’s car getting closer to the camera where it stops and the inspector gets out. The camera is present in the inspector’s location without the protagonist presence. This shows us that the narrator is omniscient allowing the camera to go wherever it decides. Unlike a first-person narrator, where we are told the story by one of the characters,
in this kind of narration we are not forced to see only one point of view. Accordingly, Kaurismäki’s choice of narrator allows us to see the world from both points of view. This scene is not biased towards any of the two sides in the story at least as long as the narrator voice is concerned. We can see the development of events not only from the viewpoint of Marcel, but that of Inspector Monet as well (Figure 06).

The scene continues with the inspector knocking at the door. Marcel starts to clear off the cash and hides it in a drawer. The inspector comes in. When Marcel opens the door, the inspector is first seen on the right of the screen and Marcel on the left. Their positions on the screen change later and the inspector takes the left and Marcel goes to the right. Kress & Van Leeuwen propose the concept of the “Given” versus “New” to distinguish how the sides of visual space could emphasize different values. Accordingly, left side of the image or frame is more associated with what is familiar while the right of the frame is mostly constructed as the unfamiliar (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). In this way, I would like to relate this to the changing of the positions of Marcel, and Inspector Monet in the frames of the given scene (See Figure 07). This constitutes a neutral way of presenting the characters to the audience with regards to the trait discussed.

In addition to the two features discussed above, we could consider the distance of the characters to the camera in this scene. All the three main characters of the narrative are seen at least in one shot in this scene. However, a careful look at the whole scene does not show a systematic difference between characters’ distances to the camera. In some shots Marcel is closest, while in some others he is in the background. Similarly, Inspector Monet is seen in a variety of distances. As a general rule, most of the shots in this scene are medium shots. The medium shot creates a balance between character and setting and usually emphasizes a character's upper-body, arms, and head. The medium shot is a general, all-purpose shot. Medium shots are used for dialogue sequences, and they allow the viewer to pick up on the character's movements and gestures. Body language is important to conveying emotion, and the medium shot remains close enough to capture that emotion (Ablan, 2003). Medium shots are closest to what we see in the real world and can therefore be applied in documentary style of filmmaking. It can, thus, be argued that the use of medium shots has created a sense of neutrality, so does the fact that the main characters have been given approximately similar distances to the camera (Figures 07 and 08).
One more feature that we can look at is the angle of the camera. According to Ascher & Pincus (2007), the camera angle refers to the specific location at which the camera is placed to take a shot. A scene, for example, can contain several camera angles simultaneously in its shots. Camera angle will give a different experience and sometimes emotion. Ascher & Pincus (2007) argue that the location of the camera in relation to the subject can affect and have an impact on the way the viewer perceives the character. For instance, a high-angle shot is a shot in which the camera is physically higher than the subject. Such shots look down upon the subject, making the subject look small or weak. By contrast, a low-angle shot is one from below the subject and has the power to make the subject look powerful or threatening. In our selected scene, neither of these angles have been applied as a visual technique. Instead, most of the scene has been taken with eye-level shots. Eye-level shots have little, if any, psychological effect on the viewer. This shot is when the camera is level or looking straight on with the subject. Aki Kaurismäki’s choice of eye-level for the camera helps the scene not to look down or up at any of the characters (Figure 08). Alternatively, if the camera had been positioned in a low-angle when Inspector Monet was in the frame, the viewer could have received the impression that Monet is the strong and dominant character (See Figure 03 on page 16). A reverse effect could have been left on the viewer if the asylum seeking child had been shot with a high-angle camera. If so, an imposed sense of empathy with the subject would have been triggered in the audience. I believe, Aki Kaurismäki has successfully avoided favouring any of the characters in this scene by the choices he has made for the camera angle.

The patterns just listed above suggest that the scene’s filmic structure and editing techniques do not position Marcel and the inspector as different. The scene does not favour either of them. Even more, there are still other signs in this scene that support my reading. Apart from the different means of visual representation in this scene which I discussed above, this is the scene in which more time has been given to Inspector Monet to present himself and his concerns. The viewer is, for the first time, exposed to the Inspector’s perspective on the events. He tells Marcel that it may be hard to believe that his heart also has tender spots. This dialogue happens simultaneously with the inspector’s indirectly advising Marcel to be quick in sending the boy out of the country as immigration police are close to finding him. The audience may still see him as the bad guy antagonist of the story, however, the visual techniques as well as the content of the scene add no such impact on the judgment. Thus, it could be claimed that the scene is not siding with Marcel and the boy.
Figure 06. Scene 78 begins with a shot of Inspector Monet, with the protagonist absent.

Figure 07. Characters’ sides in the frame change. Left side of the frame is associated with the familiar, right side of the frame with the unfamiliar.
4.2 Overall Analysis of More Scenes

*Le Havre’s* 89 scenes are, in fact, more complex than they can seem to an ordinary viewer. There are certain elements among the filming or editing techniques that can contradict the supposition that the scenes are an innocent representations of reality. Below, I am discussing some of these techniques and argue *Le Havre* is not a simple recording of world reality, but a mixture of reality and filmmaker’s manipulations of reality. Other scenes, not included below, are those in which the filmmaker has been generally faithful to total realism, or those I have not been able to detect any such elements in. It should also be noted that in cases where two or more scenes have a similar feature, only the scene that comes first in the film will be analysed. Additionally, for the analysis not to become too bulky, the analysis of the scenes in the second half of the film are only briefly available in the appendix table.

Scene 03

When Marcel is working by the street as a shoe-shiner, a classy shop owner comes out and pushes him to leave the spot. He calls Marcel “terrorist”. A viewer of the film could ask whether the word has been an accidental or a careful choice by the creator of the film. If the latter, seeing an apparently rich man attacking an apparently poor man makes the viewer
attribute aggression to the rich. Ironically enough, terrorism involves violence and the violence we see in this scene is originated from the person who accuses Marcel of it. Marcel’s reaction is calm and he leaves the scene without even an argument. The director of the film has cleverly created a dichotomy of violence and peace, while in the real world most scenarios can be hybrid of both violence and peace.

Scenes 4-7

Immediately, after Marcel is attacked by that man, we see a relatively long sequence that shows Marcel sitting in his favourite bar, standing on the street waiting for customers, and in a longshot walking on river bank. The sequence ends with a longshot frame of the port city of La Havre. This sequence that takes over one minute is significant in my study because of the music that has been edited to it. All through these scenes we hear a 1965 pop song called “Matelot” by “The Renegades”. Hoffmann (2016) says a very strong function that film music can serve is evoking certain emotions with the audience. How would the audience emotionally react differently if this piece of music was not added to these opening scenes of the film? Would the audience identify with Marcel equally without the use of music? It is a fact that we do not hear music in real life unless it is physically available in the scene. However, in films music can be imposed on images and lead to particular interpretations.

Scene 10

The camera takes us into Marcel’s favourite bar. In this scene we see different shots of customers sitting in the bar. All these faces are seen by the audience for the first time. They are sitting at different tables talking. The bartender talks to Marcel. They clearly know each other and seem to be friends. What I find a clear engineering in this scene is firstly the way these individuals are shown. They are all smiling, smoking, and having a good time. The atmosphere of the bar together with what the customers are wearing suggests it must be a bar most favoured by the marginalized, such as the emigrants, or the unemployed. These people are shown smiling, while in a real life situation it can be far less likely for every customer to be smiling simultaneously. What is more, this scene has a music edited to it. However, unlike scene 3 where the music cannot be considered as a real sound in the environment (non-diegetic music), this music is well fit into the realism of the scene (diegetic music), as it could be the music being played in the pub. We also hear it the background only
as a secondary sound in the scene. Voices of the customers can be heard in the foreground as well.

Scene 13

When a watchman knocks on the walls of containers, we hear a baby’s weeping sound. Film maker’s choice of baby sound can cause an effect that reinforces innocence and helplessness. If there was no sound of the baby in this scene, how would the audience’s emotional reaction differ? Although this does not constitute a manipulation of realism in the film, the fact that this choice has been made will have its own outcome and effect on the audience.

Scene 14

This is one of the scenes where a social semiotician can find a lot of points worth referring to. The scene starts with a shot of police and journalists gathering at the container in which illegal refugees were hiding. Later, Inspector Monet arrives. They open the container. A boy runs away from inside. A significant shot in this scene is when we see 8 close-up frames of the refugees. The refugees are shown alone and parted. Each frame can easily function as a portrait as there is no dialogue or words exchanged. The viewer is exposed to the faces of some human beings who are tired, stressed, and in immediate danger of the police. The viewer does not know these people but can see them from very close distance. Outside the container, there are 6 armed security forces in uniforms. We do not see the uniformed police officers’ faces. In theory, these forces are equally human beings, but we do not see them as human beings. We see them as police forces without any facial expressions. Their faces are not shown to the viewer, because a facial expression is seen in close-ups and we see no close-ups of the police, but separate long-take portraits of the refugees. It can, therefore, be deduced that Aki Kaurismäki has visually given advantage to the refugees and neglected the police (Figure 09).

There is another shot in this scene that I find relevant to my analysis. When the boy starts running away from the police, the camera moves with him, leaving the police behind. The choice of the director to follow the boy instead of keeping the camera stationary in the location is also another privilege one side of the story is receiving.
Figure 09. Refugees are shown in separate close-ups.

Scene 15

This scene consists of a relatively short shot in which Marcel is shining the shoes of a customer when he sees the newspaper headline on the refugee on the run. The shot is taken with a low angle and the camera is adjusted to Marcel. Marcel is kneeling down working, and
with the camera adjusted to his angle and not that of his customer a sense of inferiority is reinforced. I personally find this in line with Kaurismäki’s style of siding with the underdog.

Scene 16

This is when Marcel runs into the boy for the first time. Additionally, only in this scene do the inspector and Marcel come across each other for the first time. In fact, all the three main characters are seen together in one scene. The audience knows who to like in this scene from the previous scenes of the film. Even here, while both protagonists versus the antagonist are present, we see no action or talking from the side of the former. The inspector, by contrast, does talk and is shown as an active agent. From a visual perspective, the low-angle from which the inspector has been shot creates for him a sense of superiority and power over the other two (See Figure 3).

Scene 17

This is one of the few scenes in which the film makes reference to real world events. Marcel and his friends are at the bar watching TV news which says the police have violently forced refugees out of the French Jungle camp. In the real world, Jungle Camp was opened and administered by the French Red Cross and was founded near the Port of Calais in 1999 and soon became overcrowded (Bouchaud, 2014). In two incidents this camp was destroyed by the police. Firstly, in an April 2009 raid, the French authorities arrested 190 and used bulldozers to destroy tents, and again in a raid in September 2009, the French authorities closed down a camp occupied by 700–800 migrants and detained 276 people.

Real world news in this film could tell the audience that the narrative they are watching is not just a fiction but could well be representation of reality. In fact, Kaurismäki is claiming, even if not consciously, that *Le Havre* can be a documentary rather than a fiction movie.

Scene 18

Marcel shows the paper headline to his Vietnamese friend, Chang, and asks him what he thinks. Chang tells us his immigration story 12 years ago when he had to change his identity to be given asylum. Chang says he even faked his nationality then. What we hear in this scene of the film is the story of a successful asylum seeker who has obtained the right to
vote, for example. One could equally claim that we are not given the chance to hear the story of those who trusted the law and never broke it. One could argue that Chang succeeded because he cheated, and broke the law. However, the negative effects of this for the whole society is not a subject of interest in Kaurismäki’s film.

Scene 23

In this scene Yvette drives Marcel and his wife to the hospital. The scene begins with a medium shot of the three characters with the camera at an eye-level angle, but then the camera starts to gradually get closer to Marcel and his wife. This gradual zooming continues until we only have the portraits of the couple in the frame. Arletty is leaning against Marcel’s shoulder and they are peaceful and seemingly in love. Marcel and his wife look very vulnerable in this shot, a trait that can influence the audience to better like these two characters. I would like to argue that the narrative as well as film making techniques have helped the protagonist to be seen as a whole human who likes and supports his sick wife. By contrast, inspector Monet is never shown similarly, as we are given no information about his personal life and family.

Scene 24

While Marcel talks to the doctor at the hospital, the audience is faced with yet another circumstance in which Marcel is in the inferior position. The doctor is the one to tell him to go and not wait at the hospital because he would be in the way. Marcel is shown to the viewer of the film as a whole person, one who enjoys his beer, is simple, and is also sometimes refused by the society.

Scene 25

An extreme long shot of Marcel by the sea shifts into a medium shot showing him stopping to ignite a cigarette (Figure 10). This is another set of shots in which Marcel is shown all alone. There were other such shots previously. These shots emphasize Marcel’s loneliness in the environment. With him stopping to smoke, the audience is also given the chance to take a break from the stress at the hospital and reflect on the narrative and the character of Marcel. This is the moment in the film when the audience has clearly decided that they will
like Marcel above anyone else and that he is the sole protagonist of the story. The director shows us Marcel, while the theme is illegal immigration and this is the trick by which the audience will start to like Marcel and his people, and dislike Inspector Monet whose characterization has been quite flat in the narrative.

Figure 10. Scene 25 is made of two shots, both showing Marcel alone. The image on the left shows him in a long shot, and the next frame depicts Marcel in a medium shot. This emphasizes his loneliness in the environment.

Scene 26

This scene begins with a close up of Marcel’s feet walking. His shoes are clearly cheap ones, and we are given the chance to better know him. Similar to the previous scene, this scene is yet another piece to show us more of Marcel’s details as a whole person. In fact, the character of Marcel becomes even more believable when we are given the chance to closely see and examine his shoes.

Scene 27

This scene has a 7-second frame of the boy and Marcel’s dog Laika. The boy is sleeping and the dog is next to him. For one thing, people are better trusted and incapable of harming others when asleep. Additionally, as we already know how much Marcel likes Laika, this juxtaposition reinforces a sense of innocence in the scene, clearing the boy for the audience. The dog becomes a symbol of innocence, and the boy is understood to be equally reliable. (Figure 11)
Figure 11. Two elements in this frame convey a sense of innocence in the boy: The dog, and his being asleep.

Scene 28

I especially like this scene for the artistic technique of defamiliarization. To defamiliarize is to present to audiences common things in an unfamiliar or strange way in order to enhance perception of the familiar. For instance, if asylum seekers are identified by us through certain features one of which for example is being willing to receive any help, Kaurismäki can show us one of them who is independent, and rich enough not to accept money. In this way, Kaurismäki applies defamiliarization to educate the minds of the viewers.

The scene involves the boy sitting in the kitchen, eating food. He says he is there to pay back his 10 euro debt. Camera is again shortly leveled with Laïka. Laïka is clearly shifting from a dog into a symbol. Laïka is a sign of innocence, and Kaurismäki wants us to see this repeatedly. Apart from the dog, scene 28 is when we hear the boy’s name for the first time: His name is Idissa. Idissa says he wants to pay back his debt. This is when the audience’s
stereotypical image of a homeless asylum seeker changes. If we are naturally prone to believing the homeless are irresponsible and never pay back their debts, this character shows us the opposite and we obtain a new image of these people which is different from the cliché.

Scene 29

When Arletty discusses her terminal disease with the doctor, she asks him to keep her husband in the dark about her disease because he is like a child. The doctor, in response, says he will act like politicians. This is the dialogue where the film brings to my attention the contrast between the complexities of politicians’ characters and the simplicity of children, with Marcel belonging to the latter.

Scene 30

Marcel, in his favorite bar, tells the bartender that Arletty’s disease is only benign. The bartender offers him a free drink. Scene 30 is the moment in the film where I would like to argue that drinking and smoking in Marcel’s character are going beyond their literal meaning and forming a symbolic concept. A symbol is anything that stands for, or represents, something else. In a film, a character, an action, an object, or an animal can be symbolic. Often these symbols stand for something abstract. Marcel is smoking in many scenes. He is drinking in many scenes. However, we see him as a man who likes his wife and is willing to make sacrifice to help out the illegally running child. I would like to argue that drinking and smoking is symbolic of rebellion against the institutionalized values of capitalism and bourgeoisie. Marcel is against the norms of the majority. He likes the weak, and is ready to even endanger himself in order to help out the underdog.

Scene 32

A neighbour sees Marcel and the boy arriving home. The neighbour calls the police. From a social semiotic viewpoint, the use of the technique of “low-key lighting” draws my attention to this scene. Low-key lighting as a style of lighting for photography, film or television accentuates the contours of an object by throwing areas into shade while a fill light or reflector may illuminate the shadow areas to control contrast. There is a common assumption that low-key lighting is more frequently used in film noir and horror genres and intensifies the
psychological drama in the scene (Hurbiş-Cherrier, 2012, p.289). Filming techniques in this scene have dehumanized the person who calls the police. Apart from the lighting tool, the character has been reduced to a hand. No face is shown.

Scene 37

In this scene, the grocer opposite Yvette’s shop gives Marcel some food for free. Following scene 36 in which Yvette offers a baguette, this scene makes the audience start to see a local community of helpers around Marcel. Interestingly, when the grocer provides Marcel with the food we are ironically put in a situation to change our negative judgment about that grocer guy from scene 8. The narrative is drawing a picture of a community where the majority are in favour of the asylum seeker and the police are against him. Given that residents with the opposite view have been totally eliminated from the scenario, I would like to argue that Le Havre is weak in giving a comprehensive picture of both sides to the story.

Scene 38

When Marcel arrives home, the kid is standing in the kitchen doing the dishes. Realistically speaking, the kid cannot have been doing the dishes for the whole day, but Kaurismäki has decided to show the few minute of his whole day in which he is seen helping his host and acting responsibly and considerately. There is nothing wrong with the choice of the film director, however, the whole reality consists of other pieces which we have been deliberately deprived of seeing. For instance, the boy has naturally, as a human being, spent some time sleeping or in the bathroom. But the moment chosen for us to see is him washing the dishes. How could our judgment about the boy be different if Marcel’s arrival coincided with the boy’s sleeping time?

Scene 44

While Marcel is on the bus on his way to Calais we hear a French song that has been edited to this scene. The music is again non-diegetic and cannot be considered as an environmental sound being played on the bus because it continues even in outdoor shots that follow Marcel’s arrival. The soundtrack is a 1933 song by Damia called Chansons Gitanes. It was al-
ready discussed above that the use of external music can affect the viewer’s emotional reac-
tion to the scene and to the whole film (See my discussion on scenes 4-7). No matter what
the effect, the fact that music is a tool to manipulate feelings, and is therefore not in line with
realism of the scene, cannot be neglected.

Scene 46

A humorous short dialogue in this scene contains the central theme of the narrative, discrim-
ination against asylum seekers and refugees. When a dark-skinned guy asks Marcel why he
should trust him, Marcel replies “because of my blue eyes”. The clever reply can make the
audience of the film laugh at, and reflect on, the fact that colours of eyes, skins, etc. have
been used as grounds for discrimination and judgement.

Scene 48

This is yet another scene in which the issue of racial discrimination is explicitly brought to
the attention of the audience. When Marcel meets with the manager, and claims he is Mo-
hamat Salim’s brother, the manager of the camp asks, “Are you mocking me?” and Marcel
immediately informs him of his breaking the law against racial discrimination.

Scenes 52-53

The feature in these two scenes that I find worth discussing is the way they make a sequence.
The scene begins with genuine (diegetic) music. By genuine music, I mean the music that is
playing in the physical environment and not one that has been added to the picture. However,
once scene 52 connects to the next scene the music is still playing. In other words, we are no
longer there but the sound of that location travels with the camera to another location. It is
clearly a technique that yields a type of cinema that is far from an innocent representation of
reality (See image 9).
Continuity technique spoils realism.

Figure 12. These two frames have been taken from scenes 52 and 53 respectively. The music in the first scene is from the accordion player who can been seen on the left side of the frame. The sound of accordion, however, continues even when the camera leaves that location. We keep hearing the music in the following scene when the boy is running.
4.3 Visual Turns Given

Of the 89 scenes in *Le Havre*, only 15 scenes depict the police or forces that oppose the protagonist characters. I have shaded those rows that include these scenes gray in the appendix table. All other scenes plus also some of these 15 scenes depict the protagonists of the film. It is, therefore, true to claim that *Le Havre* is about Marcel and his friends, not about the authorities and the state. It should be noted that one might argue that the film is being narrated from the perspective of the protagonist, Marcel. However, this is not really the case in *Le Havre*. In fact, the focalisation in the narrative is external, meaning that the narrative is not claiming to be experiencing the world from the viewpoint of one character. For one thing, there are scenes in the film where the protagonists are totally absent, for example scene 58. As a result, the formation of the narrative follows an omniscient pattern.

It should be explained here that external focalization, as opposed to internal focalization, has the narrator focus on visible, external aspects of events and characters in the narrative. The narrator, in this method, does not impart any information as to characters' thoughts or feelings, but merely relates physically ascertainable facts to the viewer. Assuming a role outside of the characters' consciousness, this type of narrator or focalizer has access to the characters' utterances, but adds no interpretation or analysis (Prince, 2003).

As mentioned in the lines above and seen in the table in the appendix, the visual turns given to the two sides of the story have not been even relatively equal, neither is the narrator Marcel to justify this difference. Thus, it can be claimed that audience has been forced to read the narrative from the point of view of those who are helping the asylum seeker. The perspective of the opposing force has been neglected, inevitably. We see the world from the eyes of Marcel and his friends and are systematically deprived of seeing the side of Inspector Monet and the authorities who are seeking to arrest the running boy.

4.4 Distance, Angle of the Camera

Of the objective measures that can be used in the analysis of films, distance to the camera or shot type is one. The frame’s angle also matter and was discussed in details earlier in this study. *Le Havre* is mostly made up of mid shots taken with the camera approximately at human eye level, resulting in a neutral effect on the audience.

The distance of the camera from the subject is an important feature in the impact the image can have on the viewer. Irrespective of why a particular distance has been chosen by a film-
maker, the impact of the decision on how the viewer can comprehend the shot has been systematically studied. Depending on their distance to the camera, characters in a film can represent a variety of senses, for example a sense of loneliness or a sense of belonging.

*Le Havre* is mostly made up of mid shots when human characters are being depicted, and close-ups when objects are being shown (Figure 13). Mid shot is a shot taken at a medium distance that shows some part of the subject, whilst still showing enough for the audience to feel as if they were looking at the whole subject. Mid shots are neutral towards the character without forcing the audience to see the characters’ emotions or conversely feeling too distant from them. In fact, this is an approximation of how we would see a person in the real world if we were having a casual conversation. You would not be paying any attention to their lower body, so that part of the picture is unnecessary ("Mid Shot (MS)", 2012).

The Mid shot is appropriate when the subject is speaking without too much emotion or intense concentration. It also works well when the intent is to deliver information, which is why it is frequently used by television news presenters. You will often see a story begin with a mid-shot of the reporter (providing information), followed by closer shots of interview subjects, providing reactions and emotion ("Mid Shot (MS)", 2012).

As well as being a comfortable, emotionally neutral shot, the mid shot allows room for hand gestures and a bit of movement ("Mid Shot (MS)", 2012). The significance of Mid Shot lies in the fact that it is neutral.

As said at the beginning of the chapter, *Le Havre* is mostly made up of Midshots and in this way can be regarded faithful to the realistic approaches.

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**Figure 13.** Human characters are usually in mid-shots, while objects are mostly seen in close-ups.
4.5 Use of Music

Film music can come from within the action, involving sound whose source is visible on the screen or whose source is implied to be present by the action of the film. This sort of music is called diegetic music or sound. By contrast, if the sound comes from a source outside story space it can be called non-diegetic (Van der Lek, 1991, pp. 27-30). I would like to argue that unlike diegetic sound, non-diegetic sound takes from the extent to which a film can be considered realistic. Pure realism in cinema requires that all sounds be present in the scene where the images are recorded. In the case of Le Havre, both types of sound occur along the film. However, in my study, non-diegetic sounds play an even more important role, giving weight to the hypothesis that Le Havre is not an innocent representation of reality.

Although the occurrence of non-diegetic music is rather rare in Le Havre, cases where environmental music is used, for example in a bar, can still be considered effective in the ways the audience perceive filmic reality and identify with the characters. Kaurismäki makes use of music in some of the scenes in Le Havre. However, without a single exception, all the scenes in which there is a music-over portray the protagonists of the film. In other words, there are no scenes with music-over where we have shots of the inspector or the police forces. The only scene that might look like an exception is at the end of the film, when the inspector and Marcel have become friends and go to a pub for a drink. At this point in the film, the inspector has already proven to be a good guy and is recognised by the audience on the side of the asylum seeker and Marcel. So, the use of music-over here does not reject my claim above. It can still be claimed that in Le Havre music is only edited to the scene when the scene is about the protagonists.

Film music (also called film score) is original music written specifically to accompany a film. The score forms part of the film's soundtrack, which also usually includes dialogue and sound effects, and comprises a number of orchestral, instrumental, or choral pieces called cues, which are timed to begin and end at specific points during the film in order to enhance the dramatic narrative and the emotional impact of the scene in question. Manchel (1990) says a film creator can make use of sound manipulations, including soundtracks and music, in order to increase the film’s emotional impact (p.99). In a similar argument, Huisman, et al. (2006) reiterate that music is often employed in cinema to pass judgment on the action on the visual track. Music is, in fact, a very useful non-verbal way of guiding, or challenging, the audience’s identification with the moral interpretations. (p.82) In Le Havre the sound tracks used have a sympathetic effect on me and make me like the characters better. I can
imagine the effect of the soundtracks on others watching the film could well resemble that
on me. Thus, I would like to argue that from a social semiotics perspective, music has been
used in the film in order to unfairly favour one’s viewpoint and neglect the other point of
views. In the detailed table that has been included as an appendix to this research, the scenes
that have music-over have been filled with pink colour. As can be seen, in 17 scenes of the
film music-over has been added. As the antagonist scenes have been shaded in grey, we can
easily see that except for scene number 85, no other occasions exist where gray and pink
overlap in the table, and even this exceptional case happens no sooner than when the inspec-
tor has joined Marcel’s cause and is in line with the protagonist of the narrative.
5. CONCLUSION

The results of this research suggest that the amount of time allocated to each side of the story is the main area in which Aki Kaurismäki has systematically favoured one viewpoint over the other. In other analysed aspects of the film, with only a few exceptions, I found a fair use of visual and filmmaking techniques. I would like to conclude that my findings tell us that *Le Havre* as a text is not exploiting cinematic tools to deceive us. Iedema (2000) says social semiotics is against the claim that the “how” of showing something relates merely to “what” is shown. There are political considerations in the use of techniques. Images are not innocent. They have been engineered to make us believe something and hammer something else (p.200). I would like to accept this argument but further suggest that the “how” of showing something is not always tantamount to producing a political statement or propaganda. Instead, there is always a degree to which a visual representation has remained faithful to the reality it is representing. Acknowledging that a film is never totally honest is not synonymous to stating that a film is always lying.

When I initially asked myself if representation methods in Kaurismäki’s *Le Havre* were fairly giving equal weight to both sides of the story, I personally expected the answer to be negative. It was because having watched the film twice before, I had the impression that I sympathized a lot with the main characters of the film. I kept relating my feeling of sympathy to filming techniques and tricks in editing. The research results however, yielded a more moderate tone in my understanding; that *Le Havre* is relatively simple and fair in orientation and organization of the story. Unlike my initial thoughts, generally speaking, Aki Kaurismäki’s orientation-related choices in *Le Havre* are not biased towards giving weight to one side of the story over the other. In fact, in general, it does not seem to be true to suggest that Kaurismäki has exploited means of representation to favour one viewpoint.

Back to my research question, the overall impression one could get from my research findings is that *Le Havre* is a fair representation of its narrative although the issue of realism in cinema is never a black and white dichotomy. Semiotically, the patterns in the film do not suggest that *Le Havre*’s filmic structure and film editing position law-enforcing characters (the police) and law-breaking characters (asylum seeker and his accomplices) as different. In this case, neither of the two are favoured by the auteur. Although from a pure theoretical perspective cinema can never be real- because it is at most about reality and not the reality
itself- one could still argue the amount of realism available in the works of different auteurs is vastly diverse. _Le Havre_, on this continuum, belongs to that end where a work of art gives the viewer more freedom in observing facts and making interpretations less engineered by the film maker. Despite the overall conclusion that _Le Havre_ is a fair representation of its fiction, in its narrative weight and space what we see is mainly Marcel’s story, and the stories of those people who are supporting him. As discussed above, in _Le Havre_, the narrative focuses on Marcel and neglects police forces except for the inspector. However, those who have some knowledge about politics would know whose views this film is giving and whose views have been neglected. An informed viewer about world affairs and the current refugee crisis in Europe will be able to ask questions even while enjoying the film and the humanistic depiction it carries out. In other words, the story of illegal immigration into Europe is not as simple as this film would make us believe. There are other sides to this story that have been simply neglected.

(Idema, 2001, p.183-204) says films are abstract from time and space and show us only as much of time and space as necessary. In this way, what a film shows is always necessarily less and different from that which went on in real time. _Le Havre_, for example, spans the few days from the day Marcel met the boy until the day the boy was helped out of town towards England. A lot is not shown. For example, we will not see where the boy will end up living, if he will reunite with his mother, if he finds his new space in England fulfilling, secure, and or if he will be marginalized in his new community. We do not know or see in _Le Havre_ what this boy will be doing a one year’s time or where he will be in ten years. What we see, and this has intentionally been chosen for us to see, is a few days from a lifelong adventure. Emigration, especially when illegal, brings about far more consequences than shown in this film not only for the individual who travels but also for the society or societies that host her/him. Films are inevitably political statements, and like any other political statements an informed reading of filmic text is helpful in better comprehending the whole picture.

Cinema is not the presentation of reality but the representation of it. _Le Havre_ is representing the story of a local bohemian old man who helps out an illegal African underage. However, _Le Havre_ fails to include close-up narratives of the society which refuses to admit an underage asylum seeker. In its narrative, _Le Havre_ is about Marcel and his friends and even when the law-enforcing authorities are shown, their presence is in relation to Marcel, the boy, and
their fate. When a citizen of the society calls the police to give information about the whereabouts of the fugitive, that citizen is shown without a face, without being. All we see is a hand dialing a phone number. We are made not to see him as a human being but an evil force.

One could question the comprehensiveness of the narrative in shedding light on the problem of asylum seekers. For example, one could ask what causes the law to be pursuing the boy, and argue that the film tells us little about this. Additionally, with the presupposition that laws are democratically passed, one could wonder if the majority of the citizens in France opt for helping or refusing to help refugees. Again the film tells us little about that. A society in which the police are seeking to arrest an underage asylum seeker can have a lot to say in why the police should be doing this. Again, *Le Havre* deprives us of hearing those viewpoints.
6. REFERENCES


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7. APPENDIX

Scenes in *La Havre*.

- The shaded rows include those scenes where the narrative (also) includes the police and other antagonist characters.
- The pink colour shows those scenes where music has been edited somewhere to the scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene or Sequence</th>
<th>Until</th>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Orientation/ organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scene01</td>
<td>2:24</td>
<td>Marcel and his Vietnamese friend shoe shining at the train station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene02</td>
<td>2:36</td>
<td>Marcel walking on the street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 03</td>
<td>3:02</td>
<td>Marcel interrupted at work by a shop owner</td>
<td>Marcel is called “terrorist”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 04</td>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>Marcel in his favourite bar with music playing on the film</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 05</td>
<td>3:36</td>
<td>Marcel standing on the street waiting for customers</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 06</td>
<td>3:57</td>
<td>Longshot of Marcel walking on river bank</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 07</td>
<td>4:07</td>
<td>Longshot single frame of the port city of La Havre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 08</td>
<td>5:02</td>
<td>Marcel buys a baguette from Yvette, also tries to buy from</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 09</td>
<td>7:13</td>
<td>Marcel arrives home, meets his dog Laika, and Arletty - his wife. Wife gives him 5 euros to treat himself with a drink at his favourite pub before she prepares the dinner. Marcel leaves. His wife starts to prepare the dinner and she feels a pain in her stomach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 10</td>
<td>9:05</td>
<td>The inside of Marcel’s favourite bar is shown. People are sitting at different tables talking. The bartender talks to Marcel. They clearly know each other and seem to be friends. The marginalized shown with soundtrack over. Everyone is smiling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 11</td>
<td>9:50</td>
<td>Marcel finishes his dinner with Arletty watching and clearing the table afterwards. She doesn’t eat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 12</td>
<td>10:42</td>
<td>Arletty ironing while Marcel lying in bed. Later, she sneaks a cigarette.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 13</td>
<td>11:12</td>
<td>A watchman knocks on the walls of containers. A baby’s weeping sound attracts his attention.</td>
<td>Baby sound reinforces innocence and helplessness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 14 (Sequence)</td>
<td>14:15</td>
<td>Police and journalists have gathered at the container in which illegal refugees were hiding. Inspector Monet arrives at the scene.</td>
<td>Close-up of the refugees versus longshot of police forces. Camera moves with the escaping child neglecting the officials at the scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 15</td>
<td>14:31</td>
<td>Marcel is working when he sees the newspaper headline on the refugee on the run.</td>
<td>Marcel kneeling down working, camera adjusted to his angle and not that of his customer reinforcing a sense of inferiority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 16</td>
<td>16:59</td>
<td>Marcel meets the boy hiding in the water. The inspector arrives and talks about the running boy.</td>
<td>Protagonists versus antagonists with the former silent while the latter does talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 17</td>
<td>18:14</td>
<td>Marcel and his friends are at the bar watching TV news which says the police have violently forced refugees</td>
<td>People watching the news share the same belief in favour of illegal refugees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 18</td>
<td>19:29</td>
<td>Marcel shows the paper headline to his Vietnamese friend, Chang, and asks him what he thinks.</td>
<td>Chang tells us his story of faking identity for immigration. We are not shown the negative effects of this, however.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 19 (Sequence)</td>
<td>20:14</td>
<td>Marcel buys food from Jeanne, a sandwich shop holder, and leaves the sandwich with a 10-euro note on it at the river bank where he earlier met the black boy.</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 20</td>
<td>20:30</td>
<td>Marcel ignites a cigarette while walking alone.</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 21</td>
<td>21:28</td>
<td>Marcel arrives home to find his wife worrying about him. He holds her to bed, and says he is to get her an ambulance.</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 22</td>
<td>21:57</td>
<td>Marcel knocks at Yvette’s door and tells her he need to use her phone to call an ambulance.</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 23</td>
<td>22:17</td>
<td>Yvette drives them to the hospital.</td>
<td>Close-up of the couple in the car with music over</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 24</td>
<td>23:02</td>
<td>Marcel talks to the doctor at the hospital.</td>
<td>Hierarchy of power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 25</td>
<td>23:37</td>
<td>Marcel walks by the sea, igniting a cigarette.</td>
<td>He is repeatedly the only person in frame.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 26</td>
<td>24:04</td>
<td>Marcel sees Yvette at her shop, and updates her on his wife’s situation.</td>
<td>walking repeated. Shoes in close-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 27</td>
<td>24:32</td>
<td>Marcel arrives home to see Laika and the boy sleeping in the storage.</td>
<td>Laïka’s close-up with the kid, reinforcing a sense of innocence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 28</td>
<td>25:42</td>
<td>The boy is sitting in the kitchen, eating food. He says he is there to pay back his 10 euro debt.</td>
<td>Camera leveled with Laïka. Debt return: Defamiliarization technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 29</td>
<td>27:34</td>
<td>Arletty discusses her terminal disease with the doctor, asks him to keep her husband in the dark about this. Marcel walks in with flowers for her.</td>
<td>“…politicians?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 30</td>
<td>28:23</td>
<td>Marcel, in his favorite bar, tells the bartender that Arletty’s disease is only benign.</td>
<td>Free drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 31</td>
<td>29:13</td>
<td>Marcel runs into the boy sitting outside the bar. Tells him he will need time to help him. They walk back home.</td>
<td>Music over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 32</td>
<td>29:47</td>
<td>A neighbor sees Marcel and the boy as they arrive home. He calls the police.</td>
<td>Low-key lighting, framing: Antagonist dehumanized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 33</td>
<td>31:23</td>
<td>Marcel and the boy talk with each other in his house. Yvette brings food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 34</td>
<td>31:39</td>
<td>Marcel waiting for customers on the street. It starts raining.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 35</td>
<td>33:39</td>
<td>Marcel orders an omelet and wine in a bistro. Inspector Monet comes in and sits at his table. Monet warns him of his neighbor telling him that he is there to help.</td>
<td>The inspector’s order is expensive wine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 36</td>
<td>34:00</td>
<td>Marcel, on his way back home, is given baguettes by Yvette. Yvette says she can hide the boy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 37</td>
<td>34:23</td>
<td>The grocer opposite Yvette’s shop gives Marcel some food for free.</td>
<td>Community of helpers around Marcel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Visual Description</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>34:56</td>
<td>Marcel asks the boy about his parents.</td>
<td>The kid doing the dishes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>35:49</td>
<td>Marcel goes to a Muslim community looking for “Muhamat Saleh”.</td>
<td>Close frame of a guy playing the instrument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>36:26</td>
<td>Marcel tells the boy about shoe-shining.</td>
<td>The kid shining shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>36:53</td>
<td>Marcel takes his suit from the closet, and some cash from the drawer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>37:35</td>
<td>Marcel asks Yvette to take the boy for a few days while he is going to Calais.</td>
<td>Wearing a suit. Gives money to Yvette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>37:59</td>
<td>Marcel calls his wife telling her he will be away for a few days.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>38:58</td>
<td>Marcel on the bus. He arrives in Calais.</td>
<td>1933 song by Damia called <em>Chansons Gitanes</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>40:15</td>
<td>Marcel’s morning in Calais begins, with him having slept on the street. He takes a taxi to the camp on the shore off Dunkirk.</td>
<td>Cathedral sound and image to begin the scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>42:03</td>
<td>Marcel arrives at the camp, investigates and finds Mohammad.</td>
<td>Shares a cigarette. Music over Eats with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 47</td>
<td>42:37</td>
<td>Marcel enters the refugee camp.</td>
<td>High security at the camp Close-ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 48</td>
<td>43:32</td>
<td>Marcel meets with the manager, and claims he is Mohamat Saleh’s brother.</td>
<td>“Are you mocking me?” Albino “Discrimination”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 49</td>
<td>44:39</td>
<td>Mohamad Salim gives Marcel the boy’s mother’s address in London. Marcel promises to help the boy out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 50</td>
<td>45:00</td>
<td>The boy waiting alone with Laika</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 51</td>
<td>45:32</td>
<td>Yvette is talking with two other women.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 52</td>
<td>46:56</td>
<td>A man calls the police when he sees the boy shoe shining at the train station. Marcel’s Vietnamese friend helps the boy escape.</td>
<td>Genuine Music over. The guys is well-dressed The boy is working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 53</td>
<td>47:05</td>
<td>The boy is running</td>
<td>Music still playing, creating a continuity bug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>47:34</td>
<td>Yvette tells Marcel that Idrissa has disappeared.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>48:16</td>
<td>Laika shows Marcel to the wardrobe where Idrissa is hiding.</td>
<td>Laika takes an active role, stressing the inhumane society out there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>50:15</td>
<td>Marcel visits his wife in the hospital. She tells her that her treatment is to begin and Marcel cannot see her for 2 weeks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>50:44</td>
<td>Marcel shining the shoes of two priests discussing the bible.</td>
<td>Ignorance to the real world among the priests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>51:43</td>
<td>The inspector is told by a superior that the case should be settled soon.</td>
<td>Mr.Perfect?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>52:51</td>
<td>The boy plays some music while in his room.</td>
<td>The song?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>53:06</td>
<td>Marcel and the boy are sitting in the yard, with Laika also in the frame.</td>
<td>Music continuity from the previous scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>54:21</td>
<td>The inspector investigates the grocer about Marcel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 62</td>
<td>56:31</td>
<td>The inspector goes to Marcel’s favourite bar, and investigates the bar tender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 63</td>
<td>56:48</td>
<td>Marcel and the boy by the beach.</td>
<td>Close-up of the boy with Marcel in the background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 64</td>
<td>58:13</td>
<td>Yvette and the bartender at the hospital, with Yvette reading a story to Marcel’s wife</td>
<td>What book is it? (Franz Kafka) Why this choice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 65</td>
<td>58:58</td>
<td>A boatman tells Marcel that for money they will smuggle the boy to England. The inspector is watching.</td>
<td>Marcel agrees to the 3,000 euro fee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 66</td>
<td>60:00</td>
<td>The bartender and the Vietnamese friend tell Marcel that they can give their savings to him for the cause. As the money is not enough, the idea of a charity concert pops up.</td>
<td>Such generosity being real?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 67</td>
<td>60:26</td>
<td>Marcel tries to persuade Mimie to return to Bob, so he will agree to do the concert.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Note</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 68</td>
<td>62:24</td>
<td>Marcel sees little Bob in a bar and tries to persuade him to perform. Marcel shows the wife in settling the row between them.</td>
<td>Music over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 69</td>
<td>62:33</td>
<td>A longshot of the dusk in <em>Le Havre</em></td>
<td>Music continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 70</td>
<td>62:55</td>
<td>Marcel’s wife smokes a cigarette looking out of the hospital window.</td>
<td>Music continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 71</td>
<td>63:25</td>
<td>Marcel’s friends put up ads of Little Bob’s concert.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 72</td>
<td>64:09</td>
<td>Marcel wraps his wife’s favourite dress.</td>
<td>Laika watching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 73</td>
<td>65:02</td>
<td>The boy is cooking in the kitchen. Marcel’s Vietnamese friend comes in, and says the concert is today. Marcel gives the wrapped dress to Idrissa to take to the hospital.</td>
<td>The boy is always doing something productive when filmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 74</td>
<td>65:13</td>
<td>Idrissa waits at the bus stop.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 75</td>
<td>65:29</td>
<td>Idrissa is on the bus.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 76</td>
<td>67:07</td>
<td>Idrissa arrives at the hospital, and delivers Idrissa answers her questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 77</td>
<td>71:18</td>
<td>Marcel’s parcel to Arletty.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 78</td>
<td>75:26</td>
<td>Inspector Monet visits Marcel’s house to give him a heads-up about danger.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 79</td>
<td>76:11</td>
<td>The police raid Marcel’s house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 80</td>
<td>76:56</td>
<td>The police check Yvette’s shop and the grocer’s opposite.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 81</td>
<td>77:53</td>
<td>Marcel visits his favourite bar again.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 82</td>
<td>78:12</td>
<td>Marcel’s Vietnamese friend carrying the greengrocer’s cart.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 83</td>
<td>78:39</td>
<td>Marcel and his Vietnamese friend help the boy out of the cart.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 84</td>
<td>81:53</td>
<td>Marcel accompanies the boy onto the boat. The police arrive. The inspector see the boy in the boat’s compartment. The boy is too polite and calm to be true. Second surprise about the inspector.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 85</td>
<td>82:13</td>
<td>Marcel and the inspector arrive at the bar.</td>
<td>Music over</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 86</td>
<td>82:46</td>
<td>The boy comes onboard from hiding.</td>
<td>Music continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 87</td>
<td>83:22</td>
<td>Marcel tidies up the house.</td>
<td>Music over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 88</td>
<td>85:13</td>
<td>Marcel arrives at the hospital to find his wife cured.</td>
<td>Music continues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Scene 89 | 86:27 | Marcel and his wife arrive home.            | Blossoms
The ending song
Happy ending |