

## **Film Analysis “The Killing Fields”**

*The Killing Fields* directed by Roland Joffe is a powerful film based on true events of the past, which refer to the war conducted by Americans in Cambodia. The plot of the film also represents the questions of sincere friendship and an irresistible desire to survive experiencing human rights' violation and cruel violence. The scenes of the film are really difficult to watch and bear as they show a nightmare, in which the regime of the Khmer Rouge kills millions of people. Thus, the main idea demonstrates US atrocities and a relentless attitude to the native population causing a boundless amount of the victims to die as human life means nothing.

Loyalty, friendship, and the war unite the main characters as they intend to fulfill one goal. The film illustrates a true story, which occurs in the 1970s in Cambodia when an American correspondent, Sydney Schanberg (Sam Waterston) arrives from New York to make a report of the current situation including all horrible consequences of the war. He starts cooperating with a Cambodian interpreter and journalist, Dith Pran (Dr. Haing S. Ngor), who makes many attempts to survive in relentless non-living conditions provided by the existing regime established by Khmer Rouge. When both journalists work together, they support each other and become friends being ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of justice and freedom. Moreover, Schanberg managed to evacuate Dith Pran's wife and children despite the fact that he was also at risk. Being able to leave Cambodia, he makes a decision to stay, because he did not complete his initial and primary purpose. Dith also remains in the capital as he cannot betray his friend leaving him alone. Undoubtedly, they realize that their mission is rather dangerous, and they can be killed anytime but their intentions were worth it.

Human will to survive does not have any limits or boundaries when the main character manages to survive while reigning of the Khmer's regime based on slavery and human exploitation. From the very beginning of the film, Schanberg discovers that the US planes are

bombing innocent Cambodians, who become poor victims losing everything they possessed. After coming back to New York, everybody was sure that Dith Pran was either killed or died because of disease or starvation. Despite the fact that a man was forced to work in the labor camp experiencing violence, tortures, and constant humiliation, he does not leave an idea to run away from a so-called prison, in which people disappear one by one if they ask questions. Only those people can survive, who always keep silent and live in silence as death is too close. It is evident that the audience feels sympathy and compassion for the main character as he never forgets that life is ahead, and it is possible to be free. Thus, Dith Pran finds all his strength and refuse to die trying to survive on scorpions and lizards “sucking the blood from living water buffaloes” (Joffe n.p.).

In conclusion, the film *Killing Fields* refers to one of the greatest films of the past, which reflect the historical events in Cambodia in the 1970s. The plot reveals the consequences of the Khmer Rouge’s regime based on human violence and cruel treatment according to the native population that died in a large number because of the war and constant abuse. On the other hand, Roland Joffe portrays true friendship based on support and loyalty, which remain between the main characters to the end of the film. The code of integrity and the appropriate mission is under great importance, which they cannot deny. Thus, this true-based story is worth watching one more time in order to observe all injustice and cruelty people experienced in life during the war in Cambodia.