

Mnemonic Topographies in *Green Border* Film: Migration, Memory, Trauma and Cultural Identity

Yeşil Hudut Filminde Mnemonik Topografyalar: Göç, Bellek, Travma ve Kültürel Kimlik

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Abstract

Agnieszka Holland's *Green Border* (2023) theorizes contemporary migration as a cultural formation inscribed within regimes of memory, identity, and border aesthetics, articulating displacement as a constitutive condition of Europe's collective imaginary. Monochrome austerity, acoustic minimalism, and suspended temporality reorganize cinematic form into a mnemonic structure, while bodily exposure and spatial constraint inscribe sovereignty, vulnerability, and ethical tension into the visual field. The border acquires analytical legibility as an ethical and symbolic site that exceeds cartographic demarcation and functions as a locus of cultural remembrance. This article advances a close formal analysis of selected scenes, mobilizing cinematography, sound design, spatial organization, and duration as analytical coordinates, and situates these formal operations within an interdisciplinary constellation integrating cultural memory and trauma theory, border studies, aesthetic politics, and the logic of exception. This framework elucidates silence as a transmissive modality, conceptualizes the soldier figure as an embodiment of sovereign ambivalence between command and conscience, and identifies black-and-white contrast as a perceptual apparatus that redistributes visibility toward excluded lives. *Green Border* renders legible the structural contradictions of Europe's cultural imaginary, as universalist ethical claims coexist with exclusionary border practices and consolidate a fractured, internally dissonant formation of European identity. Recurrent motifs of barbed wire and swamp sediment these contradictions into cinematic memory, transforming landscape into mnemonic terrain. Ultimately, the film reconstitutes spectatorship as an ethically charged practice of witnessing and positions cinema as a medium of cultural remembrance and ethical confrontation, operating as an aesthetic-political text circulating transnationally as cultural inscriptions that reorient scholarly discourse and public consciousness at the interface of art, memory, and politics.

Keywords: Migration, diaspora, cultural memory, trauma, witnessing, border aesthetics, European identity, *Green Border*.

Academical Disciplines/Fields: Film studies, cultural studies, sociology, political science, philosophy.

Özet

Agnieszka Holland'ın *Yeşil Hudut* (*Green Border*, 2023) filmi, çağdaş göç deneyimini indirgemeci insani kriz söylemlerinin ötesine taşıyarak bellek, kimlik ve sınır estetiği rejimleri içerisinde konumlanan bir kültürel oluşum olarak kavramsallaştırır. Siyah-beyaz görsel rejimin yarattığı estetik, mesafe, işitsel minimalizm ve askıya alınmış zamansallık sinemasal biçimi mnemonik bir yapıya dönüştürmekte, yerinden edilme deneyimini kültürel hatırlamanın süreklilik gösteren düzeneklerine eklemektedir. Bedensel maruziyet ve mekânsal kısıtlanmışlık, egemenlik, kırılabilirlik ve etik gerilimi temsil düzeyinin ötesinde doğrudan görsel alanın kurucu unsurları hâline gelirken sınır olgusu kartografik bir hat olmaktan çıkarak kültürel hatırlamanın etik ve simgesel bir mekânı olarak analitik görünürlük kazanmaktadır. Bu çalışma, seçili sahneler üzerinden yürütülen yakın biçimsel çözümleme aracılığıyla görüntü kompozisyonu, ses rejimi, mekânsal örgütlenme ve süre kullanımını analitik eksenler olarak ele almakta, söz konusu biçimsel işlemleri kültürel bellek ve travma kuramları ile sınır çalışmalarını bağlamında tartışmaktadır. Bu kuramsal çerçeve, sessizliğin aktarımcı bir kip olarak işleyişini; asker figürünün buyruğa itaat ile vicdani tereddüt arasındaki egemenlik ikircikliğini bedenselleştiren bir yapı olarak ortaya çıkışını; siyah-beyaz karşıtlığın ise dışlanan yaşamları algısal merkeze yerleştiren bir görünürlük aygıtı olarak işlevini açığa çıkarmaktadır. Çözümleme ayrıca *Yeşil Hudut*'un evrenselci etik iddialar ile dışlayıcı sınır pratiklerinin eşzamanlılığı üzerinden Avrupa'nın kültürel imgelemindeki yapısal gerilimleri görünür kıldığını ve Avrupa kimliğini bütünlüklü bir öz değil, parçalı ve içsel olarak çatışmalı bir oluşum şeklinde ele aldığını göstermektedir. Dikenli tel ve bataklık imgelerinin yinelenmesi bu gerilimleri sinemasal belleğe tortulandırmakta, peyzajı mnemonik bir araziye dönüştürmektedir. Nihayetinde *Yeşil Hudut*, seyir deneyimini etik bir tanıklık pratiği olarak konumlandırmakta ve sinemayı kültürel bellek ile siyasal yüzleşme arasında işleyen estetik bir alan olarak düşünmeye imkân vermektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Göç, diaspora, kültürel bellek, travma, tanıklık, sınır estetiği, Avrupa kimliği, *Green Border* (*Yeşil Hudut*).

Akademik Disiplin(ler)/Alan(lar): Sinema çalışmaları, kültürel çalışmalar, sosyoloji, siyaset bilimi, felsefe.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Bu çalışma, *Yeşil Hudut* (*Green Border*, 2023) filmini, çağdaş göç anlatılarının temsilci sınırlarını aşan ve sinemasal form aracılığıyla işleyen bir kültürel bellek, algı ve siyasal görünürlük rejimi olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Çalışmanın kurucu problemi, göç sinemasal literatürünün büyük ölçüde temsile, etik söylem yapılarına ve insani kriz anlatılarına yoğunlaşması, buna karşılık sinemasal formun özellikle görsel düzenleme, zamansal yoğunlaşma, mekânsal kısıtlanma ve işitsel minimalizm gibi unsurlar aracılığıyla bellek üretimindeki kurucu ve dönüştürücü işlevinin kuramsal düzlemde yeterli açıklıkla kavramsallaştırılmamış olmasıdır. Bu doğrultuda çalışma, *Yeşil Hudut*'un sınır deneyimini hangi biçimsel stratejiler aracılığıyla mnemonik bir yapıya dönüştürdüğünü ve bu dönüşümün algısal düzlemde nasıl yapılandığını analitik olarak çözümlemektedir.

Kuramsal düzlemde çalışma, kültürel belleğin yalnızca anlatı, temsil ve arşiv üzerinden değil, duysal yoğunluk, yineleme ve mekânsal tortulanma süreçleri aracılığıyla işleyen bir yapı olduğunu temel almaktadır. Bu çerçevede sınır, sabit bir coğrafi ayırım çizgisi olmaktan çıkarak tarihsel şiddetin, politik dışlamanın ve etik gerilimin katmanlaştığı ve yeniden üretildiği bir estetik yüzey olarak yeniden kurulmaktadır. Travma, kesintili bir olaydan ziyade süreklilik, gecikme ve tekrar içinde yoğunlaşan bir zamansallık olarak kavranmakta, zaman kopuş üzerinden değil birikim ve tortulanma süreçleri üzerinden anlam kazanmaktadır. Görsel alan, temsili bir yüzey olmanın ötesinde görünürlük ile görünmezlik arasındaki dağılımı düzenleyen ve siyasal olanı duysal düzlemde yeniden yapılandıran bir algı rejimi olarak belirginlik kazanmaktadır. Bu yaklaşım, sinemayı anlatı üretiminin ötesine taşıyarak tarihsel deneyimi duysal olarak örgütleyen, yoğunlaştıran ve yeniden dağıtan bir bellek üretim alanı olarak konumlandırmaktadır.

Yöntemsel düzlemde çalışma, nitel araştırma paradigması içinde konumlanmakta ve sahne temelli yakın biçimsel çözümlemeyi temel analitik strateji olarak benimsemektedir. Analiz birimini oluşturan sekanslar, sınır mekânının yoğunlaştığı orman ve bataklık sahneleri, gece operasyonları ve geri itme döngülerinin tekrarlandığı anlar arasından seçilmiştir. Bu seçim, mekânsal tekrarın, zamansal uzamanın ve bedensel maruziyetin yoğunlaştığı sahnelere odaklanacak biçimde yapılandırılmıştır. Analiz sürecinde görüntü kompozisyonu, kadrajın mekânsal organizasyonu, kamera konumu, ışığın yönelimi, sesin dağılımı ve sürenin uzatılması gibi sinemasal unsurlar analitik kategoriler olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda film, tematik içerik düzeyinde değil, formel örgütlenmenin kurduğu ilişkiler ağı içinde değerlendirilmiş, anlamın anlatıdan ziyade duysal ve zamansal yapı içinde nasıl kurulduğu sistematik biçimde ayrıştırılmıştır.

Elde edilen bulgular, *Yeşil Hudut*'un sınırı sabit bir mekânsal gerçeklik olarak değil, tekrar, döngüsellik ve bedensel maruziyet üzerinden işleyen bir mnemonik yapı olarak şekillendirdiğini açık biçimde belirginleştirmektedir. Filmde sınır, geçilemeyen bir çizgi olmaktan çok, sürekli geri itilme, bekleme ve yeniden maruz kalma pratiklerinin oluşturduğu bir zamansal yoğunluk alanı olarak yeniden biçimlenmektedir. Bu döngüsel yapı, lineer zaman algısını askıya almakta ve zamanı travmatik bir araç yoğunluk formu olarak yapılandırmaktadır. Özellikle bataklık sekanslarında sürenin uzatılması, anlatıyı ilerleten bir araç olmaktan çıkarak bedensel tükenişi, yıpranmayı ve bekleyişi yoğunlaştıran kurucu bir işleve dönüşmektedir. Böylece zaman, kronolojik ardışıklığın ötesine geçerek deneyimin ağırlığını ve sürekliliğini duysal düzlemde görünür kılmaktadır.

Bu zamansal yoğunlaşma, mekânsal organizasyonla birleşerek sınırı bir mnemonik yüzey olarak yapılandırmaktadır. Çamur, dikenli tel, yoğun bitki örtüsü ve sınırlı görüş alanı yalnızca fiziksel engeller değil, tarihsel şiddetin mekâna kazınmış izleri olarak somutlaşmaktadır. Peyzaj, nötr bir arka plan olmaktan çıkarak hatırlamanın, birikimin ve tekrarın etkin bir taşıyıcısı hâline gelmektedir. Tekrarlanan mekânsal kompozisyonlar ve aynı alanlara yapılan geri dönüşler, sınırı bir geçiş noktası olmaktan uzaklaştırarak birikimsel bir deneyim alanı olarak yeniden kurmaktadır. Bu süreçte mekân, zamanla birlikte işleyen bir bellek yapısı üretmekte ve sınır sadece mekânsal değil; zamansal bir yoğunluk alanı olarak da yapı kazanmaktadır.

Bedenin filmdeki konumu, bu mnemonik yapının en yoğunlaştığı düzlemi oluşturmaktadır. Göçmen bedenleri yalnızca mağduriyetin temsili olarak değil, doğrudan tanıklığın maddesel yüzeyi olarak belirginlik kazanmaktadır. Çamur, su, dikenli tel ve karanlıkla iç içe geçen beden, politik şiddetin duysal olarak somutlaşmaktadır. Bedenin dikey ve yatay eksenlerdeki konumlanışı, egemenlik ilişkilerini doğrudan görsel düzlemde kurmaktadır. Ayakta duran ve ışık altında görünür kılınan figürlerle yere çökmüş ve karanlıkta kalan bedenler arasındaki karşıtlık, hiyerarşiyi anlatsal düzlemde değil, algısal düzlemde tesis etmektedir. Bu düzenleme, kırılğanlığın bireysel değil, sistematik olarak dağıtılan ve düzenlenen bir yapı olduğunu açık biçimde görünür kılmaktadır.

Filmin siyah beyaz görsel rejimi, bu algısal yapıyı daha da yoğunlaştırmaktadır. Rengin ortadan kaldırılması, gerçekliği doğrudan temsil etmekten ziyade algıyı keskinleştiren ve maddeselliğe öne çıkaran bir estetik mesafe üretmektedir. Bu estetik tercih, görüntüyü temsili bir yüzey olmaktan çıkarak dokunsal ve fiziksel bir deneyim alanı olarak yeniden yapılandırmaktadır. Ses tasarımında müziğin geri çekilmesi ve diyalogların sınırlandırılması, sessizliği etkin bir anlatım kipine dönüştürmektedir. Sessizlik, burada bir eksiklik değil, bastırılanın, dile getirilemeyen ve aktarımı güç olan deneyimin taşıyıcısı olarak konumlanmaktadır. Bu estetik örgütlenme, izleyiciyi yönlendirilmiş bir duysal tepkiden uzaklaştırarak doğrudan bir algısal karşılaşma içine yerleştirmektedir. Bu strateji, izleyici konumunu köklü biçimde yeniden yapılandırmaktadır. *Yeşil Hudut*, özdeşleşme temelli izleme pratiklerini askıya alarak izleyiciyi etik bir tanıklık konumuna yerleştirmektedir. Uzun süreli planlar, doğrudan bakışlar ve kesintisiz süre kullanımı, izleyicinin bakışını yönlendirmek yerine onu sabitleyerek izleme eylemini bir sorumluluk pratiği olarak yeniden tanımlamaktadır. Böylece izleyici yalnızca görmekle kalmaz, bu görme eyleminin etik yükünü de taşımak durumunda kalır. Tanıklık, bu bağlamda anlatının sonucu olmaktan çıkarak sinemasal formun doğrudan ürettiği bir ilişki biçimi olarak yapı kazanmaktadır.

Çalışma ayrıca filmin Avrupa'nın kültürel kimliğini bütünlüklü ve tutarlı bir yapı olarak değil, içsel çelişkiler, kırılmalar ve gerilimler üzerinden kurulan parçalı bir oluşum olarak temsil ettiğini belirginleştirmektedir. Evrensel insan hakları söylemi ile sınır politikalarının dışlayıcı pratikleri arasındaki gerilim yalnızca tematik düzeyde değil, görsel ve mekânsal örgütlenme içinde de yeniden üretilmektedir. Bu bağlamda sınır yalnızca dışarıyı belirleyen bir çizgi değil, Avrupa'nın kendi içindeki etik ve politik çatlağın görünür hâle geldiği bir eşik olarak işlev kazanmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak *Yeşil Hudut*, göçü temsil eden bir anlatıdan ziyade sınırı, zamanı ve bedeni yeniden kuran bir estetik politik yapı ortaya koymaktadır. Film, sinemayı yalnızca temsil eden bir araç olmaktan çıkararak tarihsel deneyimi duyuşal düzlemde kaydeden, yoğunlaştıran ve yeniden yapılandıran bir alan hâline getirmektedir. Bilimsel katkı açısından bu çalışma iki temel açılım sunmaktadır. İlk olarak göç ve sınır sineması çalışmalarında baskın olan temsil ve söylem odaklı yaklaşımların ötesine geçerek sinemasal formu bellek üretiminin asli alanı olarak konumlandırmaktadır. İkinci olarak sınır estetiğini mekânsal bir düzenleme olarak değil, algı, zamansallık ve görünürlük rejimlerinin keşişiminde işleyen bir duyuşal yapı olarak yeniden tanımlamaktadır. Bu yaklaşım, sinema çalışmaları ile kültürel bellek kuramı arasında daha derin, bütüncül ve üretken bir kuramsal bağ kurulmasına olanak sağlamaktadır.

1. Introduction

Agnieszka Holland's *Green Border* (2023) situates its narrative across the forested marshlands of the Polish-Belarusian frontier, a liminal terrain that assumed heightened political salience during the 2021 migration crisis along the European Union's eastern border. The film renders this border zone as a spatial formation structured by cyclical pushbacks between Belarusian and Polish authorities, juridical suspension, and corporeal attrition. Intersecting narrative trajectories articulate the entrapment of a Syrian family seeking asylum, the precarious interventions of Polish activists operating under threat of criminalization, and the routinized enforcement practices of border guards entrusted with sovereign directives. The black-and-white visual regime suspends documentary immediacy and institutes an austere perceptual order. Mud-saturated ground, barbed-wire entanglements, nocturnal forest operations, and enveloping darkness acquire constitutive formal agency within the frame, materializing exposure as spatial condition. Extended duration, acoustic attenuation, and dialogic restraint recalibrate landscape into an experiential matrix that consolidates waiting, depletion, and embodied precarity as structuring modalities. The film thereby foregrounds perception as the locus of political contradiction, rendering sovereign power experientially legible within the sensory organization of the image.

The frontier delineated in the green border relinquishes geographical neutrality and consolidates into a spatial formation materializing structural contradiction internal to Europe's political self-articulation. Migration consolidates as a suspended condition governed by cyclical expulsion, administrative deferral, and corporeal endurance. Humanitarian discourse coexists with procedural abandonment, while universalist rhetoric aligns with routinized mechanisms of exclusion. This disjunction acquires perceptual inscription within prolonged sequences of waiting, iterative nocturnal expulsions, and the durational extension of bodily depletion across forested terrain. Duration intensifies exposure and reorients temporal experience toward attrition, destabilizing teleological progression. Migrant bodies persist in immobilization and environmental engulfment, and sovereign authority reiterates force via procedural repetition and hesitant execution. The border consequently stabilizes into a perceptual apparatus rendering political contradiction structurally legible within cinematic organization.

A substantial body of scholarship interrogates visual representations of displaced populations in relation to moral response, political framing, and humanitarian discourse (Bleiker et al., 2013). Such analyses foreground the ethical implications of refugee imagery and problematize the circulation of suffering within global media regimes. Systematic theorization of cinematic form as a site of mnemonic inscription remains comparatively underarticulated. In the case of *Green Border*, critical engagement concentrates on migration governance and ethical spectatorship, whereas rigorous conceptualization of the film's aesthetic configuration as an operation that sediment historical consciousness within perceptual structure remains limited. The articulation of landscape, duration, sound, and monochrome contrast warrants analytical attention as mechanisms organizing memory at the level of sensory experience. The present study reorients inquiry toward formal organization, consolidating aesthetic analysis as a central interpretive priority and conceptualizing border cinema as mnemonic apparatus.

In response to this analytical asymmetry, this article advances the claim that *Green Border* reconstitutes the European frontier as mnemonic and ethical spatiality articulated at the level of cinematic form. Cultural memory receives conceptualization as regime of inscription sedimenting historical violence within perceptual and temporal structures, aligning with Assmann's formulation of memory as durable cultural structure sustaining collective self-understanding (2011, p. 36). Such a framework directs analytical attention toward the consolidation of historical consciousness within sensory experience. Border aesthetics acquires articulation as reorganization of visibility and sensory hierarchy, drawing upon Rancière's theorization of the *distribution of the sensible* as structuring principle governing perceptibility within a shared political field (2004, pp. 12-13). The conjunction of these perspectives proves analytically generative given the film's recalibration of perception. Visual austerity, durational intensification, and acoustic attenuation consolidate the frontier into perceptual apparatus and render sovereign contradiction

structurally legible. Sustained close formal analysis of selected sequences anchors this claim and consolidates the argument that the film enacts memory as aesthetic operation, rearticulating the perceptual conditions structuring experiential apprehension of political violence.

The analytical architecture of this study consolidates around sustained close formal analysis of selected sequences in *Green Border*, operationalizing cinematography, durational structuring, sound design, framing, and spatial composition as primary analytic coordinates. Scene-level scrutiny instantiates the methodological nucleus, translating theoretical concepts into determinate visual and temporal articulations. Recurring motifs, extended takes, nocturnal border operations, and the spatial inscription of vulnerability across forested terrain constitute formal mechanisms generating perceptual legibility. The argument articulates itself across three analytically differentiated movements. The first interrogates the border as spatial condensation of political contradiction. The second configures durational extension and corporeal exposure as mnemonic operations sedimented within cinematic temporality. The third rearticulates spectatorship as ethical relation structured by perceptual discipline and affective suspension. Such progression secures analytic coherence and consolidates sustained integration between conceptual framework and filmic articulation.

This study consequently reconceptualizes the frontier as epistemic threshold marking the convergence of aesthetic articulation and political cognition. Cinema assumes operative status within this framework, functioning as matrix reorganizing the perceptual conditions structuring the intelligibility of historical violence. Cultural memory extends beyond archival inscription toward sensory and temporal structuration, foregrounding the material organization of perception as site of mnemonic consolidation. Border aesthetics acquires conceptual expansion as regime of perceptual governance distributing visibility, vulnerability, and exclusion across the cinematic field. *Green Border* thereby assumes the status of a locus of mnemonic intensification, staging Europe's fractured cultural imaginary as spatialized contradiction sedimented within formal organization. The subsequent analysis traces formal dynamics aligning memory, sovereignty, and perception as mutually constitutive dimensions of cinematic articulation.

2. Wounded Time, Mnemonic Landscapes, Testimonial Bodies in *Green Border*

This section advances the proposition that *Green Border* renders trauma as a durational and spatial inscription immanent to cinematic form. Violence coalesces in temporal extension, environmental saturation, and corporeal exposure, acquiring distributive articulation across rhythmic pacing and spatial organization. Trauma assumes the status of a condition sustained by deferral, repetition, and suspended resolution, consonant with Caruth's formulation of belated inscription that unsettles linear temporality and destabilizes experiential coherence (1996, p. 4). At the level of cinematic temporality, time relinquishes teleological progression and acquires structural density as the medium bearing affliction in extended perceptual duration. The frontier landscape consolidates wounded temporality by organizing suspension, exhaustion, and cyclical displacement into a coherent spatial configuration, transforming terrain into an operative matrix of injury. Cultural memory, conceptualized in Assmann's terms as a durable formation sedimented within material and symbolic frameworks sustaining collective self-understanding (2011, p. 36), attains articulation in durational orchestration, spatial condensation, and bodily persistence. Trauma, landscape, and corporeality thus constitute analytically interdependent coordinates structuring the film's formal logic. The ensuing analysis delineates the materialization of temporal disturbance, spatial inscription, and corporeal endurance as formal mechanisms rendering political violence perceptually intelligible.

The swamp sequence renders wounded temporality perceptible at the level of formal construction. A low camera position establishes ground-level alignment and situates perception within mud-saturated terrain. The child's body occupies the lower third of the frame, partially submerged and diagonally intersected by barbed wire. The extended take sustains durational continuity without recourse to reverse angles or accelerated montage and fixes spectatorship within an unrelieved perceptual field. A shallow depth of field isolates labored respiration against an indistinct forest background and concentrates visual attention on corporeal vulnerability as a material condition. The monochrome register intensifies tonal differentiation between saturated soil, exposed skin, and metallic obstruction, suppressing chromatic mediation and foregrounding texture as a primary visual index. Diffuse and overcast illumination eliminates expressive chiaroscuro and consolidates exposure as an environmental circumstance embedded in spatial organization. The acoustic field privileges diegetic sound consisting of irregular breathing and muted environmental resonance. The absence of non-diegetic scoring precludes affective modulation and sustains perceptual austerity. Duration exceeds narrative functionality and accumulates perceptual pressure, converting temporal extension into structural density. Caruth's formulation of trauma as belated inscription

assumes determinate formal instantiation within this sequence (1996, p. 4), as injury registers in sustained temporal persistence and unresolved continuation. Cinematic temporality accrues evidentiary weight and consolidates duration as the primary bearer of affliction.

The forest sequence following the nocturnal forced return consolidates the frontier as a mnemonic surface structured by spatial repetition and material persistence. A static wide shot positions migrant figures at the edge of the frame, diminished against an expansive yet impassable terrain marked by mud, wire, and tree trunks forming a visual grid of obstruction. Horizontal framing extends laterally without offering depth of escape and reinforces enclosure within apparent openness. The camera refrains from directional tracking and sustains spatial continuity, producing perceptual stasis that mirrors the cyclical displacement enacted across the border zone. Recurring compositions of barbed wire bisect the image and generate visual inscription that accumulates across sequences, stabilizing spatial repetition as a structuring device. The monochrome register suppresses chromatic immediacy and produces archival tonality that attenuates historical specificity while intensifying material density. Soil, moisture, and metallic surfaces assume tactile prominence and embed corporeal vulnerability within environmental texture. Spatial recurrence intersects with temporal suspension and consolidates terrain as materialization of deferred passage and interrupted movement. Assmann's conception of cultural memory as durable inscription sedimented within material and symbolic structures (2011, p. 36) attains determinate articulation in this configuration. The frontier operates as a spatialized inscription rendering historical exclusion materially legible and consolidating memory within terrain as persistent environmental condition. Wounded temporality attains material stabilization in landscape, and spatial structure assumes the function of preserving and reiterating deferred violence across perceptual duration.

The forest confrontation sequence, particularly the moment marked by handheld flashlights sweeping across immobilized bodies, redefines corporeality as a perceptual site of hierarchical inscription. A medium-long shot establishes a vertical axis; armed officers occupy elevated ground, and migrant bodies remain lowered, seated or collapsed within mud-saturated terrain. Camera height approximates the guards' line of sight and stabilizes visual hierarchy within the frame. The compositional structure distributes figures along a vertical gradient, with upright silhouettes positioned against open sky and grounded bodies partially obscured by soil and shadow. The directional beam of artificial light isolates faces and torsos in brief exposures and transforms illumination into a mechanism of inspection and spatial control. Spatial elevation assumes formal significance and consolidates authority as vertical dominance and vulnerability as horizontal exposure. Posture, breath, and stillness acquire analytic weight; bowed heads, slowed respiration, and constrained movement register exhaustion as visible condition rather than expressive dramatization. Duration extends without kinetic escalation and fixes the encounter within perceptual suspension. Agamben's articulation of bare life as existence subjected to sovereign power in the absence of juridical protection (1998, p. 74) attains formal articulation in this configuration, as corporeal exposure becomes structurally legible within spatial hierarchy. Butler's conception of vulnerability as a socially allocated condition (2004, p. 25) clarifies asymmetrical distribution inscribed across bodily posture, elevation, and illumination. The migrant body consolidates testimonial force at the level of visible arrangement and translates abstract sovereignty into material alignment of height, stillness, and constrained breath.

Temporal suspension, spatial inscription, and corporeal alignment cohere as a unified formal configuration in *Green Border*. Prolonged duration stabilizes affliction as extended presence, displacing narrative acceleration and consolidating perceptual density. The recurrent pushback cycle, inscribed across nocturnal returns to the forest and repeated confrontations with barbed wire, embeds deferral within rhythmic structure. Landscape consolidates exclusion as material persistence, with monochrome tonality and obstructed framing converting terrain into a surface of accumulated historical residue. Corporeal positioning translates sovereign asymmetry into visible hierarchy, rendering vulnerability legible in vertical alignment, constrained breath, and enforced stillness. These dimensions operate as structural coordinates of cinematic organization rather than thematic motifs. Trauma assumes formal consistency as durational pressure, spatial sedimentation, and somatic endurance intersect within a cohesive aesthetic logic. The frontier acquires perceptual status as an apparatus that preserves deferred violence in repetition, suspension, and hierarchical visibility.

The preceding analyses consolidate trauma as a formal condition embedded in cinematic organization and displace its reduction to episodic violence. Prolonged duration, recurrent nocturnal expulsions, monochrome tonality, and the repeated incision of barbed wire across the frame establish a structural configuration that stabilizes deferred violence as perceptual persistence. Temporal deceleration, spatial obstruction, and corporeal alignment function as interdependent formal coordinates fixing political force

within aesthetic arrangement. Close formal scrutiny of shot composition, durational continuity, and vertical hierarchy reveals that memory in *Green Border* assumes material inscription within terrain, light, and bodily positioning and acquires perceptual density in spatial configuration. The frontier attains determinate epistemic status as a perceptual apparatus regulating visibility, suspension, and hierarchical distribution. Trauma achieves analytic coherence as durational pressure, mnemonic surface, and embodied endurance converge within a unified cinematic logic. Border space operates as a structured field constituted by suspended passage and enforced exposure, consolidating aesthetic articulation and political intelligibility within a single perceptual order.

3. Ethical Witnessing and the Politics of Exposure in *Green Border*

This section proposes that *Green Border* renders ethical witnessing as a formal dispositif inscribed within cinematic organization. Ethical force consolidates at the level of corporeal presence, materialized in sustained close framings, restrained camera movement, and extended durational exposure that structure spectatorship as a regulated relation of implication. Witnessing attains perceptual inscription in the distribution of visibility, the spatial alignment of bodies within static compositions, and the persistence of silence across prolonged takes. The migrant body assumes determinate status as an address antecedent to hermeneutic stabilization and situates the spectator within an asymmetrical relational matrix marked by vulnerability and non-reciprocity. Butler's articulation of ethical responsibility grounded in embodied precariousness (2004, p. 25) acquires formal instantiation in this configuration, as vulnerability operates as a structurally organized modality of visibility stabilized by framing, duration, and acoustic restraint. Ethical demand thereby assumes structural consistency within aesthetic arrangement and reconstitutes spectatorship as a site governed by exposure, endurance, and perceptual obligation.

The confrontation sequence structured around the father's direct gaze consolidates ethical witnessing at the level of visual alignment. A sustained medium close framing isolates his mud-marked face against a blurred forest background, where the faint silhouette of an armed figure remains partially visible at the edge of the frame. A narrow beam of flashlight intermittently crosses the surface of his skin, producing brief illuminations that intensify ocular focus without dissolving compositional restraint. Camera position approximates eye-level alignment and stabilizes the encounter as frontal address. The absence of reverse-shot construction interrupts shot-counter-shot reciprocity and suspends perspectival alternation. Frame depth remains shallow, compressing spatial recession and concentrating visual tension within facial stillness and fixed eye contact. Duration extends beyond narrative economy, maintaining the gaze without interpretive mediation or emotive escalation. Silence governs the acoustic field; dialogue withdraws and non-diegetic scoring remains absent, consolidating stillness as structural insistence. Felman and Laub's articulation of testimony as an address implicating its witness (1992, p. 57) attains determinate formal articulation in this implication, as the gaze institutes ethical asymmetry and situates spectatorship within a relation of responsibility anchored in sustained visual exposure. Visual contact functions as structural demand inscription in framing, duration, and perceptual proximity.

The prolonged waiting sequence marked by bodies immobilized in mud-saturated terrain consolidates silence and duration as structural determinants of ethical witnessing. Prolonged shots sustain static compositions beyond narrative function and suspend dialogic articulation, stabilizing exposure as perceptual persistence. Spatial emptiness surrounding seated figures generates negative visual field that intensifies isolation and suppresses kinetic diversion. Acoustic minimalism privileges restrained respiration and muted environmental resonance, while the continued absence of non-diegetic scoring precludes affective modulation. Temporal extension accumulates without compensatory closure; duration assumes density and registers as structural weight. Faces remain held within uninterrupted framings, visible without response and audible without acknowledgment, converting vulnerability into sustained visual presence. Butler's formulation of grievability as politically distributed recognition (2004, p. 25) attains determinate formal articulation in this configuration, as exposure persists within the frame without activating institutional reciprocity. Silence thus assumes structural status within cinematic organization and converts temporal persistence into ethical demand embedded in visual form.

The nocturnal inspection sequence, marked by handheld flashlights scanning immobilized figures in the forest, consolidates visibility as structured perceptual distribution. Static wide framings position migrant bodies at the margins of the image, partially obscured by mud, vegetation, and wire, while armed officers remain upright and optically stabilized along the vertical axis of the frame. Frame imbalance intensifies this hierarchy; expansive negative space surrounds seated figures and amplifies their isolation within the visual field. Directional beams of light isolate exposed faces in brief intervals, producing momentary illumination without altering compositional dominance. Depth compression restricts spatial recession and consolidates

enclosure within apparent openness. The image distributes perceptual prominence unevenly, stabilizing vulnerability as fully visible yet spatially contained presence. Rancière's articulation of the distribution of the sensible as a political partition of perceptibility (2004, p. 13) acquires determinate formal articulation here, as framing, elevation, and illumination regulate the allocation of presence within the field of vision. Visibility functions as structured arrangement embedded in compositional hierarchy and sustained by controlled optical dominance.

The forest return sequence following repeated forced returns consolidates precarity as perceptual stabilization structured by environmental recurrence. Bodies reappear within identical muddy coordinates, aligned with saturated ground and obstructive vegetation, producing figure-ground fusion that visually integrates corporeality into terrain. The horizon line remains low and unstable, compressing vertical escape and reinforcing enclosure within apparent openness. Static framings prolong exposure; rain persists across takes, and the monochrome register suppresses chromatic differentiation, intensifying material continuity between soil, clothing, and skin. Repetition operates as structuring principle, returning figures to spatial positions already marked by exhaustion and displacement. Shelter remains absent; bodies remain visible yet unattended, exposed yet unshielded, observed without institutional response. Butler's articulation of precariousness as politically distributed vulnerability (2004, p. 25) acquires determinate formal articulation in this configuration, as exposure persists in the frame without activating reciprocal protection. Precarity thus assumes aesthetic consistency through repetition, duration, and environmental embedding, consolidating vulnerability as stabilized perceptual condition.

Ethical witnessing in *Green Border* emerges as a structural effect of cinematic organization through sustained scene-based formal scrutiny. The monochrome register, recurrent nocturnal pushbacks, flashlight inspection sequences, and repeated returns to mud-saturated terrain stabilize exposure as perceptual persistence rather than episodic event. Shot-level examination of framing, durational continuity, vertical hierarchy, and figure-ground alignment demonstrates that ethical demand derives from compositional arrangement and temporal extension embedded within the image. Visibility functions as regulated allocation; precarity persists as environmental embedding; vulnerability attains perceptual continuity across cyclical displacement. Spectatorship occupies a position structured by proximity and sustained exposure, held within static framings that deny compensatory resolution. Ethical force assumes determinate formal status through the convergence of light, duration, spatial repetition, and bodily stillness. The film frames witnessing as a disciplined perceptual regime binding aesthetic construction and political intelligibility within the material organization of the frame.

4. Border Aesthetics as Atmospheric Dispositif in *Green Border*

The nocturnal swamp disorientation sequence consolidates the frontier as atmospheric configuration embedded in cinematic form. Horizon lines recede into darkness. Tree trunks and mud saturated ground compress depth and restrict visual recession, dissolving navigational orientation. Static camera placement stabilizes enclosure within apparent openness, and lateral dispersion extends the frame without directional progression. Flashlight beams cut through humid air in narrow arcs and produce localized illumination that fails to restore spatial clarity. Acoustic attenuation suppresses environmental depth; sound remains dampened and spatial cues dissolve into muted resonance. Environmental saturation including moisture, fog, and soil generates perceptual density that absorbs movement and arrests momentum. Depth compression and occluded sightlines convert terrain into continuous surface, eliminating perspectival escape and embedding bodies within atmospheric enclosure. The border thereby assumes operative form as spatial modulation stabilized in framing, illumination, and environmental opacity. Balibar's articulation of the dispersed border as a condition diffused across space (2002, p. 84) attains determinate formal articulation at the level of visual organization, as territorial demarcation yields to atmospheric diffusion structured by obstruction and sensory attenuation. The frontier consolidates as perceptual formation governed by diffusion, saturation, and suspended orientation.

The barbed wire sequence condenses atmospheric density into material inscription at the level of surface contact. A restrained close framing isolates the tactile encounter between metal and skin; the camera remains fixed at near eye level, eliminating spatial distraction and stabilizing the abrasion within the visual field. Slight bodily movement produces intermittent friction against the wire, and the metallic tension registers through subtle shifts in light and texture. Compressed depth confines the scene to immediate surface, restricting background recession and intensifying the proximity between flesh and obstruction. The monochrome register suppresses chromatic differentiation and amplifies tonal contrast, rendering moisture, abrasion, and strain visually acute. Diffuse illumination prevents expressive highlight and stabilizes injury within a controlled tonal spectrum. Environmental saturation established in earlier forest

sequences here condenses into tactile surface, as atmospheric enclosure materializes in corporeal abrasion. Rancière's articulation of the distribution of the sensible (2004, p. 13) attains determinate formal articulation at this juncture, as framing and tonal austerity reallocate perceptual centrality to exposed flesh and suspend all competing visual hierarchies. Monochrome aesthetics thereby transform atmospheric dispersion into material legibility, embedding exclusion within surface tension and restrained movement.

Border aesthetics in *Green Border* consolidate atmospheric modulation and material inscription into a unified perceptual order continuous with wounded temporality and ethical exposure previously examined. Environmental saturation, occluded horizons, and depth compression establish enclosure as spatial condition, while monochrome austerity and barbed wire abrasion stabilize vulnerability as tactile presence. Governance materializes not as declarative force but as regulated visibility, restricted movement, and immobilized circulation embedded in shot composition. Recurrent returns to mud-saturated terrain and flashlight inspections reaffirm exposure as cyclical spatial containment rather than episodic interruption. Sustained shot-level scrutiny of framing, tonal distribution, and spatial restriction demonstrates that border power operates through environmental density and surface inscription structured within cinematic organization. The frontier attains determinate status as perceptual apparatus in which obstruction, diffusion, and corporeal abrasion converge. Aesthetic arrangement thereby consolidates political intelligibility within environmental modulation and tactile abrasion, binding spatial structure to sustained exposure without rhetorical amplification.

5. Ethical Dilemmas and Testimony in *Green Border*

The encounter between a border guard and a dehydrated child concentrates ethical conflict at the level of formal tension. A restrained medium framing situates both figures within a single uninterrupted shot, the camera positioned at near eye level to stabilize the exchange without conferring elevated authority. Barbed wire remains visible in the background, bisecting the spatial field and anchoring the gesture within a regime of obstruction. The guard's extended arm enters the center of the frame; brief contact between bottle and hand unfolds without cut or reverse-shot mediation, preserving assistance and expulsion within a shared compositional continuum. Depth remains shallow and restricts background recession, intensifying proximity between care and coercion. The guard sustains upright posture; the child remains lowered and partially supported by mud-saturated ground, consolidating vertical asymmetry despite the transient suspension of force. No non-diegetic scoring intervenes. Duration extends without expressive escalation, stabilizing the exchange within perceptual continuity. Agamben's articulation of the state of exception as juridical suspension coexisting with uninterrupted coercive structure (1999, p. 74) attains determinate formal articulation in the uninterrupted framing of aid and removal within a single visual register. Butler's conception of precarious life (2004, p. 25) renders the asymmetry inscribed within this structure, as vulnerability persists in exposure despite the temporary gesture of relief. Ethical conflict acquires structural consistency through compositional continuity organized by framing, posture, and duration.

A nocturnal scene stages an activist kneeling to extend a blanket toward a shivering migrant and consolidates solidarity as restrained intervention within a surveilled environment. The camera remains fixed at low eye level and retains both figures within a single static frame, preserving lateral distance between giver and recipient. Negative space surrounds the crouched bodies, and dim flashlight illumination isolates faces without dissolving environmental darkness. The gesture unfolds slowly without cut; eye contact remains brief and partially averted, stabilizing proximity without dissolving asymmetry. Compressed depth restricts background recession, and surrounding foliage partially occludes the figures, embedding assistance within atmospheric constraint. Acoustic minimalism persists; speech remains subdued, and non-diegetic scoring remains absent, consolidating restraint as structural condition. Felman and Laub's articulation of testimony as an address implicating its witness (1992, p. 57) attains determinate formal articulation at the moment a migrant's gaze meets the lens without reverse-shot mediation, preserving ocular contact within uninterrupted framing. Butler's theorization of grievability (2004, p. 20) clarifies the stakes of this visibility, as exposed bodies remain illuminated yet unsheltered and perceptible yet unprotected. Solidarity thus acquires structural tension in compositional continuity, and testimony constitutes perceptual insistence structured by framing, duration, and restrained gesture.

Ethical tension in *Green Border* consolidates as sustained formal persistence across the water offering, the nocturnal blanket exchange, and the subsequent expulsion framed against barbed wire. Gestures of care and gestures of coercion remain embedded within uninterrupted compositions, and solidaristic intervention fails to reconfigure structural asymmetry stabilized in vertical alignment and compressed depth. Static framing and extended duration withhold compensatory closure; scenes terminate without reconciliation and preserve exposure within the same visual register that stages assistance. The absence of

reverse-shot mediation and the persistence of monochrome austerity stabilize ethical friction as compositional continuity rather than narrative contradiction. Vulnerability remains visible yet unsecured in mud-saturated terrain, and authority persists within the same perceptual field that momentarily accommodates hesitation. Sustained shot-level scrutiny reveals that irresolution attains structural consistency across framing, duration, and spatial structure. Testimony constitutes unresolved presence, and spectatorship sustains prolonged proximity to ethical fracture without interpretive discharge. The film stabilizes ethical demand within the material organization of the frame, as responsibility adheres to compositional persistence and atmospheric constraint.

6. Cultural Studies Perspective: Migration, Identity, and Memory in *Green Border*

This section argues that *Green Border* constitutes migration as a structural cultural condition that recasts Europe's imaginary at the level of perception and mnemonic inscription. Displacement inscribes itself within Europe's unstable self-constitution and compels the frontier to consolidate as a site where belonging, exclusion, and historical residue coalesce within a unified visual regime. Identity materializes as a suspended and processual formation generated within conditions of spatial marginalization, durational extension, and regulated visibility. The film performs a determinate intervention in cultural memory studies by transposing mnemonic inscription from archival representation into cinematic structure and sedimenting remembrance within perceptual organization. Framing, tonal austerity, spatial stratification, and reiterated obstruction operationalize memory and convert the border into a perceptual archive structured by recurrence and deferral. Stuart Hall's formulation of identity as an ongoing process of *becoming* (1990, p. 225) attains formal instantiation in these visual arrangements, situating subjectivity within an unresolved interval between origin and deferred arrival and forestalling ontological closure. The analysis conducts sustained formal scrutiny of selected sequences and mobilizes shot composition, durational continuity, acoustic attenuation, vertical hierarchy, and figure-ground articulation as cultural mechanisms that constitute migration as a structure of belonging and historical consciousness. Methodological consolidation thereby establishes the film as an aesthetic operation that inscribes Europe's fractured cultural memory within the material structure of the image and rearticulates the frontier as a cultural threshold stabilized in perception.

Following the nocturnal forced return, the film establishes an extended static wide shot that relegates migrant bodies to the extreme lateral margin of the frame and constitutes peripheral emplacement as a structural visual principle. The camera sustains frontal immobility across an uninterrupted duration exceeding forty seconds, refusing corrective reframing and withholding shot-reverse-shot reciprocity. Forest density, mud-saturated terrain, and vertical trunks generate a grid of obstruction that compresses depth and attenuates perspectival recession, while expansive negative space dominates compositional centrality and amplifies the asymmetry between environmental mass and corporeal presence. Monochrome austerity suppresses chromatic hierarchy and integrates clothing, soil, and shadow into a contiguous tonal field that diminishes bodily singularity and stabilizes figures within a muted continuum of terrain. Gesture contracts into minimal postural adjustment and constrained respiration; kinetic progression yields to durational stasis. Temporal extension accumulates perceptual density and transforms waiting from narrative interval into structural condition embedded in spatial organization. Peripheral positioning within this configuration exceeds spatial displacement and inscribes mnemonic deferral into the visual field. Reiterated returns to lateralized framing sediment interruption as visual recurrence, converting deferred arrival into a pattern stabilized within compositional memory. The frame withholds central recognition and situates subject formation inside an unresolved spatial interval governed by suspension and postponement. Stuart Hall's articulation of identity as continuous *becoming* (1990, p. 225) attains formal instantiation in this spatial marginalization, which renders subjectivity processual rather than territorially consolidated. Bhabha's conceptualization of the *third space* clarifies the interstitial temporality structuring this arrangement, since the frontier here functions as a liminal threshold that sustains existence in calibrated indeterminacy. The sequence consequently consolidates migration as a cultural condition materialized in compositional marginality and preserved within the image as a recurring mnemonic configuration.

Immediately following forced displacement during a nocturnal inspection, the film isolates the father in a sustained medium close framing that anchors ocular contact as the primary compositional vector. Armed officers remain at the periphery; handheld flashlights intermittently traverse the father's face and generate abrupt tonal contrasts against enveloping darkness. The camera maintains eye-level alignment and prolongs the shot for over thirty seconds without reverse-angle construction, suspending perspectival reciprocity and consolidating visual address as unilateral exposure. Shallow depth of field compresses environmental recession and intensifies facial stillness, while monochrome austerity accentuates moisture, abrasion, and shadow as tactile indices of corporeal endurance. Acoustic minimalism privileges restrained

respiration and dampened forest resonance; the absence of non-diegetic scoring eliminates emotive modulation and stabilizes perceptual confrontation. Refusal of shot-counter-shot logic interrupts dialogic exchange and situates spectatorship within an asymmetrical field structured by enforced visibility. Prolonged ocular contact converts the face into a site of mnemonic inscription. The withheld cut stabilizes the gaze as durational trace and displaces psychological interiority in favor of perceptual persistence. Marianne Hirsch's formulation of postmemory (2012, p. 5) clarifies this visual operation, since the image mediates traumatic inheritance across spectatorship without reliance on narrative exposition. The gaze enforces implication and redirects ethical attention toward conditions producing exposure, thereby refracting Europe's fractured cultural imaginary back into its perceptual field. Testimony acquires material consistency in extended visibility and consolidates migration as a transmissive mnemonic event binding memory, identity, and political contradiction without symbolic resolution.

Following successive nocturnal expulsions and prolonged immobilization at the forest frontier, the film institutes an extended static wide composition that situates migrant bodies within rain-saturated terrain and consolidates exposure as a governing spatial condition. The camera sustains low eye-level alignment across a duration exceeding fifty seconds, suppressing vertical transcendence and compressing the horizon into an indistinct tonal threshold that forecloses directional futurity. Continuous rainfall saturates clothing, skin, and soil, generating a materially contiguous surface that dissolves figure-ground hierarchy and integrates corporeality into environmental density. Monochrome austerity abolishes chromatic stratification and intensifies textural inscription; diffuse illumination neutralizes expressive contrast and embeds vulnerability within atmospheric uniformity. Bodily movement contracts into residual micro-gestures and restrained respiration, while montage abstention arrests temporal progression and converts waiting into durational sedimentation. Temporal extension accrues mnemonic weight as repetition reactivates identical spatial coordinates across recurring returns to the frontier landscape. Rain, stillness, and environmental saturation consolidate a perceptual regime structured by deferral and stabilize suspended belonging as recurring visual pattern. Jacques Rancière's articulation of the distribution of the sensible (2004, p. 13) clarifies this perceptual reordering, since the sequence recalibrates visibility and relocates marginal existence to the center of cinematic attention without conferring institutional recognition. Exposure attains structural permanence and destabilizes Europe's humanitarian self-conception by aligning vulnerability with sustained abandonment rather than episodic emergency. Atmospheric duration thereby assumes archival function, preserving interruption within cinematic temporality and inscribing Europe's fractured cultural memory into environmental persistence.

A night-time enforcement sequence following repeated expulsions organizes the visual field around pronounced vertical stratification and consolidates sovereign hierarchy as perceptual geometry. Armed officers occupy elevated terrain; migrant bodies remain seated or collapsed in mud-saturated ground below. The camera secures a wide, vertically integrated composition and preserves the entire height differential within a single frame, slight upward angling from the level of exposed bodies reinforcing elevation as an index of procedural command. Descending flashlight beams trace controlled trajectories across lowered figures and convert illumination into a technique of inspection, extending optical regulation into the spatial logic of surveillance. Depth compression intensifies enclosure and suppresses spatial recession; silhouetted contours of upright bodies acquire tonal clarity against the horizon, whereas prone figures dissolve into environmental density. Postural contrast acquires structural density: erect stance encodes authority, grounded immobility registers enforced endurance, constrained respiration embeds corporeal exposure within compositional hierarchy. This vertical ordering materializes migration as the visible outcome of stratified sovereignty and refracts Europe's humanitarian self-projection against the persistence of exclusion enacted within the same perceptual regime. Paul Gilroy's critique of European modernity as historically constituted through racialized boundary-making clarifies the cultural density of this configuration, since elevation and optical command reiterate hierarchies sedimented in Europe's own historical imaginary. Jacques Rancière's articulation of the distribution of the sensible (2004, p. 13) further illuminates the perceptual partition enacted here, compositional hierarchy reallocating visibility and stabilizing vulnerability inside a regime structured by control rather than reciprocity. Recurrent returns to analogous vertical alignments sediment this geometry into mnemonic pattern and preserve sovereign asymmetry as visual recurrence across the film's temporal articulation. The frontier consequently consolidates as a cultural diagram; elevation, illumination, and posture inscribes political contradiction into the material structure of the image and inscribes Europe's fractured imaginary within a stabilized perceptual structure.

The preceding analyses interrogate the constitution of migration within cinematic form as cultural memory and dislocates its reduction to episodic geopolitical disturbance. Sustained scene-level examination of

lateral marginalization, ocular stabilization, atmospheric endurance, and vertical stratification consolidates political contradiction within perceptual architecture and translates sovereignty into spatial and temporal inscription. Prevailing border cinema scholarship privileges representational discourse and humanitarian narration; the present inquiry reorients analytic emphasis toward formal organization and posits aesthetic configuration as mnemonic apparatus. Compositional recurrence, durational sedimentation, and environmental saturation materialize cultural memory within the regulation of visibility and embed remembrance in perceptual structuring rather than archival citation. Identity formation consolidates as suspended process governed by calibrated exposure and deferred arrival, and the frontier crystallizes as a perceptual threshold administering belonging through stratified visibility. Cultural studies furnishes the necessary analytic register by conceptualizing perception as ideological terrain and by situating visual hierarchy within historically sedimented imaginaries of Europe. Formal stratification refracts humanitarian self-projection against persistent exclusion and exposes the cultural imaginary as internally hierarchical and structurally unstable. The film advances a determinate intervention in cultural memory scholarship by materializing historical contradiction in aesthetic configuration and by preserving mnemonic transmission without declarative exposition. Migration acquires legibility as durable cultural inscription embedded in the material distribution of elevation, illumination, posture, and duration. Cinematic organization stabilizes this inscription as recurring perceptual structure and consolidates the frontier as mnemonic terrain sustaining Europe's unresolved political memory.

7. Media, Reception, and Transnational Circulation

This section interrogates the transnational circulation of *Green Border* and examines the reactivation of its formal operations within collective public memory. Earlier analyses located mnemonic production in framing, duration, vertical stratification, and atmospheric density; the present inquiry traces the displacement of those visual configurations across festival exhibition in Venice, journalistic controversy in Warsaw, and broader European media discourse. Specific images, including the rain-saturated swamp sequence, the floodlit inspection structured by vertical hierarchy, and the close framing of hands torn against barbed wire, detach from narrative continuity and reappear in promotional stills, press coverage, and parliamentary debate as condensed mnemonic fragments. Arjun Appadurai's account of global cultural flows (1996, p. 33) clarifies the mobility of media artifacts across disjunctive cultural terrains and foregrounds circulation as a process that accumulates layered significations through repetition, displacement, and ideological contestation. Circulation reactivates compositional logics already embedded in the film and amplifies their perceptual force beyond the screening space. Repetition across antagonistic interpretive fields stabilizes particular images as focal points of controversy and ethical confrontation, thereby reorganizing collective perception and sedimenting public memory through mediated recurrence. The analysis follows discrete visual fragments across reception contexts and evaluates the processes of reiteration, appropriation, and political conflict that transform cinematic form into mnemonic infrastructure operating across national boundaries.

The swamp sequence presents migrant bodies immobilized in rain-saturated terrain under static wide framing that suppresses directional movement and consolidates exposure as environmental condition. Mud adheres to clothing and skin, diffuse illumination neutralizes tonal contrast, and prolonged duration converts waiting into perceptual suspension. Atmospheric density integrates corporeality into terrain and stabilizes endurance as compositional pattern. Upon entry into festival promotion and journalistic mediation, the same visual fragment circulates as a standalone image frequently cropped to foreground seated bodies against saturated ground, thereby intensifying iconographic concentration. Promotional stills isolate mud-soaked figures and detach the scene from narrative progression, transforming atmospheric endurance into condensed emblem of border abandonment. Repetition across European media outlets amplifies recognition independent of narrative continuity and consolidates the fragment as recurring visual reference. Circulation reactivates compositional logics already sedimented in the scene and extends their perceptual reach across heterogeneous interpretive terrains. Repetition, reframing, and decontextualization stabilize the swamp image as mnemonic condensation capable of functioning beyond projection. Appadurai's account of media mobility (1996, p. 33) clarifies the accumulation of layered significations across transnational circulation; persistence of formal configuration secures the fragment's mnemonic force. Atmospheric immobility, flattened tonality, and environmental saturation retain perceptual density in each iteration and permit the fragment to operate as public index of vulnerability and sovereign exclusion. The swamp consequently transitions from narrative moment to circulating ethical sign and embeds cinematic form within collective memory through mediated recurrence.

The floodlight inspection sequence constructs a vertically stratified composition that positions armed officers on elevated ground and situates migrant bodies below within descending beams of artificial light.

Static wide framing preserves the entire hierarchy along a single visual axis, and controlled arcs of illumination convert light into an instrument of inspection and surveillance. Tonal contrast sharpens upright silhouettes against the horizon and integrates lowered figures into environmental density, consolidating authority and exposure as perceptual geometry. Following its premiere in Venice and subsequent controversy in Polish governmental discourse, this image circulated widely in press photography and televised debate, detached from narrative progression and reframed as emblem of border enforcement. Official denunciations mobilized the elevated stance of officers as visual affirmation of territorial defense; activist commentary foregrounded the same descending beams as indices of surveillance and coercive exclusion. Circulation intensifies a hierarchy already inscribed in the frame and reactivates its compositional logic across antagonistic interpretive arenas. Stuart Hall's articulation of representation as ideological struggle (1997, p. 259) clarifies this rearticulation, since identical visual structures sustain competing claims concerning sovereignty and dignity. Repetition across adversarial media contexts stabilizes the floodlight image as durable mnemonic reference and embeds vertical stratification within collective perception as recurring visual schema. The image condenses the contradiction between humanitarian self-presentation and exclusionary practice and consolidates Europe's fractured cultural imaginary around the tension between protection and abandonment. Circulation beyond projection converts cinematic hierarchy into public mnemonic infrastructure and preserves political asymmetry as enduring visual memory.

Transnational circulation secures the afterlife of the film's aesthetic and ethical structures by extending perceptual structures beyond projection and inscribing them within collective memory. Reiterated exhibition, journalistic mediation, parliamentary denunciation, and digital redistribution preserve specific visual fragments and stabilize them as recurring reference points in debates on sovereignty, migration, and European identity. Formal configuration generates the image; circulation extracts and multiplies that image; reiteration stabilizes recognition; stabilized recognition consolidates public memory. Circulation intensifies compositional logics already sedimented in framing, duration, stratification, and illumination and amplifies their mnemonic force across national boundaries. Atmospheric endurance from the swamp sequence, vertical hierarchy from the floodlight inspection, and tactile abrasion from barbed wire close-ups acquire public durability through repetition and ideological contestation. Such reiteration embeds cinematic images within mediated temporality and consolidates them as visual infrastructure sustaining Europe's unresolved political memory. Media circulation thus operates as mnemonic extension and transforms filmic configuration into transnational archive of conscience. Visibility persists across festival discourse, governmental controversy, and critical commentary, ensuring that the frontier retains perceptual presence as cultural wound and structural contradiction. Migration attains recognition as enduring cultural inscription embedded in distributed visibility and contested interpretation. The circulation of *Green Border* preserves cinematic hierarchy, atmospheric exposure, and ethical address within ongoing public negotiation and secures mnemonic endurance across temporal and geographic displacement.

8. Conclusion

This study positions *Green Border* as a rigorous cinematic intervention that reconstitutes migration as a structural cultural condition inscribed within perceptual regimes of memory, stratification, and ethical exposure. The analysis interrogates the transformation of cinematic form into mnemonic architecture and identifies spatial alignment, durational extension, tonal austerity, and calibrated visibility as formal mechanisms that render political contradiction perceptually legible. Close scene-level scrutiny of lateral marginalization, ocular stabilization, atmospheric endurance, and vertical hierarchy clarifies the frontier's consolidation as perceptual threshold regulating belonging by calibrated exposure and deferred arrival. Cinematic organization materializes cultural memory via compositional recurrence and environmental density, translating sovereignty, abandonment, and corporeal endurance into structured visual inscription. This article advances border cinema scholarship by displacing representational emphasis and by establishing aesthetic configuration as primary locus of mnemonic production. Migration constitutes a component of Europe's collective imaginary, sedimented in image structure and sustained across temporal unfolding. Formal stratification operates as mnemonic apparatus preserving historical contradiction within the material organization of the frame and stabilizing the border as enduring cultural terrain.

The study advances a methodological and conceptual reorientation within border cinema studies by shifting analytic priority from representation-centered readings of migration narratives and humanitarian visibility frameworks to formal structure as the primary locus of historical inscription. A substantial body of migration cinema criticism concentrates on discourse, ideology, and testimonial rhetoric; the present

analysis identifies compositional structure, durational discipline, perceptual stratification, and atmospheric density as constitutive mechanisms that inscribe political contradiction in cinematic organization. This repositioning extends cultural memory studies by relocating mnemonic production from archival documentation and narrative testimony to aesthetic architecture sedimented in image structure. The article establishes a direct analytical bridge between border aesthetics and mnemonic theory and formulates an approach that examines cinematic form itself as apparatus of remembrance. Such an emphasis on formal mnemonic architecture remains comparatively underarticulated in existing scholarship and therefore marks the study's principal intervention. The incorporation of reception and transnational circulation further expands the analytic field by tracing the migration of discrete visual fragments into contested arenas of public memory. The article thereby consolidates an interdisciplinary framework aligning film aesthetics, cultural memory, and media analysis and positions aesthetic organization as determinant structure in the study of migration and sovereignty.

The analytic force of *Green Border* resides in its exposure of the structural contradiction governing Europe's border regimes and humanitarian self-presentation. The floodlit inspection sequence and the rain-saturated swamp composition align sovereign elevation and grounded vulnerability within a unified perceptual order, translating political tension into vertical hierarchy and durational endurance. Elevated officers, descending beams of inspection, and immobilized bodies produce a spatial configuration that situates protection discourse alongside material abandonment. Such alignment discloses the instability of Europe's universalist claims and renders visible the tension between security rhetoric and exclusionary practice. Migration assumes the status of constitutive fissure within Europe's cultural imaginary and embeds displacement inside regimes of visibility that distribute recognition unevenly. Calibrated exposure governs belonging, and perceptual stratification preserves inequality within frameworks that invoke ethical universality. The frontier consolidates as a site of convergence between sovereign control and ethical demand, sustaining contradiction as structural condition inscribed in cinematic organization.

Within disciplinary inquiry, *Green Border* establishes a model integrating film aesthetics, cultural memory theory, trauma studies, political philosophy, and media analysis in a coherent analytic structure structured by sustained scene-level precision. Framing, duration, spatial hierarchy, and circulation establish cinematic form as mnemonic infrastructure and a site of political inscription beyond declarative argumentation. The study establishes the methodological value of close formal analysis for work on migration, sovereignty, and border aesthetics and provides a replicable framework for future investigations of transnational cinema. Formal structure generates mnemonic inscription; circulation extends that inscription across mediated publics; reiteration stabilizes recognition within collective memory. Reception and transnational mediation secure the persistence of these visual structures inside public discourse and register political contradiction within shared perceptual fields. The endurance of such images affirms the capacity of formal rigor to sustain ethical and historical pressure beyond projection and establishes cinematic organization as a durable instrument of cultural reckoning.

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