



Raskolnikov as a Transformed Character: Aki Kaurismäki's Adaptation of “Crime and Punishment” (1983)

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Abstract

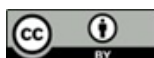
How do motion pictures transpose the characters from a well-established literary work into a cinematic narrative, replete with their own narrative potential? Can the resulting film be regarded as an entirely new creation? To explore these questions, we have selected Aki Kaurismäki's 1983 cinematic adaptation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

The primary objective of this study is to ascertain whether the characters from a literary work undergo a transformation into new personas, enriched by the narrative possibilities inherent to cinema. Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* transposed the narrative to a more contemporary era and streamlined the cast of characters, with the film director imparting his distinctive touch to their transformation.

In Kaurismäki's rendition of *Crime and Punishment*, a metafictional dimension emerges, blurring the boundaries of narrative levels. The film's characters comport themselves as if intimately acquainted with the original novel's story and characters. While maintaining fidelity to the foundational narrative, a novel artistic creation takes shape, wherein the characters exhibit a profound awareness of their origins within the original literary work.

Keywords

Novel Adaptations; Crime and Punishment; Dostoevsky; Kaurismäki; Character in Cinema; Characterization in Cinema; Kaurismäki's Cinema; Literature and Cinema; Novel and Cinema; Russian Literature



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Раскольников как преобразенный персонаж: адаптация «Преступление и наказание» Аки Каурисмяки, 1983

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Аннотация

Как кинематографические произведения транспонируют персонажей из известного литературного произведения в кинематографический нарратив, обогащая их собственным повествовательным потенциалом? Может ли получившийся фильм считаться совершенно новым творением? Чтобы исследовать эти вопросы, мы выбрали кинематографическую адаптацию «Преступления и наказания» Федора Достоевского, снятую в 1983 году режиссёром Аки Каурисмяки.

Основная цель этого исследования – определить, претерпевают ли персонажи литературного произведения трансформацию в новые образы, обогащенные повествовательными возможностями кинематографа. Адаптация Каурисмяки переносит повествование в более современную эпоху и упрощает состав персонажей, при этом режиссер придает им свой уникальный оттенок трансформации.

В этой интерпретации Каурисмяки возникает метафизическое измерение, стирающее границы между уровнями повествования. Персонажи фильма ведут себя так, будто они тесно знакомы с историей и персонажами оригинального романа. Сохраняя верность основному нарративу, складывается новое художественное произведение, в котором персонажи проявляют глубокое осознание своего происхождения из первоначального литературного произведения.

Ключевые слова

адаптации романов; «Преступление и наказание»; Достоевский; Каурисмяки; киноперсонаж; характеристика в кино; кино Каурисмяки; литература и кино; роман и кино; русская литература



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Introduction

Social changes have played a pivotal role in the evolution of narrative storytelling. The portrayal of individuals within narratives has evolved in tandem with shifts in society. These social changes have not only influenced the characters in narratives but have also been expressed by the writers and filmmakers as integral reflections of society. The reactions of narrative characters to events, their perspectives on life, and their awareness of individuality and sociality have mirrored the prevailing social changes of their time. Consequently, the transformation in societal perceptions has integrated artists into the very fabric of their productions, with visual arts faithfully reproducing reality. This artistic shift, reminiscent of the auteur cinema theory, allows for the discernment of the creator's imprints within a film. As the role of the individual in society has evolved, so too have the characteristics of narrative storytelling.

Individuals, existing as members of society, often assume roles as characters in works of fiction. These characters, in turn, provide insights into societal dynamics or serve as sources of inspiration for the narrative. Numerous theories have been posited regarding the creation of characters within the fictional universe. While the modes of expression, such as cinema, theater, novels, and short stories, have evolved over time, character theories have adapted to suit these mediums. In cinema, character presentation differs from that in novels, with the former emphasizing visuality, while the latter relies on textual representation.

Aristotle, in his examination of tragedy, contended that characters were conceived as secondary entities representing good or evil in service of the plot. Aristotle's perspective on character resonates with a binary conception, akin to the dichotomy between black and white (Aşkaroğlu, 2016, p. 304). Character theories have evolved since Aristotle's time, and his viewpoint endured for a significant period. However, it began to be challenged in the mid-20th century. Aristotle's assertion that character was subservient to action was perpetuated by structuralists, leading to character analysis limited primarily to functional roles. It was Henry James and E. M. Forster who challenged this perspective. James, departing from the Aristotelian tradition, argued that actions and characters could not be viewed in isolation from each other. Forster, taking James's ideas further, prioritized character over plot, asserting its greater significance. While these two opposing viewpoints persisted for an extended period, contemporary character theories suggest a shift towards a reevaluation of the character's role (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016).

Between the 1920s and 1940s, a period of radical change and experimentation pervaded literature and the arts. Realism, previously considered predictable and uninteresting, came under scrutiny. Certain film directors and literary figures protested against the illusion of reality, which they believed rendered the audience



passive. Artists, seeking greater depth and diversity, turned to more audacious themes and character portrayals (Shepherd-Barr, 2019, pp. 61-62).

Metz contends that cinema constitutes a distinct language, albeit one without a code, possessing texts with meaningful discourse. This cinematic language differs from spoken languages as it is not bound by a pre-existing code (Wollen, 2004, p. 108). According to Jensen, the language of cinema embodies a sign system that generates meaning, positioning cinema as a unique form of communication, akin to other social and cultural productions (Ellul, 1998). Films can be regarded as systems of signs, with the arrangement of images and sounds being far from arbitrary. The meanings attributed to films are not the exclusive purview of individuals but are instead shared by a community over time. The history of cinema has seen the emergence of stereotypical filmic structures and understandings; however, innovations introduced with creativity remain accessible and interpretable by audiences (Moriel, 1998).

Cinema emerged at the tail end of significant developments in narrative science. The art of cinema embodies an interdisciplinary nature through its visual and dramatic components. This interdisciplinary framework has enabled cinema to forge its distinct language, drawing inspiration from preceding artistic forms like theater and literature and reinterpreting these elements in its unique field. The transformation in character structure witnessed over time within narratives underwent further evolution within the field of cinema. To analyze this shift comparatively, adaptation films play a vital role.

This study adopts a descriptive structure as its methodology. Although it initiates by introducing the fundamental concepts of narratology, the analysis employed is not strictly adherent to a narratological approach. Instead, a structuralist method is eschewed. The fundamental concepts of narratology are employed to gain insights into the transformation of narrative genres and the evolution of narrative genres. These concepts, however, extend beyond the purview of narratology and have become subjects of independent research. Nevertheless, the utility of narratology in facilitating the development and elucidation of these concepts is undeniable. As a methodological approach, this study leverages narratology concepts and theories of characterization to offer a descriptive analysis of how these concepts undergo distortion and transformation in Aki Kaurismäki's cinematic adaptation of the novel *Crime and Punishment*.

This study focuses on Aki Kaurismäki's adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, examining the nuances of character portrayal in cinema. It explores the evolution of character theories in literature and cinema and how characters are depicted in different artistic mediums. The discussion includes how Kaurismäki integrates and transforms the original characters from Dostoevsky's novel, blending literary and cinematic techniques to create a unique narrative experience. The complexity of characters and the intertwining of various narrative layers are emphasized, analyzing the nuances of character development and the director's



storytelling approach. The innovative aspect of the article lies in its focus on how Kaurismäki's film interprets and transforms characters from Dostoevsky's original work. Under the guidance of narratology theories, the study also briefly includes Kaurismäki's adaptations of *Hamlet*, *The Match Factory Girl*, and *Juha* to analyze his adaptation method. The lack of academic studies on character transformations in Kaurismäki's adaptations of *Crime and Punishment* and other films has been a challenging aspect of this work.

The article focuses on the film adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* by Aki Kaurismäki and the depiction of characters in cinema. Accordingly, the research questions have been formulated as follows:

RQ1. How has Aki Kaurismäki's film adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* reinterpreted the characters and themes of the novel, and what cinematic techniques has it employed to convey these elements?

RQ2. In deviating from Dostoevsky's original text, how does Kaurismäki's film reshape the inner worlds and societal positions of the characters?

RQ3. How does the meta-narrative in Kaurismäki's adaptation affect the audience's perception of the characters and the reality of the narrative?

RQ4. How are Dostoevsky's original moral and existential dilemmas reflected or deviated in the adaptation, and what cultural or temporal contexts influence these changes?

RQ5. What are the artistic differences between the literary texture seen in Dostoevsky's novel and the visual composition seen in Kaurismäki's film?

Character in Cinema

The cinema audience seeks to grasp and acquaint itself with the characters portrayed in a film, and it can be argued that a film's appeal is heightened when the audience comprehends the character. This comprehension is achieved by endowing the character with both external and internal attributes, aimed at bolstering the character's credibility. The advancement of cinematic techniques has paralleled developments in the presentation and authenticity of film characters, sparking fresh approaches to character portrayal.

In literature, a “type” represents a one-dimensional figure conceived to symbolize the traces and attributes of society, with the term “type” denoting a sample or exemplar (Tekin, 2018, p. 104). In contrast, “character” in literature implies multi-faceted and multidimensional figures, bearing the connotation of an individual's distinctive traits (Eagleton, 2019, p. 58).

During its formative years, cinema predominantly offered visual storytelling, but with time, sound was incorporated into the cinematic experience. Consequently, filmmakers recognized that a character could be portrayed not merely through physical features but also through their inner world. The advent of sound films facilitated the creation of characters with depth, enabling them to reflect the society they inhabit and the culture they embody (Aslanyürek, 2004, p. 104).



Characters in cinema can be explored from three dimensions, aligning with the multifaceted nature of humanity as a social being, encompassing physical, sociological, and psychological dimensions. These dimensions collectively shape the character. Three distinct approaches are employed to elucidate a character in films. The first method entails the revelation of the character through the actor's dialogues and movements, akin to theatrical representation. The second method involves character depiction through other characters' descriptions, along with visual details. The third method relies on the screenwriter's narrative storytelling, achieving a multidimensional portrayal imbued with the complexity of everyday life (Akyürek, 2008, pp. 177-178).

Character depiction in cinema can be divided into two principal methods: direct and indirect, paralleling the open and closed characterization techniques seen in novels. Direct characterization entails the use of character descriptions through dialogues and actions. This approach, however, is less suitable for the cinematic medium. Dialogues in films provide insights into the social, personal, and psychological contexts of the speaker. These dialogues encompass both spoken exchanges and character monologues, which divulge information about themselves, others, and various subjects (Akyürek, 2008, pp. 182-185). Given cinema's visual nature, careful attention is dedicated to dialogue usage. Films employing classical dramatic structures emphasize mimetic time and spatial relationships; the inclusion of a narrator can disrupt the sense of immediacy and reality for the audience. Consequently, dialogues are employed with visual elements, including human figures, animals, or objects (Ünal, 2015, p. 144).

The final facet facilitating the direct portrayal of characters is their behavior. Characters' actions convey their ideals and values, with character development unfolding over the course of the film's duration. A character's behavior and demeanor may evolve throughout the film, culminating in the establishment of the character's coherence and values (Akyürek, 2008, pp. 185-186). In line with Syd Field's viewpoint, characters possess both internal and external lives. The internal life encompasses the character's history, encompassing their social environment, family, upbringing, and conduct, leading up to the film's commencement. Conversely, the external life pertains to events that transpire after the movie begins, exposing the character's moral compass, values, beliefs, and attitudes. For audience engagement, it is imperative that the character's inner and outer lives harmonize, rendering the character's actions coherent and comprehensible to the viewers (Ünal, 2015, p. 132).

The indirect portrayal of a character is achieved through the character's responses to events or the attitudes of other characters towards the main character in the film. Creating opposition is a pivotal element in the framework of a dramatic structure, often culminating in conflicts between two characters. The introduction of contrasts allows distinct characters to react differently to the same events, thereby facilitating the audience's formation of opinions about the movie's charac-



ters. Secondary characters also play a crucial role in conveying the character to the audience, as they possess sufficient significance to influence the course of the narrative (Akyürek, 2008, pp. 187-191). In films, the primary focus tends to be on one character, while other characters are instrumental in catalyzing the internal and external dimensions of their respective stories.

Character development techniques encompass a multitude of elements and nuances. As a visual art form, cinema has adapted character development techniques from written language to establish its distinctive visual language. The transformation from literary or theatrical works into cinematic productions has witnessed a series of modifications, including alterations in character presentation. Furthermore, the director's artistic style and vision have exerted an influential impact on the innovative reinterpretation of classical characters.

In the early days of cinema, fairy tales and narratives were frequently employed, with some films opting for direct adaptations. Novels served as a source of inspiration for character creation, shaping the main ideas and ambiance (Bazin, 2008, pp. 63-69). Of all the arts, cinema shares the closest relationship with the novel, as both recount stories from the standpoint of a narrator (Monaco, 2001, pp. 47-49). Various adaptation methods in cinema have diversified character portrayal in films. Direct adaptations aim to faithfully adhere to the original text, preserving formal similarities between the two works. Hollywood cinema, known for its classical narrative, frequently utilizes this approach. In contrast, the interpretation method generates a new language by interpreting the source material, accentuating character attributes, such as their perspectives on life, and replicating other narrative elements, such as time and space, through the lens of cinema. However, the essence of the original work is preserved, and the adapted narrative can be disassembled into distinct cinematic elements. A third adaptation method is adaptation by inspiration, allowing the director to create a free interpretation inspired by various sources, such as narratives, paintings, or real-life events. This method permits the incorporation of characters from different texts into the screenwriter's original script, without being tethered to a single source. Such an approach provides room for creativity, unrestricted by fidelity to the original text (Çetin Erus, 2005, p. 20). In direct adaptations, viewers bring their expectations about the source material to the cinematic adaptation, assessing the extent to which it has transitioned to the cinematic realm. Conversely, in interpretation and inspiration, directors can manipulate the audience's expectations (Kirel, 2004, p. 118). The primary constraint influencing adaptation possibilities is time. Directors and scriptwriters must condense the source material into a specified time frame, necessitating cuts to certain events and characters while potentially introducing new elements to the adaptation (Çetin Erus, 2005, p. 18).

The method of inspiration seeks to infuse an existing work with the dynamics of cinema. During this process, the adapted work may undergo substantial transformation, with the characters, settings, and timeframes shifting to accommodate the creative vision of the director. In many of Aki Kaurismäki's adaptations,



the utilization of various aspects of these adaptation methods is readily apparent. Viewers often possess preconceived knowledge when watching a film that is based on a familiar source material, capitalizing on the audience's anticipation. In the interpretation and inspiration methods, directors can guide the audience, a strategy frequently employed by Aki Kaurismäki in his adaptations. This approach allows directors to set up their films with the expectation that the audience will be experiencing a faithful adaptation of, for instance, Shakespeare or Dostoevsky, only to surprise and challenge the viewers in the process.

Character Types and Classifications

To better understand character types and their classifications, a brief exploration through the lens of narratology proves insightful. To unravel how characters evolve within a work and transform when transplanted into another context, a preliminary examination of character types is essential.

E. M. Forster, a luminary in the realm of character analysis, discerned between flat or simple characters and round characters. Flat characters, as per Forster, embody a single quality or idea, often explicable within a single sentence. These characters epitomize one-dimensional traits and, at times, verge on caricature. Their chief attribute lies in their instant recognizability by the reader (Forster, 1985, pp. 108-109). Notably, flat characters remain unaltered throughout the narrative. In contrast, round characters exhibit three-dimensionality, showcasing intricate, evolving structures shaped by events and circumstances (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016, p. 143). For Forster, a character is deemed versatile if they can genuinely astonish the reader; otherwise, they fall into the category of plain characters. In instances where a character manages to surprise but lacks credibility, what appears as a round character is, in reality, a flat character (Forster, 1985, pp. 114-119). It is vital to note that Forster did not regard these categories as definitive descriptors (MacKay, 2019, p. 117). Numerous theoretical perspectives have been advanced, but it is widely accepted that characters either evolve with changing characteristics within the text or remain unchanging (Sağlık, 2010, p. 102). MacKay, in his classification, designated types as flat/circular, main/intermediate, and transparent/non-transparent. Types are flat, main, and non-transparent (2019, p. 116). Sartre, similarly, argued that reducing types to schematic representatives of social classes oversimplifies these categories into immutable forms (Yavuz, 2005, p. 44).

Harvey classifies characters into four distinct categories: the main character or protagonist, background characters, card characters, and ficelle characters. The main character and background character can be likened to the differentiation between flat and round characters. The card character falls under the category of flat characters, displaying a sense of realism and liveliness, while the ficelle character takes on the rounded character archetype. Ewen, conversely, categorizes characters based on complexity, development, and the depth of penetration into their inner worlds. Hochman also presents a classification scheme, which highlights



polar opposites, including stylization-naturalism, consistency-inconsistency, unity-partiality, realism-symbolism, complexity-simplicity, transparency-blur, mobility-stasis, and, lastly, closedness-openness (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016, pp. 144-149).

Following this overview of main character types, it becomes imperative to introduce various techniques employed in characterization to facilitate a comprehensive interpretation of the characters.

Characterization and Characterization Techniques

In Western culture, narratives are inherently character-driven. The recounting of an individual's story forms the core of storytelling, with other elements of dramatic action meticulously crafted to unveil the personal and psychological traits of the character, to elucidate their motives, and to delineate their relationships with both allies and adversaries. The modern era, often referred to as the epoch of grand narratives, is characterized by the storytelling of individuals.

Theories pertaining to character typically revolve around the concept of reality. In the construction of a character, their introduction to the audience frequently commences with a depiction of their physical appearance, serving as an exploration of their tangible reality. These descriptions encompass visual portrayals designed to facilitate the reader in constructing a vivid and immediate mental image of the character (Wood, 2013, p. 75).

Several fundamental principles underpin character consistency. In this context, Rimmon-Kenan delineates four key principles: repetition, similarity, contrast, and inference/reasoning. Repetition of a character's behavior or the manifestation of the same conduct across diverse situations signifies a distinctive character trait. Contradiction manifests in the character's paradoxical behavior, spotlighting the internal contradictions within their personality. The process of character inference entails interpreting a character's psychological state from their physical attributes, deriving their mental state from their psychological characteristics, or integrating both their physical and psychological attributes to deduce their mental state (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016, pp. 150-151). Following this elucidation, an introduction to characterization techniques is warranted.

Characterization can be executed by the narrator or by another character within the narrative. Direct characterization emanates from the character themselves or another character in the text. In narratorial characterization, the narrator assumes the role of the character, offering a unique perspective on their traits (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016, p. 153; Jahn, 2015, p. 113). The primary distinction lies in explicit and implicit characterization. Explicit characterization relies on direct depictions, while implicit characterization operates through subtle allusions, conveyed through the character's actions, speech, physical attributes, attire, and accessories (Jahn, 2015, pp. 114-115; Dervişcemaloğlu, 2016, pp. 153-154). Although character theories and techniques have primarily been developed



for written narratives, they are also instrumental in the realm of filmmaking, where the art of character portrayal is indispensable.

Aki Kaurismäki's Cinema

This article does not provide an overview of Kaurismäki's political stance and cinematography. The aim is to examine Kaurismäki's use of character and his method of literary adaptation through his adaptation of the novel *Crime and Punishment*. While Kaurismäki narrates his own country and era, Dostoevsky also witnessed his era in *Crime and Punishment*.

Crime and Punishment stands as one of the five seminal works that catapulted Fyodor Dostoevsky to fame. The remaining four, namely *The Idiot*, *The Possessed*, *The Adolescent*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*, equally bear significant philosophical gravitas (Carr, 2010, p. 183). The assertion that *Crime and Punishment* is a quintessential product of its era, while also possessing enduring relevance across time, becomes apparent when one considers Fyodor Dostoevsky's multifaceted engagement with contemporary literary, social, and political discourse. Notably, Dostoevsky leveraged the press and its pivotal role within 1860s Russian society. As a portrayal of the “modern human condition,” *Crime and Punishment* can be aptly characterized as a “literary text that emerged within a novel context.” This context, marked by the thriving influence of newspapers, contributed significantly to its development, and it was a response to this evolving environment. The publications perused by Dostoevsky were replete with sensational news accounts, particularly those concerning murders (Tucker, 2009, p. 446).

Aki Kaurismäki embarked on his directorial career with the adaptation of F.M. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. His subsequent works, such as *The Match Girl* (*Tulitikkutehtaan Tyttö*), inspired by Andersen's fairy tales, *Hamlet at Work* (*Hamlet Liikemaailmassa*), based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and *Bohemian Life* (*Boheemielamaa*), derived from Henri Murger's eponymous novel, collectively underscore his enduring fascination with the art of adaptation. Kaurismäki's cinematic narratives frequently delve into the lives of the working class and individuals marginalized by society.

Aki Kaurismäki's distinctive cinematic language, characterized by its dark humor and narratives featuring melancholic protagonists, has been a consistent presence in his body of work from his very first films. His thematic focus centers on individuals who find themselves alone and adrift within the realm of global capitalism. The characters populating his films, often characterized by their lackluster, defeated, alcoholic, and melancholic qualities, poignantly reflect his response to the evolving cultural landscape. It is noteworthy that these characters frequently refrain from taking any affirmative action.

In Kaurismäki's cinematic tapestry, a palpable yearning for the old Finland permeates the narrative. From one perspective, Kaurismäki's cinema serves as a reflection of Finnish national identity, ensnared within the ambivalence



between the disintegrated worldview of the former Soviet Union and the assertive influence of Euro-Americanism (Peden, 2012, pp. 13–15). One could argue that the predominant theme of his films revolves around the rapid cultural transformation experienced by Finland. The late 20th century witnessed significant cultural shifts, stemming from the rural-to-urban migration, which posed unique societal challenges. The amalgamation of urban intellectuals and rural dwellers within the city served as the fertile ground for portraying disparate and incongruous human archetypes, thereby forming the cornerstone of characters within Aki Kaurismäki's cinematic oeuvre (Algan, 2015, pp. 136–137). It becomes evident that Kaurismäki adeptly encapsulates the cultural transformation taking place within his society and its multifaceted repercussions through his cinematic creations.

Adaptation as Metafiction in Aki Kaurismäki's Cinema

The term “metafiction” is a fusion of the prefix “meta,” signifying above or beyond, and “fiction,” denoting a creation of imaginative narrative. The prefix “meta” finds application in various fields, including theater (metatheater) or narrative fiction in the context of self-reference, acknowledging its own status as fiction, transcending conventional boundaries. Correspondingly, the realm of fiction encompasses events that never transpired and characters devoid of existence. This distinction highlights the inherent boundary between the cinematic portrayal of a narrative and the actual world. However, within the framework of metafiction, the demarcation between reality and fiction becomes fluid, lacking a clear-cut distinction (Krysinski, 2014, p. 74).

His inaugural film, an adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, set the stage for Kaurismäki's distinctive approach to transforming preexisting works into cinematic experiences, leveraging the unique potentialities of the medium. Within these adaptations, Kaurismäki adeptly crafts narratives that could be classified as instances of metafiction.

An exploration of Aki Kaurismäki's methodology in adapting literature and theatre proves insightful. The director's inaugural adaptation from a novel is *Crime and Punishment* (*Rikos ja Rangaistus*, 1983), with his second novel adaptation being *Juha* (1999), derived from a Finnish novel. As for theatrical adaptations, *Hamlet Goes Business* (*Hamlet Liikemaailmassa*, 1987) stands out. Moreover, his film *The Match Factory Girl* (*Tulitikkutehtaan Tyttö*, 1990) is an adaptation of H.C. Andersen's fairy tale, *The Little Match Girl*.

Working interdisciplinarily with available resources, Kaurismäki transforms existing works, thereby creating a common narrative language under the framework of metafiction. He constructs the metafictional language similarly to the structure found in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. In building this structure, Kaurismäki has endowed his characters with a new level of consciousness. This consciousness is the awareness of the film's characters, originating from novels/plays, about their existence within the recreated cinematic universe. This awareness resembles



Don Quixote's transformation of his real life into a fiction, based on the knight novels he read. Similarly, Kaurismäki constructs his characters in the likeness of Don Quixote and positions the cinema audience as a true observer from outside the fiction, akin to Sancho Panza.

Adapting from various narrative forms such as *Juha*, *Crime and Punishment*, and *Hamlet*, Kaurismäki has leveraged the recognizability of these works. The familiarity with the source material has enabled the director to engage in a series of narrative plays within the fiction, occurring among the viewer-director, character-viewer, and character-director. To elucidate; the connection between viewer and director relates to the viewer's relationship with the source work. Drawing on this relationship, the director utilizes the viewer's knowledge of the source material. For Aki Kaurismäki, it has been crucial to have an audience aware of what they will encounter in the film. Leveraging this knowledge, Kaurismäki has made conscious alterations in the film's fiction. The bond between character and viewer stems from the viewer's familiarity with how the character is portrayed in the source material, which has been significant information for the director. The link between character and director emerges as the most critical factor concerning the film's fiction and essentially outlines the main characteristics of Aki Kaurismäki's adaptation cinema. The director has not left the character in the source material's era but has transformed it into a character of the film. Characters like Raskolnikov or Hamlet, now film characters, act as if they are aware of the Raskolnikov and Hamlet from the source material. They have become characters of Aki Kaurismäki, not of Dostoevsky or Shakespeare. These three connections have provided a new perspective to Kaurismäki's adaptation genre and enriched the viewpoints towards novels and plays.

Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Hamlet* is seen as an example of film noir and simultaneously as a playful engagement with Shakespeare's style. *Hamlet* is an adaptation shot in a distinct film noir style in black and white. The opening scene, with scrolling text across the screen, mimics the openings of early film noirs such as *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Big Sleep*. The director's use of chiaroscuro techniques, low-key lighting, and claustrophobic spaces cleverly demonstrates the application of the film noir style (Croteau, 2008, pp. 194, 196). The director's ironic narrative style is also evident in this film.

The use of dialogue in Kaurismäki's characters is a significant tool that demonstrates the characters' self-awareness. In Kaurismäki's films, some dialogues are self-conscious, even artificial, and often challenge the continuity of fictional reality (Seppälä, 2018, p. 81). This use of dialogue is executed in what could be described as a slip of the tongue.

In Aki Kaurismäki's adaptations of *Crime and Punishment* (*Rikos ja Rangaistus*) and *Hamlet* (*Hamlet Liikemaailmassa*), characters are aware that they are within a fiction, or act as if they have read and know the work they are adapted from. However, this is not overtly presented to the audience. It is a situation that could be



realized by a slip of the tongue from the characters or by viewers familiar with the source material, and it is only implied. An example of this slip of the tongue can be seen in the *Crime and Punishment* adaptation, *Rikos ja Rangaistus*, where the character Rahikainen, portraying Raskolnikov, kills a businessman with a gun instead of an axe, committing one murder instead of two. When interrogated by the police about his whereabouts during the hours of the murder, he references the source material with a slip by stating he had a short time to find an axe and kill two people. In another adaptation, *Hamlet Liikemaailmassa*, narrative levels are breached, and it becomes unclear who is Hamlet and who is the narrator throughout the film. Differing from the source material in Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Hamlet*, Hamlet appears before the audience as the person who killed his father. However, this information is not provided to the audience throughout the film, intending to keep the audience under the influence of the source work. Knowing he killed his father, Hamlet still follows the plot of the source material. Hamlet's father, like in Shakespeare, appears as a ghost in Aki Kaurismäki's film. Hamlet's mother says she wants to marry Klaus - in the play Claudius, the uncle, is named Klaus in the film - who takes over the company. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are summoned to take care of Hamlet. The meeting between Hamlet and his father's ghost occurs. The ghost informs Hamlet that he was a victim of murder. However, something is amiss; neither does Hamlet become emboldened for revenge after receiving this information, as in the play, nor does the ghost father care for Hamlet as a son. The only thing the ghost father (the boss) wants is for his murder to be avenged. The dialogue between the two develops as follows:

Ghost: Don't scorn me and listen carefully. I'm the spirit of your father. The hell I was sent to for my sins is so hot that I sneak out to cool off now and then. Though I don't think of you much, I believe you love your father enough to avenge his murder.

Hamlet: Murdered?

Ghost: Exactly, you fool. The investigation was a complete farce.

Hamlet: Go on, it's getting cold and I don't want to be late for dinner.

Ghost: You seem eager. Dawn is approaching and I must return to hell. But before I do, I'll tell you what you need to do.

In this scene, Shakespeare's Hamlet reacts differently to his father as follows:

Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love,

May sweep to my revenge. (Shakespeare, 1603/2020, 1.5.35-37)

Meanwhile, the director has made another adaptation of Hamlet within the *Hamlet* adaptation. Hamlet is killed by his driver. The theme of revenge from the source material is not addressed in the main plot but in the subplots.

Aki Kaurismäki's film *Juha* is adapted from Juhani Aho's novel of the same name, published in 1911. *Juha* is a classic Finnish novel (Kirjasampo, n.d.).



This film has been adapted into cinema three times before. Kaurismäki's interpretation presents the work to audiences with an original transformation in terms of time and space context.

The film *Juha* fundamentally addresses a love triangle story. However, while narrating this story, Kaurismäki preserves the spirit of the literary work while endowing it with a new dimension through his own cinematic language. In the film, simplicity and profound emotional impacts present the inner worlds and conflicts of the characters with visual poetry. The characters and plot of the work have been reshaped through Kaurismäki's minimalist approach. Thus, the story transcends merely being a literary work adapted to cinema and becomes an independent artwork reflecting the director's unique narrative style.

Kaurismäki transforms the setting of the novel from the 18th century to the latter half of the 20th century in his film. This temporal change offers an opportunity to reevaluate the themes of the story from a contemporary perspective. The social and cultural dynamics of modern times render the conflicts and choices faced by the characters even more significant.

By opting to narrate the story with subtitles, Kaurismäki has emphasized visual expression. This method encourages viewers to focus more on visual details and the characters' facial expressions and gestures. This choice also serves as a homage to the literary roots of the work; the combination of text and visuals offers a rich ground for exploring the depths of the novel. The director's approach to this work challenges the boundaries between literature and cinema, showcasing the richness of both art forms.

Kaurismäki has taken Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale and reinterpreted it in his own minimalist and melancholic style. The film offers a profound examination of social critique and the human condition, while also standing out for Kaurismäki's distinctive sense of humor. Addressing themes such as loneliness, despair, and class differences, the film features Kaurismäki's typical style of minimal dialogue, static camera use, and simple narrative. While preserving the fundamental elements of Andersen's fairy tale, the story merges with the director's modern and minimalist vision. The film's main character, Iris, works at a match factory, characterized as cold, introverted, and ordinary. Her life is confined between home and factory, with her family taking the money she earns. Andersen's main character, the little match girl, longs for a warm home and food. Iris's hunger, however, is emotional.

The director's *The Match Factory Girl* film is characterized as a blend of melodrama, realism, and fairy tale. In this film, Kaurismäki combines numerous elements on the path to realism, making it much more concise, minimalist, and reduced compared to his previous films. With very limited dialogues, music and images in the film convey the inexpressible in a much more meaningful way (Mirza, 2016, p. 54). The film showcases Kaurismäki's ironic style. The main character is very much present, displaying characteristics beyond the conventional narrative



portrayal of characters. In *The Match Factory Girl*, the camera shows an empty table in an empty bar. The main character, Iris, enters the shot with a beer in hand and sits down. The camera seems to wait for her arrival knowingly. This significantly emphasizes her presence (Seppälä, 2016, p. 8), which can also be seen as a challenge to fictional reality.

Rahikainen's Raskolnikov

It is deemed necessary to include some information about the historical period in which the novel *Crime and Punishment* was written. Raskolnikov emerges as a character from a historical period.

The mid-19th century in Russia was a period marked by significant social, political, and intellectual upheavals. The emancipation of serfs in 1861 by Tsar Alexander II was a reform aimed at modernizing Russian society. This reform also led to social unrest and dissatisfaction among the peasantry. While the reform intended to integrate millions of former serfs into the nation's economic and social fabric, it often resulted in economic hardships and increased social tensions (Lincoln, 1990). During this period, radical ideologies, including nihilism and socialism, which questioned the traditional social order and the authority of the autocracy, emerged. Young intellectuals debated the future of Russia, advocating for radical changes to address the inequalities and injustices in Russian society (Venturi, 1960). Fyodor Dostoevsky's work, *Crime and Punishment* (1866), delves into the depths of this context. The novel narrates the psychological turmoil of its main character, Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov, who embodies the ideological conflicts of his time. Dostoevsky critiques the radical ideologies popular among the Russian intelligentsia through Raskolnikov's story, questioning the moral implications of utilitarian justifications for crime. The novel and its main character reflect Dostoevsky's concern against radical ideologies threatening the moral foundations of society (Frank, 1995). The city of Saint Petersburg is used as a setting to reflect the psychological state and societal alienation of the main character. The city, with its crowded apartments and impersonal public spaces, serves as a symbol of the broader social fragmentation and moral crisis facing Russia (Peace, 1971). Dostoevsky's novel is a response to the issues of the era.

In the *Crime and Punishment* film adaptation, the Russian Raskolnikov appears before the audience as a Finn named Rahikainen. Similar to Raskolnikov, he too has dropped out of law school, but unlike Raskolnikov, he works as a butcher in a slaughterhouse. Rahikainen has killed a businessman and started playing a sort of cat-and-mouse game with detectives. The overall plot of the novel and Raskolnikov's actions are preserved in the film.

Across all literary texts adapted by Kaurismäki, a recurring theme emerges – that of protagonists who find themselves isolated within their social milieu, whether by choice, action, or their unwavering commitment to a particular worldview. Exemplifying this recurring theme are characters such as Raskolnikov and Hamlet



(Nestingen, 2013, p. 27). The main character Rahikainen in “Crime and Punishment” and the main character in *The Match Factory Girl* are members of the working class, leading bohemian lifestyles. They have isolated themselves from society and people. Similar characters seen in his other films point to the rigid class system, injustices, and class conflicts in Finnish society (Mirza, 2016, p. 47). Raskolnikov, the central character of *Crime and Punishment*, is introduced as an intelligent, enlightened, and honest individual residing in a modest attic within an aged building in St. Petersburg. Financial constraints force him to abandon his university education, and he sustains himself by offering translation services and tutoring the offspring of affluent families. However, his situation engenders profound melancholy, primarily because of his proximity to the impoverished denizens in his neighborhood. This exposure awakens Raskolnikov to the pervasive suffering endured by many due to their circumstances, catalyzing a deep intellectual exploration. Engaging in relentless introspection, he grapples with his problems in isolation. His thoughts revolve around the social injustices that afflict his reality, compelling him to consider the historical acts of rebellion and resistance against inequality and injustice. He postulates that numerous individuals throughout history, initially branded as criminals, are now celebrated as heroes for challenging societal norms and addressing inequities. Fueled by his indignation towards a society that fails to confront these injustices, Raskolnikov positions himself as their potential savior, elevating himself above the masses. He devises a plan: to murder Alyona Ivanovna, a usurer whom he perceives as the embodiment of everything responsible for the prevailing injustice and poverty. Executing the murder according to his scheme, Raskolnikov begins to confront the unsettling reality that he is not the exceptional figure he believed himself to be. His self-image as an extraordinary individual destined to rescue humanity from crime and injustice is profoundly shaken, especially when he hears this revelation from Sonya, the woman he loves. According to Sonya, the issue lies not in Raskolnikov's lack of courage to be a savior, but in the flawed foundation of his convictions. With this act, he has become indistinguishable from the very people he vehemently criticized and opposed. Raskolnikov's gradual reckoning with this truth redefines his perception of genuine beauty and morality. No longer does he find these qualities in individuals who consider themselves superior and stand apart from the masses. Instead, he recognizes them in those who, despite their impoverished circumstances, maintain their faith in life, exhibit unwavering moral integrity, and dare to resist oppression with righteous indignation.

The narrative then unfolds as Raskolnikov falls ill in the aftermath of the murder he has committed, experiencing vivid dreams and desperately evading capture. However, his capture is swift. Given the substantial plot similarities between the novel and the film, the crux lies in the exploration of Raskolnikov's worldview and the motivating factors behind his actions.



Notable distinctions emerge between Finnish Rahikainen and Russian Raskolnikov. After committing the murder, Rahikainen articulates his motive as follows: “I wanted to show people that not everything is as simple as they see it. I didn't want to kill a person; I wanted to kill their principles.” Rahikainen explicitly challenges societal norms and traditional values. However, his transgressive act inadvertently ensnares him in the very social structure he criticizes, resulting in a lack of the cleansing or redemption process evident in Dostoevsky's novel.

Kaurismäki transports the character from the novel's era into a more contemporary setting. Finnish Rahikainen is depicted as having read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and being aware of Raskolnikov, a Russian figure. Kaurismäki cleverly assumes that the audience, too, possesses knowledge of Dostoevsky's work, as Raskolnikov is a character deeply ingrained in literary and cultural consciousness. In this manner, Kaurismäki orchestrates a quadruple consciousness, comprising Kaurismäki's Rahikainen, Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, Rahikainen's Raskolnikov, and the audience's conceptions of both Raskolnikov and Rahikainen.

The number of characters from the novel has been reduced in the film, with characters being merged. For ease of analysis while studying the adaptation, it would be beneficial to tabulate the characters from both the novel and the film (see Table 1):

Novel (<i>Crime and Punishment</i>)	Film (<i>Rikos ja Rangaistus</i>)
Raskolnikov	Rahikainen
Lizaveta, Sonya, Dunya	Eeva
Svidrigaylov, Marmeladov	Heinonen

Table 1. Characters from the novel and the film

The director introduces a temporal and spatial rupture early in the film's narrative. The story commences within a slaughterhouse, a setting drenched in blood and characterized by close-up scenes of meat being dismembered. Through this opening sequence, Kaurismäki initiates his commentary on Raskolnikov and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. Raskolnikov perceives himself as a figure elevated above the society in which he resides, assuming the role of a savior. The director leverages the cinematic narrative tools to underscore human dominance over animals, mirroring Raskolnikov's belief in his superiority over ordinary individuals. In this depiction, Kaurismäki employs the cinematic medium and the core concept of the source material to illustrate the enhanced human control over animals, particularly in a modernized world that has transformed them into objects of consumption. The fact that Rahikainen is at the center of this allegory is a testament to Kaurismäki's adaptation from Dostoevsky. The film's world has transitioned away from Raskolnikov's sphere and now reflects Rahikainen's perspective. In Kaurismäki's portrayal, the theme of domination extends beyond interpersonal relations and encompasses human



dominance over all living beings. By revealing the cruelty of humans toward animals, Kaurismäki effectively critiques social injustices and the hegemony of the strong over the weak within various societal classes.

The cinephile who has read the novel is already aware that a murder will transpire within the film. The mode of execution is to be an axe. Although the viewer is unfamiliar with the movie's characters, the occupation of Rahikainen, who embodies a Raskolnikov figure, as a butcher in the slaughterhouse becomes apparent. Rahikainen patiently awaits the arrival of the person he intends to kill. Upon their arrival, it becomes evident that the victim is the proprietor of a catering company. The pawnbroker character from the original novel has evolved into the contemporary embodiment of the powerful bourgeoisie. Notably, the victim in the movie is not a woman, as in the novel, but rather a man. To commit the murder, Rahikainen assumes the guise of a postman, discarding the axe in favor of a firearm. This cinematic adaptation employs a common diegetic sound technique observed in all of the director's works, contributing to the event's heightened dramatic effect. Prior to committing the murder, Rahikainen increases the volume of the classical music emanating from the radio, thereby muffling the sound of the gunshot. This auditory element serves to intensify the murder both for Rahikainen and the audience.

In Dostoevsky's novel, following Raskolnikov's act of murder, Lizaveta, the pawnbroker's sister, unexpectedly materializes, leading to a panicked killing by Raskolnikov. Conversely, Kaurismäki's Rahikainen commits a solitary murder, while the character of Lizaveta assumes the role of Eeva in the film. Eeva visits the victim's residence in her capacity as a domestic helper. During this time, Rahikainen perpetrates the murder, pilfering the victim's watch and money. Post-murder, Eeva sits at the deceased individual's table for a brief interval. Remarkably, Rahikainen refrains from making any hasty or evasive maneuvers, in stark contrast to Raskolnikov's response in the novel. Raskolnikov initially remains composed following the murder, experiencing a sense of relief and shock. Later, he descends into a state of panic. Rahikainen, however, displays a marked divergence from Raskolnikov's behavior. Seated calmly at the victim's table, he appears to anticipate Eeva's impending arrival. Upon Eeva's entry into the scene of the murder, she discovers the lifeless body of her employer, with Rahikainen still seated at the table. Notably, Rahikainen does not resort to flight or further acts of violence. This scenario unfolds curiously with Eeva, who, surprisingly, remains composed as well. It is worth noting that in the novel, this situation is addressed in a markedly different manner.

In the middle of the room stood Lizaveta with a big bundle in her arms. She was gazing in stupefaction at her murdered sister, white as a sheet and seeming not to have the strength to cry out. Seeing him run out of the bedroom, she began faintly quivering all over, like a leaf, a shudder ran down her face; she lifted her hand, opened her mouth, but still did not scream. She began slowly backing away from him



into the corner, staring intently, persistently at him, but still uttered no sound, as though she could not get breath to scream. (Dostoevsky, 1917, p. 80)

In the film, this moment is portrayed succinctly. Rahikainen, who remains seated at the table, perceives Eeva's presence and inquires:

Rahikainen: What is it that you desire?

Eeva: What has happened to him?

Rahikainen: Nothing. He's deceased.

Eeva: He was supposed to host a party here, and I came to assist.

Rahikainen: There will be no party. I am the one who killed him. What are you waiting for? Contact the authorities.

Eeva: Why? What did he do to you?

Rahikainen: To me? Nothing. He did nothing to me.

Eeva: You should leave. Hurry. (He permits her to depart and proceeds to call the police.)

The dialogue between the two characters clearly illustrates their nonchalance toward the situation. As Raskolnikov diligently cleans his axe, unsure of his next move after the murder of Lizaveta, Rahikainen is apprehended red-handed and promptly confesses to the murder. Notably, this confession deviates from the novel, where it occurs much later. Following the murder, Rahikainen exhibits no inclination to evade capture, nor does he seem concerned about being apprehended. In contrast, Raskolnikov succumbs to illness, overwhelmed by the constant dread of being discovered, plunging into a deep mental depression. Subsequently, the film effectively interweaves various characters from the novel. Eeva emerges as a central character embodying several female characters from the source material. The novel's plot essentially unfolds in the same manner, albeit with Eeva and Rahikainen assuming the roles of the characters in the movie. Eeva effectively amalgamates all the female figures in Raskolnikov's life, channeling aspects of Lizaveta, Sonya, and Dunya, among others. Eeva serves as a linchpin, propelling the narrative forward, likely the key reason behind the convergence of all female characters into her persona. Rahikainen's initial interaction post-murder is with Eeva. Despite his confession, Eeva assists him in evading capture.

Had Eeva succumbed to panic and Rahikainen killed her, the audience would have primarily followed the narrative through Rahikainen's perspective. In contrast to Raskolnikov, whose life revolves around his sister, mother, beloved, and friends, Rahikainen lacks an extensive social circle. His criminal act, however, abruptly alters this dynamic, with Eeva becoming an integral part of his newfound social sphere.

From this juncture, Eeva consolidates all the female characters from the novel under her character, contributing to the emergence of Kaurismäki's intricate narrative layers. Rahikainen effectively portrays Raskolnikov as a character within the film. Eeva, on the other hand, is observed watching Dostoevsky's *Crime and*



Punishment, while the audience engages with Kaurismäki's adaptation. This multilayered narrative is underscored by Rahikainen's confession during police interrogation. The interrogation is initiated due to the revelation that the individual he murdered had previously been responsible for a fatal traffic accident involving Rahikainen's girlfriend. The ensuing conversation transpired as follows:

(There is a dialog between the police and Rahikainen about his whereabouts at the time of the murder)

Police: You told us you went out for forty minutes.

Rahikainen: Yes, I did, so that means I was out for more than an hour. That's a good time to get an axe and kill two businessmen.

Police: An axe? Honkanen has been shot.

Rahikainen: Shot? I didn't know that. This proves I didn't do it. Can I go now? This is a complete waste of time. 3 years ago he killed my fiancée while drinking and driving, and you think I'm guilty because he walked out?

Police: You took care of it yourself, didn't you?

Rahikainen: That's right. (The dialog between the two continues like the dialog between Porfiri Petrovich and Raskolnikov, with allusions to killing).

Rahikainen's dialogue, "a pretty good time to find an axe and kill two businessmen," carries significant meaning. Notably, Rahikainen committed the murder using a gun and killed only one businessman. In this conversation, he is alluding to Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*. By falsely informing the police that he used an axe, Rahikainen merges the two narratives. Kaurismäki's intervention is evident here, as he used a similar tactic when he increased the music's volume during the initial murder scene. At the diegetic level (within the story), Rahikainen uses this deception to confuse the police and close the case. Simultaneously, on the non-diegetic level (outside the story), he asserts his distinction from Raskolnikov by emulating him in his own words. The motivation behind Rahikainen's murder and Raskolnikov's share a common desire to correct wrongs or gain attention, but their approaches differ. Rahikainen took a life because he believed that justice was failing, particularly when his girlfriend's killer, a businessman, went unpunished. Conversely, Raskolnikov killed as a metaphorical act. He saw the loan shark woman as a symbol of the rich causing poverty, and his aim was to destroy or wage war against these metaphors by eliminating her. Rahikainen, on the other hand, would have committed this murder regardless of who killed his girlfriend. In the novel, when Raskolnikov is interrogated, witnesses arranged by Porfiri hide behind the door. In the film, during Rahikainen's dialogues with the police, Eeva emerges from behind the door. Although Eeva embodies several female characters in the movie, at this juncture, she plays the role of a witness, akin to those in the novel. Eeva attests that the person she saw is not Rahikainen, allowing him to evade capture. Following this, Eeva continues to shape the unfolding plot. Svidrigaylov, Raskolnikov's sister Dunya's admirer in the novel,



appears as Eeva's associate and superior. Kaurismäki adeptly blends, transforms, and adapts the characters from the novel to suit the language of cinema. This intricate narrative becomes more convoluted in the later segments of the film, just as Eeva encapsulates various female characters within herself, Heinonen, Eeva's superior, melds both Svidrigaylov and Marmeladov into his character.

Rahikainen, as a self-aware character, transcends the narrative level by possessing consciousness regarding the work he is adapting, perceiving it as a character himself. Residing in Finland, he has read the novel *Crime and Punishment* and carried out his crime with knowledge of Raskolnikov. The director underscores this by having Rahikainen inform the police that he used an axe to commit the murder. Subsequently, Rahikainen's actions mirror those of any culpable individual, involving hiding evidence, evading the police, and obtaining a new passport. In contrast, Eeva's character propels the narrative of *Crime and Punishment*. Rahikainen, while a murderer, holds deep admiration for Raskolnikov, and Eeva inadvertently steers him toward Raskolnikov's fate. Throughout this, there remains one piece of information that the audience, as inheritors of the source work, knows—Raskolnikov's motive for the murder. The transgression of the narrative level signifies that Rahikainen is also privy to this information, as he uses Raskolnikov's sentences:

Eeva: Why don't you tell me the real reason?

Rahikainen: What reason?

Eeva: The girl, did you love her very much?

Rahikainen: Maybe. But that's not the real reason. Our problem was before that.

Eeva: So what is it then?

Rahikainen: I was disgusted with him. That's why I killed him.

Eeva: That's not true!

Rahikainen: He was like a louse. I want to show them that it's not as simple as they think.

Eeva: Who are they?

Rahikainen: People.

What the audience knows about Rahikainen can be summarized as follows: he is a butcher employed at a slaughterhouse, constantly exposed to death. He committed a murder, targeting a businessman who had previously taken the life of his girlfriend. He resides in a small room, and although no explicit information is provided regarding his financial state, his landlady threatens to report him to the police due to unpaid rent, to which he casually responds, "I forgot." Notably, Rahikainen displays no agitation during the act of murder. It is within this contextual framework that the aforementioned conversation between Eeva and Rahikainen reveals the character of Rahikainen adopting Raskolnikov's persona.



Rahikainen articulates his motive for the murder through Raskolnikov's words. A comparison between Rahikainen's and Raskolnikov's motives would reveal that Rahikainen is not the kind of person who would naturally utter such sentiments. His post-murder behavior significantly contrasts with Raskolnikov's, thereby underscoring that the character in the movie is not Raskolnikov himself but someone who has consciously chosen to emulate him. This choice is what prompts him to articulate Raskolnikov's nihilism through his words. The culmination of this nihilism becomes evident towards the film's conclusion. If Aki Kaurismäki's movie can be considered an adaptation of *Crime and Punishment*, Rahikainen's life can be viewed as an adaptation of Raskolnikov.

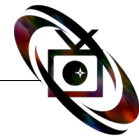
Furthermore, one of the distinct attributes that sets Rahikainen apart from the character in the novel is his lack of deliberate efforts to evade capture. He is a planner, unlike Raskolnikov, who succumbs to fear and initially believes the murder to be a dream, which occupies a substantial portion of the novel. Rahikainen's lack of meticulousness contrasts with Raskolnikov's extreme caution. While Raskolnikov does occasionally hint at his culpability throughout the novel, he does so while in a fevered state. Rahikainen, conversely, offers hints with greater awareness. For instance, he leaves the murder weapon under his bed. While dining at a restaurant with a friend, Rahikainen tears the newspaper article reporting the businessman's murder and leaves it on the table for his companion to read. Eeva, a central character, later discloses this information to the police, omitting Rahikainen's name due to her ignorance of it. During Rahikainen's visit to the shop where Eeva is employed, she conveys the following:

Eeva: I told the police everything. If I knew his name I would have told them that too.

Rahikainen: My name is Rahikainen.

He does not wish to retain his name. He strives to evade capture and appears to seek a fair application of justice. His actions suggest an intent for the police to effectively resolve the case because of a past incident where his girlfriend was murdered, and the perpetrator escaped punishment. It is at this juncture that his strategic, premeditated nature becomes apparent. He conceals his wallet and watch, left at the crime scene, within a shirt and deposits them in a train station locker. Rahikainen handpicks a victim and tosses the locker key in front of a destitute person requesting money, anticipating that the individual would access the locker. Subsequently, when the chosen victim attempts to unlock the compartment, the police apprehend them. Rahikainen presents both the evidence and the selected perpetrator to the authorities.

Eeva stumbles upon a concealed firearm beneath a pillow in Rahikainen's room. She secretes the gun in her bag, effectively obtaining evidence from the crime scene. While discussing Rahikainen's murder, Eeva beseeches him to surrender. Simultaneously, someone eavesdrops on their conversation from the adjacent room, revealing Heinonen, who has taken over the role of Eeva's employer, Svidrigaylov. Eeva, at this point, assumes the role of Sonya, rather than Dunya. Heinonen gains



knowledge of Rahikainen's culpability and subsequently threatens Eeva, assuming the position of Dunya, demanding her compliance. This effort to exploit her as a woman and her boss's coercive tactics bear a striking resemblance to Raskolnikov's desire to eliminate the loan shark. Eeva contemplates using the gun she retrieved from Rahikainen's room to kill him, which previously transformed Rahikainen into a Raskolnikov. However, the gun malfunctions when she attempts to fire it, compelling her to leave it behind as she flees. Heinonen later intends to use this same gun to kill Rahikainen. In the original novel, the individual Raskolnikov encounters on the road, referring to him as a murderer, turns out to be Heinonen. He is on the brink of killing Raskolnikov but meets his demise when struck by a train. This fate aligns with that of Marmeladov. Kaurismäki adapts the plot of *Crime and Punishment* by transforming the characters, a feat accomplished with only three individuals: Rahikainen, Eeva, and Heinonen. While Eeva and Heinonen contribute to the unfolding narrative of *Crime and Punishment*, Rahikainen embodies the events of Raskolnikov.

Rahikainen originally contemplates fleeing the country but has a last-minute change of heart. He proceeds to a police station to confess his crime. Yet, just as he is about to depart, he encounters Eeva standing before the door, and they share a prolonged, poignant glance. This moment bears resemblance to the final instance when Raskolnikov visited Sonya. On his way to the police station to make his confession, Raskolnikov reflects with the following words: “Was it right, was it right, all this?” he thought again as he went down the stairs. ‘Couldn’t he stop and retract it all ... and not go?’” (Dostoevsky, 1917, p. 533).

Rahikainen's decision to not surrender does not truly signify a renunciation of his crime. He has never harbored remorse for his actions, which is why he resists turning himself in. Unlike Raskolnikov, Rahikainen's life has not been as grim. He is entirely alone, and Eeva entered his life serendipitously. In a sense, Raskolnikov's confession to Sonya is a form of absolution. Sonya implores Raskolnikov to accept his sentence and surrender. Consequently, Raskolnikov follows Sonya's advice. While incarcerated, he grapples with inner turmoil, seeking solace in the Bible gifted to him by Sonya. It is as if Raskolnikov experiences a spiritual rebirth. In contrast, Rahikainen's imprisonment does not lead to a similar catharsis. There is no profound transformation or rebirth, as evident in their dialogue during Eeva's prison visit.

Rahikainen: I'll tell you something. The man I killed is not important. I killed a louse, and now I've become one myself, and I have the right to do it forever. From the very beginning, including myself – but that's not important. I wanted to kill a morality, not a man. Maybe it was wrong to kill a man – but now everybody is happy.

Eeva: You shouldn't think like that.

Rahikainen: Including me. Being in jail doesn't mean anything to me, you know why? Because I've always been alone. Do you know what that is? That's why I don't want you to wait for me. Go and live your life. We have to die sometimes. And there won't be a heaven for us. Spiders. Or something like that. How the hell should I know?



There was no redemption for Rahikainen. He remained unchanged, without experiencing any remorse. In contrast, Raskolnikov undergoes a transformation throughout the novel due to his actions and the events that unfold. Rahikainen retains his identity from the beginning of the movie to the end, even during his incarceration.

Conclusion

The first research question of this article is: “How has Aki Kaurismäki's film adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* reinterpreted the characters and themes of the novel, and what cinematic techniques has he used to convey these elements?” The findings are as follows: Kaurismäki, while preserving the essence of Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, has depicted him with less psychological complexity than Dostoevsky. The focus has shifted from Raskolnikov's inner turmoil and philosophical dilemmas to his actions and interactions in a contemporary urban setting. Other characters in the story have been adapted to fit the modern setting, highlighting their social roles and relationships with the protagonist. These changes align with Kaurismäki's emphasis on social critique and the human condition. While Dostoevsky explores themes of alienation and existential despair through philosophical discussions and deep psychological insights, Kaurismäki portrays them more through the living conditions, interactions, and societal structures surrounding the characters. Central themes such as crime, punishment, and redemption are preserved but presented in a more subdued manner. Kaurismäki has delved into the moral and societal consequences of crime and punishment, emphasizing the protagonist's journey within the context of an impersonal modern society. In interpreting the novel, Kaurismäki has employed a minimalist aesthetic in visuals, dialogue, and characters, conveying the characters' emotions and thoughts through visual and auditory elements. The number of characters from the novel has also been reduced. Pale colors and static camera usage contribute to depicting an atmosphere of alienation and disconnection. In line with the minimalist approach, actors deliver calm performances, subtly showcasing existential despair and the emotional states of the characters. While preserving the essence of the source material, the director's unique artistic vision becomes evident.

The second research question of the article, “How does Kaurismäki's film deviate from Dostoevsky's original text in reshaping the characters' inner worlds and their positions within the social context?” has led to the following conclusion. Aki Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* significantly diverges from Fyodor Dostoevsky's original text in terms of character portrayals, thematic focus, and setting. Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov is a character embroiled in deep conflict, with internal moral and philosophical debates forming the core of the novel. Kaurismäki's adaptation simplifies this complexity, focusing on Raskolnikov's actions and their social consequences. While the complex relationships and interactions among



characters are crucial in the novel for revealing Raskolnikov's psychological state and societal structures, Kaurismäki's film is more orderly and less psychologically intense. Dostoevsky explores existential themes through intense psychological and philosophical discussions, whereas Kaurismäki presents a different approach, concentrating on the characters' mundane struggles and societal pressures. Moral dilemmas and existential distress are depicted against the backdrop of daily life and societal norms, with an enhanced focus on social critique. The film places greater emphasis on social conditions and the roles of characters within their social context, highlighting themes such as alienation, poverty, and the struggle to survive in a modern urban environment. Kaurismäki employs a modern setting, not only updating the story's backdrop but also enabling the film to comment on modern societal issues and make the story more relevant to contemporary audiences. Kaurismäki has created a distinct atmosphere reflecting the characters' isolation and the gloom of their urban surroundings, using minimal dialogue, pale colors, and static shots as part of a minimalist aesthetic. This contrasts with the rich, detailed narrative descriptions found in Dostoevsky's novel.

The third research question of the article, “How does the metafiction in Kaurismäki's adaptation affect the audience's perception of the characters and narrative reality?” has yielded the following conclusion. Metafiction draws attention to the structured nature of the narrative. It encourages audiences to engage with the film on a more conscious level by experiencing the interaction between reality and fiction. Metafictional elements make the audience aware of Kaurismäki as a storyteller and the choices he makes in his adaptation. This awareness can prompt viewers to question what is presented and recognize the film's narrative as a constructed reality, distinct from both Dostoevsky's original novel and the real world. Metafiction can create a distance between the audience and the characters. This does not diminish the audience's empathy towards the characters' fates but can encourage viewers to see the characters as representations of real people grappling with real issues, as well as fictional constructs serving specific thematic or narrative purposes. Metafiction invites a more analytical and critical engagement with the film's themes. As viewers recognize the narrative as a meticulously crafted work of art, they may be more inclined to explore underlying meanings, social critiques, or philosophical questions presented, understanding that these elements are consciously integrated into the narrative by the filmmaker. The use of metafiction can alter how the audience perceives the reality of the narrative. It can encourage viewers to reflect on the nature of reality and the role of art in representing and interpreting this reality. Kaurismäki's metafictional approach in *Crime and Punishment* involves viewers in a thought-provoking and critical viewing experience. This shifts the focus from passive consumption of the story to active questioning of the narrative, characters, and thematic content, ultimately enriching the viewer's engagement with the film and its message.

The conclusion for the question “How are Dostoevsky's original moral and existential dilemmas reflected or deviated in the adaptation, and what cultural or



temporal contexts influence these changes?” is as follows: Kaurismäki has positioned his adaptation within a contemporary urban environment, significantly different from the socio-economic context of Dostoevsky's era. This modern setting influences how themes of alienation, despair, and redemption are explored and makes them relevant to a modern audience. The adaptation reflects contemporary societal issues and values, which differ from those addressed by Dostoevsky. The alienation created by modern urban life, the impersonal and bureaucratic nature of contemporary society, are emphasized, providing a modern interpretation of the novel's existential themes. While Dostoevsky's work delves deeply into Raskolnikov's psychological turmoil and complex moral reasoning, Kaurismäki's adaptation tends to simplify these aspects. The focus is shifted more towards the external outcomes of the protagonist's actions and their social consequences. Themes of existential despair and alienation are explored in both the novel and the adaptation. However, Kaurismäki's approach is more subdued and stylized. The existential struggles of the characters are depicted against the backdrop of the modern world. The adaptation utilizes visual storytelling to convey themes and emotions, with less emphasis on dialogue. Greater reliance is placed on the visual composition of scenes, actors' performances, and the overall atmosphere, offering a different interpretation of the moral and existential dilemmas.

The conclusion for the fifth and final research question, “What are the artistic differences between the literary texture seen in Dostoevsky's novel and the visual composition seen in Kaurismäki's film?” is as follows: The literary texture of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is characterized by psychological depth, achieved through the author's profound psychological exploration of Raskolnikov. The novel delves deeply into his mental state, showcasing his internal conflicts, moral dilemmas, and the turmoil following his crime. The philosophical and socio-political themes that constitute the novel's literary texture address complex themes such as morality, free will, the nature of punishment, and redemption. The social and economic conditions of 19th-century Russia, reflecting themes of poverty, despair, and the struggle for moral existence, are depicted in the novel. Another element contributing to the novel's literary texture is the narrative technique, focusing on dialogues and internal monologues that engage deeply with the characters' thoughts and feelings, using a rich and detailed narrative style that provides deep and nuanced insights into the characters' motivations and actions.

In Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Crime and Punishment*, the visual composition features stylistic minimalism and realism. Minimalism in *Crime and Punishment* manifests through limited dialogue, understated performances, and a focus on the mundane aspects of daily life, creating a striking, realistic portrayal of the characters and their environments. The film's visual aesthetics are marked by pale colors and simple shots, emphasizing the gloom and isolation of the characters' world, in harmony with themes of alienation and existential dread present in the story.



Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Kaurismäki's cinematic adaptation of the same story present contrasting artistic visions. Dostoevsky's novel offers a deep psychological and philosophical exploration of the main character and the moral consequences of his actions through rich, introspective narration. Kaurismäki's film focuses on the realism and minimalism of visual storytelling, presenting the narrative with a more outward-looking and societal perspective. While the novel invites readers to deeply understand the inner world of the characters, the film encourages viewers to reflect on the characters' situations and the societal structures surrounding them. Both works offer a powerful and thought-provoking exploration of crime, punishment, and human nature, showcasing the diversity and depth of storytelling across different artistic forms.

Some similarities and differences have been observed among the adaptations made by Aki Kaurismäki. Three of Kaurismäki's adaptation films have been compared: Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (*Hamlet Goes Business*), Hans Christian Andersen's *The Match Factory Girl*, and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*. These adaptations are notable for reflecting Kaurismäki's narrative style, which includes minimalism, expressionless humor, and a focus on the working class.

As for the similarities among the adaptations, minimalist aesthetics, modernization, impassive performances, and social commentary are evident. Minimalism is fundamentally defined as the systematic reduction of expressive elements in a certain form. It constitutes one of the modernist styles in cinema (Kovács, 2007, p. 140). It could be said that the most significant characteristic of Kaurismäki's films is their minimalist attitude. Kaurismäki has attributed the origin and development of his minimalist style to the primitive production conditions in his country. Making his films within minimalist measures has been the only possibility for him (Seppälä, 2016, p. 5).

Minimalism is clearly observed in all three of his adaptations. He has reduced the narratives to their essence, either removing or simplifying complex subtexts and characters. The adaptations are set in contemporary times, particularly in and around Helsinki, allowing for the exploration of timeless themes within modern society. The acting in Kaurismäki's films is deliberately subdued. Characters often deliver their lines in an expressionless, emotionless manner, adding a layer of irony and dark humor to the tragic or serious subthemes of the stories. The adaptations critique contemporary society, focusing on themes such as alienation, the struggles of the working class, and the harshness of modern life.

When looking at the differences among the adaptations, the degree of change made to the source materials varies. *Hamlet Goes Business* is a radical reinterpretation that transforms Shakespeare's play into a dark comedy about corporate greed. *The Match Factory Girl* is a more faithful adaptation of Andersen's story but with Kaurismäki's unique perspective, focusing on the monotonous and bleak existence of the main character. *Crime and Punishment* stays relatively close to Dostoevsky's narrative but is altered to fit a contemporary setting. In terms of



tone and atmosphere, *Hamlet Goes Business* tends towards humor more strongly. *The Match Factory Girl* presents tragic and comedic elements with an expressionless delivery. *Crime and Punishment* focuses more on the social and moral aspects of the story, maintaining a more serious tone throughout compared to the other adaptations.

The multi-layered dimension of the movie prompts viewers to question whether they are watching Rahikainen or Raskolnikov. The reason for this uncertainty is the subtle wordplay inserted by the director. Aki Kaurismäki, who makes a ghostly appearance in *Hamlet*, subtly hints at his presence in *Crime and Punishment* through Rahikainen's dialogue, playfully toying with his audience. During Rahikainen's police interrogation, he falsely claims to have committed the murder with an axe, although he used a pistol. This allusion to the source material in the adapted film reveals that Rahikainen is not a carbon copy of Raskolnikov. Another pivotal character is Eeva, who seems to single-handedly drive the plot of *Crime and Punishment*, the novel from which the film is adapted. If Eeva were omitted from the film, it would become a conventional detective story centered around a murder committed by a man named Rahikainen and the subsequent police investigation. Eeva's character restores the multi-layered structure inherent in Kaurismäki's cinema. She embodies all the roles of Raskolnikov's sister, the woman he loves, and his mother at different junctures. With her versatile identity, she steers the narrative's progression while simultaneously transforming Rahikainen's story into that of Raskolnikov. Eeva's life seems to be an ongoing quest for her own Raskolnikov, which causes her to repeatedly delay his capture.

One can argue that Aki Kaurismäki's adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* essentially traces Rahikainen's evolution into Raskolnikov. Nonetheless, it is not a transformation consciously sought by Rahikainen but rather an unexpected occurrence that he simply falls into.

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