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Evidence, Subjectivity and Verité in Renzo Martens’ Episode III: Enjoy Poverty – a Shot-By-Shot Analysis

Sanne Sinnige

Abstract
In this article it is argued that the political message of the film Episode III: Enjoy Poverty (2008) by Renzo Martens is based on a ‘truth-claim’, enforced by Martens’ presence in the film. In order to strengthen this truth-claim, Martens has adopted documentary aesthetics such as the hand-held camera. Yet, the artist defines the film specifically as an art piece and not a documentary film, differentiating between the objectivity that ‘mainstream’ documentarians advocate and the objectivity or ‘truth’ that Enjoy Poverty claims to reveal. It is demonstrated how Martens uses the documentary material as ‘evidence’ in order to create a rhetoric narrative that gives reason to presume that certain events in the film have been pre-organized or staged. With this strategy the artist aims at debating a relevant issue in contemporary art: Engaged contemporary art pieces often hide that the problems they want to debate are inherently present in the pieces themselves.

Résumé

Keywords
Enjoy Poverty, documentary, evidence, rhetoric, verité.
Introduction

Since its first presentation in 2008 in the SMBA exhibition space in Amsterdam, Renzo Martens’ Episode III: Enjoy Poverty (2008) (hereafter: Enjoy Poverty; the visual material of the present analysis can be found at the end of this essay) has been screened many times around the world and continues to catalyse debates amongst critics and scholars.1 The main arguments that are put forward in these debates relate to ethics and Martens’ responsibility as an artist2, specifically in regard to the use and portrayal of the subjects in his film. The political message of Enjoy Poverty, which focusses on the complicity of the art world, the artist and the viewer in the existence of poverty, equally precipitates much debate.3 The film is acclaimed for its political message, which explains why the piece has unquestionably succeeded as a powerful work of art, providing for what T.J. Demos has called a “new institutional critique”.4 However, the film is simultaneously critiqued for repeating the very mechanisms that Martens aims to criticize, while justifying this repetition, and the use of images of human suffering, with the “get-out-clause of art”, as Paul O’Kane has put it.5

Martens reasons in Enjoy Poverty that Congolese poverty is a resource that can be exploited through images, and which can yield quantities of money, in the same way as gold or palm oil. Consequently, Martens launches an emancipation project, in order to convince some local photographers in Congo to renounce their core business, and exploit Congolese poverty instead. He assures them that this will lead to a more advantageous future. When this project fails, the paradoxes of the image- and humanitarian aid industry in the Congo-- are brought to the fore, but simultaneously, so are the presence of these paradoxes in the film or the work of art. Even though the emancipation project fails, this failure is of consequence on the success of the film, or Martens’ position as an artist – although Martens argues otherwise.6 Martens benefits from this piece, as demonstrated by his Yale Fellowship, and his participation in numerous film festivals.7 It can even be asserted that I, the writer of this text, am indirectly profiting from it. Through the repetition of the mechanisms in which the piece is grounded, the film makes an attempt at indicating and debating this issue. For how can an artwork be genuinely critical and engaged? Martens’ answer seems to be that, in order to achieve criticality, the piece should not isolate itself from the context it is produced in, and must not disguise its own problematic

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4 Demos, Return to the Postcolony: 122.
6 Stuart Jeffries, “Renzo Martens – The Artist Who Wants to Gentrify the Jungle”, The Guardian, December 16, 2014, accessed March 31, 2016, http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/dec/16/renzo-martens-gentrify-the-jungle-congo-chocolate-art. “Still, if he was useless at helping Africans, Martens was brilliant at helping himself. He left Africa after two years with a film that was seen and discussed by western aid workers, NGO functionaries, academics, artists and critics. In 2013 he became a Yale World Fellow; in 2014 he’s been shortlisted for the £40,000 Artes Mundi prize, the UK’s most lucrative art competition.”
production process. Rather, it should reveal its production process, in order to acknowledge and debate the paradoxes inherent in the piece itself: “Art can really expose its internal contradictions, the contradictions that produce a piece. Once that happens, you notice these are the same contradictions that reign [in] the oil industry, diamond industry, or global politics—because they all operate in the same way.”

A crucial feature of _Enjoy Poverty_ is Martens’ presence in the film; Martens turns the camera purposefully on himself, and appears as a character in the film [Film Stills 1 and 2, 02.59 min. and 03.45 min.]. A filmmaker can appear in his or her film for various reasons--- for instance in order to investigate, through an alternative method, the subjects of the film. However in this case, it can be argued that Martens appears in the film in order to ‘reveal’ the system in which the filmmaker operates, while simultaneously demonstrating how Congolese poverty is equally capitalized on through images by actors such as journalists and humanitarian aid organisations. Alternating between what seems to be him being himself, on the one hand, and the performance of a filmmaker with obvious colonial references such as the hat on the other, _Enjoy Poverty_ thus beholds a truth-claim. The perception of the film as ‘revealing’ truth, enforced by Martens’ appearance in the film, returns in various texts on _Enjoy Poverty_. In Martens’ own words: “In het geval van _Enjoy Poverty_ was mijn taak alleen het blootleggen van hoe het daar gaat.” (In the case of _Enjoy Poverty_ my task was solely to expose how things are there, [transl. by the author].) In reply to the question on how he regards typical documentary values such as objectivity and veracity, Martens answers: “Ik heb wel degelijk geprobeerd een zo objectief mogelijk beeld te geven. Alleen niet van Congo, maar van het kijken naar andermans lijden.” (I did try to create as objective an image as possible. Only not about the Congo, but about looking at someone else’s suffering [transl. by the author].) In one critical anecdote by Martens on the photographic work of Guy Tillim, the notion of ‘reality’ or truth also seems to be involved: “Tillim ensures that there is never a white journalist to be seen in any of his photographs, even if, at the events he photographed, he was surrounded not only by hordes of black protesters, but also by hordes of white photographers.”

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9 Ibidem.

10 Renzo Martens about his performance in the film: “Within this performance there are two Renzo Martens’ in the film: First there is Renzo Martens the artist and second Renzo Martens the consumer. The two Renzos interact with each other to produce the duplicity communicated by the film: I am both the observer and the perpetrator of the African’s exploitation. I can never be the savior or the emancipator because I am defined by the structures and institutions that exploit in the first place.” Frances Guerin, “Interview with Renzo Martens”, _Art Slant New York_, January, 2009.


12 His presence has indeed been qualified by T.J. Demos as “a performative intervention” for the purpose of “ultimately exhibiting the structural conditions of economic inequality under neoliberal globalization.” See Demos, _Return to the Postcolony_, 10.

13 Hilde van Gelder mentions the hat as a symbol of power and colonial oppression, see Demos and Van Gelder, _In and Out of Brussels_, 6. At the same page she mentions the uncertainty about Martens’ character in the film, caused by the different appearances. Demos mentions Martens’ character and its colonial references, while referring to Aguirre as cinematic precedent, main character in Werner Herzog’s film _Aguirre: the Wrath of God_ (1972). See Demos, _Return to the Postcolony_, 103.


15 Peter van Goethem, “Renzo Martens over zijn film episode III”, _Rekto Verso_ (2009), nr 35.

Also, in critical reflections on the film by scholars and art critics, the notion of disclosure surfaces:

For example, Demos argues how the film “uncovers how such famine photography flows into a global image industry running on poverty as fuel [...]”\(^{17}\) and “As a documentary set alongside a carefully scripted performance by Martens, Enjoy Poverty exposes this system of Congolese poverty”.\(^{18}\) Hilde Van Gelder comments in a reaction on her article ‘Aesthetic Ruptures’ (2011): “In the film, there’s ample evidence of how the photo-journalistic business in the Congo works today [...]”\(^{19}\) and Els Roelandt argues, “By making a film about its own broader parameters, elements that are normally obscured become obvious and visible.”\(^{20}\) Caitlin Frances Bruce’s critical discussion of the film mentions that: “Renzo Martens’ 2008 film, Episode III (Enjoy Poverty), is a conceptual film that satirizes documentaries about poverty in Africa by exposing the ways in which consumers of poverty images enjoy such spectatorship”\(^{21}\) and Matthias de Groof refers to Seneca when he qualifies Enjoy Poverty as a ‘monstrum’, “[...] een visuele en afschuwelijke revelatie van de waarheid” (a visual and horrible revelation of the truth, [translation by author]).\(^{22}\)

This aspect of claiming ‘to show things as they are’ has been argued to be a ‘basic documentary principle’, an aspect that all documentary definitions share, according to photography historian Olivier Lugon.\(^{23}\) Even though the previously cited authors argue that the film reveals aspects of Congolese poverty’s image-industry, herewith alluding to the film as embodying a ‘truth-claim’, the film is simultaneously appreciated for its debate of documentary conventions such as objectivity. For example, Demos and Van Gelder argue that the film stands in an ‘antagonistic’ relationship to “the conventional, objective, authoritative and neutral documentary conventions by which ethnographers - and more recently mainstream documentarians and news media - have portrayed different cultures, and often those enmeshed in poverty or humanitarian conflict [...]”\(^{24}\); similarly De Roo argues that “Martens actually criticises the so-called objective perspective that most documentaries propagate.”\(^{25}\) This demonstrates a presumed difference between the ‘truth’ or objectivity that Enjoy Poverty creates, and the documentary objectivity that it questions. I would like to argue that Martens’ argument does not necessarily focus on the debate as to whether documentary material in itself could provide a true image, but rather that documentarians disguise the ‘truth’ of the system in which these materials are produced, thereby acknowledging the documentary’s truth-claims.

In this article, I will focus on this aspect of Enjoy Poverty, in relation to a shot-by-shot analysis of the film. The outcomes of this analysis raise questions concerning the truth-claim of the film and its use of documentary codes and therefore deserve more theoretical attention. In order to investigate the strategies that Martens

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18 Demos, Return to the Postcolony, 105.
adopted in order to formulate a ‘truth-claim’, I will examine the scholarly and artistic debates regarding the notion of evidence in documentary in relation to the role of rhetoric and the concept of *verité* as proposed by Okwui Enwezor. Hereafter I will discuss some examples from the film in order to demonstrate how Martens employed documentary conventions deliberately in order to create a rhetorical narrative that supports the political message and truth-claims of the film. I will argue that this creates a tension between his supposed criticism of documentarians and documentary traditional conventions, specifically in relation to objectivity, and his conscious use of documentary codes because of their presumed objectivity, while deliberately hiding that certain events in the film are less ‘true’ than they appear at first sight. By doing so, I hope to contribute to a general understanding of the use of the documentary image by contemporary artists.

It must be noted that the relation between art and documentary remains the subject of many debates and publications. The documentary turn encompasses the idea that documentary practices have been increasingly used in the last two decades in the contemporary art field, often in order to debate social matters which leads to political and critical art. Art historian Sophie Berrebi even speaks of a “tendency towards ascribing to the documentary a privileged position within the art context of reflecting upon the realities of the world.” For this reason, I will assume that *Enjoy Poverty* is a work of art adopting documentary practices. Therefore, I will refer to art theory as well as documentary theory, taking into account that the boundaries and histories of both are blurred and interconnected. Martens himself has stated that the film should be considered a work of art, although there are connections to documentary film. It could be questioned why he does so and what he defines as documentary film. Perhaps art historian Olivier Lugon’s observation applies here, namely that those who participate in an aesthetic debate with their work need for the documentary to be clearly defined, in order to affirm an opposition between the documentary and art, even though this opposition does not necessarily exist. It should be noted that the relationship between art and documentary has been problematic because the documentary has been considered by artists to be ‘a transparent reflection of the world, in which subjectivity,

26 Julian Stallabrass describes the relation between art and documentary practices in Julian Stallabrass, *Documentary* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013), and signals an increased use of documentary practices in contemporary art. At the conference and set of screenings *Truth and Dare: Art and Documentary*, which was held in the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Tate Modern in the UK in 2006, artists and documentarist filmmakers met each other which resulted in the following publication: Gail Pearce and Cahal McLaughlin, eds., *Truth or dare: Art & documentary* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007). Also in *The Documentary Film Book* edited by Brian Winston a separate chapter is devoted to the debate and history of the relation between art and documentary: Michael Renov, “Art, Documentary as Art”, in *The Documentary Film Book*, ed. Brian Winston (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 345-352. Olivier Lugon debates the relation between art and documentary in the *Green Room*, see Lugon, “Documentary: Authority and Ambiguities”, 29-37. When it comes to other forms of the documentary and art, see Sophie Berrebi, *The Shape of Evidence. Contemporary Art and the Document* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2014), in which she discusses the use of documents and documentary photographs by artists in order to question its evidential power. Another documentary form that appears in the contemporary art field is the re-appropriation of archival footage, see Erika Nimis, “In search of African history: the re-appropriation of photographic archives by contemporary visual artists”, *Social Dynamics* 40 (2014): 556-566.

27 Maria Lind and Hito Steyerl, introduction to *The Green Room, Reconsidering the Documentary and Contemporary Art* #1, eds. Maria Lind and Hito Steyerl, (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008), 11. See also Mark Nash, “Reality in the Age of Aesthetics”, *Frieze*, Issue 114, April 2008. In general Documenta 11 is regarded as an important moment of the use of documentary practices in the contemporary art field. This is discussed by Okwui Enwezor in “Documentary/Verité, Bio-Politics, Human Rights, and the Figure of “Truth” in Contemporary Art”, in *The Green Room, Reconsidering the Documentary and Contemporary Art* #1, eds. Maria Lind and Hito Steyerl, (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008), 62-102. Jaques Rancière has doubted the existence of critical art, arguing that there can be art created by commited artists, but not commited art. From Roelandt, “Renzo Martens’ Episode 3”, 180.


30 Guerin, “Interview with Renzo Martens”.

31 Lugon, “Documentary: Authority and Ambiguities”, 35.
creativity and expression were necessarily suppressed.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{Evidence and Verité}

Even though it is in general agreed that this idea of a transparent reflection of the world through documentary practices is untenable, the notion of the relation between documentary material and the representation of the reality has been the topic of many debates.\textsuperscript{33} This is justified by the fact that documentary practices employ material from the existing world, instead of a fictional world.\textsuperscript{34} Furthermore, a photograph or frame functions as an index, as proposed by Charles S. Pierce in his Theory of Signs (Early Account, 1867-8). This indexical relationship between reality and the image that represents this reality, which assumes a direct causal link between the reality and the image, stimulates a perception of the image as evidence of ‘something being the case’ in the shape of a truth-claim.\textsuperscript{35} Additionally, the historical development of the documentary has contributed to the perception of documentary material as providing objective truth; definitions of documentary revolve around notions of objectivity and truth, which could be traced back to 1839 when François Arago tried to persuade the French government to add Daguerre’s patent to the list of scientific instruments.\textsuperscript{36} This means that when documentary practices are adopted, even though the majority of the audience is aware of the contemporary modes of manipulation and the distorting effects of editing and even though the trust in documentary material is decreasing, in general documentary materials are perceived as evidence of something.\textsuperscript{37} In order for documentary material to serve an argument or message, the material will be interpreted as evidence of something, and arranged by the filmmaker in light of this argument.\textsuperscript{38} This demonstrates how documentary material can be used as evidence in order to create a rhetoric narrative.\textsuperscript{39}

\textit{Enjoy Poverty} demonstrates how Martens conducts research in Congo, how he collects visual material and information through interviews with subjects and creates an emancipation project based on the outcomes of this research. Besides the fact that this must be shown in order to justify his emancipation project, which I will elaborate on below, this material is used as evidence about the production of images of Congolese poverty and the film itself. It can thus be questioned whether Martens arrives at instilling belief in his truth-claim, and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Bill Nichols, “How do Documentaries Differ from Other Types of Film?”, in \textit{Introduction to Documentary}, Bill Nichols (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 20-41.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} From Brian Winston, “Film as Truth”, in \textit{Claiming the Real II: Documentary: Grierson and Beyond}, Brian Winston (Basingstoke: Basingstoke Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 188.
  \item \textsuperscript{39} Bill Nichols has introduced the concept of ‘Voice’, about which he argues: “These sounds and images come to function as signs; they bear meaning, though the meaning is not really inherent in them but rather conferred upon them by their function within the text as a whole. We may think we hear history or reality speaking to us through a film, but what we actually hear is the voice of the text, even when that voice tries to efface itself.” See Bill Nichols, “The Voice of Documentary (1983)”, in \textit{The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism}, ed. Jonathan Kahana (Oxford, New York: University Press, 2016), 642.
\end{itemize}
if so, how?

Several conditions influence whether material will be perceived as evidence or not, and hence, whether believe that the truth-claim of the film will be instilled in the viewer.\textsuperscript{40} The context of the presentation of \textit{Enjoy Poverty} in an artistic context such as SMBA may have effectuated another interpretation than its presentation at a documentary film festival such as IDFA in 2008. In that regard, I would like to recall one specific situation in the film. At a certain moment the film displays how Martens travels through villages in the Congo, where he mounts the neon-sign that reads ‘\textit{Enjoy Poverty, please}’. While mounting the neon-sign, Martens explains to the villagers that the neon-sign is in English, because the film will be shown in Europe. When one of the villagers explains this to a fellow villager, he points to the camera, herewith acknowledging the viewer as an invisible though present onlooker. With this explanation Martens indirectly addresses an interesting theme in regards to the discussion of documentary evidence, namely the meaning of the material in relation to the context in which it will be screened [Film Still 3, 31.07 min.].\textsuperscript{41} The material that Martens gathers for \textit{Enjoy Poverty} is being interpreted and arranged in line with the message of the film, which is about the mechanisms of the art world and directed towards the gallery visitors who will watch the film. The material is interpreted and presented as evidence in order to support that message. However, the material could also be used as evidence of another claim.\textsuperscript{42}

It remains unclear why Martens argues in his film not to show \textit{Enjoy Poverty} in the place of production, although it probably relates to the theory of capital accumulation that he was applying in his following project, the Institute for Human Activities: Not the place of production but the place where the art work will be displayed and eventually sold, will attract capital and stimulate economic growth in this place.\textsuperscript{43} It should be noted however that the film has been screened in the Congo, in locations such as Centre-Wallonie-Bruxelles in Kinshasa in 2010, and on television, which may give reason to believe that Martens was performing during this specific scene, criticizing the artistic exploitation of poverty through the production of art in a location where it will not be screened or sold, and thus does not bring in any revenue. It remains however unclear if \textit{Enjoy Poverty} has been screened in the villages where Martens has passed with the neon-sign.

This performativity of Martens in the film signals his subjectivity as a filmmaker. Even though a part of the frame is produced mechanically, and therefore results in the production of evidence that escapes the subjectivity of the creator, which explains why the documentary image is often used as evidence in legal procedures,\textsuperscript{44} the frame is primarily produced through human intentionality.\textsuperscript{45} Philosopher Roland Barthes described this with regard to the position of the photographer: “[…] the photographer bears witness essentially to his own subjectivity, the way he establishes himself as a subject faced with an object.”\textsuperscript{46} Documentary scholar Michael

\textsuperscript{40} Plantinga, “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 40.
\textsuperscript{41} Demos mentions the film \textit{Bamako} (2006) by Abderrahmane Sissako, which has not only been screened in Europe but also in the place of production, see Demos, “Poverty Pornography”.
\textsuperscript{42} Spence and Navarro, \textit{Crafting Truth}, 40.
\textsuperscript{43} “The Institute for Human Activities”, \url{http://www.humanactivities.org/chronological/}, accessed June 3, 2016.
\textsuperscript{45} See Plantinga, “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 42. See also Zijlmans, “Documentary Evidence and/in Artistic Practices”, 102.
Renov qualifies the relation between the documentary-filmmaker and the world as an encounter, in which the subjectivity of the maker meets the object-hood of the world. For this reason, a document can be neither fully objective nor fully subjective; it should rather be considered as evidence of the real world in the shape of a subjective interpretation, or as art historian Kitty Zijlmans calls it, a ‘reality seen by someone else, a second order observation’. In this light, it can be argued that Martens’ presence and performance bear witness to the acknowledgement or acceptance of the impossibility of an objective documentary, as proposed by documentary scholar Stella Bruzzi in her definition of performative documentary. She even argues that the filmmakers’ performativity, which connotes a disavowal, expresses simultaneously “a desire to make a conventional documentary.”

It can be argued that Martens’ appearance in the film notifies the viewer that the film has been made by the person Martens, and therefore offers a subjective view on the represented world in the film. Martens has chosen to single out certain images and leave others out, not only for reasons of content, but also with regard to framing and editing, through which meaning is accumulated. In order to illustrate this, I would like to briefly refer to one moment in the film when Martens visits the plantation worker at his home and meets his severely malnourished daughter, who is eating a mouse. Martens zooms in and takes close-ups of the mouse. It seems as if Martens wants to alert the viewer while saying: This is the actual meaning of poverty, sustained by artists and spectators [Film Still 4, 15.24 min.]. The images of the girl eating the mouse accumulate meaning and provide evidence in relation to the political message of the film.

Moreover, Martens’ presence effectuates another layer of subjective reality in the film, which relates to the participatory mode as proposed by film theorist Bill Nichols and the cinéma vérité, a style of filmmaking coined by film maker Jean Rouch and sociologist Edgar Morin in the 1960s in France. According to Rouch, the behaviour that people show in the presence of the camera and the filmmaker is the most profound truth that a camera can record. This means that Martens’ presence not only indicates that his presentation of the objective world is subjective, but furthermore that Martens creates situations, which would not have existed if Martens and his camera had not been present in those situations. He and the camera’s presence create another kind of reality or vérité, which is provoked by the act of film-making. The emancipation project is a clear

50 Bruzzi, “The Performing Film-maker and the Acting Subject”, 49.
51 Plantinga, “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 42.
52 Spence and Navarro, Crafting Truth, 192 refer to camera movement in order to draw attention to a specific detail.
55 Plantinga, “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 44.
56 Stella Bruzzi argues that: “[…] a documentary can never be the real world, that the camera can never capture life as it would have unravelled had it not interfered, and the result of this collision between apparatus and subject are what constitutes a documentary – not the utopian vision of what might have transpired if only the camera had not been there […] documentaries are performative acts whose truth comes into being only at the moment of filming […]”. See Stella Bruzzi, introduction to New Documentary: A Critical Introduction, Stella Bruzzi (London: Routledge, 2000), 7.
example [Film Still 5, 58.35 min.].

His camera may thus have altered recorded situations, but at the same time, the aesthetics of the hand-held camera could stimulate the perception of seeing evidence, for it suggests that the situations recorded by the camera are not manipulated, and that the camera was only present in the function of documenting passively.\(^{57}\) Indeed, the hand-held camera has been interpreted as “shooting in documentary style” and “marker of documentary truth”.\(^{58}\) However, it has also been argued that the meaning of documentary aesthetics, such as the use of the hand-held camera, may change over time, since the hand-held camera is now deliberately used in ‘performative documentaries’ in order to assume an observational style that approaches reality.\(^{59}\) In that regard, it is interesting to note that Downey has signalled the use of “ethnographic and filmic tropes including […] the jumpiness associated with a hand-held camera” when he discusses the piece *Home* (2007) by Olaf Breuning.\(^{60}\) De Roo has argued that Martens has adopted the hand-held camera in order to “emphasize his presence”, which demonstrates that certain aesthetics, previously perceived as markers of documentary truth, can transform over time in order to demonstrate the opposite, namely the subjectivity of the filmmaker.\(^{61}\) So far, it remains unclear if Martens has a specific reason to use the hand-held camera, and furthermore it should be doubted whether Martens’ presence as conveyed through the hand-held camera leads to an ‘I was there, it really happened’ or ‘I made the film, a subjective treatment of actuality’ perception in the viewer.\(^{62}\) In several shots in *Enjoy Poverty*, the hand-held camera seems to function as a documenting device that claims to register objectively and directly rather than seeking for aesthetic images, as if adopting the fly-on-the-wall mode for which the Direct Cinema is known.\(^{63}\) This is especially visible during a moment at the beginning of the film, in which the camera seems to hide behind a crowd of people and some seconds later zooms in on humanitarian aid workers, directing the viewer to the primal meaning of the image [Film Still 6, 01.58 min.]. The humanitarian aid workers do not know that they are being filmed, which creates a voyeuristic feeling. One of the humanitarian aid workers is ‘caught’ happily photographing the aid that they are providing [Film Still 7, 2.10 min.], unintentionally demonstrating how poverty functions as gratis resource, and the “lucrative presence” of the humanitarian-aid worker.\(^{64}\) Other examples of the aesthetics of the hand-held camera are the visibility of water drops on the camera when Martens finds himself in a boat [Film Still 8, 03.03 min.], shaky shots, dirty camera shots [Film Still 9, 03.38 min.], and shots of interviewed subjects who are not visible but only audible, as if only the recording of what is being said matters [Film Still 10, 43.31 min.].

It can thus be argued that the combination of aesthetic choices and Martens’ presence as a filmmaker, and sometimes as a performer, creates confusion as to whether the film should be perceived as truthful or not, and what any such truth entails. This doubting of documentary material is crystallized in artist and critic Hito

\(^{57}\) Plantinga mentions the type of image as crucial factor for the perception of truth, see “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 44.

\(^{58}\) Spence and Navarro, *Crafting Truth*, 32.


\(^{60}\) Downey, “An Ethics of Engagement”, 597.

\(^{61}\) De Roo, “Immorality as Ethics: Renzo Martens’ Enjoy Poverty”, 143.

\(^{62}\) Brian Winston cites Richard Leacock on the ‘feeling of being there’: “[…] The film-maker’s problem is more a problem of how to convey it. How to convey the feeling of being there.” From Winston, *Claiming the Real II*, 150.


\(^{64}\) See Zmijewski, “Artists come to create Beauty and Kindness”.
Steyerl’s formulation of the ‘principle of documentary uncertainty’, according to which “the perpetual doubt, the nagging insecurity, whether what we see is ‘true’, ‘real’, ‘factual’ and so on – accompanies contemporary documentary perception like a shadow.” It can be argued that the combination of documentary images and the performativity of Martens, because of which Hilde van Gelder defines the film as a documentary fiction or an ‘amalgam’ while referring to Jacques Rancière, strengthens this uncertainty.

When it comes to debating the ‘objectivity’ or ‘truth-claim’ posed by Enjoy Poverty, the question is whether these words signify the same thing. Art historian and curator Okwui Enwezor proposes to make a difference between fact and truth and argues that ‘a documentary can record something that is true but fail to reveal the truth of that something.” Therefore he proposes the concept of verité. He distinguishes conventional documentary from verité documentary meaning the ‘forensic inclination concerned essentially with the recording of dry facts’ whereas verité means that ‘we confront the conditionalities of ‘truth’ as a process of unraveling, exploring, questioning, probing, analyzing, diagnosing, a search for truth or […] veracity’. In the relationship to art this means that verité or art connotes a process that leads to a deeper kind of truth. This leads to the question how Enjoy Poverty through the presentation of facts and documentary material creates a kind of truth that surpasses the presentation of a pure fact. Here, I would like to refer back to the role of rhetoric and the arrangement of material as evidence, and the organisation of documentary material according to ‘plots’ as Aristotle used to call them. The structure of a documentary should be considered a means of persuasion, implying conscious choices and strategies in order to formulate and support an argument and convince the viewer of this argument.

In the following paragraph I will examine the concept of verité by discussing how the images in Enjoy Poverty are arranged, herewith creating a rhetorical narrative that leads to the formulation of a deeper kind of truth that strengthens the political message of the film, supported by the documentary aesthetics of the film. This narrative can be interpreted as a process in which the belief of the political message, or the ‘truth’ proposed by the film, is installed in the viewer. However, at the same time I will demonstrate that in order to create this ‘truth’, Martens had to disguise specific aspects in the film.

**Enjoy Poverty: A Shot-by-Shot Analysis**

A detailed analysis of the film shows that Enjoy Poverty consists of as many as 487 shots. This leads to suppose that the editing has a crucial influence on the creation of meaning in relation to the situations depicted in the film. In this regard I would like to mention the concept of average shot length, through which the average of one shot’s length in a film can be calculated and which has been applied in the analysis of motion films. The average shot length varies between films and there are films in which the director plays

66 Demos and Van Gelder, In and Out of Brussels, p. 6.
67 Enwezor, “Documentary/Verité, Bio-Politics, Human Rights, and the Figure of “Truth”, 94.
68 Idem, 97.
69 Idem, 96.
70 From Spence and Navarro, Crafting Truth, 113.
71 Idem, 114.
72 De Roo also pays attention to the process of truth in documentary in his reflection on the film. De Roo, “Immorality as Ethics: Renzo Martens’ Enjoy Poverty”, 144.
deliberately with the amount of shots, *Rope* (1948) by Alfred Hitchcock being a well-known example. The average shot length of *Enjoy Poverty* is, without taking into account the credits at the end of the film, 95.03 minutes / 487 shots = 11.7 seconds per shot. In comparison to motion films, in which according to filmmaker David MacDougall “whole scenes are played out in one shot”, this could be considered short.\(^74\) Indeed, the long take, which implies the editing of a scene in a film as one single take\(^75\), has become “terra incognita” to documentary filmmakers, since documentary filmmakers apply quick cutting in order to keep the film dynamic and retain the attention of the viewer.\(^76\) Various shots in *Enjoy Poverty* last only 2 seconds.

Naturally, meaning can be attributed to the average shot length in relation to other aspects of the film, like the use of the camera and the number of shots with a different length. However, the power of editing in documentary has been acknowledged and this should be considered particularly relevant in relation to the truth and reality debates in documentary practices, and the massive amount of documentary material being adopted by artists and filmmakers nowadays.\(^77\)

**Horizontal perspective**

The organization of the shots in *Enjoy Poverty* can be analysed from a horizontal and vertical perspective.\(^78\) The horizontal perspective concentrates on the consecutive order of the film and allows an explanation of the arrangement of the shots towards the formulation of the political message of the film. The film’s horizontal structure consists of three major components: the foundation, the emancipation project, and the conclusion.

The foundation consists of shots 1 – 281 (0.00-48.42 min) and serves various purposes [Table 1 *Foundation*]. In this part of the film, characters are introduced, some of which return later in the film: For example Mr. Blattner - the plantation-owner, the plantation worker, and the malnourished child in the hospital (the latter two remain anonymous in the film, which may be on purpose and interpreted as criticism about the way subjects are treated in newsreels and films\(^79\)). More importantly, this part of the film serves as a foundation of the film: The viewer is informed about the subject of the film through a depiction of various situations and conversations Martens has with people he meets, which forms an important part of the rhetoric narrative. Through the display of all these situations and interview conversations, a typical feature of documentary style\(^80\), the spectator is equipped with the essential knowledge in order to concur with the conduction of the emancipation project that follows. It can be argued that Martens needs the foundation in order to justify this emancipation project, and convince the viewer that the emancipation project is the sole righteous conclusion.

The situations and conversations in the foundation often follow logically each other; for example, at a


\(^75\) Beaver, *Dictionary of Film Terms*, 149-150.

\(^76\) MacDougall, “When Less is Less: The Long Take in Documentary”, 36.


\(^79\) Toma Muteba Luntumbue discusses this aspect of the dehumanized human being in relation to the scene in which a journalist seemingly photographs a man without asking his name, Richard. See Demos and Van Gelder, *In and Out of Brussels*, 14.

\(^80\) Spence and Navarro, *Crafting Truth*, 25.
certain moment in the film, Martens is travelling accompanied by men who carry his luggage, and the boxes with the neon-sign. During this journey Martens meets a village doctor who tells him that the amount of malnourished children in the workers’ quarters on the plantations is higher than the amount of malnourished children living on farms [19.03-19.52 minutes]. Directly after these shots the film displays how Martens is visiting the workers’ quarters, as if to investigate this information [Film Still 11, 20.03 min.]. However, in this part Martens is not accompanied anymore by the men carrying the boxes. This either means that the men are around, though not being filmed, or it means that this material was shot at another moment in time.

Shot 281 is the last shot in the foundation, in which Martens is filmed while he is making a phone call with Jesse who acknowledges that the money that humanitarian aid organisations acquire with the photographs of the victims of war and famine, does not necessarily return to those victims [Film Still 12, 48.45 min.]. This forms a turning-point in the film, for in shot 282 we see Martens for the first time in the role of teacher [Film Still 13, 49.09 min.]. The phone call with Jesse represents the conclusion of the material presented in the foundation, forming a bridge towards the core of the film. The construction of the foundation takes time and explains the complaint that the film starts rather slowly: It covers almost 50 minutes of the film.

As I mentioned above, the emancipation project comprises the essential core of the film: The theoretical instruction and practical guidance by Martens of a few Congolese photographers [Table 2 Emancipation project] [Film Still 14, 54.06 min.]. After the theoretical part of the project, Martens takes the men to various places in order to instruct them. Besides this emancipation project, Martens visits villages with the neon sign, to spread the message that the villagers should reclaim power over their poverty.

The last shot of this part of the film depicts the moment after the meeting with a doctor from Médecins sans Frontières, whom Martens has asked if the photographers could take pictures of his patients in the hospital [Film Still 15, 1.09.15 min.]. Finding Martens request unethical, and commenting the quality of the photographs, the doctor declines and sends them away. Martens announces the end of the emancipation project, which entails that the photographers do not have access to profit from their own poverty, while Martens does. This second turning-point in the film leads towards the conclusion of the film. The emancipation project has a span of more or less ten minutes and is, in comparison with the foundation, quite short.

From shot 421 onwards, the viewer witnesses the meaning of the emancipation project’s failure: For example, Martens passes through a village and instead of motivating the villagers to regain power over their poverty, Martens proclaims that they should submit to their poverty, [1.10.48 minutes] [Table 3 Conclusion]. The malnourished child who was introduced in the foundation of the film dies, which implies that poverty means malnourishment and child-death. Furthermore, Martens loses his press-card. This does not mean that the death of the child and the loss of Martens’ press-card actually took place after the failure of the emancipation project. These moments have been located in the conclusion of the film, because they underline the paradoxes of the meaning of the failure of the emancipation project, and thus strengthen the argument of the film, which

81 Bill Nichols mentions “[...] classical narrative procedures, among them (1) a chronology of apparent causality [...]”, see Nichols, “the Voice of Documentary”, 642. Ellis has also argued that documentary films provide “[...] a structure in which events do not merely follow each other, but lead from another [...] the construction of a chain of consequences, which by definition can be done [...] in the knowledge of the end to the story.” See Ellis, Documentary, 69.
83 Demos describes Martens as ‘missionary’, see Demos, Return to the Postcolony, 106.
entails that the mechanisms in which journalists, humanitarian aid workers and artists operate, sustain rather than dissipate poverty.

This structure of the film complies with a voltage curve that creates a rhetorical narrative: In the first part of the film the foundation of the film is constructed through Martens’ research. Through a careful selection and arrangement of shots, the viewer is stimulated to see the emancipation project as a logical conclusion of the foundation. Martens has made conscious choices about the selection of events in order to support his argument, such as the Italian photographer arguing that he is the righteous owner of his photographs and the amount of money that he makes as such. The film reaches its peak during this emancipation project that proclaims a hopeful message. The failure of the project holds another turning point in the film that leads to its conclusion, which displays events that are in line with the failure of the emancipation project and the argument of the film. The events in the film accumulate meaning in relation to their location in this rhetoric narrative.

However, the failure of the emancipation project does not mean that the film Enjoy Poverty has failed; on the contrary, the piece succeeded and Martens will profit from it, whether this emancipation project failed or not. In this sense, Martens not only questions the complicity of filmmakers and artists in sustaining poverty for the sake of their art, he also debates the possible effect of an emancipation project or an art piece, which just like the neon-sign in the film could be regarded as meaningless.  

**Vertical perspective**

The horizontal perspective of the film is reasonable and functional, but does not relate to the various stories and events that are put forward by the film. Therefore I will discuss an additional perspective of analysis that centers on these stories instead of the horizontal order of the film [Table 4 Vertical perspective]. The analysis has led to the formulation of 11 storylines that are present in the film. These storylines are not conceived as distinct, successive blocks in the film following after each other, but instead they are separated into parts, which can be connected in one storyline on the basis of their content. The film switches continuously back and forth between the different storylines and locations, in order to relate to the rhetorical narrative as described above.

For example, Storyline Neon-sign consists of the most parts, and appears in all three components of the film. It displays the journey of Martens through the Congo while accompanied by men who carry the boxes and the mounting of the neon-sign in villages where Martens passes.  

It occurs once in this storyline that the parts are directly succeeding. The other parts of Storyline Neon-sign are separated throughout the whole film. However, the various parts can be combined in one storyline for they all display Martens’ journey with the neon-sign. The content is decisive in this regard.

Meaning is accumulated through the interconnection between the storylines and the rhetorical narrative. This can for example be argued for the meaning of the Enjoy Poverty, please neon-sign throughout the film. It alters its meaning in relation to its arrangement in the film.  

84 Hans Hartog den Jager has discussed this aspect of Enjoy Poverty broadly in Het Streven. (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Athenaeum Polak & Van Gennep, 2013).

85 The boxes are from the Compagnie Anversoise, which is a colonial reference. See Van Gelder, “Aesthetic Ruptures”.

86 The notion of the motive analysis is proposed by Van Kempen, in which one motive or element, like the neon-sign, is anal-
In the first part of the foundation the boxes are closed. In the second part of the foundation the boxes are opened and mounted on a wooden structure for the first time [30.36 minutes]. The neon-sign is introduced to the viewer: It is here that Martens explains the villagers that the sign is written in English because the film will be watched by European viewers.

During the emancipation project Martens expresses for the first time in the film the meaning of the phrase ‘Enjoy Poverty, please’: Martens encouraging the villagers to take charge and capitalize their own poverty. For this reason a positive meaning can be attributed to it, which corresponds to the hope that is expressed in the emancipation project and which is shown in the same component.

However in the conclusion of the film the ‘Enjoy poverty, please’ sign does not bear this positive meaning anymore. Here, the emancipation project has failed and the neon-sign can accordingly be assigned a negative interpretation: ‘Enjoy Poverty, please’ is not meant as an encouragement, but rather a bit of advice for the people to submit to their poverty.

The formulation of storylines does not mean that connections between those storylines do not exist, on the contrary, the various parts frequently succeed logically although they do not belong to the same storyline.

For example, Storyline Plantations displays the investigation of Martens of various situations that relate to different perspectives on the Congolese plantations. In the first part of this storyline Martens visits a photography exhibition where photographs are exhibited, which are taken at a plantation of Mr. Blattner [Film Still 16 and 17, 10.24 min. and 10.30 min.]. Ostensibly the photographed workers are employees of Mr. Blattner. Directly after the depiction of the photography exhibition, the film switches to shot 88, which displays the plantation worker working in the field [Film Still 18, 12.10 min.]. This switch poses an interesting contrast between the two situations: The shot of photographs of workers versus the shot of a worker. This contrasting of images demonstrates how editing can add meanings to images, which are originally not present in these images.

Separated, the shots of the exhibition are shots of an exhibition with their proper meanings. However, in relation to the film, and specifically in relation to the shots of the plantation worker, the shots of the exhibition acquire additional meaning, according to the theory of conceptual montage, as developed by Russian filmmakers such as Sergei Eisenstein in the 1920s. Not only do they acquire additional meaning, they are also interpreted in a specific way as evidence ‘of something that is the case’, serving Martens’ argument.

Although the reactions of the visitors to the exhibition indicate the photographs of the workers at the plantation are recognised to be images of human deprivation, primarily, the photographs are acknowledged for their aesthetic quality. Nevertheless, as Martens seems to suggest by contrasting the two situations, the subjects on the photographs suffer in an equal manner, as the plantation worker does. The opposition of the photographs of this situation and the shots of the actual situation therefore relates to significant debates in

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87 Spence and Navarro, Crafting Truth, 174-178.
89 Plantinga, “I’ll Believe It When I Trust the Source”, 40.
90 One viewer interpretes the photograph at first sight differently, he recognizes how his ancestors used to live and is pleased. Luntumbue has mentioned the cultural differences in the perception of an image. See Demos and Van Gelder, In and Out of Brussels, 13.

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contemporary art.91 Not only has Martens been accused of exploiting the subjects in this particular film, but the search for an ethics in contemporary critical and participative art is a topical subject in contemporary art criticism.92 This question of ethics relates also to the question of whether the portrayed subjects should benefit from their depiction in art. According to the Italian journalist in Martens’ film, the subjects in his photographs should not profit from their portrayal through the photographs. Applying this reasoning to Enjoy Poverty itself would imply that Martens does not need to compensate the subjects who he is filming. It should here be noted that, even though this is not visible in the film, Martens has stipulated contracts with some of the subjects in the film.93

Another example of conceptual montage in Enjoy Poverty and the interconnection between storylines is the opposition between a part of Storyline Plantations, where Martens meets Mr. Blattner at his office and debates the percentage and number of malnourished children at Mr Blattner’s plantations, and the first part of Storyline Malnourished Child, which registers a young child in a hospital dying from malnourishment [Film Stills 19 and 20, 23.46 min. and 24.33 min.]. The registration of this malnourished child is a tangible and concrete image of the meaning of malnourishment in opposition to the discussion that Martens and Mr. Blattner have about the percentages of malnourished children on his plantations, which retains only an abstract level. It is clear that Martens contrasted the depicted situations on purpose, in order to make the viewer understand the consequences of the kind of reasoning that Mr. Blattner adopts and the reality of malnourishment.

The most striking influence of the editing can be found in the absence of any chronological order in the film, which can be demonstrated in a couple of shots at the end of the foundation, where Martens meets a humanitarian aid worker and speaks with her about the use of plastic sheets with logos. The shot focuses on the humanitarian aid worker in the form of a medium close-up; however behind her, one of the Congolese photographers participating in the emancipation project is taking a picture [Film Still 21, 46.14 min.]. A short moment later, two Congolese photographers are visible [Film Still 22, 46.39 min.]. The official introduction of these photographers follows later in the film [Film Still 23, 51.12 min.]. It is interesting to note that the Bolingo Studio, the photography studio of these photographers, has been filmed before, namely during Martens’ encounter with the Italian photographer [Film Still 24, 42.32 min.]. It is suggested through this order of shots that Martens embarked at the photography shop and returned there later, to meet the photographers.

The appearance of the photographers in the film in advance of their official introduction means that the order of events as suggested by the arrangement of the shots does not relate to the actual order of events. Rather, the location of their introduction is justified by the narrative of the film: The photographers are the main subjects taking part in Martens’ emancipation project. Martens’ visit of a refugee camp is part of the evidence that leads

to the emancipation project, which suits its location in the foundation of the film. These images show that in reality the events have been overlapping: Martens has taken the photographers to the refugee camp in order to instruct them, while simultaneously, he met with the humanitarian aid worker.

This not only demonstrates how the material in the film has been interpreted and arranged in terms of the political message of the film, it also gives one reason to believe that certain events in the film have been pre-organized or even staged in order to create material for the film.

Conclusion

The truth that Martens aims to reveal in Enjoy Poverty, as reinforced by Martens’ appearance in the film, is the very system in which journalistic images, humanitarian aid campaigns, and artworks by critical artists are produced, including Enjoy Poverty itself. This truth-claim leads to the political message of the film, since this truth implies that artists and viewers profit from the deprivation of the subjects in the artwork, and as such prolong it. Therefore Martens argues that, since he observes that many artists hide this aspect of their art, they should acknowledge the paradoxes inherent in their pieces itself.

As I have demonstrated through the discussion of a couple of examples, the documentary material that is used in the film is interpreted and arranged as evidence in the structure of a rhetorical narrative. In addition, the appearance of the Congolese photographers before their official introduction in the film leads to believe that not only material has been interpreted and arranged in a particular way, but also created to serve the rhetoric of the film.

Through this rhetorical narrative, Martens constructs a complex argument about the ‘truth’ of the way the image-industry operates in the Congo, and on a meta-level the art world, which is also perceived as such by critics and scholars. Using documentary codes, such as the hand-held camera, interviews and through intelligent editing, Martens enforces that this is the ‘truth’ of how this image-industry and the art-world functions and thus calls upon the documentary’s conventional claim to veracity and truth. At the same time, Martens criticizes documentary filmmakers and artists, who lack the creation of ‘truthful’ images in which their thriving on the depicted subject’s poverty is openly acknowledged. It can thus be argued that Martens underlines, rather than disavows, the capacity of documentary images to make claims to truth.

The organisation of the images according to a rhetoric of the narrative, the careful location of the events in the storylines in relation to this rhetorical narrative, the intelligent and deliberate editing, the documentary codes, and possibly the creation of material, all form part of the artist’s strategy. The rhetoric is strong, has been considered controversial, and is undoubtedly meaningful in the contemporary art field: Engaged contemporary art pieces often disguise the fact that the problems they are trying to debate are inherently present in the pieces themselves. However, by creating this powerful statement, the images have been interpreted in a specific way, providing evidence this statement as true. The film thus creates a verité that does not necessarily correspond to the reality that these documentary images represent, but rather, surpasses the reality of the facts as represented by the documentary material, in order to aim at a ‘deeper’ kind of truth. As such, it can be argued that while the film aims at revealing its own production, it hides another crucial part of its production, which contradicts its own formal intentions.
### Film Stills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Film Still</th>
<th>Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Film Still 1" /></td>
<td>Film Still 1, 02.59 min, shot 16. Martens’ hand is visible on the lower right side of the frame, which indicates that he is carrying the camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Film Still 2" /></td>
<td>Film Still 2, 03.45 min, shot 23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Film Still 3" /></td>
<td>Film Still 3, 31.07 min, shot 198.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Martens has taken the Congolese photographers to a hospital in order to show them how to photograph a malnourished child.
Film Still 8, 03.03 min, shot 16. Water-drops are visible on the camera.

Film Still 9, 03.38, shot 22. The dirt on the camera is visible in this frame.

Film Still 10, 43.31 min, shot 261. The man who Martens is speaking with on the far left, is almost out of focus. Furthermore, the direction of the journalists’ face towards Martens, indicates that Martens is holding the camera in front of him as a device that records what is being said.

Film Still 11, 20.03 min, shot 127.
Film Still 12, 48.45 min, shot 281.

Film Still 13, 49.09 min, shot 282.

Film Still 14, 54.06 min, shot 317.

Film Still 15, 1.09.15 min, shot 420.
Film Still 16, 10.24 min, shot 77. One of the photographs exhibited at the exhibition.

Film Still 17, 10.30 min, shot 78. The man pointing at a photograph is Mr. Blattner.

Film Still 18, 12.10 min, shot 88. Plantation worker in the field.

Film Still 19, 23.46 min, shot 141. Mr. Blattner is calculating that 16 malnourished children on a total of 8000 is not so bad.
20

A mother in the hospital hands money to the mother of the malnourished child in order to buy some sugar.

21

Behind the humanitarian aid worker, one of the Congolese photographers is taking a picture.

22

The two Congolese photographers walk on the right side of the humanitarian aid worker.

23

Martens is inquiring the photographers about their photography studio. This is their official introduction in the film.
The photography studio has been filmed before, when Martens speaks with the Italian journalist about the prizes of the photographs and the intellectual property of his photos.

**Shot-by-shot analysis - Tables**

**Table 1 The Foundation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Storyline</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Shots</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Filmstill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I Foundation (shots 1-281)</td>
<td>I Plantation Worker – part 1</td>
<td>0.00 – 1.45</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Introduction of Plantation worker: ‘it takes three days to make half a dollar.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Humanitarian Aid and Photography</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.46 – 2.39</td>
<td>6-13</td>
<td>Humanitarian aid and photography: camera records humanitarian aid workers handing out materials to people and photographing them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Photographer in Refugees camp</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.47 – 4.50</td>
<td>32-35</td>
<td>Photographer in refugee camp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.30 – 6.56</td>
<td>36-46</td>
<td>Journey with neon-sign: you cannot give them anything they don’t already have (folder text).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Plantations – part 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.15 – 12.07</td>
<td>76-87</td>
<td>Investigation Martens: exhibition photographs + Introduction of Mr. Blattner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Page Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI Plantations – part 4</td>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>133-141</td>
<td>Investigation: Mr Blattner’s office and number of malnourished children on his plantations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Humanitarian Aid Organisations, Journalists and Gold – part 5</td>
<td>36.52</td>
<td>227-232</td>
<td>Gold company and employees.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Humanitarian Aid Organisations, Journalists and Gold – part 6</td>
<td>37.44</td>
<td>233-247</td>
<td>Journalists photographing corpses and with the militia.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII Humanitarian Aid Organisations, Journalists and Gold – part 7
40.00 – 41.44
248-250
Martens is with the militia in the fields and speaks with them.

VIII Humanitarian Aid Organisations, Journalists and Gold – part 8
41.45 – 45.16
251-267
Italian photographer + filming the photography shop of the Congolese photographers who appear later in the film.

VIII Humanitarian Aid Organisations, Journalists and Gold – part 9
45.17 – 48.41
268-281
Refugee camp: humanitarian aid worker, the use of logos (Congolese photographers walking in the back) + phonecall with Jesse.

Table 2 The Emancipation Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Storyline and parts</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Shots</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Filmstill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>IX Emancipation class – part 1</td>
<td>48.54 – 50.59</td>
<td>282-291</td>
<td>Martens instructs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IX Emancipation class – part 2</td>
<td>51.00 – 52.50</td>
<td>292-305</td>
<td>Meeting photographers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IX Emancipation class – part 3</td>
<td>52.51 – 55.15</td>
<td>306-326</td>
<td>Martens instructs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IX Emancipation class – part 4</td>
<td>55.16 – 57.57</td>
<td>327-341</td>
<td>Martens instructs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IX Emancipation class – part 5</td>
<td>57.58 – 1.00.43</td>
<td>341-353</td>
<td>Martens and photographers in hospital.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 5</td>
<td>1.00.44 – 1.03.21</td>
<td>354-380</td>
<td>Neon-sign; mounted in village.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 6</td>
<td>1.03.22 – 1.04.56</td>
<td>381-390</td>
<td>Neon-sign; mounted; meeting journalist.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3 The Conclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Storyline and parts</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Shots</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Filmstill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 7</td>
<td>1.09.21 – 1.12.59</td>
<td>421-443</td>
<td>In village, neon-sign.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VII Malnourished child – part 2</td>
<td>1.13.00 – 1.14.44</td>
<td>444-445</td>
<td>Malnourished child dies.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 8</td>
<td>1.14.45 – 1.15.36</td>
<td>446-448</td>
<td>Neon-sign journey continues.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Presscard</td>
<td>1.15.37 – 1.16.31</td>
<td>449-455</td>
<td>Martens loses his presscard.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Plantation Worker – part 4</td>
<td>1.16.32 – 1.20.58</td>
<td>456-474</td>
<td>Martens brings food to plantation worker + logo on daughter’s shirt.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>Keith Snow</td>
<td>1.20.59 – 1.22.03</td>
<td>475-479</td>
<td>Keith Snow.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>III Neon-sign – part 10</td>
<td>1.22.04 – 1.25.03</td>
<td>480-487</td>
<td>Jacques Brel + boat with neon-sign.</td>
<td><img src="Image" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4 Vertical structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storyline</th>
<th>Location in horizontal structure</th>
<th>Shots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Storyline I (4 parts): Plantation Worker</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>I1: shots 1 - 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12: shots 88 - 90.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13: shots 95 - 119.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storyline</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Shots</td>
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<td>III2: shots 36 - 46.</td>
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<td>III3: shots 120 - 126.</td>
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<td>III4: shots 162 - 199.</td>
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<td>Emancipation Project</td>
<td>III5: shots 354 - 380.</td>
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<td>III6: shots 381 - 390.</td>
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<td>Conclusion</td>
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<td>III8: shots 446 - 448.</td>
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<td>III9: shots 485 - 487.</td>
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<td>Archival footage of Laurent Desire Kabila – not sure from which film or video.</td>
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<td>VI2: shots 91 - 94.</td>
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<td>VI3: shots 127 - 132.</td>
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<td>VI4: shots 133 - 141.</td>
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<td>VIII2: shots 200 - 205.</td>
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<td>VIII3: shots 206 - 217.</td>
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<td>VIII4: shots 218 - 226.</td>
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<td>VIII5: shots 227 - 232.</td>
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<td>VIII6: shots 233 - 247.</td>
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<td>VIII7: shots 248 - 250.</td>
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<td>VIII8: shots 251 - 267.</td>
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<td>VIII9: shots 268 - 281.</td>
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IX2: 292 - 305.
IX3: 306 - 326.
IX4: 327 - 341.
IX5: 341 - 353.
IX6: 391 - 420.

10. Storyline X (1 part): Presscard.

Conclusion shots 449 - 455.

11. Storyline XI

Keith Snow shots 475 - 479.

**Bibliography**


De Roo, Ruben. “Immorality as Ethics: Renzo Martens’ Enjoy Poverty.” In *Art and Activism in the Age*


Sanne Sinnige (1987) is PhD candidate at the VUB and assistant curator based in Brussels. She researches the audiovisual documentary strategies that are adopted by contemporary artists and filmmakers in their reflections on the Belgian colonial past, while departing from her research on Enjoy Poverty (2008) by Renzo Martens. Furthermore, she worked on various exhibition projects in Brussels, Milan and China.

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