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The Perpetrator Confesses

A study of Confessional Processes in Documentary Film, and how they might contribute to Peace and Reconciliation

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Abstract:
The last years have seen a shift in documentary film from the victims, to a greater attention to perpetrators of Crimes against Humanity. Little research has been done however, on the potential of giving substantial attention to perpetrators. In this paper I explore how these types of films might contribute to confessional processes, and subsequently reconciliation and peace.
I have conducted a qualitative study of three relevant films with emphasis on the narrative analysis and hermeneutics.
My study shows that all three films generally lead to confessions of partial remorse, as well as a high degree of disclosure. I argue that perpetrators might be motivated to confess, based on the relationships they develop with directors. I also propose that the use of re-enactments might facilitate confessional processes, as they seem to trigger psychological and emotional experiences, as well as bodily memory. Finally, narrative might play a crucial role in convincing audiences that the confessions elicited are sincere and authentic, and even more importantly, that perpetrators are human beings and not monsters.
Though the perpetrator´s view might be both controversial and ethically challenging, my study suggest that focus on the perpetrator in documentaries might still prove valuable as they lead to confessional processes that seem effective in promoting peace and reconciliation.

Sammendrag:
Der fokuset i dokumentarfilmer tidligere var på ofrene, har vi i de senere år sett en utvikling der større oppmerksomhet vies til gjerningsmenn som har forbrutt seg mot menneskeheten. Det har imidlertid blitt gjort lite forskning på virkningene av å gi betydelig oppmerksomhet til gjerningsmennene. I denne oppgaven utforsker jeg hvordan denne type filmer kan bidra til tilståelsesprosesser og dermed også forsoning og fred.
Jeg har utført kvalitative studier av tre relevante filmer med vektlegging på narrativ analyse og hermeneutikk.
Studiene mine viser at alle tre filmer førte til tilståelser karakterisert av delvis anger, og en høy grad av åpenhet. Jeg argumenterer for at gjerningsmenn kan være motivert til å tilstå, med bakgrunn i forholdet de utvikler til filmregissøren. Jeg foreslår også at bruken av rekonstruksjoner kan tilrettelegge for en tilståelsesprosess ettersom den virker i stand til å utløse psykologiske og følelsesmessige erfaringer, og også fysisk minne. Til slutt, kan narrativet spille en viktig rolle i å overbevise publikum at tilståelsen er oppriktig og ekte og enda viktigere, at gjerningsmennene er mennesker, ikke monstre.
Selv om det kan være både kontroversielt og etisk utfordrende å gi betydelig plass til gjerningsmannen, antyder studiet mitt at fokuset på gjerningsmannen i dokumentarer likevel kan være verdifullt fordi det leder til tilståelsesprosesser som virker særlig egnet til å fremme fred og forsoning.

Preface

> But I was there,' he said then, in a curiously dry and tired tone of resignation. These few sentences had taken almost half an hour to produce. 'So yes,' he said finally, very quietly, 'in reality I share the guilt … Because my guilt … my guilt … only now in these talks … now that I have talked about it all for the first time … (Sereny, 1983, p. 364).

I would like to begin this paper by thanking Gitta Sereny (1921-2012), whose work on Franz Stangl, Commandant of Treblinka deathcamp (1983), is the main inspiration for my choice of topic. Sereny sets the standard for "slow journalism," spending 70 hours on questioning Stangl. She represents the ideal of investigative journalism, after she interviewed Stangl, she spent an additionally 18 months on crosschecking all his answers. She also shows the importance of personal commitment, she did not complete her work, before she had obtained some sort of confession. Sereny did not believe in evil people, but she did, like Arendt believe in the evil in us all. As a result she was willing to speak to the perpetrators, and spend considerable time with them. In this way, she might also be seen as advocating important principles in Peace Journalism, the humanizing and speaking to both sides. Stangl´s quotation above indicates the significance of the last: "Now that I have talked about it all for the first time," Stangl says, and as a result it seems, finally also confesses to guilt.

Additionally I would like to thank you, Roy Krøvel, for constructive suggestions and advice. It was helpful of you Guri Rønning, to check my spelling. I owe you, Jan Ingar Thon for introducing Sereny to me in the summer of 2015. Thank you for being the colleague I always desired, for inspiring and patiently listening to my numerous ideas and plans, for relentlessly questioning my analyses and interpretations, and for shortening my sentences, and enhancing my vocabulary. Thank you even more so, for increasing my faith, and reducing my doubt when needed, and diminishing my faith, and mounting my doubts when appropriate.

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1.Introduction

I admit to being slightly disconcerted after watching the opening scenes of the documentary film "The Act of Killing" by Joshua Oppenheimer: A white haired Indonesian man enters a rooftop where he claims to have killed more than a hundred people. Proudly he boasts about the killing, jokes, and laughs, finishing off by dancing.

This was director Oppenheimer´s first encounter with Anwar Congo, the main character in the film. Two hours later in the film, and five years later real time (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11), the old man re-enters the rooftop. He picks up his former narrative, but this time he seems to be under great strain. At one point he stops, his body convulses repeatedly before he very slowly and quietly walks away.
What happened during these two hours, or five years? What triggered the change in Anwar?

Filmcritic Kiefer suggests: "there is something palpably cathartic about the ritual of the re-creations, and it is encouraging, barely, to see the posturing tilt from defiance toward repentance" (Kiefer, 2013). Sean Burns proposes that a "poetic justice" takes place (Burns, 2013).

Is this "something palpably cathartic" and "poetic justice" solely restricted to the filmic experience in the "Act of Killing", or could it also have an effect on real-life relationships, for instance the one of victim and perpetrator? Subsequently contributing to some sort of resolution or reconciliation between the two?

Some would prefer leaving those questions unanswered. There is a certain danger and discomfort in giving too much emphasize on the perpetrator and his worldview. Nick Fraser in BBC discouraged the Oscar committee from giving "The Act of Killing" an Oscar when it was nominated in 2013: "It feels wrong and it certainly looks wrong to me, " Fraser claimed. He advocated focusing on the victims (Fraser, 2013).

Yet would Kiefer´s and Burns´ sense of "catharsis" and "justice" have emerged if it was the victim´s, rather than the perpetrator´s perspective we indulged ourselves in "The Act of Killing?"

If we return once more to the critic of Kiefer and Burns, their reflections seem also to suggest that the feeling of "catharsis" and "justice" has to do with the genre of documentary. Kiefer talks about the "ritual of re-creation", and Burns uses the word "poetic" about justice. In peace studies the media has generally been criticized for promoting narratives of war, rather than peace. Galtung and Ruge have argued that journalism tends to sustain war narratives, often unconsciously, due to its inherent inclination towards news criteria that encourage accounts of for instance stereotyping, aggression and controversy (Galtung & Ruge, 2012, pp. 164-165). Documentary film has benefitted from journalistic methods and traditions (Nichols, 2010, p. 6), yet as Nichols argues, independent documentary film, in contrast to mainstream media, "has brought a fresh eye to the events of the world" (Nichols, 2010, p. 2). As Galtung constantly stresses in his speeches and writing: Reconciliation requires a high level of creativity (Galtung, 2011, p. 16). Does the documentary inhabit certain qualities that make it especially inclined to reconciliation processes?

Keeping in mind the questions raised, I will attempt to sum them up in a single question: *In what way can documentaries contribute to confessional processes that promote peace and reconciliation?*

To answer this question, I will study the narration of three documentaries where perpetrators are given special attention: The films will include: "The Act of Killing" (2012), by Oppenheimer, "Enemies of the People" (2009), by Lemkin and Sambath, and "S 21: The Khmer Rouge Death Machine" (2003), by Rithy Panh. The first film takes place in Indonesia; the two others are filmed in Cambodia.

Though documentaries might contribute to peace and reconciliation, they are first and foremost narratives, and as such their main prerogative is to tell stories. All directors of the films in my study have however also expressed a social agenda, and I will therefore in the following analysis partly treat them as such.

When referring to perpetrators, it will be in accordance with the definition of "crimes against humanity." The phrase covers systematic and widespread crimes committed against a certain group of people. In most cases genocide has also occurred. I will, however, avoid using genocide, as it limits the range to the "intent to *destroy* a group, in whole or in part" (Cassese, 2013, p. 110). Crimes against humanity on the other hand might also include torture, murder, imprisonment, rape, persecution and other inhumane acts (Cassese, 2013, p. 91). The definition of "war crimes" entails a similar list of crimes; yet the definition is limited to crimes committed during war, whereas crimes against humanity also take place during peace time (Cassese, 2013, p. 71 & 91). More importantly, "crimes committed against humanity" entail crimes not only committed by one nation against another, but also by parties within a nation; deliberate and strategic crimes committed by government, or crimes tolerated or condoned by government or ruling authority (Cassese, 2013, p. 91). It is especially crimes committed within a nation, not between nations that I find relevant to this assignment. When crimes are committed, against people living together, means of finding solutions towards peace and reconciliation seem especially urgent. As Desmond Tutu put it: "While the Allies could pack up and go home after Nuremburg, we in South Africa had to live with one another" (Tutu, 1999, p. 25).

Many of my theories, and the examples I use, originate from Holocaust studies. This is not because the Holocaust is most comparable to the cases of the films of my study; rather it reflects the massive and well established literature and research that exist on Holocaust studies.

I have repeatedly used the words "reconciliation" and "peace"; they will be given a more precise and thorough definition when introducing theory.

In the following chapters I will firstly give a historical background on how perpetrators have been presented in documentary film up until today, in order to understand the context and tradition that the films of my study are a part of. Secondly I will define and explore the definitions of peace and reconciliation, with especially emphasis on the significance of confessions. Next, as a natural prolonging, I will see how documentaries

might facilitate and narrate those confessions. Before analysing the three films of my study, I will discuss my methods. Finally I will discuss how the confessions that the three films derive at, can promote peace and reconciliation.

2. Historical background

"Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites - as the Lord your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God." (Deuteronomy 20: 17-18)

There has never been a lack of narratives of war, cruelty or injustice throughout human history. History is usually written from the viewpoint of the victors (Orwell, 1944), and atrocities, and even genocide have, as the excerpt from the Bible above exemplifies, occasionally been promoted as righteous and necessary, or –simply denied. Simultaneously, the Bible has a rich tradition for chronicling and lamenting injustice and suffering. The narrator´s focus, seems to variably have shifted between perpetrator and victim. In Western culture, it is the latter, the victim, through Holocaust research and trauma studies, that has become the centre of attention during the second half of the twentieth century, according to Morag (2013, p. 4).

This position also goes for documentary film. From the outset documentaries were regarded as important instruments in informing and documenting the atrocities committed in conflict and war (Torchin, 2012, p. 61). This was especially the case in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Documentaries were to ensure a "Never again" (Michalczyk, 2014, p. 1). Interviews with witnesses became the norm and gave rise to the "era of the witness" (Wieviorka, as cited in de Sousa Dias, 2015, p. 488), yet the witnessing mainly took place from the perspective of the victim (de Sousa Dias, 2015, p. 488).

There have been a few exceptions. I will not give an extensive overview of these, but will rather focus on some examples that have played a significant role in setting precedent. One of these is the four and a half long French film: "The Sorrow and the Pity" (1969), in

which director Opühls interviews perpetrators and victims alike, among them, aristocrat Christian de la Maziére, who speaks openly about his collaboration with- and sympathy for- Nazism during the War. In the film, the French-Jewish director, does not condemn, and treats both victims and perpetrators with equal respect. The film was "considered one of the most controversial films in the history of French cinema" (Tardy, 2006, p. 858).

A decade later, director Claude Lanzmann took a different approach in the ten hour long film on Holocaust, "Shoah" (1985). "Rarely has any film received the unqualified praise widely accorded "Shoah" (Lang, as cited in Wilson, 2014, p. 107). "Shoah" gives victims prime attention, but Lanzmann also includes testimonies from bystanders and perpetrators. The latter, Lanzmann questions hard, subtly ridicules, interrupts, and also deceives. Franz Suchomel, a former SS- guard at Treblinka is promised anonymity, yet is filmed with a secret camera by Lanzmann. "I was obliged, when I was making Shoah, to use devices, very special devices. I had to fool them, I had to deceive them," Lanzmann claimed, arguing that perpetrators were liars and false witnesses (Lanzmann, 1995, p. 208). Lanzmann also introduced the term: "The Obscenity of Understanding," claiming that any attempt to understand the Holocaust, as well as the perpetrators, psychologically or historically is "obscene" (Lanzmann, 1995, p. 204).

In many ways, Lanzmann set a standard of what is acceptable procedure concerning the Holocaust documentary, including how to interact with the perpetrators, something both scholars and directors have agreed on (Boyle, 2015, p. 510, Winston, 2014, p. 108).

In recent years, Lebow, has argued for a new "perpetrator cinema," where the torturer or killer has come to "occupy centre stage", presenting both spectatorial, as well as ethical challenges (Lebow, 2015, p. 480). The shift of focus from victim to perpetrator is also characteristic of a new wave in Israeli cinema, taking form as Israeli documentarists´ moral and political critique of Israeli occupation (Morag, 2013, pp. 21-26). Morag argues that the new wave is characterized by a high level of maturity in the confessions admitted by perpetrators on film, empathy for the victim, as well as an orientation towards the future (Morag, 2013, XVI, 213). Folman´s animated documentary "Waltz with Bashir" (2008) is regarded by Morag, as being one of the first

documentaries to challenge local as well as world cinema with its sole focus on perpetrator´s trauma, or rather that of complicit indirect perpetrator´s trauma (Morag, 2013, p. 3). This is director Folman´s personal quest of attempting to find out what took place when, as a young soldier in Beirut in 1982, he witnessed and indirectly aided the Phalangists´ massacre of Palestinian civilians in Libya (Folman, 2008).

In the USA, foreign wars have similarly to Israeli cinema, instigated criticism and explorations of perpetrator´s trauma. In "Standard Operating Procedure" (2008), director Morris portrays the guards of Abu Ghraib, who were tried for torture and abuse of its prisoners, as victims and scapegoats of a larger power game. The film elicited critique from Nichols, who stated he was repulsed, firstly by the emphasis on the guard's perspective, secondly by the re-enactments of torture and degradation, and finally, by the lack of representation of Iraqi prisoners (Nichols, 2016).

All the three characteristics presented in Morris´ film, are also present in "The Act of Killing" (2013), by American director Joshua Oppenheimer. The guard´s perspective, as well as the re-enactment of cruelty, are likewise found in "S21, The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine" (2003), by Rithy Panh, as well as in "Enemies of the People" (2009), by Rob Lemkin and Thet Sambath.

There is however also certain features that set them apart from Morris´ film, a crucial one being the close geographical proximity of perpetrator and victim involved, and consequently the need to find ways to coexist with each other (Tutu, 1999, p. 25). In addition, several of the documentaries are directed or co-directed by insiders from the societies that the atrocities are committed "thus bringing to the project something no outside observer possesses: a capacity for empathy, understanding, and possible forgiveness born out of the need to survive atrocity with one´s humanity intact" (Boyle, 2015, p. 508).

Oppenheimer´s project originated in a close cooperation with victims and Human Rights organizations within Indonesia.

Similarly “Enemies of the People” led to the initiation of a videoconference between Cambodian refugees in America and the two perpetrators Khoun and Suon. The conclusion was: “As our preliminary analysis of the event suggests that a film such as ”Enemies of the People” can play an important role in opening a public space for dialogue, which promotes healing and contributes to transitional justice” (Lemkin, Needham, Sambath & Quintilliani, 2011).

The historical background suggests that the perpetrator´s role in documentary has undergone changes during the 20th and 21st century. From being perceived as something suspect and undesirable, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust, perpetrators´ testimonies are conceived as more acceptable. Though they are still seen as controversial, they have also been admitted value, both as criticism of politics and society (Morag, 2013). They have in certain cases even been commended as initiating reconciliation processes (Lemkin, Needham, Sambath & Quintilliani, 2011).

3. Definitions of peace and reconciliation

Before I explore the *means* that contribute to confessions that promote peace and reconciliation, I will discuss the desired outcomes: confession, peace and reconciliation, as it is only when we know where we want to go, that we are able to decide how to get there.

Peace

Nobody has a monopoly on defining peace, and thus its interpretations have been many (Galtung, 1969, p. 167). I will use Galtung´s, definition, as his studies in peace have been closely related to journalism, and therefore seem especially relevant to this study, as both journalism and documentary film concern themselves with narratives, and share many of the same traits and methods (Nichols, 2010, p. 1). Lynch has further made valuable contributions to the field of peace journalism (2005, 2014), as has also Ottosen (2015).

The News media too often reduces peace to solely entail “victory + ceasefire” or what Galtung describes as “negative peace”(Galtung, as cited in Lynch, 2014, p. 41). Galtung suggests instead that peace be defined as “the absence of violence” (1969, p. 167).

This definition demands further explanation of what violence is. Galtung differs between three forms of violence (Galtung 1969, 1990): Direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. He describes direct violence as the visible effects of violence, and entails the amount of people killed or wounded, as well as material damage. Though there is absence of direct violence, cultural and structural violence might still take place according to Galtung (1969, p. 168), yet as these are more difficult to detect, they often go unreported in media (Galtung, as cited in Lynch, 2014, p. 41). Lynch has adequately summed up the definition of structural violence as: “barriers to achievement and fulfilment that are held in place by custom and practice and keep people from self-actualization” (Lynch, 2014, p. 49).

A third form of violence is “cultural violence”, which through cultural expressions such as for instance, language, myths, religion and art, are used to legitimize structural or visible violence (Galtung, 1990, pp. 291-305). I would argue that cultural violence often continues after the killings take place, as the killings are often denied or transformed into deceptive myths (Payne, p. 20). It is especially regarding cultural violence, I believe that documentary film might make a difference, as confessional narratives might be able to alter and dispute those myths. I would also argue that this is equally true for victim´s mystification of perpetrator. Victim research and therapy (Morag, 2013, p. 11), as well as mainstream journalism (Lynch, 2014, p. 36), tend to portray the perpetrator as “the incarnation of evil” (Morag, 2013, p. 11). When making documentary, on the other hand, Niney argues that: “one risks knowing enemies close up, humanizing them” (Niney, as cited in de Sousa Dias, 2015, p. 487). Niney indicates that he does not consider humanizing as a positive element, but an unfortunate risk when filming. Lebow likewise warns of the dangers in identifying and sympathizing with the perpetrator (2015, p. 480). I will argue however, in accordance with peace studies the benefits of humanizing all sides (Lynch, 2014, p. 41), as one might be more inclined to live with, or even start dialogue with a fellow human being, rather than with “the Devil.”

The most common critic of Galtung´s definition of violence is that it is too broad and vague. Some have also objected to Galtung´s peace definition as being too idealistic, and subsequently impossible to obtain (Steenkamp, 2014, p. 18). This can prove a problem as imprecise and unrealistic definitions might lead to never ending claims of victimization, as peace criteria do not seem to be met. None the less, Galtung´s definition of peace creates awareness that peace and reconciliation processes are complex structures that need working on many levels.

Reconciliation

Gloppen introduces five different strategies to reconciliation: criminal justice, truth, restorative justice, reform and oblivion (Gloppen, 2005, pp. 17-54). I shall concentrate on the path of truth, offered through confession, as I feel that this is the approach which bears greatest resemblance to the strategy offered in documentary film.

The term "truth" suggests that there exist a total and exhaustive account of the past. Truth is however a contested and complex matter, as there exist so many versions and kinds, both personal, empirical, legal and meaningful (Barash, Webel, 2009, pp. 453-54). Mongbe and del Picchia suggest in stead to use the word "remembrance" (Mongbe & del Picchia, as cited in Claggett -Borne, 2013, p. 14). I will however continue to use "truth," as it is widely used in the literature, and also because I feel it is more suitable in establishing the fact that wrongdoing has taken place. In order to indicate my reservations however, I will use it with apostrophes.

"Conciliation means acknowledging past wrongs, elaborating on how and why, and then defining a future together" (Galtung, 2011, p. 17). Galtung´s statement suggests two important phases in reconciliation processes, both the past and the future. I will discuss the latter first.

It is a common assumption that knowledge of past atrocities is important. The large amount of chronicled testimonies from Holocaust have often come with the "Never again" phase attached (Michalczyk, 2014, p. 3). Similarly both peace-initiators, such as Galtung and Tutu have emphasized the importance of knowing history, in order to not repeat it (Galtung, 2011, p. 10, Tutu, 1999, p. 32). Another aspect of knowing the past is

creating a common history that both perpetrator and victim can agree on (Gibson, 2004, p. 202). This ties up with Galtung´s theory on cultural violence. The mutual partaking of a collective memory, will also contribute to the elimination of myths and preconceived ideas of "the other" (Gibson, 2004, p. 215).

Another positive effect of "truth" is the acknowledgement of victim´s version, preferably on public, national record (Gloppen, 2005, p. 34, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report, vol.1 TRCS, 1998, p. 114). It might also provide missing details as to how loved ones died, as perpetrators often are the only witnesses to these acts (Payne, 2008, p. 30). Research has shown that this might have a therapeutic effect on victims, as well as leading to closure, subsequently assisting victims and perpetrators alike to move on with their lives (Payne, 2008, p. 30).

The opposite might also be true. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa experienced that in some cases: "Truth may in fact cause further alienation" (TRCS, 1998, p. 107). It is also a common fear that the perpetrator´s confession will not support the victim´s testimony, but will rather oppose it" (Payne, 2008, p. 29). Still, one of the four requirements for being granted amnesty in South Africa was that the applicant had to make a "full disclosure of all the relevant facts related to the offence" (Tutu, 1999, p. 47). Morag similarly stresses that confessions ideally should be "totally transparent"(Morag, 2013, p. 20).

Payne has categorized confessions into eight subgenres, ranging from expressions of deep remorse, heroic justifications, denial, silence, fiction and lies, amnesia and betrayal (Payne, 2008, pp. 17-22). Payne states that remorseful confessions are most commonly associated with reconciliation (2008, p. 6). She does not offer a definition of a confession of remorse, but she does suggest some elements that might help identify it: There should be acknowledgement of wrongdoing (p. 55), further an admission of guilt (p. 66), and preferably a concrete form of atonement (p. 74). Payne argues that though confessions that deny, glorify and reveal shocking detail might both offend and retraumitize victims, they are equally valuable to confessions of remorse, in that they disclose valuable information about the past, as well as initiating dialogue and discussions in democracies (Payne, 2008). Payne argues that the problem with remorseful confessions is that they

intend to end, not begin dialogue (2008, p. 73). Payne seems likewise to question the sincerity of remorseful confessions, yet simultaneously adhering that they might have an effect (2008, p. 74).

I find Payne´s categorizations of confessions relevant and valid, as they are based on years of studying confessions on several continents (Payne, 2008). I will therefore use them as a method when identifying confessions in the three films. I do, however, find her views on perpetrator and his/her confession to be too pessimistic. Rather I agree with researchers that argue that public apologies are more likely to lead to reconciliation, than confessions without apology (Gloppen, 2005, p. 36, Ohbuchi, Kameda, Agarie, as cited in Gibson, 2002, p. 543). An apology establishes clearly that a wrong has been committed and restores dignity to the victim (Gibson, 2002, 547). Apology might be just one element of confessions of remorse. I will still suggest that they might have a similar effect. Both Payne and Tutu argue however that confessions of remorse are often not believed, as they either show too much, or too little emotion (Payne, 2008, p. 74, Tutu, 1999, p. 48). If documentary film risks humanizing the perpetrator as Niney argues (Niney, as cited in de Sousa Dias, 2015, p. 487), they might in the process also be able to add credibility to perpetrators' confessions.

When perpetrators confess in remorse, there might also be a hidden demand for forgiveness that the victim should not be obliged to fulfil (Morag, 2013, p. 20, Payne, 2008, p. 74). In Christian tradition forgiveness is seen as a prerogative: "but if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive yours sins" (Matt, 6:14-15). Forgiveness is by some peace studies considered a trait of Christian societies, and therefore not a universal practice (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 453). Others, such as Desmond Tutu, claim that there can be no future without forgiveness (1999, pp. 34-35). I agree with Tutu, that forgiveness ideally is the better alternative; but I do not see it as the only alternative.

This brings us back to Galtung quotation earlier, which suggest that not only the past, but also the future is an important phase in reconciliation processes (Galtung, 2011, p. 17).

Historian LaCapra has argued that there must be some sort of closure of the past if one shall have hopes of moving on with life (LaCapra, 2001, p. 90), introducing the terms "acting out" and "acting through." LaCapra´s theories were originally intended towards the victim, as he claims they are the ones with real trauma. He only admits minor trauma to the perpetrator (LaCapra, 1998, p. 9).

Morag however, admits perpetrators substantial more trauma, and has extended LaCapra´s theories to include them (Morag, 2013, p. 18). Morag describes "acting out" as a condition characterized by guilt feelings, yet not a constructive form of guilt, but rather a static one, marked by "melancholic narcissism, self-pity, and looking backwards" (Morag, 2013, p. 16). "Acting through" on the other hand, she defines as characterized by a critical and analytic approach towards the past, as well as a high degree of looking forward. The perpetrator´s guilt is outward looking, emphasizing with the victim, as well as assuming responsibility. The latter involves changing behaviour, and making reparations (Morag, 2013, p. 16).

LaCapra does not believe in reconciliation wherein all wounds are healed. There will always be scars and even resets (LaCapra, 2001, p. 90). Similarly the perpetrator must live with what he/she has done (Morag, 2013, p. 31). Still, Morag seems to uphold the possibility of reconciliation when the perpetrator confesses remorsefully: "Reconciliation, in contrast to conflict resolution (…) must include a changed psychological orientation towards the other" (Morag, 2013, p. xvi). By filming the perpetrator, and subsequently humanizing him/her, the "psychological orientation towards the other" might also take place in audiences.

4. The possibilities of documentary

So far, this study has focused on the importance of "truth" in reconciliation processes, though also admitted the problem of asserting absolute truth. In documentary there has always been a tension concerning truth (Ellis, 2012, p. 8), which is reflected in Grierson´s definition of documentary from 1926: "creative treatment of actuality" (Grierson, 1926, as cited in Wells, 2003, p. 252).

Similar to photography, authentic footage gives documentary the illusion of watching real life (Ellis, 2012, p. 11). Yet, extensive use of compelling music, montage, re-enactment, creative choices concerning camera-angle, narrative and editing, suggest otherwise (Nichols, 2010, p. 6).

Consequently, documentary is not a reproduction of reality, but represents instead a particular view of the world," applying expressive and interpretative means in doing so, asserts Nichols (Nichols, 2010, p. 13). In fact, Nichols attributes documentary´s special appeal to its ability to couple emotion and evidence: "It allows the documentary to add flesh to fact, to locate its argument not in the abstract domain of impersonal logic, but in the concrete domain of embodied experience and historical occurrence" (Nichols, 2010, p. 88).

Documentaries may not offer absolutes, but rather they: "provoke doubt, argument and dispute. Their status is always in play and never finalised," argues Ellis (2012, p. 8).

This scepticism to assertiveness in documentary might resemble postmodern thinking, and likewise elicit the same type of criticism, one being that it lapses into moral relativism (Wright, 2011, p. 158). In cases where injustice and killings have taken place, the idea that some facts are not subjective, but either true or false, seems imperative (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 247). On the other hand, the emphasis on subjectivity and emotion does not mean that filmmakers do not adhere to institutional presentations of facts, argues Nichols (2010, p. 129). Yet, precisely because they are not restricted to authoritative and strictly formalized structures, and instead "contribute to an on-going dialogue (…) that take on new, distinctive forms, like an ever-changing chameleon" (Nichols, 2010, p. 6), they might also be willing to go places other genres resist, like that of the perpetrator´s viewpoint for instance.

The lack of formalized rules in documentary also signifies the numerous ways in which directors might elicit confessions. My aim, however, is to find those methods that most likely will lead to peace and reconciliation processes. Finally I will investigate theories on narration in relation to presenting reconciliation.

Directors and their subjects

Documentaries are about real people who do not play or perform roles. Instead they play or present themselves, according to Nichols (Nichols, 2010, p. 8). Goffman maintains that any social situation involves a performance (as cited in Ellis, 2012, p. 46). As social beings, we make an effort to make ourselves presentable: "It matters what people think of us (…) we do not like to be embarrassed or look like a fool" (Ellis, 2012, p. 47). The presentation of self comes into full play when people come before the camera and interact with filmmakers, argues Nichols (Nichols, 2010, p. 9)

What does it take then to get the perpetrator to speak the truth? "Nothing less than prosecutorial zeal will suffice: otherwise, the filmmaker/interviewer is seen to have been "manipulated" or "conned by the arguments raised, justifications given or exonerating circumstances offered by the devil," claims Boyle (2015, p. 510). Boyle deliberately uses "devil" for perpetrator throughout her text, and upholds Lanzmann´s method as the gold standard. Lanzmann used deception and provocations in order to make his interview objects talk. In journalism these methods might be justified when concerning issues of great social concern (Vær Varsom Plakaten, 2016). Could documentary film however offer other, more reconciling solutions in getting the perpetrator to talk?

The film director might often do, according to Piotrowska, based on own experience, as well as study of other film directors: "People will say things to you in front of the camera and a film crew that they might not have said ever before" (MacDonald, as cited in Piotrowska, 2014, p. 31).

There might be several reasons for this. One is the amount of time that filmmakers spend with their subjects (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 193). In certain observational films, the film technique itself requires that the film directors become a mayor part of their subjects´ lives, in order to obtain necessary footage (Singer, as cited in Quinn, 2013, pp. 50-51). Some documentary projects might last for several years.

Adding to this, Piotrowska sees the process between director and subject in films: “in which a verbal testimony of the other is at the heart of the work,”(Piotrowska, 2014, p. 9) similar to psychotherapy, especially in regards to “transference” (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 39). Briefly, transference might be explained as redirection of emotions that the patient might have had for someone in the past, towards the therapist (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 46).

Both in therapy and in documentary, the subject find themselves in a special place where there will be a lot of attention to their story. They will be listened to and some times even loved, states psychotherapist Berman (Berman, 2003, p. 221).

“Here might also be involved that process that psychoanalysis understands as transference, in the confessing to the other as one who can forgive, as priest, or understand, as therapist or judge. The other here is both a fantasized and powerful other and the fickle other of the media and television audience” (Cowie, as cited in Piotrowska, 2014, p. 30)

Similarly, the therapist or the director needs to be aware of countertransference, which similarly might result in affection for the perpetrator (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 46).

This special attachment between patient and therapist might be seen as a positive element in psychotherapy, as it is what enables the analytical process to take place (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 45). In documentary, there are however ethical dilemmas involved: Though the idea of transference might benefit the film, the testimony that is given, in contrast to psychotherapy, might not lead to a possible cure, but rather a “public spectacle” (Piotrowska, 2014, p. 106). A filmmaker´s transcendence usually only last for as long as the duration it took to make the film, which might leave the subject of the movie, feeling tricked and exploited (2014, p. 106).

On the other hand, the opposite might also be the case: The perpetrator is using the film director to obtain “some kind of absolution or forgiveness or temporary forgiveness” (Mograbi, as cited in ten Brink, 2014b, p. 262). About the perpetrator in his film “Z32,” film director Mograbi states: “He hopes to feel better at the end of it. He definitely uses

me to get there (…) I think one of the reasons for making the film is that he thought the film would absolve him. And this will be the end of it (2014b, p. 262).

Gitta Sereny was a journalist who spent a considerable time of her career interviewing perpetrators. I will include her, as her work is comparable to independent film directors, taking several years, and in the end always obtaining some form of confession. She believed her role in interviewing perpetrators was significant in that: "There was a world of experiences which he had never thought of analysing, and he was confronted with someone who analysed everything he said, and played it back to him in a way" (Sereny, 2008). Sereny has emphasized that she was always open towards the perpetrator as to what she was going to use the material for: "It always worked extremely well for me" (2008). In her book on commandant Stangl, Sereny, similarly to Lanzmann interviewed SS officer Suchomel, but whereas Lanzmann deceives Suchomel to testify in his film, Suchomel seems to have no problem in speaking openly or being identified by Sereny (Sereny, 1983).

Re-enactment

Film is a visual medium, and its dependence on footage and some times lack of it, has caused filmmakers to invent and investigate other means of representation, such as re-enactment. Nichols defines re-enactment as the more or less authentic recreation of prior events (2014).

Lanzmann does not include re-enactment merely as a substitute for footage, instead he uses it as a technique to invoke and relive past trauma in the present (LaCapra, 1998, p. 123), thus introducing a new aspect to re-enactment. ten Brink is similarly interested in re-enactment as a method in documentary, and not merely as illustrations (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 181), arguing that when used as a method, it works especially well in discourses related to violence (2014a, p. 185).

ten Brink compares the last form, to the definition of re-enactment that historian R. G. Collingwood introduced in 1928 as a method for historians: "it is not a passive surrender to the spell of another´s mind; it is a labour of active and therefore critical thinking. The historian not only re-enacts past thoughts, he re-enacts it in the context of

his own knowledge, and therefore, in re-enacting it, criticises it, forms his own judgement of its value" (Collingwood, as cited in ten Brink, 2014a, p. 178).

This type of re-enactment in documentary is first and foremost interested in questioning the present through the past, and the problem of authenticity is therefore of minor importance, states ten Brink (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 182).

One might gather from ten Brink´s statement that if authenticity is of little importance, truth is then considered a relative concept. This was also the critic of the re-enactment of "The battle of Orgreave " in England (2001), an actual event where police clashed with miners in 1984. Archaeologist Kevin Walsh criticised the project for promoting a "post-modern simulacrum" stance to history (Walsh, as cited in Correia, 2014, p. 200).

An important element of re-enacting is the body-based experience where all senses are involved, contributing to a "physical as well as psychological experience" (ten Brink, 2014, p. 185). According to ten Brink this offers a more rich and detailed account, in contrast to traditional observational or evidence- bases documentary methods. In some cases it might also be the only way for the witness to be able to speak. In Holocaust terminology, the idea of "the differend" by Jean-Francois Lyotard is explained as the "unstable state and instant of language wherein something which must be able to be put into phrases cannot yet be (Lyotard, as cited in Adams, 2014, p. 303). For witnesses who have experienced great trauma, this might be the case (Felman & Laub, 1992, p. 59). In his film "S21- The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine," director Panh experienced something similar, yet with perpetrators. One of the former guards in S21 was attempting to tell his story, yet was incapable of finding the right words. Instead he invoked gestures, which completed the phrases he could not find: "And it´s then that I discovered that there was another memory, which is the bodily memory, explained Panh" (as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244).

Additionally to ten Brink´s definition of re-enactment as method, I will include one of Nichol´s five categories, "Brechtian Distanciation." Nichols describes this form of re-enactment as increasing the separation of the re-enactment from present to the specific historical moment, by breaking the illusion through " social gests." "Brechtian

Distanciation" also emphasizes the emotional experience that the re-enactment might have on the participants (2014).

LaCapra argues that re-enactment, as portrayed in Lanzmann´s film "Shoah", bears close resemblance to the state of "acting out" (1998, p. 100), as the "scenes resist closure, and attest to a past (…) that must remain an open wound in the present, but they do so with a dominant tonality of unrelieved melancholy and desperation" (LaCapra, 1998, p. 117). Lanzmann has also been criticized for re-traumatising certain witnesses in this way (Winston, 2014, p. 108, LaCapra, 2001, p. 143). This might not necessarily be the case for the perpetrator, as victim trauma according to LaCapra cannot be compared to perpetrator´s (1998, p. 9).

Narration

The idea that narratives might offer some sort of redemption, more specifically through catharsis, dates back to Aristotle. He argued that the viewer when watching tragedies could purify his emotions of fear and pity, and thus reach a form of catharsis. An interesting point in Aristotle´s theory is his argument that we only feel pity for people who are good. The tragic hero must be good, yet he must also have some sort of flaw that causes the tragic events to advance. No one feels sorry for the evil person if he comes to harm, claims Aristotle (Aristotle, 335 b.c.e). If this were the case, directors and scholars would not have to worry about their audiences identifying with the perpetrator.

The benefits of catharsis have been contested. Rousseau believed that catharsis had a pacifying effect on the viewer: "In giving our tears to these fictions, we have satisfied all the rights of humanity without having to give anything more of ourselves" (Rousseau, as cited in Dawes, 2013, p. 210).

Brecht had a similar negative opinion of catharsis, and sought means to avoid it in his theatre (Brecht, 1964, p. 192). He maintained that the play should not cause the audience to identify emotionally with the characters or action before them, but should instead provoke critic and discussion as to the behaviour and social and moral issues that they represent. In order to achieve this, Brecht introduced a variety of theatrical devices and "alienation affects" that would remind the audience throughout that they

were only watching theatre (Brecht, 1964, p. 192). This position has since also inspired film (Nichols, 2010, p. 315), and resonates to a certain degree with ten Brink´s concept of re-enactment as means to stimulate critical thinking and discussion, rather than creating an illusion (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 181).

Narratives are in their conventional form redemptive, according to Northrop Frye. They tend to follow a linear, biblical structure of paradise, fall, a period of trial and tribulation, and then redemption (as cited in LaCapra, 2001, p. 156). Such narratives are chronological, and harmonizing; in that the past seems to continuously lead up to the present (LaCapra, 1998, p. 104). Bill Nichols definition of narrative in documentary film reads similar: "Narrative perfects the sense of an ending by returning to problems or dilemmas posed at the beginning and resolving them. Narratives resolve conflict and achieve order" (Nichols, 2010, p. 132).

The result might be that certain events are rendered in ways that are too easily redemptive (LaCapra, 2001, p. 162). Yet after Holocaust, such traditional "grand narratives" no longer seem plausible, LaCapra contends (LaCapra, 2001, pp. 154-55). Film directors have sought ways to solve this problem, as for instance Lanzmann who breaks with chronology in Shoah (LaCapra, 1998, p. 105).

To a growing number of neuroscientist, biologists and cognitive psychologists, the human brain works like a storyteller (Herman, Jahn & Ryan, 2010, p. 44). The basic principle of our mind is the story, which we project unto other situations in order to understand (Fisher, as cited in Herman, Jahn & Ryan, 2010, p. 44). Psychologist Jerome Bruner sees narration rather as a cultural phenomena, yet likewise as a tool to make sense of the world: "We organize our experiences and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative –stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on" (Bruner, as cited in Staiger, 1996).

The critique of narration might be viewed as a postmodernist critique of realism, and a desire to establish new innovative ways of representing reality. Thus the critique should not be seen as a critique of narration, but of a specific narration. Directors will always

have to organize and make choices according to their material in order to make their movies presentable to an audience.

5. Method

In my attempt to answer in what way documentaries can contribute to confessional processes that promote peace and reconciliation, I will use a qualitative method, as the question suggest a large amount of interpretation (Gentikow, 2010, p. 36).

My approach to method will be most closely linked to the idea of Critical Realism, as it offers an approach well fit to journalist and media studies (Wright, 2011, p. 156): "representing a middle path between constructivism and positivism: acknowledging the independent existence of objective reality, but asserting the constructedness of human knowledge about the nature of that reality"(Archer, as cited in Wright, 2011, p. 158).

As I intend to interpret a genre: documentary film, which explicitly defines itself as an interpretation of reality (Nichols, 2010), the acknowledgement of a certain "constructedness of human knowledge" is necessary. At the same time, as documentary takes place in a historical setting with real people (Nichols, 2010, pp. 7- 8), a method that accounts for the "real world" is also essential.

Selection of material

I will limit my material to three cases, suggested by Flyvbjerg as maximum variation (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 305). Because of the limited number of cases, the results of my study will not be suitable for generalizations, but might by providing an in-depth and "thick description" (Geertz, as cited in Gentikow, 2010, p. 28) of the films in question.

The films of this study:
1. The Act of Killing (2012)
2. Enemies of the People (2008)
3. S21- The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (2003)

To maximise the utility of information from these, the cases are selected purposefully rather than randomly, according to their relevance (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 307). They were chosen from the following criteria:

1. Perpetrator in focus, if not necessarily in main focus, but to such extent that the director obviously had to invest time in them.
2. Containing some type of admittance or confession by perpetrator initiated of or admitted as a result of the filming process, not by external forces.
3. The use of re-enactment as method when extracting confessions.
4. Relatively recent, so that they might be representative for a possible new trend within documentary tradition.

All three movies are located in South East Asia, and are limited to two countries: Indonesia and Cambodia. A greater geographical variation would have been preferable, yet through my research, finding movies that fulfilled my criteria as listed proved difficult. The reason for this might be various, but are also determined by language and accessibility.

The explanations for why certain continents are not concerned with perpetrator´s confession might also be culturally conditioned, and thus the lack of representation might express local differences in values and practice. In some cases where atrocities have taken place, there might simply not exist a documentary tradition. In Africa I found that in those documentaries where perpetrators admitted to crimes, the confessions were initiated by Truth and Reconciliation Commissions rather than by the director; the latter merely filmed what they observed from these processes.

Three levels of analysis

"For every documentary, there are at least three stories that intertwine, the filmmaker´s, the film´s, and the audience´s," according to Nichols (2010, p. 94).

All these three levels will play a part in my study, as they answer different aspects of my thesis question. Because they simultaneously affect each other, I will not always separate them from each other in my analysis. I will still make clear to the reader which

level I am addressing, as there should be an awareness that though the director´s story might solely refer to an objective reality, the other two refer both to an objective reality, as well as a "constructedness" of that reality (Wright, 2011, p. 156).

The third story of documentary is the audience, according to Nichols. In this study that will largely be me. "Every viewer comes to a film with perspectives and motives based on previous experiences," according to Nichols (2010, p. 96).

As I am also the main research instrument on every level of my study (Gentikow, 2010, p. 59), the results will consequently have a strong element of subjectivity. I do not think subjectivity can be avoided, nor is it desired in this study. All understanding needs to be based on prejudice, according to Gadamer (as cited in Krogh, 1997, p. 236). These might both be subjective prejudice, as well as prejudices partially derived from a shared historical consciousness (as cited in Krogh, 1997, pp. 236-37).

This suggests that as member of a specific culture, in this case a Scandinavian culture with a strong democratic tradition, and limited experience with war and violence, I will, in addition to my own personal background, have certain values and perceptions in common with other members of my Scandinavian, as well as Western Culture. My cases however, generally concern cultures different from mine.

Gadamer argues that by being aware of one´s illegitimate prejudice, and constantly adjusting them through interacting with the hermeneutic circle, one might be able to correct them (Gadamer, as cited in Krogh, 1997, p. 238). A certain consciousness about the cultural and subjective limitations of this study might equally eliminate at least some of my culturally illegitimate prejudices. I have travelled in Cambodia, and in South-East Asia, but will also work towards reducing some of my cultural ignorance through accumulating background information on the cultures that I study through Saunders (2011, 2012).

I do not think I can avoid culturally or personal subjectivity however, nor do I find it desirable. However, in order to increase the "stability of observation," Gentikow recommends that the researcher argues convincingly for his choice, as well as being

explicit about one´s analytical categories and procedures (Gentikow, 2005, pp. 59-60). I will make an effort to do both in my analysis and subsequent discussion.

Because researchers in qualitative studies do bring such a large amount of subjectivity to their studies, Gentikow advices that one argues convincingly for one´s choices, as well as being explicit about one´s analytical categories and procedures (2005, pp. 59-60). I will make an effort to do both in my analysis and subsequent discussion.

In order to extend the single viewpoint, I will also make use of data triangulation (Gentikow, 2010, p. 157), in that I cross-check and corroborate my own interpretations by exploring multiple sources such as live interviews of the directors, written material, bonus material, as well as other viewers´ perceptions. In regards to these sources I will not discuss the process of information evaluation explicitly in the analysis, I will still be applying Kjeldstadli´s advice on determining source reliability (1993, pp. 161-173).

All of these, including the director´s interpretation, will be treated as one of many possible positions. The director will not be the privileged voice of authority, as how the text is received does not always correlates with the director´s intentions (Nichols, 2010, p. 95). Qualitative interviews with directors would have been ideal, yet has not been possible. I have been in touch with both the director and producer of "The Act of Killing," yet only in relation to minor questions on sources credibility. Never the less, the directors in question are repeatedly interviewed on TV, in newspapers and at festivals, and thus the information concerning use of re-enactment, choice of technique, and relationship between director and perpetrator are more or less covered in already existing material.

Outline of analysis and discussion

In order to answer the "in what way (…)"-part of the question of my thesis, I will, based on watching the three films in advance, as well as reading available theory, assume that the following elements play a greater role than others in facilitating confessions:

1. The relationship between perpetrator and director

2. The use of re-enactment

3. I will also assume that narrative plays a significant role in how these confessions are perceived by audiences.

All these elements will be analysed according to the three levels that Nichols introduced. In order to answer whether the confessions promote peace and reconciliation, I will also include an analysis of the confessions. Finally I will discuss whether they do promote peace and reconciliation.

The whole process will take form of a hermeneutic circle, where I continuously adjust my interpretation according to new information. This will take place on many levels: both by interchanging between the parts and the whole of the individual films, but also in discussion, when leaving the separate films in order to study the three together. Finally the analyses will be seen in new light of the theory, and the theory hopefully in new light of the analyses (Krogh, 1997, p. 275).

To explore the first point, I will make use of both narrative analyses, as well as of external documentation. As much of what takes place between director and subject is not visible in the finished film, interviews and other material will play an important role in obtaining information about their relationship.

Nichols differentiates between documentary modes, deciding the level of visible interaction on account of the director (Nichols, 2010, p. 172). As my main concern is the interaction between perpetrator and director, I will especially concentrate on the scenes where the participatory mode is implemented, in that directors actively participates in the film, and interacts with their subjects.

To explore the use of re-enactments, I will firstly identify the scenes where re-enactment take place, secondly I will analyse how they are conducted, and thirdly the effect they might have. I will only partly make use of Nichols categorizing of re-enactment (Nichols, 2014), but will focus especially on ten Brink´s definition as presented earlier (2014).

Additionally I will make use of external sources to question or confirm my results and interpretations.

I will analyse the confessions, according to Payne´s categorizing (Payne, 2008).
I will also include theory by Morag and LaCapra in this discussion, as to whether the confessions are future-orientated and apt to "working through." When analysing the narration, I will concentrate on just a few of the multiple storytelling devices that exist, with an emphasis on Nichols´ theory on documentary modes, voice, as well as rhetoric (Nichols, 2010). I will also include a more practical approach through Rabiger´s (2015) and Kobré´s (2012) advice on methods. Finally, when discussing the three films as a whole, and as to whether they promote peace and reconciliation, I will return to the theories of Galtung (1969), Morag (2013) and Tutu (1999).

6. Analysis

In order to understand the historical and social background which the confessions refer to, and to what environment the confessions are performed. I shall briefly comment on the movie´s context. I will also include the directors´ motivations for making the films, as I find it important in order to understand the relationship they develop to the perpetrators, as well as the strategies they choose in order to extract confessions. This is in accordance with the hermeneutic method, in order to understand the text;[1] one needs to understand the question that it answers (Gadamer, as cited by Krogh, 1997, p. 251).

I will attempt to make use of the same schematic procedure in all three films, to avoid, arbitrary choices, as far as possible, aiming for consistency (Gentikow, 2010, p. 59). Firstly, I will analyse the relationship between director and perpetrator. In this section, I will also include portrayal of the perpetrator, as narration ultimately reflects the director´s perspective, and therefore his/her relationship to the subject (Nichols, 2010, p. 69). Secondly I will analyse the re-enactment scenes in the film. Next, I will examine the confessions, identifying what type of confessions they are, and also briefly discuss their quality. Further, I will explore how the film´s narratives might add credibility to the

[1] I use "text" in the wider sense (Scleiermacher as cited in Krogh, 1997, p. 273).

confessions. After describing the parts, I will as in the hermeneutic circle return to the whole (Krogh, 1997, p. 239), and discuss, as well as summarize in what way relationship and re-enactment might facilitate confessional processes.

a. The Act of Killing (2012)

Background

In 1965, six military generals were murdered in Indonesia, giving the military an excuse to overthrow the government (Anderson, 2014, p. 272). The communists were blamed for the killings, igniting an anti-communist hysteria, subsequently leading to the massacre of over one million civilians within a year. Civilians, gangsters and paramilitaries were recruited to assist in the killings (Oppenheimer, 2012, Anderson, 2014, pp. 268-284).

Neither the government, nor the army have taken responsibility for the massacre. Rather the official version has explained the killings as a spontaneous action among common people against communist "bestiality", and that the military´s role has been that of calming down the tension between the two groups [2] (Anderson, 2014, p. 282). On a national level, those who executed the murders therefore never received any recognition for what they had done. According to Anderson, this might also explain why perpetrators so willingly would participate in Oppenheimer´s film: "His camera offers them the possibility of commemoration (…)" (2014, p. 282). This is also confirmed by Oppenheimer (2014b, p. 299).

The communist, as well as the alleged communist, have been demonized, and the massacre of them justified. A state sponsored film, portraying the communist as sadistic and perverted murderers, has been compulsory in all schools and colleges (Anderson, 2014, pp. 268-284). In Medan, and in North Sumatra where the "The Act of Killing" takes place, the military and the gangsters who were implicit in the murders, are still in

[2] In fact there is "overwhelming evidence" that the Military government initiated the killings (Anderson, 2014: 282)

power: “It is like going to Germany, 40 years after the Holocaust, and discovering that the Nazis are still in power” (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1).

Motivation for making the film

Oppenheimer claims that the film was made on request of survivors and Human Rights activists in Indonesia: “To show what it means for victims to live surrounded by perpetrators” (2014a, ch. 1). Oppenheimer´s original plan was to film the victims´ stories, yet he was opposed by the military and police. He then changed tactic, and started interviewing the perpetrators instead. The interviews exposed what had happened as the perpetrators “were telling things far more incriminating than anything the survivors could have told (…) exposing to ordinary Indonesians the nature of their regime” (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1). Oppenheimer had already filmed Indonesia since 2001. He spent a total of five years filming “The Act of Killing”, and subsequently three years editing the film. When analysing the film, I have chosen to use the directors cut version of 240 minutes, as that was the one screened for the Indonesian audience (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013).

Narrative structure

The film´s action revolves around the dramatizations and re-enactments of how former mass killer Anwar and his companion Herman, remember, and wish to portray the massacre of 1965. In further analysis I will focus on Anwar, as Herman did not participate in the 1965-killings. Though the film is highly untraditional, it still follows a conventional structure of narrative, in that a problem is introduced and solved at the end of the film (Nichols, 2010, p. 132). The two main problems presented, are firstly Anwar´s boasting and lack of remorse, and secondly Anwar´s nightmares. The two are interchangeable in that the nightmares are presented as Anwar´s motivation for reflecting more critically on the killings, and subsequently stop boasting. In order to solve both issues, Oppenheimer instigates re-enactments as a method. By using a reflexive mode (Nichols, 2010, p. 194), such as showing the context of the re-enactments, the actual re-enactments, as well as scenes where they are screened back to Anwar, the film suggest that it is the re-enactments that lead to Anwar´s final transformation.

Anwar goes from being light-hearted and boastful about the killings, to gradually becoming more serious and haunted, as the re-enactments also turn more painful and traumatic. Finally, some resolution is found in that Anwar admits that what he did was wrong.

The film also explores how the past affects structural, cultural and physical violence in North Sumatra, through revealing present-day injustice and corruption. I will decline however, considering time and space, to explore these aspects further.

Relationship

Oppenheimer filmed 40 perpetrators in North Sumatra, before he met Anwar (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1). In his commentary to the film, Herzog asks Oppenheimer: "So did you film until you found the "perfect" one," to which Oppenheimer replies that he did not see the filming as casting, but rather he "lingered with" Anwar because he felt that "his pain was close to the surface" (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 1).

Presentation of perpetrator

Still, Anwar matches well with Nichols argument on directors often favouring individuals who have charisma, attracting our attention and holding our interest (Nichols, 2010, p. 46). Anwar is additionally exotic, peculiar and shocking, and also fits well into the category of early "cinema of attractions" (Nichols, 2010, p. 126), and also commercialized reality TV. Because of his passion for movies, he dresses up in extravagant clothes, chooses colourful costumes, dances, charms, and smilingly delivers amusing, flamboyant lines, and horrifying stories of killing and torture, all in one breath. This does suggest that Oppenheimer´s choice of Anwar, as main character might have been artistically motivated as well.

Identification and empathy with Anwar

Once perpetrators confess, their identities are in danger of becoming reduced to the act they committed, claims Payne (2008, p. 56). Oppenheimer ensures that this not happen to Anwar, as he uses considerable amount of time on showing his complexity and humanity. As viewers we observe Anwar´s vanity when dressing up, his happiness when winning a bowling game, his gentle, loving care for his grandchildren, his scorn for

corrupt politicians, his playful and sometimes spiteful teasing of Herman, his boasting, as well as childish excitement when discussing Oppenheimer´s film. Extensive use of close-ups additionally gives a feeling that we have access to the inner life of Anwar (Nichols, 2010, p. 134). The scenes ultimately bear witness to the amount of time Oppenheimer must have spent together with Anwar in order to obtain such a diversity and intimacy of scenes (Singer, as cited in Quinn, 2013, p. 50).

As the movie starts exploring Anwar´s dreams, Oppenheimer shifts into a more poetic, mode (Nichols, 2010, p. 162), creating a nightmarish atmosphere by fragmented and horrifying cuts, images are somewhat blurred and surreal; the music aggressive and disturbing. As if we, similar to in "Waltz with Bashir" (Folman, 2009), start seeing the world through the eyes of the perpetrator, which allows for an extreme form of identification with perpetrator.

One might argue, that the use of the reflectional and Brechtian mode in the film (Nichols, 2010, p. 199) alternately works against such identification (Brecht, 1964, p. 192). As audiences are repeatedly reminded of the film-making-process, they might also be more inclined to reflect critically on the events that take place on the screen. Oppenheimer has however, also expressed the importance of identifying with the perpetrator, in order to understand our own disposition to do evil:

> I had two rules when I made the film. I would never for a second forget my repulsion or horror, but I would never make the leap to: Anwar has done something monstrous, to: He is a monster. Because that moment, I know that I´m only reassuring myself that I am not like him, and I am closing down the possibility of how human beings do this to each other. (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 5).

Presentation of Oppenheimer

Oppenheimer´s visual presence is limited. In a brief introductory text, Oppenheimer informs neutrally, void of any moral implications about the mass killing of 1965, and his encounter with the killers: "When we met the killers, they proudly told us stories what they did. To understand why we asked them to create scenes in whatever way they wished "(2013, ch. 1). The word "understand" indicated an openness and lack of judgement towards the killers, which is persistent of all of Oppenheimer´s encounters

throughout the film. Oppenheimer is not visible in the film, but is participating through voicing his questioning to the subjects of the film, as well as giving instructions in re-enactment scenes.

Questioning Anwar

Oppenheimer's presence is most felt, when the re-enactments Anwar has participated in, are played back to him on screen: "If I showed the footage back to him, would he recognize what he had done in the mirror of the footage?" (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 2). When asking questions, Oppenheimer´s approach is polite and attentive. Only two questions are directed solely to Anwar: The first question takes place at night, in which Anwar cannot sleep: "When you say karma what does it mean to you? What are you afraid of?" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9). The question begins open-ended and neutral (Handgaard, 2009, p. 82), the second part links the question more specifically to Anwar´s situation (Handgaard, 2009, p. 44).

The second question takes place when Anwar is watching one of his re-enactments on screen, and he suggests that the mass killing will make a beautiful family movie. Oppenheimer asks rhetorically: "Will the communist children be able to enjoy this film?" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 7).

Only in one of the final scenes does Oppenheimer disagree with Anwar. After watching one of his more traumatic re-enactments, Anwar claims he can feel what the people he tortured felt. "Actually the people you tortured felt far worse, because you know it´s only a film. They knew they were being killed," Oppenheimer replies (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11).

Both the questions and the comment seem to elicit reflection. Open ended, inquisitive questions often do, according to Handgaard (2009, p. 89). Anwar seems to take them seriously, and makes an effort to answer them. His reply reveals doubt, as well as some form of introspection, provoking Anwar to reflect critically about the past. In this sense, Oppenheimer takes on a similar approach as Sereny (2008), forcing Anwar to reflect on his actions in a way that he would not do otherwise.

Relationship between Oppenheimer and Anwar

Oppenheimer does not use the word transference when defining what takes place between him and Anwar, but his description bears similarities:

> I am actually listening, not only trying to find out the historical facts, but also trying to understand him as a human being. By showing the footage back to him, I am creating a space for him to go into safely, and to find out what all this means to him. That is why he continues. (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 6).

This might be comparable to what Berman describes as a "special place" where the subject will get a lot of attention (Berman, 2003, p. 221). It is especially in regards to Anwar´s nightmares that Oppenheimer seems to offer a therapeutic role. Already at their first encounter Anwar mentions them (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 1), and they obviously are of concern to him. He makes an effort to talk about them to his old friend Adi, but is briskly discouraged by Adi´s comment: "You feel haunted because your mind is weak" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 4). Oppenheimer on the other hand is willing to explore Anwar´s dreams. It is also at this point that Anwar seems to undergo a change, which finally leads to his acknowledgment of what he did was wrong.

In one of the closing scenes, when Anwar reassures Oppenheimer that he identifies with the victims, Oppenheimer says in the commentary with Herzog: "I wonder if he is trying to get off the hook by offering me a generic confession. (…). I feel empathy, isn´t that what you want, Josh, I´m giving it to you" (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11). This resembles what directors have experienced in the past, that perpetrators might be trying to use the film director in order to obtain some kind of absolution or forgiveness (Mograbi as cited in ten Brink, 2014b, p. 262). It is also comparable to what Cowie describes as transference: "in the confessing to the other as one who can forgive, as priest, or understand as therapist or judge" (Cowie, as cited in Piotrowska, 2014, p. 193).

Oppenheimer seems equally to have experienced countertransference, in that he becomes attached to Anwar. His attachment appears to have been a conscious and deliberate choice:

> I don´t know, (…) how to make honestly a whole person, with all their complexity, their majesty and strangeness without becoming intimate with them. (…) I think that intimacy is the real condition for the whole movie. I think the film emerges out of this space of intimacy, empathy and even love (2014a, ch. 8).

This intimacy makes Oppenheimer vulnerable to critique (Dadras, 2014), yet as the film clearly shows that Anwar is moved into the direction that Oppenheimer desires him to go, rather than the opposite, I would argue that he is not being manipulated by Anwar.

Deception as method

In the past, directors of documentaries have seen it necessary to deceive perpetrators in order to make them speak (Lanzmann,1985). Does Oppenheimer equally deceive Anwar? Oppenheimer claims no: "Every perpetrator I filmed knew I was only making re-enactments, none of them felt they were making a separate film. The film was not a rouge method to get people to open up" (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1).

Throughout the movie, Anwar´s understanding of what the movie is about seems unclear. In one scene, he comments that his movie will be popular because it has humour and love interest (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 6). What does he mean by the latter? In Jakarta Post, Anwar is quoted as saying that the movie was originally titled "Arsan and Aminah," and that it was about Arsan falling in love with the daughter of a communist. A poster that appears in the film confirms this statement, and can vaguely be seen in the background of a real life talk show. In the interview in Jakarta Post, 15th of September, 2012, Anwar is quoted as saying that: "If I knew this would happen, I wouldn´t have acted in the film" (Gunawan & Kurniasari, 2012). Oppenheimer claims however, that Anwar had not yet seen the movie on that date. Anwar watched the final film, the 1st of November 2012, and he was very moved according to Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer quotes him as saying: "Joshua, this film shows what it is like to be me. And I am glad to finally have had the chance to go into these feelings" (Oppenheimer, as cited in Cooper, n.d.).

According to Oppenheimer, Anwar was pressured to denounce the film by the other perpetrators (as cited in Cooper, n.d.). This seems plausible, as Anwar clearly is aware that he is filmed on more occasions than when re-enacting.

Re-enactments

Re-enactment as method

Re-enactment is closely linked to the past, as it seeks, to represent a prior event (Nichols, 2014). Oppenheimer claims that "The Act of Killing" however, is not about the past, but the present state of impunity in Indonesia (as cited in Stevens, 2015). Further he argues that the word re-enactment is inaccurate, and what takes place is closer to dramatization: "What we're seeing is the dramatization of the present-day fantasies, scripts, and stories that the perpetrators are telling themselves so that they can live with themselves" (as cited in Stevens, 2015).

Several scenes in "The Act of Killing" are clearly dramatizations, as they portray Anwar´s fantasies of heaven, as well as the phantoms of his dreams. Others are more complex and ambiguous, as they seem to be a mix of both dramatization, as well as re-enactment. These still might fit into Nichols´ definition of re-enacting as the "more or less authentic recreation" of the killings of 1965 (Nichols, 2014). Likewise, the scenes carry close resemblance to ten Brinks definition of re-enactments as a critical method of questioning the present through the past (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 182). Oppenheimer also describes the re-enactments as a method. Firstly Anwar would propose a re-enactment to Oppenheimer, secondly he would re-enact it. The footage would then be played back to him, supposedly initiating dialogue and reflection (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 2). The method bears similarities to "Cinéma vérité" (Rabiger, 2015, p. 52), which advocates directors to take on roles as provocateurs (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 2). In "The Act of Killing," the re-enactments, and subsequent reflection on them, might be seen as what sets Anwar´s consciousness in motion.

The re-enactments in the film also bear resemblance to what Nichols describes as "Brechtian Distanciation." Through visualizing the metafictional process of creating the re-enactments, Oppenheimer "greatly increases the separation of the re-enactments

from the specific moment (Nichols, 2014)," emphasizing instead the importance of what takes place in the present.

Anwar and his friends are allowed substantial control of the filming process during re-enactments. According to Oppenheimer, this was the crux of the method: "To give performers the maximum amount of freedom to determine as many variables as possible in the production" (Oppenheimer, 2012). This might have elicited a certain trust, but also pride and personal investment in the project on account of the perpetrators, and might explain why Oppenheimer was granted access to top-leaders, as well as TV-studios (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch.1). It sometimes leads to grotesque, boastful, and some would say, amoral scenes (McGranaghan, 2013), yet also to something we have never seen before (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 1). Oppenheimer has also attested the success of the method to the amount of time it requires: "One reason the emotional impact was so profound came from the fact that this production method required a lot of time"(2012). This allows for the relationship between Oppenheimer and Anwar to develop, and also for the re-enactments scenes to evolve.

There are numerous re-enactment scenes in "The Act of Killing." I will first give a short description of how these undergo change, and how that change might play a role towards the final confession of remorse. Next, I will go into further detail on two of them. These two are chosen according to the significant role they play in the movie, the reflections or reactions that they provoke, as well as for their differentiation to each other, representing the variations of re-enactment that Oppenheimer makes use of.

The narration of the re-enactments

During the first re-enactments, Anwar is obviously exited and happy about performing the role as "happy killer" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 1). The effect of playing back the re-enactment at first elicits superficial comments on which clothes to wear, or on the acting (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 2).

Later on, Anwar and his friends are granted access to a TV-studio, including resources as crew, make-up, costumes and props. Very few of these re-enactments are played out in

the movie. This might be because they, except for producing bizarre and strange images, didn´t have much effect on Anwar, according to Oppenheimer, as Anwar would become stiff and unnatural. “Whenever we needed to go into real trauma or real feeling, we would shut the set down” (Oppenheimer, 2014a ch. 3). All the other re-enactments are also played out on location of the real killings.

Re-enactments with real trauma are not presented before the second half of the film. According to Oppenheimer they took place about four and a half years after he met Anwar, and were shot during a week (Oppenheimer, 2012). The location of these specific re-enactments is in a newspaper office, where the real victims were tortured, and sometimes even killed. In these re-enactments, we as viewers are given no preparation, nor provided any “Brechtian Distanciation” (Nichols, 2014); Oppenheimer cuts directly into these scenes, and though we due to previous experience know the background for them, we are still mentally unprepared for the dark mood, and sudden lack of playfulness. Finally, Anwar decides to re-enact the victim. By playing the victim, Anwar does not re-enact his historical self. The scene is a historical re-enactment, and probably one of the few in the film, that refers to a historically singular event, as Anwar gives the name of a victim he in fact tortured and killed (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 10). The scene seems to trigger trauma, as well as a certain empathy for the victims, and might also be seen as fundamental for the last re-enactment in which Anwar finally confesses.

Re-enactment 1: The Kampung Kolam massacre

The Kampung Kolam massacre is the film´s most elaborate re-enactment, involving a large amount of people, and taking place on location where a massacre originally occurred (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9). Despite all of the energy put into making the re-enactment, very little of it is included in the movie, emphasizing that it is the present-day effects of the method Oppenheimer is interested in, not the actual historical re-enactment (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 182).

Rather Oppenheimer focuses on the preparations for the acting, as well as the reflections afterwards. Similar to previous re-enactments, the filming of the massacre of Kampung Kolam is “Brechtian” and highly self-reflexive (Nichols, 2014).

One such important “Brecthian” scene occurs before the re-enactment, and involves a group of paramilitaries who have volunteered to play the perpetrators in the re-enactment. Many of the members of the Pancasila Youth present at the scene, are too young to have taken part in the massacre. They might symbolize former members of Pancasila Youth, as the organization played a leading role in the 1965- killings, yet even more so, their presence hints at the current situation in North Sumatra. Earlier in the movie, the leader of Pancasila Youth, Yapto declared that all of Pancasila´s members are heroes, from exterminating communists in 1965, to fighting neo communist and left wing extremist in present-day Indonesia (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 2). The latter implies that they still fight the communist, though we do not see this take place.

By including them in the re-enactment scene, the possible implication of Yapto´s statement is exposed visually. It is however the Brechtian element that contributes to this revelation: When Anwar, Herman and the deputy minister colloquially pep-talk the men into zealous anger towards the communists, so that they might act better in the up-coming scene, it feels more real than their performances in the actual re-enactment, as the emotions that are provoked are genuine. The paramilitaries are reluctant at first, shy and looking downcast, but are then quickly stirred up to a fiery, angry mob, looking quite able to perform whatever they might be enticed to do by their leaders. In this case, that involves, paradoxically, participating in a film.

The participation of a high-ranking minister is likewise of both historical and present-day significance. It does not only suggest the government´s involvement in the massacre; it also exposes them actively supporting the present state of impunity. Thus this scene offers an alternative historical version of the official version, which blames the massacre solely on the paramilitaries. At the same time it also reveals the double face of the regime, as the minister when seeing the chaotic, barbaric mob, wants to reverse and erase the footage, as he is afraid of “my image right in the middle of it!” “Let´s still wipe out the communist, but in a more humane way,” he proposes, then changes his mind again: “Use it to show how ferocious we can be! In fact we can even be worse… if anyone disturbs our country” (2013, ch. 9). In the last remark, lies also a threat. Again present

and past intermingle, revealing that though the killings have stopped, there is no real peace in Indonesia.

Even though the actual re-enactment is kept to a minimum, only a few minutes, they consist of highly authentic images that break the style of all previous re-enactments. These are what Nichols describes as realist dramatizations; they look so real that they create an illusion of reality (2014). In his commentary to the film, Oppenheimer states: "I had a feeling that here I had a moral responsibility to create an icon for a genocide where there are no icons" (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9). The footage of the actual re-enactment also plays an important role in further narrative as they prompt the second darker phase of the re-enactments in "The Act of Killing". All the ensuing re-enactments lack the playfulness of those before the massacre at Kampung Kolam.

Even more important are the reactions and reflections the actual re-enactment elicits. The children were according to Oppenheimer chosen for their ability to cry, but they were also chosen because they were the children and grandchildren of paramilitaries and perpetrators, as Oppenheimer wanted to make sure that none were from the victim´s family (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9). Though it might not have been intended, the result is also that the perpetrators end up comforting and empathizing with the victims, especially the children who are unable to stop crying, even after the re-enactment has ended. This would probably not have happened, if the children and women were merely actors, or strangers. Subsequently the sympathy Anwar feels for the people he knows, seems to transfer to the historical people he killed: "My friends kept telling me to act more sadistic, but then I saw the women and children. Imagine those children´s future. They´ve been tortured… Now their houses will be burned down… What future do they have? They will curse us for the rest of their lives" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9).

Anwar speaks about the past in present tense, and seems not to be able to distinguish properly between the past and the present, which is characteristic of the passive phase in which LaCapra defines as a state of "acting out", which according to Morag is not a constructive place to be for a perpetrator (LaCapra, 2001, p. 89, Morag, 2013, p. 16). In Anwar´s case, the remark differs from the previous lack of remorse when re-enacting

torture and murder, and shows a major progression of his ability to identify with others. "Acting out" is also the initial steps in therapy, and might be an important phase in order to finally get to "acting through" (LaCapra, 2001, p. 90).

Re-enactment 2: Killing on the rooftop

The roof is where Anwar tortured and killed hundreds of people. It is one of the plainest scenes, with the least people and props involved, yet also the most powerful, as the location obviously triggers something in Anwar. The re-enactment is a repetition of previous re-enactments that took place five years prior to the scene, and presented to viewers in the beginning of the film. Already the first time, Anwar expressed discomfort; a close- up shows him gasping when entering the roof, though he subsequently quite merrily gives an account of how he killed people, and eventually cheerfully dances the cha cha cha, seemingly totally oblivious to the suffering he has caused here (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 1).

This time, Anwar from the onset of the scene, looks and acts like a broken man. There is little progression and action within the scene, yet as we simultaneously are made to recall the first encounter while watching the second, this re-enactment portrays the strongest transition within the movie. This time it is night, adding to Anwar´s mood. The only people present are Oppenheimer and his crew of two cameramen (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11), where as earlier Anwar brought another man along to play the victim.

Anwar seems to have lost interest of the camera at this stage. Not once does he look into it, but appears to avoid it, by walking away from it. Throughout the whole scene he breaks up his talk with long pauses, swallowing, frowning, his body eventually convulsing. His words come staccato-like and brief; where earlier they were full of entertaining detail and humorous detours. For the first time, he admits: "I know it was wrong." Then he adds: "But I had to do it." Anwar makes an effort to show how he killed the victims. Mechanically he lifts up the wire he used, and where as he countless times earlier, eagerly and proudly demonstrated its use, he now quickly lets go of it, picking up the next prop instead, until his body again wretches into spasm (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11).

The re-enactment is seemingly disrupted, at least the historical account of it. As a similar re-enactment has already taken place earlier however, in which Anwar disclosed what Oppenheimer described as "forensic evidence" on how he used to kill, it is obviously not the historical facts that are of importance. Instead, the re-enactment is comparable to what occurs in Lanzmann´s film "Shoah" (1985), where by re-entering locations and situations of the past, trauma is revoked. What evolves as trauma with Anwar however, might still be similar to what ten Brink describes as the body-based experience that takes place in re-enactment, contributing to a "physical as well as psychological experience" (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 185). In this case, it seems that the sum of all the re-enactments allow for this experience to take place. Anwar´s trauma reminds also of what Panh characterizes as bodily memory (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244), though as a rather extreme version for Anwar, as he is incapable of controlling it. In this light, Anwar´s physical reaction, though it is neither factual nor logical, might still be better at presenting atrocities of the past, as they more honestly express the horror of what took place, and how it presently affects Anwar. This is also what documentary is best at "to locate its argument not in the abstract domain of impersonal logic, but in the concrete domain of embodied experience (…)" (Nichols, 2010, p. 88).
More importantly, for the first time in the film, Anwar expresses remorse for what he has done.

LaCapra criticized the re-enactments in "Shoah" for resembling a state of "acting out" in which participants are repeatedly re-traumatized, and discouraged to work through their problems (LaCapra, 1998, p. 116). Anwar seems likewise to be subject to two such traumatic re-enactments, yet in contrast to the victims in "Shoah," Anwar is the one who initiates these scenes, according to Oppenheimer (2012). Rather than being static, the re-enactments scenes also encourage change of the present state of impunity, and critical thinking of the past, encouraging a state of "acting through," in which Anwar eventually might responsibility for his actions

Confessions

Throughout the film, there are confessions of both crimes committed in 1965, as well as in the present day. My focus will be on confessions of killings and torture from 1965, as well as on Anwar´s confessions.

Because of the state of impunity in North Sumatra, access to perpetrators´ confessions was readily accessible to Oppenheimer (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1). Anwar´s first confession on the roof was according to Oppenheimer similar to all the confessions he had heard so far: boastful and highly detailed and graphic (2014a, ch. 1). Oppenheimer´s challenge therefore is not to get the perpetrators to speak and admit to their crimes, which often has been the aspiration of past documentarists, but rather: "I wanted to know if he (Anwar) would recognize (…) something of the meaning of what he had done" (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 2). In the following analysis, I will explore whether Oppenheimer was able to succeed in this.

Sadistic confessions

The initial confessions in the film are performed merrily and boastfully. Anwar keeps repeating how he enjoyed the killing, making small jokes as he goes along: " I´d give him (the victim) a cigarette. I´d still be dancing, laughing. It was like we were killing happily" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 2), "I used a table. I placed it right on his neck (…) having fun like this"(Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 3). He comments on the corpses he threw over the bridge and into Deli river as: "They looked beautiful. Like parachutes "(Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 3). When admitting to these crimes, Anwar smiles carefreely and light-heartedly, appearing to enjoy the memories.

To admit to pleasure when committing atrocities, is according to Payne, rare, and considered a taboo in most cultures (Payne, 2008, p. 124). She defines this type of confession as sadistic, often encouraged by the media, because of their entertainment value (Payne, 2008, p. 127). Oppenheimer might have encouraged Anwar´s sadistic features to a certain degree, or at least not discouraged them by revealing how much he actually disapproved of them. However Anwar´s sadistic confessions were not unique, but rather representative for all the perpetrators Oppenheimer interviewed in North Sumatra (Oppenheimer, 2014, ch. 1), and also characteristic for highranking politicians

(Oppenheimer, 2013). By including these confessions in the film, they contribute to the exposure and critique of a society of impunity.

Payne also states that: "There is no doubt that these unsettling accounts harm individuals more deeply than other kinds of confessions" (2008, p. 14). By allowing these confessions into the film, Oppenheimer risks that certain vulnerable groups are traumatized (Payne, 2008, p. 139), yet on the other hand, they are more honest, and thus better at revealing the horror behind the regime´s acts, as confessions are normally obscured in denial, glorification, generalities and euphemisms (2008, p-139). Sadistic confessions make audiences understand, feel, smell and witness that violence, making it nearly impossible for anyone to deny it, according to Payne (2008, p. 139) The latter is also what Oppenheimer defined as the survivor community´s goal: "To understand the source of our fear"(Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1).

Confession of remorse

At some point, Anwar seems to question the image he has created of himself as a sadistic killer. The narrative suggests that the change of attitude takes place after Anwar starts re-enacting his nightmares. When watching one of the re-enactments, he proposes to change the chronology of the scenes in the film, so that the fictional scenes of a communist woman eating Anwar´s penis, are presented at the start, ensuring that "all the sadistic things I do next, will be totally justified" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 8).

Likewise after the Kampung Kolam re-enactment, when asked about the killing, Anwar does not take the usual sadistic and boastful approach: "What I regret. Honestly I never expected it would look this awful. This was so very, very, very…" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9).

After the "Kampung Kolam-re-enactment," Anwar is portrayed as sleep deprived suggesting that Anwar is not unaffected by what he has done. He suffers physically because of it. The fact that he talks about his bad karma, and God´s punishment, reveals that he indirectly acknowledges his wrongdoings.

In the last scene he also admits to them directly, finally "acknowledging wrongdoing" (Payne, 2008, p. 55): "I know it was wrong," Anwar says, his face and body substantiating his words, validating the confession. Still, this final confession comes with a "but": "But I had to do it." Never the less, we pay little attention to Anwar´s words, as his body convulses in what might be interpreted as disgust, terror or shame. "It´s as if his body physically is rejecting the words," in Oppenheimer´s opinion (Herzog, Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 11).

Anwar´s confession has traits of remorse, yet this remorse is revealed more through his body language and physical suffering than from what he says. This does not necessarily mean that the confession is less effective, as perpetrators "who physically exhibit suffering for their past violence (…) are more likely to sway audiences in their favour" (Payne, 2008, p. 51).

Oppenheimer has clearly achieved his aim in making Anwar see some of the meaning of what he has done. Additionally, Anwar seems to fulfil Morag´s requirement (2013, p.16), of empathizing with the victims (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9). Anwar ´s guilt seems however to be characterized by self pity[3]. He does not take responsibility for what he has done (Morag, 2013, p. 16), nor does he apologize (Gloppen, 2005, p. 547). As Oppenheimer also acknowledges: "Anwar never comes to find the courage to say consistently and truly that this was wrong" (Oppenheimer, as cited in Stevens, 2015).

Creating credibility through narrative

The narrative in the film follows a traditional chronology, the gradual transformation of Anwar into a more ethically conscious human being, traumatized by what he has done.

This emphasis on gradual transformation might contribute to the confession´ s plausibility (Kiefer, 2015, Burns, 2015). Others have found it too good to be true. Dadras argues: "(…) the secret of his (Anwar´s) success is his ability to tap into our, and Oppenheimer´s desire for recognizable narratives of cinematic redemption (…), which we rarely find in real life" (Dadras, 2014).

[3] Anwar desired to play the role of the victim, because he felt sorry for himself, according to Oppenheimer (Herzog and Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 10).

It is difficult if not impossible to know if Oppenheimer manipulated his material in order to make it more accessible through editing, without having access to the actual footage. One cue is Anwar´s hair, which Anwar colors in order to play in the re-enactment scenes (Oppenheimer, as cited in Maclnnis, 2014). When lying awake in bed at night, Anwar´s hair is white. As the bed-scene is cut between two of the final, and more traumatic re-enactments, we are made to think that it is the re-enactment and guilty conscience that keeps Anwar awake, and which consequently leads him to play the victim, and consequently making him realize the horror of what he has done. The problem is that in both re-enactment scenes, Anwar´s hair is black. The bed-scene is probably filmed at an either earlier or later moment. This might indicate that the influence of the re-enactment scenes, and Anwar´s growing trauma might have been exaggerated in order to add to the rising emotional tension of the narrative. On the other hand, it might also have been an honest depiction of Anwar´s reaction, in which Oppenheimer lacked footage of.

Needless to say, documentaries cannot be anything but simplifications of real-life. Oppenheimer had to make artistic choices in order to make the film presentable for an audience. I would argue however that the crosscuttings of scenes are effective in validating Oppenheimer´s method. Already from the beginning the viewers are let in on the process. Every aspect of it is shown, not only the end result, and it comes therefore across as successful, making the end-result appear convincing.

Anwar´s strong appeal might both intrigue and repel audiences. Generally people agree that it is morally questionable to be amused by mass killings (Kerner, 2011, p. 5), even more so by the men who have committed them (Fraser, 2015). It might foster doubt as to Oppenheimer´s prime motivation for making the film, as the exotic and bizarre plays such an important role, including the sadistic re-enactments of the killings. Consequently it might raise questions to whether Oppenheimer was conned himself by these charming murderers (Dadras, 2014). These questions might foster doubt whether Anwar´s confession is sincere or not. However, the surreal scenes and larger than life-characters, have also drawn critic´s, and subsequently audience´s attentions (Fraser, 2015).

Other elements contribute to the rationale of Anwar´s confession of remorse. By portraying Anwar as a complex person with positive and negative features, the transformation also seems plausible. The extensive use of close ups of Anwar contribute to validating the upcoming confession. At times the camera reveals every blink, every swallow, the pursing of lips, and makes us believe in the authenticity and development of Anwar´s emotions, as they seem caught unaware and feel sincere, creating what Nichols defines as "psychological realism," as they give the impression that we have access to Anwar´s inner life (Nichols, 2010, p. 134).

It is particularly one scene portraying Anwar with his grandchildren that supports the concept of Anwar´s capacity of confessing: Anwar´s grandchild has hurt a duckling, and gently Anwar makes the little boy apologize to the duckling (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 4). The scene portrays the caring grandfather, yet more importantly; it argues that Anwar is a moral person. He knows the difference between right and wrong. The observational mode strengthens this assumption (Nichols, 2010, p. 126), as the scene feels authentic and Anwar unaware of the camera.

However, the lack of visible director might also confuse viewers as to what the film is trying to accomplish, or on which side the director is. In the few incidents where Oppenheimer does expose himself to an audience, he reveals very little about himself, and refrains from passing judgment on the killings, calling on the viewer to take a more active role (Nichols, 2010, p. 174). Towards the end of the film, Oppenheimer makes up for this, by opposing Anwar´s claim that he is capable of identifying with his victims. By rejecting Anwar´s claim, Oppenheimer seems to add credibility to the final confession, as the viewers now are aware that Oppenheimer is not easily deceived.

Possible effects of re-enactment and relationship

Anwar´s confessions are mainly sadistic (Payne, 2008, p. 140), through out the film. It is not until the end of the film that he both physically and verbally confesses to remorse (Payne, 2008, p. 74). He does not apologize however, and his confession of remorse therefore feels incomplete.

Dadras argues however, that Anwar´s confession is staged, and that he, due to his knowledge of Hollywood genre conventions, "decides to stage his most dramatic scene of humanity and remorse" (2014). Dadras´ statement is essentially about Anwar´s motivation for making the film, and I will therefore explore this motivation further.

Throughout the documentary, especially initially, Anwar repeatedly seems more concerned about the success of the film he is making, than about the confessional process. He dresses up as his film heroes in the re-enactments, and acts like them. Until the very end, he claims: "We want to feel like people in the movies (…)" (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 10). This does support the strong desire on Anwar´s behalf to stage himself, and therefore also confirms Dadra´s claim. Further, one would suppose that Anwar´s staging would be according to his hard-boiled, callous, yet flamboyant Hollywood heroes, which he also does initially. The final scene of remorseful and humiliating confession, however, does not correlate with this image, in my opinion. Neither does it rhyme well with Indonesian culture, where loss of face, or "malu", is considered a great shame (Saunders, 2012, p. 153).

It seems rather, that Anwar´s motivation changes. This is also signposted by the film´s narrative. It is only halfway into the film, when Anwar spontaneously re-enacts the killing, which he claims to be the origin of his nightmares that the subsequent re-enactments seem to have an effect on Anwar (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 6). According to Oppenheimer this alteration is not merely narrative, but took place halfway through the production: After Anwar suggested they go deeper into his bad dreams, he stopped asking when the film would be ready (Oppenheimer, as cited in Cooper, n.d). Seemingly being able to explore his suffering, as well as confiding in someone meant more than the film. Likewise, the fact that it looks like Anwar is trying to avoid the camera in the end, might even suggest that the camera no longer attracts him (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch.11). The film does not seem to be Anwar´s first priority any more, but rather the exploration of his nightmares, and plausible solution of them.

The re-enactments appear to have played an important role in offering a pretext as well as a context in which to explore the cause of those nightmares safely. It is especially re-enactments on location that seem to have provoked strong emotions and bodily

memory. Re-enacting the victim, as well as allowing children and wives of friends and colleagues play the victims, seems to have had a strong effect on changing Anwar´s orientation towards the victims, in accordance with what Morag argues as essential in reconciliation processes (2013, p. xvi). Generally, Anwar´s confessions were given either during re-enactments, or when they were screened back to him. Oppenheimer's open questions seem further to have instigated reflection, guiding the re-enactments into the right direction. Due to the amount of time that the method required, it might have encouraged an intimate relationship, in which a form of therapy most likely took place. I would argue thus that the combination of relationship and re-enactment played a significant role in Anwar´s final, incomplete, yet still remorseful confession.

b. Enemies of the people (2009)

Background

In April 1975, armed radicals known as Khmer Rouge won the five year long civil war in Cambodia, carrying out an extreme form of social revolution. During this time, at least 1, 5 million died from starvation, overwork, undiagnosed and mistreated diseases. Almost 200, 000 were executed without trial (Chandler, 1999, p. vii).

The Vietnamese overthrew the regime in 1979, but it was not until 1991, that a peace treaty was signed. The treaty ruled out an international trial, in part because so many international actors were implicated, according to Becker (2009, p. 6). Some have also argued that the ensuing silence concerning the mass killings has to do with the large number of former Khmer Rouge officials still in power, including current Prime Minister Hun Sen, also a former Khmer Rouge leader. He has stated: "We should dig a hole and bury the past" (as cited in Sambath, 2011a). It has also been suggested that the Cambodian style of Buddhism emphasizes that reconciliation will be hindered by a focus on justice or retribution (Barash & Webel, 2009, p. 453). This attitude might have changed after the Cambodia Tribunal was set up in 2006, and several top-leaders were arrested (Documentation Centre of Cambodia, 2013). In the film, several perpetrators express fear of going to trial for crimes they committed during the Khmer Rouge (Lemkin & Sambath, 2009).

Motivation for making the film

Rob Lemkin came to Cambodia to make a film about the three top leaders of Khmer Rouge, including Brother Number Two, Nuon Chea, in connection with their upcoming trials. They were in denial, and were reluctant to speak to Lemkin. At the time Thet Sambath worked as a fixer and translator for Lemkin. In his spare time he had interviewed perpetrators for the last seven years, including Nuon Chea, and had the material and contacts that Lemkin was lacking for his film. The two formed a 50/50 joint partnership. Sambath´s motivation for making the film is personal: He lost his father, mother and brother during the Khmer Rouge period. In the film he states that: "My project is to find out why so many people died in the Killing Fields" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 1)

Narrative structure

"Enemies of the People" is structured traditionally according to the Three Act play, which is similar to classical storytelling, including an exposition, rising action, climax, and resolution" (Kobré, 2012, p. 6).

The film´s main mode is participatory (Nichols, 2010, p. 157), co-director Thet Sambath is also the film´s main character, and the story revolves around his personal project in establishing contact with former perpetrators, and his technique in making them explain and admit to the killings they committed. We observe Sambath´s interaction with the perpetrators, but in addition to this, we are given his perspective, reflections and emotions concerning them, in that Sambath speaks the voice-over in the film (Nichols, 2010, p. 76). His commentary is personal and emotional, adding credibility and conviction to the film, according to Nichols, as the filmmaker "starts from what she or he knows best –personal experience" (2010, p. 81).

It is especially in Sambath´s relationship to Nuon Chea, also called "Brother Number Two," and the second most powerful man in Khmer Rouge, that tension evolves: Firstly whether Sambath will be able to make him talk about the past and prompt him to admit that he ordered the killing. Secondly how Nuon will react when he realizes that Sambath,

who has been his confident in ten years, is in fact also partly victim[4], as he lost his parents and brothers during Nuon´s reign. This is the story´s climax, as this information might ruin the trust, Sambath has accumulated, as well as trigger an apology.

Parallel to Nuon's story, Sambath follows two other perpetrators, Suon and Khoun, and together they explore the hierarchy of command, in order to find out who´s decision it was to kill, as they all attest to just "following orders". They finally also confront Nuon, yet the scene offers no resolution as Nuon denies responsibility.

The narration does offer a resolution however. Nuon is eventually arrested by the The Khmer Rouge Tribunal. Sambath´s 10-year long project is finished, and he finds peace in returning to normality. Close to the end, the film screens black and white footage of bones and sculls of people who died during the Khmer Rouge. The last scene stands in optimistic contrast to the previous footage, with Sambath walking content into the horizon, which might symbolize the bright future of Cambodia.

Relationship

In the film we encounter all together five perpetrators. I will especially centre my attention on Nuon, as I see him as the second most important character in the film, next to Sambath.

Presentation of Nuon

Nuon is portrayed as a complex character. When talking about the opposition during the Khmer Rouge, he speaks forcefully and dogmatically, conveying a rigid narrow-mindedness. In one scene he watches the hanging of Saddam Hussein on TV, in which he identifies and sides with Saddam Hussein: "This was the end of a patriot in an unfair society" (2011a, ch. 12). There are several images of Nuon surrounded by his family, of him interacting childishly to his grandchild, as well as laughing and chatting contently with Sambath. They are very brief though, perhaps only a couple seconds, yet are still able to express Sambath´s respect and genuine affection towards Nuon, placing Nuon in a positive light.

[4] When using victim here, I do not differ between victims of traumatic events, and others that do not directly experience them (LaCapra, 2001, ix).

The fact that Nuon has but one recurring dream, that of Pol Pot (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 1), suggests a desire to return to the past, and where as the other perpetrators likewise are haunted by their nightmares (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch.11), Nuon´s dream is pleasant, as are his recollection of the Khmer Rouge period and Pol Pot (2011a, ch. 1).

Sambath´s relationship to Nuon

According to Sambath, it took three years to gain Nuon´s trust. During this time Sambath spent nearly every weekend with him (Sambath, 2010). Finally in 2005, he opened up: "Sambath, I have checked you out for many years. Now I trust you. Go ahead ask me anything you want. I will answer you honestly" (Sambath, 2010). Prior to sharing with Sambath, Nuon had never admitted to knowing about the killings. The following years, Sambath conducted more than 1,000 hours of interviews with him about his time in the Khmer Rouge (Chon & Sambath, 2010, p. 4). The majority of these confessions are more justifications for his view on what took place, than any admittance that what he did was wrong.

Questioning Nuon

Several of Sambath´s questions to Nuon are included in the film. Most of them are relatively neutral in that they solely seem to concern themselves with eliciting information, such as: "When did you realize that villagers were being killed?" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 11) Or: "Did you and Pol Pot ever argue with each other when you were in government?" (2011a, ch.11). As far as what the film reveals, the difficult questions are not backed up by follow-up questions. For instance when Sambath asks Nuon: "What is the response to my family´s story?" (2011a, ch. 15).

Just one question in the film might be interpreted as an indirect critique: "Some say you should have just imprisoned them, not killed them" (2011a, ch. 9). The statement/question is extremely polite and also vague, as Sambath by using the indirect not "many", Sambath diminishes the impact of his statement/ question. Rather than challenging Nuon´s worldview, he confirms it, maintaining Nuon´s belief that only some disagreed with Nuon on this matter. Likewise, Sambath, instead of confronting Nuon´s

controversial terms, adopts them. When Nuon explains about the opposition in the party, and says: “These people were categorised as criminals,” Sambath accepts Nuon´s definition by continuing to use it: “What did you do to those criminals?” (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 9). Payne emphasizes the importance of perpetrators learning new perspectives and languages when communicating with victims and survivors (Payne, 2008, p. 74). In this case, the opposite seems to have occurred. Lemkin has defended Sambath´s approach. “Some people have said that Sambath should have put the boot in and asked harder question (…) But I think (…) the way he was working with him is the only way” (Lemkin & Ronowics, 2011, ch. 11).

Countertransference

When Nuon is taken to trial in Phnom Penh, Sambath utters in distress: “We were so close, so close to each other” (Sambath, 2011b).

Already the first scene in which Sambath and Nuon are presented together within the movie, hints at their special relationship. Sambath´s mouth is open, his expression thrilled, when filming Nuon. Nuon likewise has a playful expression, slightly smiling at Nuon. After the film sequence, Sambath helps Nuon out of his chair, supporting him while walking to the bedroom (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 1). Later scenes portray Sambath eating and conversing happily with Nuon and his wife (2011a, ch. 11), watching patiently over Nuon while he is lying down (2011a, ch. 11), laughing in the garden with him (2011a, ch. 11).

At one point Sambath also looks at footage of Nuon playing with his grandchild. We do not see him speak, but voice-over complements the scene: “My father was killed. I have no father, no brother, no mother to take care of me” (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch 10), implying that Sambath might envisage Nuon as his surrogate father. When commenting on the film with co-director Lemkin, editor Ronowicz admits that Sambath did not utter these words while watching the footage, but that it was added in the cutting room, in order to suggest a Freudian element to the film (Lemkin & Ronowicz, 2011, ch. 10), proposing that a certain amount of transference might have taken place between Sambath and Nuon. Sambath might be “redirecting” the emotions he originally had for his parents, towards Nuon (Sandler, as cited in Piotrowska, 2014, p. 46).

Likewise, Sambath finds himself in a "special place" not where he may be listened to, but where he is confided in as an equal, as Nuon repeatedly flatters Sambath when telling him: "Sambath, you are only the third person to know all this after Pol Pot and me" (Sambath, 2010). In any case Sambath proudly keeps mentioning it in interviews and in text (Sambath, 2010, Sambath, Lemkin & Sambath, 2011c). Likewise, when Sambath tells Nuon that his parents died during the Khmer Rouge, Nuon, elegantly excuses his former lack of interest in the topic by flattering Sambath: "I didn´t need to ask about anyone else. I saw only your graciousness" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 15).

Nuon´s relationship to Sambath

Nuon might be sincere concerning his regard for Sambath, though he might also have other motives in complimenting Sambath. When Sambath asks Nuon why it took him three years before he decided to talk, Nuon replies: "I had to weigh my words, and not just say anything, because my future depends on what is recorded here" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 11). It seems Nuon aspires for Sambath to write him a descent legacy. This might also indicate that Sambath could have been tougher when negotiating with Nuon, as Nuon clearly also has an agenda. In his book on Nuon, Sambath describes Nuon as "suspicious of everything and prided himself on his ability to fool others and stay one step ahead of the authorities" (Chon & Sambath, 2010, p. 86). As a leader, accustomed to power and appearance, Nuon might be manipulating Sambath. Within the three-year period in which Sambath believed he was earning Nuon´s trust, Nuon likewise might have worked on winning Sambath´s sympathy. "My decision to tell you about Democratic Kampuchea is the right one. (…) I chose the right person," Nuon says to Sambath (Chon & Sambath, 2010, p. 158), indicating that Nuon does not see himself as a contributor to Sambath´s work, but rather that he sees Sambath as contributor towards his own agenda, which might be his particular version of history.

Khoun and Suon

Two other perpetrators also play a role. Suon and Khoun are similarly to Nuon portrayed as multifaceted characters. Their graphic accounts of killings deem them immoral, yet as they are seen as helping and identifying with Sambath´s project, giving food to monks, as well as expressing remorse, they are people we might sympathise. With Khoun and Suon, Sambath remains friendly and also generally respectful

throughout the film. He asks simple, yet inquisitive questions that seem to have no other agenda than trying to find out what happened. Though Sambath questions the men initially, they are later shown as Sambath´s associates, joining him in his quest for truth. Suon is quoted in the film as saying: "I want to reveal to you all the killers I know. When we find them and they confess the truth, I feel better" (2011a, ch. 6). Thus, Suon seems to be using the film in order to obtain some kind of absolution (Mograbi, as cited in ten Brink, 2014b, p. 262). In comment of the movie, Sambath has revealed that both Suon and Khoun expressed relief after telling him about the killings (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011b, ch. 6), not necessarily implying that a special relationship took place, but indicating that there existed a need to be listened to, and that Sambath fulfilled that need (Berman, 2003, p. 221).

Sambath´s method

In the film, Sambath explains his method as taking years: Prior to the movie, he spent ten years going to the province in order to visit perpetrators (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 2). Of these, he spent six years with Nuon (Chon & Sambath, 2011, p. 4).

The method also required a great amount of trust. (Lemkin, 2011a). Most of the confessions in the film were initially private, as they were given solely to Sambath as a result of his relationship with them, according to Lemkin (2011a). During this time Sambath did not film the perpetrators. He only filmed Nuon for a month before Lemkin arrived, and then not with the intention of making a documentary film (Lemkin, 2011a).

Sambath describes his initial tactic as:"(…) talking with their children or their wives, making jokes (…) I let them drink wine and enjoy themselves" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 6). When eventually bringing up the topic of the killings, Sambath would pretend to be non-interested and vague: "I heard some people they killed a lot of people in that place." If the man answered: "Oh, you want to know. I know. I also did it" (2011a, ch. 6), Sambath would still *not* pursue the subject, but would instead return to ask more questions later (2011a, ch. 6).

Deception as method

Throughout the film, Sambath stresses the point that none of the perpetrators know his background. When watching a screening of Suon and Khoun, he comments: “Nobody knows that I am a victim as well” (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 5). To Nuon, he also lies about this fact. Sambath tells Nuon that his parents died during the 1980s, when they in fact died while Nuon still was in power (2011a, ch. 11). Sambath explains that he was afraid Nuon would believe he was out to take revenge (Sambath, 2010). As Nuon generally is portrayed as a suspicious man (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a), he might have retreated from confiding in Sambath if he had known of Sambath´s true origin.

This might indicate that Sambath like directors of documentaries in the past partially used deception as a method in order to obtain perpetrators’ confessions. Payne has described the importance of perpetrators talking with victims or their representatives in order to understand, some times for the first time the sufferings they inflicted (2008, p. 26). Because Sambath keeps his identity concealed, he might be cautious in introducing alternative viewpoints to the perpetrators, and subsequently an important dialogue between perpetrator and victim does not take place.

Re-enactments

When illustrating the past, “Enemies of the People” generally resort to old footage, rather than re-enactment. There is just one scene in the film in which the perpetrators actually dramatize a former act.

In this scene (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 16), Suon shows how he used to kill, using a plastic knife as a prop. His neighbour re-enacts the victim. The re-enactment thus does not refer to a specific killing, but has an element of “typificaton” (Nichols, 2014), as it refers to a repetitious act of the past.

It does not seem like Sambath has prepared Suon for the upcoming re-enactment, thus as viewers we witness Suon´s responses to Sambath´s proposal. Suon stares at Sambath, then he laughs uneasily at Sambath´s proposal. “I feel embarrassed to kill you. It feels uncomfortable for me,” he replies to Sambath. This might indicate that despite Suon´s mass killings in the past, he inhabits, a moral awareness of killing as taboo, and as socially unacceptable, alluding that Suon´s actions are rather an outcome of extreme

times. Suon´s present uneasiness stands in contrast to Suon´s upcoming performance of how he killed. His hands quickly and effortlessly arrange the victim´s body, setting it in place for a quick kill, displaying bodily memory, as described by Panh (as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244), as well as revealing a killer´s routine. The latter substantiates Suon´s oral testimony of killing people, combining evidence with emotion, which is what makes documentary rhetoric so effective, according to Nichols (Nichols, 2010, p. 88).

Suon´s seemingly automatic performance reflects the multitude of people he must have killed. This is backed up as he spontaneously confesses while re-enacting: "Sometimes, I did it another way. Because after I´d slit so many throats like this my hand ached" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 5).

The re-enactments on location appear to elicit a stronger psychological reaction from Suon. The motivation for the re-enactment might have been to produce "evidentiary images" (Nichols, 2014). It also contributes to a more detailed and graphic confession from Suon. As the re-enactment seems to play a minor role in the film, I will not include it in further discussion.

Archival footage as substitute for re-enactments

When documenting mass killings, directors have generally been cautious in using archival footage (Lanzmann 1985, Winston, 2014, pp. 97-115). One fear is accusations of voyeurism (Sontag, 2003). "Enemies of the People" in fact elicited such critique: "(…) the black-and-white montage of images of genocide in *Enemies of the People* does not deliver the shock of the real, rather it seems to exploit the brutalized corpses and desiccated bones of the Khmer Rouge dead for dramatic effect" (Boyle, 2015, p. 517).

The majority of the archival footage in "Enemies of the People" does not portray killings, suffering or death however, but are used repeatedly in connection with Nuon. They depict Nuon in front of large crowds, together with Pol Pot, and Chinese leaders. The directors have argued that it was necessary for the film to establish him as a powerful character (Lemkin & Ronowicz, 2011, ch. 3), as Nuon is less well known than Pol Pot. The footage also draws attention to the scoop Nuon is. The problem might be that the

archival footage, as it is mainly old propaganda films, rather than challenging Nuon´s perception of the past, confirms it. Archival footage, similar to fictional re-enactments, works as illustrations. They might not provoke critical thinking; yet give a strong sense of realism, and rhetorical evidence (Nichols, 2010, p. 134), that benefits the films argument.

Confessions

As the work of obtaining confessions already has been completed in the case of Khoun and Suon, their confessions on film do not undergo much progression. The two admit to crimes from the start. In Nuon´s case, it seems to be more progression, yet this might be more a result of the narrative than reality, as we know that Sambath only filmed one month prior to Nuon going to jail (Lemkin, 2011a), and thus after knowing Nuon for six years (Chon & Sambath, 2010, p. 4). There are however two incidents that take place during this brief period of filming that might have had an impact on Nuon´s confession. The first is Khoun´s and Suon´s visit to Nuon. The other is Sambath´s disclosure of his family´s death to Nuon.

Khoun´s and Suon´s confessions

When testifying, Khoun and Suon willingly answer all of Sambath´s questions. They share details about the killings, admitting openly to crimes such as killing children (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 10) and cannibalism (2011a, ch. 16). Thus it appears that they fulfil Morag´s ideal of a confession, consisting of "wilful introspection aimed not on providing a narrative of selfhood, (…) but of total transparency" (Morag, 2013, p. 20). In their first confessional scene, both express regret for what they have done, and though they do not use the exact words, I would argue that they acknowledge wrongdoing according to Payne´s definition (2008, p. 55). Suon has an expressive face, and subsequently looks haunted, when he states: "I feel terrible." Khoun does not show the same emotion, though he does show dedication in that he is willing to confess: "I didn´t want to come back here… but I felt I had to." (2011a, ch. 4). Both Suon and Khoun also show dedication to Sambath´s project, by joining him in his search for perpetrators (2011a, ch. 6 & ch. 8).

Suon´s and Khoun´s admission of personal guilt (Payne, 2008, p. 66), seems to be a more complex issue, as they consistently emphasize that they were following orders: "I got the order from Khoun. Khoun got the order from her. Sister EM got it from the region chief," and thereby diminishing responsibility from them all (2011a, ch. 8).

Other scenes might still suggest otherwise. Though Khoun and Suon do not directly admit to personal culpability, they do *not* readily accept Nuon´s offer of atonement: "You had no intention, you were just following orders. So according to Buddha´s teachings you need fear no punishment. If there is no intention, there can be no sin, you understand?" (2011a, ch. 13). In the subsequent scene, Suon and Khoun are seen as offering food to monks, hinting that they do not accept Nuon´s claim. Suon also seems to disagree with Nuon when stating: "I don´t know what I´ll be reborn as in the next life. How many holes in Hell must I go through before I can be reborn as a human being again? (…) This is my understanding of Buddha's Dharma. I feel desolate" (2011a, ch. 14).

Suon and Khoun might not be reassuming full responsibility for what they have done, though their actions, and reflections on karma, suggest that they do admit to guilt. The perpetrators´ confessions are considered more credible, as they do not solely talk, but also perform acts of atonement, (Payne, 2008, p. 61). "Making reparations" is according to Morag characteristic for the state of "working through", which is essential for perpetrator to be reconciled with society (2013, p. 16).

Nuon´s confession

In the first scenes with Sambath, Nuon does not say much, but he is seen as interacting with Sambath on a more casual level. After one of these scenes, Sambath comments: "He is a very secretive man. Five months, nothing. One year, two years" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 3). Sambath´s comments imply a lapse in time. When Nuon eventually starts speaking about the Khmer Rouge in the next scene, it might therefore be interpreted as a significant accomplishment, though Nuon does little more than justify himself: "Our regime was a peaceful regime (…) but we failed because the enemy (…) sabotaged us from the start" (2011a, ch. 4). Nuon´s confession is one of denial, as he blames the other side for the killings (Payne, 2008, p. 170).

When returning to Nuon in the film, Sambath introduces the scene to the viewers, by sharing the incident in which Nuon after three years claims that he finally trusts Sambath, and that he therefor will tell him the truth. This time, Nuon elaborates on his confession, admitting to the killings, but rather than condemning them, he heralds them as being heroic (Payne, 2008, p. 104), as those who were killed were "enemies of the people" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 9). In accordance with heroic confessions, Nuon "justifies the violence as a necessary and patriotic act of national defence," (Payne, 2008, p. 170) claiming an alternative version of the killings. Heroic confessions might be a masked "desire to reclaim power (…) over history," according to Payne (2008, p. 104). This is largely done through invoking concealments, euphemisms and stigmatizations. Nuon obscures the brutality of killing, by continuously using the euphemism "solved." He stigmatizes the victims by referring to them as "the enemy", "the traitors" as well as "criminals" (2011a, ch. 9), diminishing their value as human beings, and thus implementing a form of "cultural violence", which is often implored when wanting to legitimize structural violence (Galtung, 1990, p. 291-305).

Though Nuon has promised Sambath to tell the truth, he also lies in this confession as he claims: "As for the ordinary people, neither Pol Pot, nor I knew they were killed" (2011a, ch. 9). In the film, the confession is presented as a break through. Sambath´s voice over informs us that this is the first time that Brother Number Two admits to the killings (2011a, ch. 9)

At a later point, Nuon contradicts himself, first claiming: "I knew nothing about the ordinary people." And then admitting: "But there were so many of them being brought in." When Sambath subsequently asks him: "When did you realize that villagers were being killed?" Nuon reply is slightly evasive, yet also revealing: "I can´t really remember the exact moment. I just went on with my work, and didn´t jot it down" (2011a, ch. 9). Eventually, Suon and Khoun, who want to know who gave them the orders to kill, also indirectly confront Nuon. The meeting offers a possibility for Nuon to admit to his culpability. He does not. Instead Nuon returns to his former stance of being in total denial and ignorance of the killings: "Who killed the Cambodian people. It was the USA and Vietnam. Not Cambodians killing, right?" (2011a, ch. 13). Paradoxically, the lie is

exposed, as Nuon is addressing Cambodian killers, who know that the killings did take place, as they were the ones who executed them.

In two of Nuon´s confessional scenes, Nuon seems to be giving an apology. Both of them are given at the end of the film, implying that they are a consequence of Nuon´s confessional process. The first occurs without context. The question is not included in the scene, making it difficult to know what Nuon is admitting remorse to: "I´ve always said; I made mistakes. I am regretful and I have remorse. I am sorry for our regime," Nuon confesses, his hand rubbing his forehead, as in pain. He then goes on to say that he is sorry that "we were defeated. The people were still left poor and suffering" (2011a, ch. 11). Again, Nuon instead of taking responsibility seems to be blaming his enemies for the violence, as they were fighting him all the time. By describing the current state of the people as still being poor and suffering, he implies that he in contrast was working towards the common good. Though he appears to be remorseful, his confession has more in common with heroic confessions in that he portrays himself as the heroic patriot fighting against the "forces of evil" (Payne, 2008, p. 21). Following Sambath´s comment of the scene, the viewers might be persuaded to believe the confession is of major importance: "This is the first time a top Khmer Rouge leader has admitted the killings like this" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 11).

The second confession of remorse is given after Sambath tells Nuon that his family died during the Khmer Rouge. Again, Nuon finds himself in a situation in which he is indirectly confronted to admit guilt. As an experienced politician and a suspicious man (Chon & Sambath, 2010, p. 86), Nuon might be suspecting that this is Sambath´s real intent: "I would like to say how deeply sorry I am," he says, and then says no more, showing some, but little emotion. Sambath on the other hand, believes Nuon´s apology was heartfelt: "He also very sad too… almost could not talk when he heard about my family like that" (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 15). Some viewers have agreed with Sambath. I would however argue that based on the study of Nuon´s reactions throughout the film, it does not differ much from other scenes in which he is mildly aggravated. Neither is it comparable to when Nuon watching a news broadcaster comment on whether former Khmer Rouge leaders, like Saddam Hussein would be hanged or not,

and where Nuon flinches in pain (2011a, ch. 12). The apology likewise does not admit to guilt, and consequently is less convincing, according to Payne (2008, p. 66).

Nuon´s confession does not seem to undergo much change during the film. Rather than admit to guilt, Nuon offers an alternative version of history, in which he plays the heroic role.

Creating credibility through narrative

The film´s narrative seems to imply that Nuon´s confession develop from silence, to heroic denial and admittance, and finally to remorse in the film´s climax. The study of Nuon´s confessions reveals, however, that they remain heroic, and that they do not accept responsibility. Still, they give the impression of remorse and of being substantial, as they are contextualized by Sambath´s comments and interpretations: "This is the first time that Nuon Chea admits the killing" (2011a, ch. 9). And: "he also very sad" (2011a, ch. 15). The narrative also gives an impression that Nuon´s confessions undergo progress. We know however that Sambath only started filming a month before Nuon went to prison (Lemkin, 2011a), and consequently all of Nuon´s confessions on screen, must have taken place within this month. According to Sambath, this development in Nuon however, also took place in real life (Sambath, 2010), and thus the editing of footage in order to portray Nuon´s confession might be considered a fair and honest approach by the film directors. However, as Nuon apparently still lies and denies, even six years after he and Sambath met, the process does not seem to have taken place at all. The inclusion of seemingly remorseful confessions at the end of the film, might thus suggest that the directors are trying to give the impression of a narrative that did not take place.

As viewers we are however, inclined to believe that Sambath accomplished something extraordinary with Nuon, simply because Sambath says so. Generating an impression of the filmmaker as a moral character helps the film position, according to Nichols (2010, p. 79). In this case, the characteristic of Sambath is probably the film´s strongest achievement in establishing reliability, as he also is its main character. We learn early that Sambath has used years on the project, receives no money for it, leaves his family every weekend in order to find and interview perpetrators. Crosscutting sequels of

Sambath constantly on the go, are repeated through out the film. He is driving a car, scribbling down an address, driving a bike, asking for a location, as well as sleeping during odd hours, and at odd places, demonstrating the sacrifices that he makes in order to find the truth. Because of his perseverance and hard work, we are inclined to trust him, as well as admire him. Sambath´s status as victim contributes to his credibility, as one generally has a tendency to identify with victims (Morag, 2013, p. 8).

Because of his credibility, Sambath´s respectful behaviour of the perpetrators seems to play in as to how we perceive their confessions. As Sambath believes in the perpetrators, showing them respect and affection, as in the case of Nuon, and choosing to work alongside them, as with Khoun and Suon, we are also more inclined to believe their confessions as sincere. I would argue that this is also the reason why scholars, as well as critics have conceived Nuon´s apology of being "unrehearsed," and "deep" (Boyle, 2015, p. 516, Holden, 2010).

Possible effect of relationship

The analysis of Nuon´s confession suggests that they remain heroic (Payne, 2008, p. 104) throughout the duration of the film. They continuously justify the atrocities committed during the Khmer Rouge as necessary and heroic. They do not provide disclosure of the past, or details of the killings. The other two main perpetrators in the film, Suon and Khoun on the other hand most readily answer Sambath´s questions, and participate actively in making amendment for what they have done.

Sambath spent many years on building relationships with the perpetrators, and describes his relationships with Suon and Khoun as friendships (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011c), and Nuon, as "closer than at a relative" (Sambath, 2011b). Despite Nuon´s lack of remorse and culpability, Sambath still interprets Nuon´s confessions as such. When proposing questions to Nuon, he is polite and vague, adopting Nuon´s euphemisms. Consequently it seems that Sambath instead of stimulating Nuon to confess, is being used by Nuon in order to write him a descent legacy. It might be argued that Sambath´s cautious, lenient tactic is a part of his method (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 6), or an outcome of cultural behaviour, which stresses respect for elderly people as an important value (Saunders, 2011, p. 46). By staging what seem to be deliberate confrontations with

Nuon, such as bringing along Khoun and Suon to question Nuon, as well as disclosing his own family tragedy during Khmer Rouge (2011a, ch. 13 & 15), Sambath shows that he is willing to take risk that might hurt his relationship with Nuon, but benefit his project.

Sambath´s relationship with- and open-ended questioning of Suon and Khoun, on the other hand seems to prompt confessions of a high degree of disclosure, and even to acts of retribution. His relationship with them seems to have had a therapeutic element, in that they describe feeling relief when confessing to him (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011b, ch. 6). Prior to any pursuit of therapy, there necessarily must exist a problem. Both Khoun and Suon admit to nightmares and physical trauma. Nuon lacks this motivation, as his dreams instead express longing for the past. As a leader he gave the orders, and thus avoided the dirty work, and consequently it might seem, also the trauma attached. This might offer one explanation as to why Nuon is never persuaded to admit to guilt.

c. S21-The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (2003)

Background

S21 was located in Southern Phnom Penh, and served as headquarters of the Khmer Rouge´s internal security police, as well as a secret interrogation centre (Panh, as cited in Boyle, 2015, p. 512). Between 1975 and 1979, over 15 000 men, women and children passed through S21, all but 7 were killed (Chandler, 1999, p. 6). On location was found thousands of mug-shot photographs, hundreds of cadre notebooks, and stacks of publications, though this only contains a small amount of the original material, as much of the evidence was destroyed (Chandler, 2008)

Former leaders of the Khmer Rouge, including Nuon Chea, Brother Number Two, deny knowing S21 existed (Chandler, 2008). According to Chandler, none of the perpetrators working at S21 have admitted to killings. In his paper, Chandler mentions Huoy Him, which also plays a role in Panh´s film, but states that though he has been interviewed extensively, he only admits to one or two killings (2008). This might indicate that Chandler is not aware of Panh´s film. S21 turned into Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocidal Crimes in 1980. It is today the most known and visible institution in Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge period (Chandler, 2008). While filming S21, there were negotiations on

creating a tribunal for trying former leaders of the Khmer Rouge (Documentation Centre of Cambodia, 2013). Former director of S21 was first charged with crimes against humanity in May 2007.

Motivation for making the film

Rithy Panh was 11 years old when Khmer Rouge took power in Cambodia in 1975. He was able to escape to France in 1979, but lost all of his immediate family, including his uncle in S21 (Panh, 2012, p. 3), which might explain why he repeatedly has returned to S21 in his films. He also contends: "I concentrated the shooting on S21 for one reason: The Khmer Rouge continued to say that S21 did not exist" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 253). Panh´s concern has also been that young Cambodians learn to know their historical background. Panh spent "five or six years" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 251) training a Cambodian crew to do the filming. He describes their collective ambition as: "They want to release something like a memory, a work on memory" (Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 251).

Narrative structure

There is no traditional narrative in "S21, The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine [5] ."The film begins by explaining the historical background, and then cuts to Huoy Him, the former security deputy of S21, which is briefly presented with his family, his wife, children, and parents.

His parents urge him to make amendments for what he has done. Huoy argues that he does not need to, as he was forced to kill out of fear of his own life (Panh, 2003a, ch. 1). Panh presents here the problem and conflict of the documentary: The perpetrator might admit to what he has done, but not to his culpability

Panh then cuts to the other main character: former prisoner and painter Vann Nath, who is working on a painting which depicts his experience of arriving at S21: His version contradicts Huoy´s claims of lack of guilt. Nath says: "I heard the young guards scream for joy like wolves waiting for their food" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 2). This pattern of

[5] In the following analysis, I will refer to the film as "S21."

perpetrators confessing, and then being corrected or challenged by Vann Nath, or each other, is constant throughout the movie.

Though there is traditional rise of tension, the film does to a certain degree follow a chronicle of the dead prisoners cycle at S21: Arriving, being locked up, interrogated, tortured and then finally killed. Each of these sequels is in various ways commented by the perpetrators and Nath, as well as illustrated through re-enactments, paintings or archived evidence in the form of photos and documents. The fact that the narrative seems more concerned on following the process of the dead, than the processes taken place within the perpetrators or between perpetrator and surviving victim also suggest that Panh´s main concern was commemorating the former prisoners and their stories than present day reconciliation: "In making the film the dead were with me always… the very fact that I am here, to a certain degree, suggest that somebody left a place for me" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 250).

In one of the final scenes, the camera lingers on the dark pit in which the victims were killed, pressing upon us what must have been the last horrifying point of view of the victim. The closing scene is located in one of the empty rooms of S21; the wind sweeps the dust up and scatters it in ghostlike whirlwinds, giving the impression that the room is haunted.

Relationship

Presentation of perpetrator in narrative

I will especially focus on Huoy, as he is given special attention in the initial scene of the film. Because Huoy is the highest-ranking former guard of S21, he also plays an active role in interaction with the other perpetrators. According to Panh, the other junior guards still look up to Huoy, "because he was the chief" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 252).

Portrayed as human beings, yet tense

The first scene shows Huoy working in the field with his wife, implying that he is industrious and diligent. The scene then shifts to the interior of Huoy´s house, showing him with his family and two children. The scene feels awkwardly staged. Huoy looks stiff

and uncomfortable. There is no interaction between him, his wife and his children, not even when he sits down with them. His wife and older son quickly move away, and Huoy, with the smallest child in his lap, unresponsively gazes into the air.

At one point Huoy reproaches his mother disrespectfully: “Stop it! I have a headache.” A close-up shows Huoy wiping away sweat from his face. His voice trembles when he exclaims: “I´m sick all day long. I can´t eat a thing” (2003a, ch. 1).

Cambodians might generally become embarrassed by public displays of emotion, according to Saunders (2011, p. 158), which might explain why Huoy refrains from showing amiable feelings towards his family in front of the camera. The fact that he reprimands his mother openly, in a culture where likewise respect for the elderly is mandatory, might indicate the amount of stress he is going through as a result of what he has done, affecting his close relationships which come across as dysfunctional and conflicting. Huoy is not without conscience, but haunted by what he has done. Huoy´s tense attitude, however, might also indicate that Panh did not spend enough time with Huoy. In order for observational scenes to work, a director needs time and patience to let scenes naturally evolve (Singer, as cited in Quinn, 2013, p. 51).

Portrayed collectively, without progress

Even though the film begins with Huoy, the camera does not stay with him, but moves instead on to other perpetrators in the group, as they inhabited different roles within S21, and therefore reveal different aspects of S21. Panh argues: “I decided to do a collective memory. It is difficult, when you are face to face with another: it is difficult to lie” (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 252).

By grouping the perpetrators, in contrast to the survivor Nath, who confronts them alone, the film emphasizes the lack of independent thinking that the perpetrators admit to during the Khmer Rouge period, and which seemed to characterize the Khmer Rouge movement. The dispersion of viewpoint also leaves little space to explore the transformations that might take place because of the re-enactments. Thus, despite the fact that some of the perpetrators do undergo change, it is not highlighted, and plays an insignificant role in the narrative. There is some change in Huoy, despite his continuous

repeatable mantra: “We were following orders,” “We were afraid to die”, though not much, and when Huoy does to some degree admit to guilt, it is in very little degree anticipated, as the process is not displayed.

Avoids identification

Panh uses a mixture of wide shots, medium shots and close ups when filming the perpetrators. Especially when confessing to torture or killings, close-ups seek to reveal perpetrator´s sentiments, but rarely do, as their gaze most of the time is motionless and downcast. The camera avoids following the point of view of the perpetrators, the shots are not cut from the eyes of the perpetrator to the person or object he is looking at, which is considered common when filming (Kobrè, 2012, p. 139). In doing this, Panh might consciously ensure that the viewer does not identify with the perpetrators, which has been one of the main concerns regarding perpetrator´s accounts (McGlothlin, 2014, p.159).

Presentation of director

Panh executes a strictly observational mode throughout the film, making himself invisible. One small exception is the initial text giving the historical background of Cambodia. Due to the lack of apparent voice in observational mode, audiences are often left to decide for themselves (Nichols, 2010, p. 174). This is not the case in Panh´s film, as survivor Nath plays a significant and authoritative role. Vesikko argues that Panh identifies and expresses himself through Nath (Vesikko, 2013, p. 9). I agree with her to a certain degree. Panh claims that he was not part of any group (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 246), which is not completely true. Panh is not a neutral participant in the film, as he himself is victim[6] and survivor, having more in common with the survivors than with the perpetrators. Still Panh was not tortured as Nath, and has no personal experience regarding S21, or the guards. Panh spends three years, travelling the country to come in contact with perpetrators (Panh, 2012, p. 7). Nath seems also to have accompanied him during some of these interviews. At one such episode, where former perpetrators threaten Panh, he writes in his memoirs: “Vann Nath and my film crew stood beside me” (Panh, 2012, p. 12). Panh first met Nath in

[6] I do not differ here between as in victim of traumatic events, and others not experiencing them (LaCapra, 2001, p. ix).

1990, and Nath played a part in Panh´s first film on S21: “Bophana. A Cambodian Tragedy” (1996).

When introduced in the film, Nath is intimately portrayed in close-up from the side, speaking directly to the camera, though still avoiding breaking the indexical illusion by not looking into it. The camera follows the direction of Nath´s eyes, and continues to follow his direction when interacting with the perpetrators. The former S21 employees are filmed from Nath´s point of view, either frontal or from the side. Nath on the other hand is always filmed from the side, often in close-up, and never from the viewpoint of the perpetrator. As viewers we are therefore more inclined to identify with Nath, as it is his perspective on the world we are given. Equally, Nath works much as participatory director (Nichols, 2010, p. 179), in that he interviews, confronts and takes charge of the collective confessional sessions. Generally, Nath seems to embody the authorial voice in the film, I will treat the scenes in which he participates as encounters between director and perpetrator.

Director´s questions to perpetrators

All together there exist five such encounters between Nath and perpetrators. The first encounter also portrays the perpetrators happy reunion at S21. Nath enters the scene, and asks: “Do you see yourself as victims?” The perpetrators at this point, stand upright, look Nath boldly in the eyes, and declare that yes, they were victims: “Because here, if you didn´t obey you were dead for sure.” Nath then asks rhetorically: “Now if those who worked here are victims, what about those who were killed here?” (Panh, 2003a, ch. 4).

The second encounter takes place in front of one of Nath´s paintings, which portrays prisoners lying in chains in one of the rooms of S21. Nath gives the perpetrators surrounding him, an account of how ill-treated he was as a prisoner, ending his description, by reproaching and shaming them: “I don´t understand with such cruelty and savagery (…). How could you get used to seeing such suffering?” The perpetrators bend their heads, gazing downcast. Only Huoy speaks up, explaining that they were only following orders. Nath replies mockingly: “Your ability to think as a human being, you lost it?” (Panh, 2003a, ch. 4).

Only two perpetrators are present at the third encounter with Nath. In this scene Nath interviews the doctor Mak Thim about his treatment of prisoners, which was conducted only in order for them to endure further torture. He also questions him on the practice of draining prisoner for blood, until they died. The doctor is shameful, looking down, and claims he did not know. "You didn´t know," repeats Nath ironically, examining Thim´s face. The doctor also trivializes the amount of people killed from blood drainage. Nath then turns to the other perpetrator, Prakk Kanh who gives a number five times higher than the doctor presents (Panh, 2003a, ch. 8).

In the fourth encounter, Nath questions torturer Prakk Kanh in front of two other perpetrators Nath, referring to a confession Kanh subtracted from a female prisoner, which Kanh admits to have made up. "You with your upbringing, how could you?" scolds Nath. Kanh closes his eyes, and bends his head shamefully (2003a, ch. 9).

All the perpetrators are gathered in the last confrontation between perpetrators and Nath. Nath shares how he was innocently detained, tortured to bring forth false witness, ultimately accusing the perpetrators of torturing and killing innocent people. Again Huoy defend the men and himself, as they were following orders. This time, Nath indignantly replies: "I don´t want to hear that obedience to Angkar, carry out orders, or be killed." In which Huoy softens his tense expression slightly, and admits for the first time to guilt: "Today when I think about it, it was against the law. I´m ashamed of myself. When I think about it, I get a headache. I get drunk, go home, go to sleep." Here Huoy apparently is willing to go deeper into confession. His voice is shaky, and his expression open and vulnerable. Nath has continuously provoked and challenged the former workers of S21 to admit that what they did was wrong. At this point, Huoy seems to consider Nath´s proposal, though his motivations might be selfishly motivated, as he also describes the physical suffering he undergoes, when admitting to guilt. Nath however, sensing perhaps that Huoy ultimately is seeking absolution and forgiveness for what he has done, does not encourage Huoy in developing his confession: "We meet like this, but that doesn´t mean it´s a chance to cleanse ourselves of evil" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 11).

By rebuking and shaming the perpetrators, in a calm and sensible voice, Nath seems to have been able to entice the guards into admitting to guilt. The method bears similarities

to how Sereny describes her method as: analysing the perpetrator´s world view, and playing it back to them, they are challenged to look at their taken for granted beliefs anew (2008). This is also the case, when Nath, as survivor, invites the perpetrators to see the torture and the killings, from his point of view. This might consequently make them understand that what they did was wrong, which also seems to be the case. Nath´s method here is comparable to that of Lanzmann´s in that he relentlessly questions the confessors, catching them in lies and contradiction. Likewise to Lanzmann, the questioning does not seem suitable in obtaining elaborate answers however, as Nath does not question with curiosity, but rather in order to shame or oppose. Generally questions that reflect moral judgement tend to end in denial and silence, according to Handgaard (2008, p. 95). This seems also to be the case here, except in the last scene.

It might be argued, that Nath lacks the necessary distance to the perpetrators. The victim´s position is generally characterized by distance from, and rejection of perpetrators, according to Morag (2013, p. 18). In a crucial moment, where Huoy seemingly is about to open up, Nath rejects Huoy, limiting the potential of Huoy´s confession, and possibly punishing him indirectly, by denying him the possibility of re-entry into society.

Panh also admits to rebuking the perpetrators, yet not calmly as Nath: “Sometimes I shouted a lot… when someone continues to lie, I shout. Because I´m a human being like him. Sometimes people living around S21 heard me” (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 253). In a culture where loosing face, or showing emotions is a shameful endeavour, shouting probably did not contribute in obtaining confessions (Saunders, 2011, p. 158). Panh has however also stated that he had to know the perpetrators well in order to obtain the confessions: “You need to be very, very patient. Also you have to know the subjects very, very well” (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 248).

Panh, likewise to Sereny (2008), appears to have been honest about what kind of film he was making, when approaching the perpetrators: “We approached them and told them that we needed to get their version of the events. I told them they had no right to turn us down” (Panh, 2003b). In Sereny´s case, she successfully accomplished both obtaining access, as well as confessions in this way. The same seems to be the case for Panh.

Re-enactments

Panh has claimed that his method should not be described as re-enactment. “For me it´s not really that at all. It´s not the right word for that. Maybe there isn´t a word for it” (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244). As the performances clearly act out a past event, I will define them as re-enactment, in accordance with Nichols broad definition (2014).

Used as method to obtain confessions

Similarly to Oppenheimer, Panh describes re-enactment as a method that takes time, sometimes years. Oppenheimer reveals this process, where as Panh does not. Much of the re-enactments therefore did not make it to the film, for instance Panh´s initial interviews with the torturer Prakk Kanh, who also participates in the film:

> I ask the executioners the same questions. Ten times. Twenty if necessary. Some details appear. Some contradictions. Some new truth. (…) One remembers having tortured someone at one o´clock in the morning. We meet at that hour in S21. Artificial light. (…) Then I show a torturer (…) the photograph of a young girl, his first response is to say he recognizes her. “She confessed. But I never touched her.” An hour later he murmurs: *I took up a guava branch. I lashed her with it twice. She pissed on herself. She rolled on the ground, crying.* (Panh, 2012, p. 8)

Kahn repeats this story in the movie, this time with more coherence, monotonous voice, and no pauses (Panh, 2003a, ch. 10), implying that it might be rehearsed.

In general, the set-up of the scenes are clearly planned and arranged, every detail seems carefully constructed, each man appears to sit or stand perfectly in view of the camera, giving depth or aesthetics to the picture, but also leaving little room for improvisation. If the re-enactments in the film were made in order to create a visually pleasing film, they consequently have more in common with what ten Brink defines as illustrative re-enactments (ten Brink 2014a, p. 181) than with re-enactment as a method to think critically about the past (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 182).

Still, even though we as viewers do not get the original spontaneous reactions of the guards, the re-enactments might still have an effect, as repetition is an important part of

the technique of re-enactment, according to Oppenheimer: “There is a kind of myth that the first take is the most authentic take, but, here, in a film about memory that´s often not the case” (2014c, p. 245).

The extensive use of close-ups of the perpetrators, also suggest that Panh is interested in, as well as anticipating an emotional response to the re-enactments taking place within the film. Panh himself insist that his aim with the re-enactments is critical thinking: “I film their silence, their faces, their gestures. That´s my method. I don´t fabricate the events. I create situations in which former Khmer Rouge can think about what they did”(Panh, 2012).

There are few introductions or preparations to the film´s re-enactments scenes, they are cut straight into action, and alongside the use of a purely observational mode, give a certain realistic pretence, yet are at the same time clearly distinguishable as present-day re-enactments, and not as historical footage (Nichols, 2014).

The majority of the re-enactments have some of the characteristics of what Nichols defines as typifications (Nichols, 2014), in that they do not refer to a specific event, but rather to the daily routines of the historical past. These include Huoy, who in company with guards repeatedly keep walking through the hallway of the prisoner´s cell, checking the locks, and occasionally shouting at the “invisible” prisoners. As these typifications are repeated with small alterations within the movie´s narrative, they also emphasize the mechanical behaviour that characterized the young soldiers working for Khmer Rouge (Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 246).

Another large group of re-enactments originate from actual, historical documents that were archived in S21. These are read out loud, and sometimes re-enacted as though Khmer Rouge still was in power. The large amount of printed evidence is effectively used to mobilize the re-enactments, sometimes initiating comments, questions, and also working as evidence against the former S21 staff-members, who by presenting it, also confirms and confesses to it. Panh frequently makes use of archival photos in these re-enactments, as to include the presence of the victims, both mug-shots portraits that

were taken when prisoners arrived, as well as photos of tortured bodies. The photos work well at visualizing the other invisible victims.

Facilitating confessional processes

The S21 crew quickly adapt to former roles. The perpetrators in general seem to feel more at ease when re-enacting, than when orally confessing. This might be because they unconsciously slip into habitual and well-known patterns of behaviour, which might be precisely what Panh, prescribes as re-enactments ability to trigger bodily memory (as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244). The perpetrators are in control of the re-enactments, in contrast to the unpredictable and unpleasant oral sessions with Nath, where they are forced to rethink in ways they have not done before, as well as admitting to morally reprehensible behaviour.

It could also be argued that solely by reuniting perpetrators and survivors at the original historical site, history is in a sense re-enacted. All the encounters with Nath and perpetrators could thenceforth be interpreted as re-enactments, though they in no way convey what realistically took place, they bring the event into effect again, adding a reflexive element by suggesting that the reunion of perpetrator and survivor can be seen as: "(…) an attempt to reconstitute an inner dialogue which tragically did not take place amongst individuals who then tortured and murdered – in order to provide the possibilities of further social dialogue in a wider national context" (Tsang, 2013).

The scenes of Nath and the perpetrators thus have a present-day element to them, questioning the political situation that shuns confrontation about the past, and offering a hopeful alternative (ten Brink, 2010a, p. 182).

I will analyse two re-enactments in the film, portraying the two most frequent uses of re-enactment. The first one involves the guard Khieu Poev Ches. I have chosen Poev, largely because Panh has described his encounter with Poev in interviews, thus adding valuable background to the study.

Re-enactment as evidence

Though Panh portrays Poev as perpetrator in the film, he is according to International law, not considered a victim, as he was under the age of 15, when enlisted (Cassese, 2013, p. 76). I will still include him, as I do not necessarily believe that the two definitions are mutually exclusive. There are altogether three re-enactment scenes played out by Poev, in which he acts out all by himself. Two of the re-enactments are presented as one thematic unit, illustrating the use of children as soldiers in S21. Poev was only 13 when he was brought to S21. According to Panh he had a hard time articulating his experience:

> And I understood that this man wanted very much to explain what he had done as S21. But he couldn´t get round to explaining it properly, all his phrases were cut off. (…) He made the gestures that you see in the film, which completed the phrases he couldn´t discuss. And it´s then that I discovered that there was another memory, which is the bodily memory. (Panh as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244)

Of the three re-enactments I will elaborate on the third and the last re-enactment, as it is the longest and most thorough. The scene begins with an aerial photo of S21 at night, portraying the guards walking back and forth on the balconies; the scene is then cut to a middle shot photo of Poev outside one of the cells in S21 (Panh, 2003a, ch. 7). He introduces the scene by telling what he is doing: "At 10. P.m. the interrogator brings the prisoner back." He then turns to the invisible prisoner: "Stand here," he says, opens the door of the cell, and brings the invisible prisoner to his post. The camera does not accompany him, but monitors him trough the bars of the window: "it was instinctive to stop, to hold the camera at the door, not to follow in. Otherwise we´d be walking over the prisoners" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 245).

The scene is comprised of Poev, making use of the different props that are stacked in a corner outside the cell. He gives the prisoners, first a rice bowl, secondly a can to relieve themselves in, twice he re-enacts giving them a bowl of imaginary water. The re-enactment follow a pattern, in which Poev walks back and forth between the two barred windows of the cell, each time when passing them, he stretches out his arm, pointedly towards the prisoners, rebuking them for some minor offence, repeatedly warning them that he might beat them with a club, four times he re-enters the prison door, pressing his whole body towards it, in order to make it open, such as a smaller boy might do. The re-

enactment does not portray a specific event, but rather the habitual practices of Poev´s experience of being a guard, and as such can be regarded as a typification (Nichols, 2014). Because of the initial aerial shot, the re-enactment gives pretence of being realistic. The environmental sound, such as the bustling of grasshoppers at night, and the distant recordings of revolutionary music adds to this. Poev takes care to walk between rows of prisoners, talking loud and clear to them, yet at the same time having to explain to the camera what he does, while re-enacting the movements, because else it would not make sense, as the prison cells are empty, devoid of prisoners, poignantly emphasizing the fact that all of them are dead.

Still, as we do not witness the effect of the re-enactments in the film, to viewers they work first and foremost as illustrations (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 181). They do however indirectly bear witness to Panh´s method. In an interview with Oppenheimer, Panh explains that Poev told him that he used to guard at night, and that he sometimes listened to the radio with revolutionary songs. Panh therefore brought Poev to S21 at night, and put on the music, in order to trigger Poev´s memory:

> I made him listen to the songs. It´s like giving somebody a foothold to get up a mountain. He needs to have these grips as he´s going up in order to get to the top, in order to achieve what he´s setting out to do, which is to describe his own testimony. So everything that could be found from that period, to recreate that period, was placed there at this person´s disposal. (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244).

Panh, however, admits to not using the music during Poev´s re-enactments in the film: "(…) the songs were put on afterwards in the edit" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244). This supports the assumption that the re-enactments in the film differ from Panh´s original method.

Furthermore, the attentive consideration to detail in the re-enactments, might imply that Panh´s main concern in these scenes are not to initiate reflective thinking on behalf of the perpetrator, but rather to provide evidence to the viewers. Panh has explained that he brought different objects that belonged to the prison, yet did not place them, as he was not sure where they belonged:

> But as soon as he (Poev) arrived, he knew exactly where everything should go, and also put them in a particular corner that he used to. I then simply said (…) show me how you worked. And that´s what opened up the bodily memory, in a chronological way (…). When these actions were compared with the notes, which had been kept by the Khmer Rouge within the prison, it was found that this was exactly the way these things were done (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 245).

Panh has expressed that restoration of memory is an important motivation for making the film: "Victims need the perpetrators to make the memory from their side, to try to make the memory as complete as possible" (Panh, as cited in Tsang, 2013).

By defining re-enactment as bodily memory, Panh seems to consider re-enactments as reliable evidence of the past. Nichols argues that re-enactments cannot provide evidence of proof, but they can provide persuasive argument (Nichols, 2014).

The use of archival material in re-enactments

The use of archival material is extensive in the film, and play an import role in the re-enactments, as validating their seemingly historically authenticity. I will describe one such re-enactment, but will also mention others, in order to describe the effects that these re-enactments might have.

Torturer´s protocol

The re-enactment I chose to go into detail is with the torturer Prakk Kanh, and it is chosen because it is the only re-enactment in the film that shows how the perpetrator reacts to the re-enactment in retrospect. The scene begins with Kanh walking alongside the prison cells. His mission is to collect prisoner 13 from section 39 in order for him to be tortured. Poev is included in this scene, re-enacting his role as guard, passing over the prisoner to Kanh. Visually this works to set the scene for the viewers, and might also contribute in activating Kanh´s memory. The scene is slightly typified, as Kanh explains in past tense how he used to locate a prisoner.

The picture then cuts to a close up of Kanh reading from what sounds like the protocol of how to execute torture, half of the time the camera focuses on the handwritten notebook Kanh is reading from. While Kanh is reading, the camera steps back, giving an

overview of the scene that takes place in one of the former classrooms of S21. The former security deputy Huoy sits on a chair beside a desk; another of the guards is positioned behind him. Further away three former employees are crouching against the wall. They all listen silently. The camera then returns in close-up to another document in which Kanh explains is a list of enemies interrogated. Kanh points to his name on the bottom of the list. He goes on to show a photograph of the group of torturers that he belonged to (Panh, 2003a, ch. 9).

As instructions and reprimands probably took place publicly, it is not unlikely that the guidelines concerning torture were read aloud by some high-ranking soldier, or obtained otherwise. By making former torturer Kanh read them out loud, and subsequently compelling other staff members of S21 to listen in array, the readings initiate a strong sense of the historical context in which they were written, increasing the authenticity of the prior events (Nichols, 2014). Though the reading might not allude to bodily memory, they do seem to create entries for perpetrators who struggle in explaining and confessing to what they have done. The archival material provides the necessary words and images, creating a safe and predictable context for admitting something dark and traumatic. Payne has described the importance of confessions beginning cautiously, which might also involve "reasserting safe euphemisms and coded speech" (2008, p. 26).

The archives also seem to instigate further information and response. In this case, Kanh elaborates on his experience as a torturer, eventually also shamefully admitting that it was something "cold and cruel" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 9).

The group dynamic in these re-enactments is also of importance. When reading out loud in the presence of the other perpetrators, the information validity is strengthened, as they collectively agree on the document´s credibility.
In other comparable re-enactments, the public readings might elicit indirect critique or corrections from the other perpetrators present. When Huoy reads aloud from his personal "biography", which the Khmer Rouge assigned him to write, he subsequently excuses the motivations given there, as well as what it led him to do, by arguing: "I killed so that they would be convinced. I am a child of Angkar. I did it to survive." Poey replies,

indirectly reproving Huoy: “At the time Angkar gave you orders. But if you´re heart isn´t in it, you can´t carry them out” (Panh, 2003a, ch. 6). Accordingly, re-enactments where archival material is used as public readings appear to stimulate critical thinking and discussion, in accordance with ten Brink´s argument on re-enactment in documentary (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 178).

Re-enactments that “act-out”

It might be argued that relevance is added to the re-enactments, as they create an opportunity for reuniting perpetrator and survivor. Consequently they facilitate a necessary dialogue between the two, as victims and survivors are known to play an important role in challenging the language and worldview of perpetrators (Payne, 2008, p. 22).

Still, even though the re-enactments enable such a meeting to take place, the encounters between perpetrators and victims is not necessarily characterized by dialogue, but rather confrontation. As a critic observed, the perpetrators are not “spoken with”, but rather “spoken to” in “S-21” (Treyvillwest, 2014).

As the re-enactments in Panh´s film appear to be particularly concerned about the past, one might argue that “S-21” indirectly encourages a state of “acting out,” reliving the past, not in order to reflect critically on it, and subsequently move on, but rather denying, similar to what Lanzmann does in “Shoah,” the possibility of closure (LaCapra, 1998, p. 117).

Confessions

There are several challenges regarding the confessions in S21. Panh´s main concern seems to be firstly, the accuracy of the confession, and secondly, the perpetrators´ culpability.

When participating in “Bophana. A Cambodian Tragedy,” Huoy insisted that he did not kill, and that his role was limited to noting down the names of prisoners and checking numbers just before the execution. “Then he admitted having killed over 1000 people” (Panh, as cited in Tsang, 2013). Kanh likewise lied initially to Panh (Panh, 2012, p. 8). In

S21, Huoy is caught in trying to withhold information (Panh as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 252). Though neither of these incidents is visible in the film, they suggest the problems that Panh encountered regarding the validity of the confessions. As commemorating the dead seems to be an important motivation for making the film, the accuracy and detail of the confessions play an important role.

However, as Huoy and Kanh already admitted to killing and torture, this no longer seems to be the main challenge concerning their confession; rather it is admittance to culpability, most visibly through Huoy who repeatedly claims to have followed orders. Panh says: "The answer that you get most frequently is: "Yes, ok, I was a torturer, but I was following orders; so I did wrong, but I´m not responsible" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 246).

Huoy´s confessional route

Security deputy Huoy´s confessions are in general characteristic of what Payne defines as denial confessions. According to Payne there exist two categories of denial confessions: The first justifies the violence as necessary and patriotic, and defend them as necessary in defending the country against the enemy. The second type denies personal responsibility, blaming others for the crimes committed (Payne, 2008, p. 170). Huoy belongs to the last group: "If we killed people and I personally killed people, and of our own free will, then that´s evil. But I was given orders. They terrorized me with their guns and their power. That´s not evil. The evil is the leaders who gave the orders" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 1). Huoy repeats this both in re-enactment scenes, as well as in confrontations with Nath: "I did it to survive" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 6), and: "I had to" (2003a, ch. 10).

On most occasions, Huoy sits up straight, looking Nath or the other men boldly in the eyes, apparently assuming his former role as leader. This changes near the end of the film: When sitting in a circle with the other perpetrators, and being confronted on a concrete incident where he personally arrested a schoolteacher and his family, successively executing them, his gaze turns downwards and is kept there during the entire confession (Panh, 2003, ch. 10). As Cambodians do not readily reveal body language, this small change of posture might signify an important change in attitude

(Saunders, 2011, p. 158). This could be because Huoy after being subjected to the great amount of memory and confrontation is starting to realize the consequences of his actions. It might also be because this is the first time that Huoy is challenged personally on a specific killing. On other occasions the accusations have been general, impersonal, or directed towards someone else.

Similarly in the last confrontational scene between Nath and Huoy, Huoy´s body language has changed. His eyes are downcast, he is blinking repeatedly, even when opposing Nath, he does not look up, his denial of responsibility lack their former force, and therefore also ring less convincing: "At that time, any person who worked here, whether he liked it or not owed absolute obedience to Angkar" (2003a. ch. 11). Eventually his confession also includes what Nath called for initially: Admittance of personal responsibility: "Today, when I think about it, it was against the law." He also admits to personal guilt (Payne, p. 66), as he is: "(…) ashamed of myself" (2003a, ch. 11). Huoy does not apologize though. Instead of expressing empathy with the victim´s suffering, which Morag considers to be essential for reconciling with society (2013, p. 16), he focuses on his own pain and suffering: "I get a headache, I get drunk" (…). Huoy´s reference to suffering might also be in order to attest to the sincerity of his emotions of guilt and shame, as perpetrators who exhibit physical agony for their past violence, also appear to be more believable (Payne, 2008, p. 61).

Kanh´s confessional route

Likewise to Huoy, Kanh, the torturer, when confronted by Nath in one of the first scenes, denies responsibility, blaming it on orders: "We were the Party´s right hand" (Panh, 2003a, 4). At this stage, Kanh does not look down, but seems to fix his gaze on Nath´s painting. In the remaining film, Kanh looks down when giving his account of torture. Already after the first confession of torture, Kanh admits to doing wrong: "Torture was something cold and cruel" (Panh, 2003a, ch. 9). He also admits to personal fault: "I raised my hand, my heart never checked my brain, never stopped my hands and feet from striking. My heart and my hand worked together"(2003a, ch. 9).

Kanh seems committed to reporting and to recognizing personal responsibility (Payne, 2008, p. 55), as well as denouncing what he did (2008, p. 66), avoiding self-pity: "I say

this shamefully. I am not hiding anything" (2003a, ch. 9). Kanh does not center on his own suffering, but rather on the sufferings of his victims: Unlike the other guards, he questions the practice of S21: "There´s something I don´t understand (…)," he says to Huoy and another guard. They make an effort in explaining it to him, by retorting to the propaganda of Khmer Rouge: "In Democratic Kampuchea, Angkar´s line was to govern justly (…) Angkar has eyes everywhere, it makes no mistakes, it arrests rightfully," says the other guard. Huoy replies: "That´s how it was!" Kanh does not follow their logic, but makes his own analyzes and reflections, using his own words, and consequently confesses: "I understand, when a document was drawn up, it was all a sham, we made up an activity of sabotage, we invented the evidence" (2003a, ch. 9). Kanh seems to a certain degree to have reached the stage that LaCapra and Morag define as "acting through," in which perpetrator is able to critically look at the past from the presence (LaCapra, 2001, p. 70, Morag, 2013, p. 16), which again subsequently might lead to ethically responsible behavior (LaCapra, 2001, p. 90).

Informational confessions

Several confessional scenes, among them several of the film´s re-enactments do not seem to be concerned with admittance or personal guilt, instead their intent appear to be providing historical evidence. These are exemplified through Poey, who by re-enacting his activities as a guard, also confesses to these activities, yet even more so, one might argue, as Poey´s ensuing reflections of these activities are omitted, they give insight in how victims were treated in the past. Something similar takes place when the perpetrators read from archival material, and filed during the Khmer Rouge. These include reports on prisoners, letters, directions on proper conduct when interrogating perpetrators and recording confessions.

When reading these out loud in a group they also indirectly admit to the truth of what these documents contain, as they do not contradict them. As the written documents invoke the "language" of Khmer Rouge, they resemble confessions of denial (Payne, 2008, p. 104), which according to Payne are both characterized by justification and euphemisms. The actions are "justified as necessary and patriotic acts of national defense against a fierce enemy" (2008, p. 170). By repeating the old rhetoric, perpetrators might return to a place of passive acceptance. However, as the reading out

loud, does not demand much of the perpetrator, precisely because of its passive form, they seem to create a safe starting point, in which more active and personal confessions originate. Another advantage of these confessions is that they unlike individual confessions are not subject to memory lapses, or partial and selective memory, which other confessions might be.

Creating credibility through narrative:

As the narration of S21 avoids traditional linearity, as well as denying the perpetrators closure or any form of redemption, it evades the criticism, which such traditional narratives of mass killings usually elicit, such as for instance that of rendering it too "easily redemptive" (LaCapra, 2001, p. 115, White, 1996, p. 32).

In S21, where transformation of the perpetrator does take place, especially in the case of Huoy, his final confession of remorse is slightly anticipated, in that it comes towards the end of the film. Still, the process of getting there is not revealed, nor does the narrative reveal change of attitude throughout the film. When Huoy finally does acknowledge personal guilt, his confession therefor seems just to be one of many confessional scenes, and might also be received by audiences as such.

The observational mode normally contributes to the sense of authenticity and to the illusion of noninterference on behalf of the director (Nichols, 2010, p. 177). In Panh´s film, many of the scenes seem rigid and staged. Equally, the re-enactments do not seem improvised, but rather carefully planned, implying that they might not be genuine or spontaneous. At one point, it looks like Kanh is reading from a piece of paper when confessing, and it also sounds like he is turning a piece of paper (Panh, 2003a, ch. 5), alluding that he might be reading from a script, which subsequently raises the question: If there exist a script, is the script solely his version, or has Panh helped out? The first scenes of Huoy with his family, does suggest that Huoy is an ordinary man, and not a monster, and thus more likely to have ordinary feelings of remorse and guilt: emotions Huoy twice confesses to. Generally however, Huoy is perceived as tense and cold, as are the other perpetrators, as they convey very little emotion, and avoid eye contact. This might diminish the weight of Huoy´s and Kanh´s confession of remorse, as their verbal delivery does not match well with their physical appearance (Nichols, 2010, p. 92),

making it feel insincere. One critic also interpreted it as “spooky detachment” (Gleiberman, 2004).

One narrative technique that adds to the credibility of the confessions is the use of archival material. It makes up a large amount of visible imagery in the movie, creating rhetoric similar to that of forensic evidence (Nichols, 2010, p. 105). A desk is repeatedly used in several of the scenes, nearly always stacked with papers and protocols, witnessing to the magnitude of evidence that exist. When read out loud, the camera focuses in on the archival material, spending considerable time on the close ups of the material, assuring the viewer that this is authentic material, and that whatever the perpetrators say, or do not say, it is triggered and cross checked in accordance to the recorded material. When Nath confronts Kanh on forging a victim´s confession, he points to Kanh´s signature, and quotes the precise date: “Jan. 5th, 1977,” (Panh, 2003a, ch. 8), rhetorically implying its validity. The use of collective confessions in which the perpetrators discuss and confront each other, likewise add to the confessional credibility, as the scale of witnesses who agree on the facts, contributes to its credibility, and to the film´s rhetoric of providing proof (Nichols, 2010, p. 78).

Establishing Nath´s presence also adds to the validity of the perpetrators´ confessions, as he as a victim assumingly would only benefit from perpetrators telling the truth. His confrontational style is in accordance of Boyle´s argument that “nothing less than prosecutorial zeal will suffice: otherwise the filmmaker/interviewer is seen to have been manipulated” (Boyle, 2015, p. 510). On the other hand, Nath´s general suspicion and shaming of the perpetrators, even when they do confess partially remorsefully, does not add credibility to their sincerity. We might believe the confessions, but not necessarily the perpetrators.

Possible effect of relationship and re-enactment

The analysis of “S21” shows that the confessions obtained in the film are generally confessions of denial. Though they repeatedly deny responsibility, Huoy and Kanh still contribute to detailed and self-incriminating information about the torture and killings that took place in S21. Eventually they both also confess in partial remorse.

Panh has implied that a certain trust developed through relationship (as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 248). In interviews and in personal accounts, Panh has stressed that he did not become intimate with the perpetrators (Panh, 2003b) He even admits to screaming at them (Panh according to Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 253). Thus Panh distances himself from the perpetrators, like directors before him (Lanzmann, 1985), apparently suggesting that he at no point was manipulated or enticed by the perpetrators. It makes it difficult to understand why the perpetrators out of free will would volunteer to undergo such disgrace and unpleasant confrontation both by Nath and Panh. As Ellis argued, it matters what people think of us, but in this case the perpetrators are constantly "embarrassed" and will subsequently look "like a fool" when the film is released (Ellis, 2012, p. 47).

There might be several reasons for this. As Kanh seems to have reached a stage of "acting through," participation in S21 might be his way of assuming responsibility and making reparations (Morag, 2013, p. 16). Huoy on his side seems strongly motivated by a desire to escape his pain and nightmares. The sum of re-enactments and confrontations seems to have magnified the trauma, as it is near the end of the film, that he admits to suffering, as well as to personal guilt (Panh, 2003a, ch. 11). As survivor and victim, Nath might represent something more than priest and judge (Cowie, as cited in Piotrowska, 2014, p. 30). To Huoy he might also represent all the victims of S21. Receiving forgiveness from him, and acceptance from Panh and the film crew might be Huoy´s ultimate aspiration.

Though the encounters with Nath, does not seem to facilitate confessions of disclosure, as perpetrators are not encouraged to speak, they might still, similarly to Sereny´s method, have fostered critical thinking as Nath analyses and challenges the perpetrator´s actions and world views, and plays it back to them (Sereny, 2008), subsequently leading to confessions of remorse.

The re-enactments on the other hand, might have weighted up for Nath´s interrogative style, as these particular scenes seem to be characterized by a high degree of disclosure. This might be because they both trigger memory, as well as offering safe starting points where perpetrators can resort to recognizable routines, before they launch into

confessions. Location seems similarly to have played an important role in the triggering of memory (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244). This might suggest that both relationship and re-enactment have played a role in facilitating the confessional processes in S21, and perhaps even more so, the combination of the two. The fact that Huoy does not acknowledge culpability before the end of the film might additionally indicate that they both required duration of time.

7. Confessions that promote peace and reconciliation

All three films end in confessions of remorse of various degrees. In the process they have obtained confessions that reveal detailed and self-incriminating information about former atrocities. As perpetrators generally avoid disclosing information about past crimes (Tutu, 1999, p. 28, Payne, 2008, p. 20), and rarely produce confessions of remorse (Payne, 2008, p. 22), the documentaries in question appear to have been relatively successful in obtaining confessions. How do these confessions however, promote peace and reconciliation? Reconciliation relies on "acknowledging past wrong, elaborating on how and why", but also on "defining a future together" (Galtung, 2011, p. 17). In this chapter I will discuss how the film´s confessions are able to fulfil both these requirements. I will focus on those factors that I consider being the most relevant for peace and reconciliation.

Confessions of transparency, acknowledging past wrongs

Confessions of transparency seem especially to fulfil Galtung´s first requirement on "acknowledging past wrongs", in that they are effective in disclosing and acknowledging "truths" about the past (Tutu, 1999, p. 48), as well as publicly contesting existing and conflicting narratives that endorse cultural violence (Galtung, 1990, pp. 291-305). In "S21" the encounter of perpetrator and survivor allow for the two parties to collectively agree on a common history (Gibson, 2004, p. 202). In "Enemies of the People", Nuon upholds a version that might be interpreted as a narrative of cultural violence, in that he

justifies the killings by demonizing the victims. However, as the film´s rhetoric, as well as Suon´s and Khoun´s confessions dispute Nuon´s version, I would argue that the confessions still work against cultural violence.

In North Sumatra, where the perpetrators are still in power, Anwar´s willingness to confess, in the "Act of Killing," is two sided. Payne argues: "There is no doubt that these unsettling accounts harm individuals more deeply than other forms of confessions (2008, p. 140). By allowing these in the film, Oppenheimer risks that certain groups might be retraumitized (2008, p. 140). Because Anwar´s sadistic confessions were not unique, but rather representative for all the perpetrators Oppenheimer interviewed in North Sumatra (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 1), they contribute to the exposure and critique of a society of impunity. Anwar´s final remorseful admittance that killing was wrong might undo their initial harmful effect.

"The Act of Killing" has additionally initiated a rewriting of history, as the story has been picked up by news-outlets, continuing the process of questioning and re-interpreting Indonesian history. Inspired by the film, "Tempo," Indonesia´s leading news-magazine, mobilized 60 of its journalist to investigate the 1965-66-killings. Their final piece on the killings was three times sold out (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 15).

Similarly, in Cambodia, after watching the "S21," former leader of Khmer Rouge, Samphan, admitted to the existence of "S21," which he previously denied (Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 250).

Confessions of remorse, important for future reconciliation

Confessions of remorse are most commonly associated to reconciliation processes, according to Payne (2008, p. 6). She also argues however, that confessions of remorse instead of instigating dialogue, end it (Payne, 2008, p. 73). In the films of my study, confessions of remorse are not conceived as separate, solo-events; rather they seem to be an outcome of complex processes where extensive dialogue has taken place, often over many years. When they do eventually arrive, they might alter the emphasis on the past, in advantage of the future. This does not mean that the past is forgotten, but it´s importance diminished, so that victim and perpetrator can carry on with their lives, and

perhaps even reconcile (Galtung, 2011, p. 17, LaCapra, 2001, p. 1). For the last to take place, perpetrator needs to undergo a changed psychological orientation towards the victim, according to Morag (2013, p. 16). Yet for victims and survivors to be willing to reconcile with perpetrators, they might necessarily also need to undergo a psychological orientation towards the perpetrator. In the following, I will discuss how the films of my study might not only lead to convincing confessions, but also to the latter.

Sambath claims in "Enemies of the People," that it might take several years, before a perpetrator starts talking: "The first time they always deny, but you must find another way" (Lemkin & Sambath 2011a, ch. 6). All three directors had to spend a considerable of time building trust with perpetrators, as well as implementing methods that facilitated confessions. Sambath spent three years with Nuon before he even started talking about the killings (Sambath, 2010). Only after five years did Anwar admit to Oppenheimer, that what he did was wrong (Herzog & Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 2). Initially Huoy and Kanh denied torturing and killing, but admitted after being repeatedly questioned about it by Panh (2012, p. 8, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244).

With time, perpetrators seem to come to the acknowledgement that what they did was wrong, as they all finally confess, at least partially, to remorse.[7] The encounters with directors seem to have altered their standpoints, which is align with Payne´s experience, that dialogue between perpetrators and victims might be valuable in that perpetrators come to learn worldviews, other than their own (2008, p. 74). A certain psychological orientation towards the other might have taken place, as some of the perpetrators also express empathy towards victims such as Anwar in "The Act of Killing" who conveys concern for the children who will loose their homes in the Kampung Kolam massacre (Oppenheimer, 2013, ch. 9), and Kanh in "S21" who asserts that "torture was some thing cold and cruel (Panh, 2003a, ch. 9). Khoun and Suon in "Enemies of the People" do not express this empathy. This might have been based on editing choices. Another reason could be that Sambath, in order to conceal his identity (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 5), fell short in introducing his narrative, and that Khoun and Suon consequently did not feel the amount of empathy they would have, had Sambath told them that he was a

[7] Except for Nuon (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a), as I have argued earlier.

victim. Nuon in the same film, expresses empathy for Sambath, when he tells him how members of his family was killed during the Khmer Rouge.

During the time that directors worked on building trust, two of them seem to have simultaneously become more emphatically disposed towards the perpetrators as well: Sambath defines his relationship with the perpetrators as "friendships", and describes Nuon as "closer than a relative" (Sambath, 2011b); Oppenheimer states that he felt "intimacy, empathy and even love for Anwar" (2014a, ch. 9). Panh on the other hand stresses that he did not become intimate with the perpetrators (2003b): "I was against them, the torturers who were participating in the film, and it was important that they knew what side I was on" (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 246).

My study suggests that an amiable relationship between director and perpetrator is not necessarily a prerequisite for eliciting confessions. All three films, obtain confessions of remorse, as well as confessions that reflect a high level of disclosure. The level of intimacy between perpetrator and director might still affect how the confessions are perceived however, as "everything we see and hear represents not only the historical world but also how the film´s maker wants to speak about the world" (Nichols, 2010, p. 67). The director´s relationship to the perpetrator will therefore effect how viewers regard of them, and the confessions they produce.

None of the three films portray perpetrators as "incarnations of evil", thus diverting from the traditional victim-position (Morag, 2013, p. 11). Yet, they differ as to how far they go in humanizing the perpetrator. Oppenheimer allows for full identification, giving a complex and extensive description of Anwar. Lemkin and Sambath likewise show Nuon as a multifaceted character. In "S21" Panh seems to make an effort in portraying Huoy as a more complex character, yet is only partially successful as Huoy appears unnatural and tense. This is generally the case for perpetrators in "S21." They show little emotion, most of the time they look away or downward, where as perpetrators in the other two films, look people in the eyes, behave spontaneously and with ease. This might suggest that the directors' relationship to the perpetrator also affects how perpetrators perform on screen, and subsequently how we perceive them as audiences. We are more

likely to believe the confessions of human beings, especially if they show emotion (Magnussen, 2004, p. 204).

Identification with perpetrators is generally regarded as undesirable, as well as morally questionable (McGlothlin, 2014, p. 159). Especially when it takes a form of voyeurism, offering little more than entertainment (Payne, 2008, p. 135), which some might feel is the case with Anwar in the "Act of Killing" (Fraser, 2014). Browning has argued however that only by empathizing with the perpetrators can any historical study get beyond one-dimensional caricature (Browning, as cited in Boswell, 2014). In this case, even more importantly might be Morag´s emphasis on the significance of a "psychological orientation towards the other" for reconciliation processes to take place (Morag, 2013, p. xvi). Stanton, founder of Genocide Watch, affirms this stance, claiming that: "The most extraordinary thing about the film ("Enemies of the People") is that it humanizes Nuon Chea" (Ireland, 2014). Stanton has also coined empathy "the key missing ingredient in the world's response to genocide" (Ireland, 2014).

After the screening of "The Act of Killing" in Indonesia, Anwar was worried that human rights activist would come after him. Oppenheimer´s reply to Anwar was: "I told him that, if anything, by the end of the film, viewers feel empathy for him. I explained that in fact people feel so much empathy for him that if he chose now to switch sides, the human rights community would welcome him" (Oppenheimer, as cited in Cooper, n.d).

As audiences might be critical towards perpetrators, even if they are humanized (Payne, 2008, p. 74), I would argue that it is how audiences perceive the interaction between directors and perpetrators on screen, preferably in the participatory mode that decides whether they believe in them or not (Nichols, 2010, p. 151). This seems especially to be the case if the filmmaker is able to establish himself as a moral character (Nichols, 2010, p. 79), as in the case of Sambath. Both Nath in "S21" and Sambath in "Enemies of the People," are given credibility solely by being indirect and direct victim (LaCapra, 2001, ix), as viewers tend to identify with victims (Morag, 2013, p. 7).

Both in "The Act of Killing" and in "Enemies of the People", Sambath and Oppenheimer pose their questions respectfully and with curiosity, where as Nath asks questions to

shame and contradict. Sambath includes Suon and Khoun in his quest for truth, and Oppenheimer allows Anwar into the production of the re-enactment scenes. Their approach avoids the dichotomy of "us-them", which often characterizes mainstream journalism (Lynch, 2014, p. 41). Oppenheimer has also argued that because his close relationship to Anwar is so apparent in the film, survivors and human rights activists have declined in calling for revenge (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch. 8).

On the other hand, the public shaming and humiliation that perpetrators do undergo by Nath in "S21," might be considered as acts of restoration, as perpetrators who have so far not received any punishment for what they have done, are to a certain degree penalized. This was a desirable effect of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, according to Tutu (1999, p. 48). It might still not be what it takes, as it affects the perpetrators´ behaviour and subsequently how audiences perceive them.

Finally, most importantly for how audiences receive the perpetrators´ confessions, might be whether directors acknowledge their confessions or not. In "S21", it is not only Nath who does not accept Huoy´s confession of remorse; it seems also that the narrative undermines it, and thus audiences might likewise not accept it as significant. It is important to stress that this is an acceptable stance. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also emphasized: "The resistance and the hostility of some of the victims required understanding and respect" (TRCS, 1998).

Nuon´s apology to Sambath is brief, and includes no personal responsibility. Still, because of his relationship to Nuon, Sambath sees Nuon´s apology as heartfelt (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, ch. 15), and because of the relationship we as viewers have developed with Sambath, we are similarly inclined to consider it as sincere.

This does pose a problem as Nuon´s confessions allow for a re-interpretation of history in favour of the Khmer Rouge. Sambath´s acceptance of them, might therefore endorse cultural violence (Galtung, 1990, pp. 291-305). Ethics in traditional journalism stresses the importance of independence from sources (VVP , 2015, 2,1 & 2,2), and journalist have generally also been particularly alert of powerful sources (Kjendsli, 2009, p. 40). In documentary, a similar consciousness does not always seem to be present. The lack of

authoritative rules, is precisely what distinguishes the documentary, and allows for interesting results (Nichols, 2010, p. 6). However, when filming confessions of former powerful mass murderers, documentarists might benefit from adopting some of the methods of critical journalist.

It is never the less, Sambath´s willingness to forgive, and also to reconcile with Nuon and the other two perpetrators, that come across to audiences (Boyle, 2015, p. 516, Holden, 2010). The directors´ relationship to the perpetrator, might also consequently help perpetrators to "act through," taking responsibility and making retribution. Both Khoun and Suon in "Enemies of the People" initiated a three-hour video dialogue with survivors located in Long Beach, USA (Lemkin, Sambath, Quitiliani, Neeham, 2011, p. 20).

In the long process that it takes in order to obtain confessions of remorse, directors and perpetrators might become more emphatically disposed towards the other. A reconciliation thus seems to take place on screen, which ultimately might be perceived by viewers who likewise might be inclined to a changed "psychological orientation towards the other" (Morag, 2013, xvi).

8. Conclusion

Though scholars have suggested a shift from victim to perpetrator in documentary film (Lebow, 2015, p. 480, Morag, 2013, p. 3), so far, there have been few studies on how documentary film can play a role in obtaining and subsequently broadcasting perpetrators´ confessions. This thesis has sought to answer the following: "In what way can documentaries contribute to confessional processes that promote peace and reconciliation?" I have proposed two factors that might play a role in facilitating confessional processes, firstly, relationship between perpetrator and director, and secondly the use of re-enactments. Finally, I have looked at how confessions are rendered through narrative, and might be perceived by audiences.

Confessions that promote peace and reconciliation

The three films in my study, include numerous confessions, which all might be of value, as speaking is always better than silence, according to Payne (2008, p. 30). More importantly: All three films elicit confessions that comprise firstly, a high degree of disclosure, and secondly, confessions that end in partial remorse (Payne, 2008, pp. 41-74).

By disclosing "truth" about the past (Tutu, 1999, p. 48), the three films have publicly contested existing and conflicting narratives that endorse cultural violence (Galtung, 1990, pp. 291-305).

Confessions of remorse are most commonly associated with reconciliation (Payne, 2008, p. 6). That is, if they are perceived as sincere (Payne, 2008, p. 74, Tutu, 1999, p. 48). As opposed to "one-time-performances" of remorse, it seems that the documentaries might be able to add such credibility.

One of the most noteworthy observations of my study, suggest that through the process of building trust, directors simultaneously might become more emphatically disposed towards the perpetrators. Such relationships might prove problematic (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a), but might also be what is needed for reconciliation to take place (Morag, 2013, p. xvi.), as audiences might be more willing to accept perpetrators´ confessions as sincere, if firstly, perpetrators are portrayed as complex human beings (Oppenheimer, 2013, Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a), and secondly, if directors accept perpetrators´ confessions (Oppenheimer, as cited in Cooper, n.d, Lemkin, Neeham, Sambath, & Quiniliani, 2011).

Documentary methods that might contribute to confessions

Relationship

- All directors, emphasize the importance of time and trust when eliciting confessions. This might suggest that news-media, with the constant pressure of speedy deadlines, might not be as fit at extracting confessions as independent documentarist, whom have "as many years of my life" that it takes (Oppenheimer, 2014a, ch.1), often including a strong personal commitment (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, Panh, 2012).

- Through encounters with directors, perpetrators seem responsive to other worldviews than their own (Oppenheimer, 2013, Panh, 2003a), which might consequently lead to admitting wrongdoing and feelings of remorse. When directors try to deceive perpetrators, this effect might be lost (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a).

- Certain therapeutic tendencies appear to have taken place in the films, in that the perpetrators give indications that they confess in order to feel better (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a, Oppenheimer, 2013, Panh, 2003a). This might explain why the confessions given in documentaries are characterized by a high degree of disclosure.

All the central perpetrators, except Nuon in "Enemies of the People" admit to being afflicted by nightmares. Some sort of trauma might be a condition for "therapeutic" relationships to take place, as they provide a motivation to confess. This corresponds with Morag´s emphasis on the importance of acknowledging perpetrators´ traumas (2013, p. 8), and might also indicate that perpetrator´s trauma, and subsequently the potential it offers as motivation for confessing, has been underestimated in the past (LaCapra, 2001, p. ix). This might be transmissible to both peace journalism and peace studies in general.

Re-thinking re-enactment

In the films, re-enactments serve two main purposes: They provide gripping illustrations; they are also used as methods in order to facilitate confessional processes. I have focused on the second point, yet the first argument might still prove to be director´s motivation in choice of method, as documentary relies on images. Re-enactments might also be used as pretext to persuade perpetrators to speak about the past, (Oppenheimer, 2013).

- Re-enactments seem capable of provoking memory, and might therefore be especially suited for confessions of accountability (Panh, 2003a).

- Re-enactments also seem to provoke psychological and physical reactions, confirming ten Brinks study (2014a, pp. 176-189), especially when repeated over time

(Oppenheimer, 2013, Panh, 2003a). The reactions they incite might subsequently make confessions of remorse feel more authentic to audiences.

- Re-enactments might provide safe contexts for performing unsafe content, as they seem to offer more passive and habitual holds, to launch into more complex confessions (Panh, 2003a, Oppenheimer, 2013).

The fact that both Panh and Oppenheimer use similar methods, identifying the purpose of that method as facilitating the process of confessing, yet both are reluctant to identify it as re-enactment (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244, Oppenheimer, as cited in Stevens, 2015) might suggest that the existing categorization of re-enactment is not fully satisfying (Nichols, 2014), and might prove too general (ten Brinks, 2014). I propose an additional category: *Testimonial and confessional re-enactments*. These are performed by perpetrators and victims, and are especially effective at extracting testimonies or confession of past atrocities. These tend to take place on the location where the atrocities were committed, and seem to provoke psychological or physical responses (ten Brink 2014a, p. 185), as well as bodily memory (Panh, as cited in Oppenheimer, 2014c, p. 244). Thus they seem especially effective in eliciting convincing confessions of remorse, as they rouse emotion. Similarly they might be especially apt at recollecting information about the past, as they also seem to stimulate memory. Most importantly, re-enactments provide ways in rethinking the past through the present, as well as questioning the present through the past (ten Brink, 2014a, p. 185). It is especially when they do the last that they seem to become relevant for the present day.

Narrative

According to my analysis, there are especially three factors in narrative that I believe play an important role in adding credibility to perpetrator´s confessions.

- How the perpetrator is characterized. All films portray perpetrators as human beings, not as monsters. Two of the directors also treat perpetrators as equals, and with respect. This is in accordance with peace journalism that advocates the humanizing of all sides (Lynch, 2014, p. 41). Audiences are more likely to believe

confessions made by perpetrators that are not seen solely as evil, manipulative and deceitful.

- Establishing directors as trustworthy, and moral characters. Because we trust them, we might be more inclined to believe perpetrators´ confessions, if the directors do as well.

- By revealing the method and the process that leads to the remorseful confessions, the confessions seem more plausible.

In the past, narratives on war and genocide have generally been criticized for being rendered in ways too easily redemptive (LaCapra, 2001, p. 162). The argument has especially opposed to chronology. (Felman, as cited in LaCapra, 1998, p. 115, White, 1996). In my study I suggest instead that by revealing the gradual process that leads up to the confessions of remorse, audiences might be more convinced of their truthfulness. However, as this process also makes for compelling narrative, directors might be tempted to exaggerate it, and consequently also overstate the authenticity of the confessions (Lemkin & Sambath, 2011a).

Further study:

I have briefly touched on how relationship between director and perpetrator, as well as re-enactments might facilitate confessional processes. Interview as well as field study of how these processes take place in real sets, would add to this study.

I have generally based my research on the films´ content in order to decide whether they promote reconciliation and peace. The next step in research could be exploring how films are most effectively distributed, and also perceived by audiences.

My intention with this thesis is not to advocate a shift from victim to perpetrator in documentary, I do however, in aligning with peace studies, aspire to place focus on the potential and benefits of speaking to all sides (Galtung, 2011, p. 9). Though it might be both controversial and ethically challenging, my study suggests that focusing on the perpetrator might lead to confessions that contribute to peace and reconciliation. The

process of eliciting those confessions might however prove as important as the actual confessions; when perpetrator and director interact; a form of reconciliation, or at least acceptance, takes place on screen, and might subsequently be transmittable to audiences.

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