

**AMERICAN RESISTANCE TOWARD COLONIZER
DEPICTED IN ASSASSIN'S CREED III**

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ABSTRACT

Many video games now take historical themes as the background of the story, indirectly we also learn history while playing video games. One of the video games with a historical theme is *Assassin's Creed III*. *Assassin's Creed III*, developed by Ubisoft Montreal and released in 2012, is set against the backdrop of the American Revolution, spanning from 1775 to 1784. Many missions in *Assassin's Creed III* take inspiration from several famous events during the American Revolution.

The researcher employed qualitative-descriptive research methods to analyze and describe the research objectives. This research use postcolonial theory by Edward Said and semiotic theory by Roland Barthes. The purpose of this research is to analyze the American resistance toward colonizer and oppression from colonial that depicted in the *Assassin's Creed III* video game.

In conclusion, Despite its portrayal of genuine historical events, the game takes liberties with its narrative to fit its fictional framework, albeit still featuring many authentic figures from the American Revolution. Consequently, while not entirely accurate, *Assassin's Creed III* provides a valuable overview of this pivotal moment in history, offering players a glimpse into the complexities of the American Revolution.

Keyword : American Revolution, Assassin's Creed III, History, Video Games

I. INTRODUCTION

Video games are one of the most popular, profitable and important types in the USA and all around the world (Squire, 2003). Video games are something we often hear about, especially in today's digital world. In fact, video games has become an activity that is often carried out at all ages, especially in the US itself (Kim & Shute, 2015). Video games can be define as a games that played with an audio visual and can be based on a story-line (Espasito ,2006). Many of today's popular video games use stunning visuals, great music, and interesting and varied story lines (Anguera & Gazzaley, 2015).

From many of video games, *Assassin's Creed Series* is a video game series in which players are placed in historical settings at different periods in the past (Fishbune, 2018). *Assassin's Creed* is a series of stealth-action video games that developed by Ubisoft Montreal (Van Nuenen, 2017). *Assassin's Creed III (2012)* is the fifth game in the *Assassin's Creed Series* that sets in American Revolution war (Shaw, 2015). *Assassin's Creed III* take the player as Desmond Miles that evolving against the Templar Knight by using a machine called the *Animus* that memorize of Desmond's ancestors (Berger & Staley, 2014).

As previously explained, *Assassin's Creed III* takes a real historical background in America, namely the American Revolution. According to HISTORY.COM, American Revolution is developed as a result of rising tensions between the colonial power, which represented the British throne, and the citizens of Great Britain's thirteen colonies in North America. Thirteen of Great Britain's colonies in North America carried out the American Revolution, which started in 1775 and ended in 1783 with a peace treaty. Then after gaining political freedom, the colonies united and become the United States of America (Wallace, 2024). Many

historians view the American Revolution primarily as the initial stage in forming the American nation. They emphasize the nation-building process, highlighted by establishing republican political systems in both individual states and the nation as a whole (Greene, 2000). In the American revolution, there were many events in it, such as the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Battle of Monmouth. All these events are described and inspired by these historical events in the Assassin's Creed III game.

In this research, researchers will examine the representation of Americans resistance and oppression in the video game Assassin's Creed III. To help research this research, researchers will use qualitative methodology. The theory that will be used in this research is the postcolonial theory by Edward Said and Semiotic theory by Roland Barthes, using a sociological and semiotic approach.

II. METHODOLOGY

In this research, researchers used descriptive qualitative methods in analyzing research objects. When conducting qualitative research, one must recognize that it is a skill, characterized by the difficulty of conducting original research and the pursuit of three crucial goals: openness, methodic-ness, and adherence to evidence. In addition, researchers may use their own worldview or set of beliefs as the driving principle behind the initial definition and conduct of their research (Yin, 2016).

1. Data and Source of Data

This research is using video games *Assassin's Creed III* as primary data source. The researchers will play the video game to collect the data. The secondary data obtained by through a research articles, journals, online articles, and books that has related with the research.

2. Data Collecting Technique

The Researcher will observe data from the *Assassin's Creed III* video game through various scenes, actions and social interactions related to this research topic.

The procedure for collecting data is as follows :

- a. Playing the *Assassin's Creed 3* video game.
- b. Observing the element of resistance and oppression in the video game *Assassins Creed*.
- c. Capture the scene that will used as the data related to the research question.
- d. Analyze the data by implementing theory that used in this research.



3. Method of Analyzing Data

According to Robert K. Yin (2016) in data analysis using qualitative research methods there are five-phased cycle, there are *compiling*, *disassembling*, *reassembling*, *interpreting*, and *concluding*.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Denotative and connotative elements that represent American resistance towards colonizer

Table 3.1 a protester who gives opinion to the public

Scene	Dialogue
	“taxatation without representation! Tell me - who represented us in Parliament? Who spoke on our behalf? Signed in our stead?”
	“...The Indemnity Act, The Commissioners of Customs Act, Oh, Chancellor Townshend must have thought himself so clever”

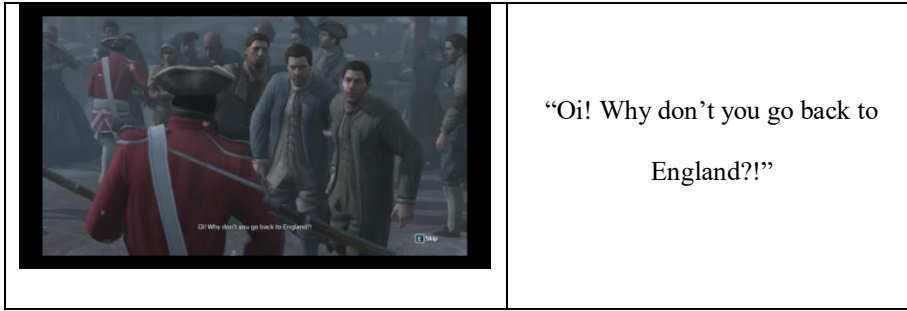
This dialog scene shows some of American people who expresses his opinion in public. A form of protest and resistance against British Colonial, it is stated that the person said "taxation without representation" which was a word used by Americans in the past to protest and complain about the British parliament's policy on taxation at

that time and was the beginning of the events of the American revolution such as Boston Tea Party and so on.

After Connor Kenway became a teenager, he briefly met someone named Achilles Devenport, who was a grand master of the Assassins Brotherhood, and Connor Kenway wanted to train with him. After that, one day Connor was invited by Achilles Devenport to visit the city of Boston, which Connor had never been to the city of Boston before, and it became something new for him. However, the situation in Boston was quite chaotic because at that time the British were still colonizing America, especially the city of Boston. You can see in the video game that British flags were everywhere, while the American citizen at that time was also annoyed with the British government's policies, and the American people also held a small demonstrations but slowly became large demonstrations, because they were angry with the British government in making policies at that time, so many people used sentences like "taxation without representation" at that time because of policies related to taxation and detrimental to the American citizen at that time.

Table 3.2 *a demonstration in Old State House*


Scene	Dialogue
	



In this scene shows people of America who are holding a demonstration toward the British parliament. After the people of America is sick out with the decision of British parliament because of their policy, the American starting to hold a demonstration, which is at that time it’s a chaotic situation, where the civilian of America fighting with the British Army.

After Connor arrived and went for a walk around the city of Boston with Achilles Devenport, Connor was told by Achilles to buy something for him, Connor left and started walking around further while looking for the shop he was going to. During the journey, it can be seen in the video game, there were many protests, both non-violent and violent, between the American people and the British army. Until a short time after Connor had bought the goods, Connor and Achilles arrived in front of the towns head's building, where there were a lot of American people who were holding demonstrations with British troops who were still guarding the towns head’s building.

Table 3.3 *American people brawl against The Redcoats*

Scene	Dialogue
	<p>“We are not English! We are not the King’s men! We are free! But the King sends these REDCOATS to push us</p>

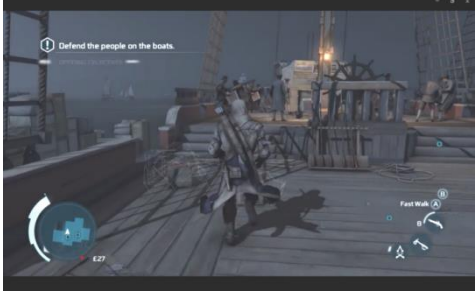

	<p>around! They were not out masters, and it was time for us to fight!”</p>
	<p>“Hey Redcoats! Your King is a pig!”</p>

In this first mission scene depict the American people were fighting with several British soldiers. In this mission of the game, these citizens were American citizens who took part in fighting the British colonialists because of the British government's policy regarding taxation. This was done by American citizens as a form of resistance and anger towards the British colonialists. Stephane Chapheau who voiced the opinion that "we" were free and "they" (England) were not our masters, and it was time for us to fight. This statement directly led to resistance against the British colonialists.

In the second mission scene shows Stephane Chapheau mocking the English king directly to the Redcoats and start fight with them. It also needs to be understood that the word Redcoats itself refers to British soldiers who in the game wear red military uniforms. Stephane Chapheau taunted the king of England directly into the Redcoats as a form of his anger at the treatment of those who had forcibly confiscated property and taxation carried out by the king of England at that time, namely King George III.

**B. Depiction of resistance and oppression towards colonizer in video game
Assassin's Creed III.**

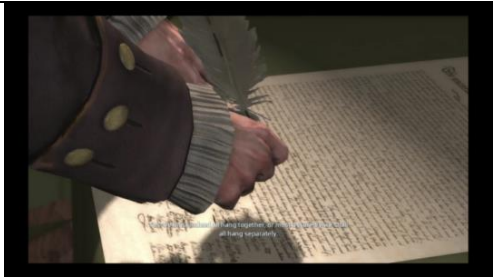
Table 3.4 *American people throwing a chest to the sea*

Scene	Dialogue
	
	

The scene from the table 3.4 is representing the resistance. Because, in this mission it was seen that the American people carried out a large demonstration by throwing British tea supplies into the sea. This event was a form of resistance in the form of non-violent action or demonstrations carried out by the American people to fight British colonialism at that time. This event was the beginning of the American revolutionary movement to free America from British colonialism. Then, after the demonstration was completed it can be seen that many American people supported this movement, because the American people themselves were fed up with the treatment of the British colonialists. So that solidarity between fellow Americans was formed to take action to resist the British colonialists, for America to be free from colonialists.

There is a historical context in the scenes from table 3.4. Inspired by a real historical events that happened during the American Revolution, and its called The Boston Tea Party. The Boston Tea Party was a political demonstration that took place at Griffin's Wharf in Boston, Massachusetts, on December 16, 1773. 342 chests of tea that the British East India Company had brought in were dumped into the harbor by American colonists who were enraged and disgusted with Britain for enforcing "taxation without representation" (Onion, 2023). Before the Boston Tea Party held, On the night of December 16, 1773 Samuel Adam made a speech in front of the residents of the Boston people. Sam Adam targeted 3 tea ships from the East India Company which were at Griffin's Wharf (Volo, 2012). In the scene from the table 3.4 it can be seen that Samuel Adams make a plan to dump the tea from the ship in Griffin's Wharf and need the aid of Connor to help for their plan which was that was a fiction not happening in the real historical events. In this mission we are required to protect the protestants who are carrying out an action of throwing tea from the ship, so we are required to fight and kill the British troops who want to attack the protestants. However, in reality no one was hurt when the Boston Tea Party started (Onion, 2023).


Table 3.5 *Declaration of independence*

Scene	Dialogue
	<p style="text-align: center;">“Yes, we must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately”</p>

Then the scene from table 3.5 is representing the resistance from The Patriots by declaring an independence. In this scene is the signing of the United States Declaration of Independence which was signed by Benjamin Franklin, Sam Adams, and others. They signed a declaration of independence as a form of resistance to the colonialists to leave this land. The resistance this time was used in the form of non-violent resistance in the form of political resistance, that the United States had declared its independence.

The scene in table 3.5 takes inspiration from the event of the American Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. In this scene, Connor enters the room containing Sam Adam, Benjamin Franklin and their colleagues who are signing a document containing the Declaration of American Independence. According to the original history, the document was signed by committee of five members containing, Roger Sherman, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Robert R. Livingston, and Thomas Jefferson, with Jefferson assigned the task of authoring the actual document (National Archives, 2022).

Table 3.6 *A burning village*

Scene	Dialogue
	<p>“Have you seen my mother?”</p>

The scene from table 3.3 is representing about oppression from the British colonial. Because, in this mission, native Americans became political victims of the Americans themselves (The Patriot) because they were accused of collaborating with

British colonialists at that time, where The Patriot burned down the native American village where Connor grew up, on the grounds that this was done to prevent them from allying with the British colonialists.

Connor Kenway is a son from Ziio and Haytham Kenway, in this mission Connor was still a kid. The story is, Connor at that time he want to play a hide and seek with his 5 friends not far away outside of the village. After they done playing hide and seek games, they went back and seeing their village was burned from far, Connor slightly runs toward the village and start to finds his mom, Ziio. But, before he enter the village, he meet someone not far away from his village, his name was Charles Lee. Connor thought that Charles Lee who is burning the village with the other man with him. Charles Lee at that time almost kill Connor but, Connor escaped from him and run toward the village. He search for his mother, it turns out Ziio was stuck in a house which will be soon catch on fire. Connor meets Ziio and don't want to let her go, but he cant do anything. After that, Ziio tell him to go and leave her behind. Connor couldn't help it but to leave her and burn with the house together. After that Connor want to revenge who is the person that burn his village and his mother, Charles Lee is his target but it turns out that George Washington who is responsible for the burning his village. George Washington do such that thing, because he don't want they (native American) helping or allied with British Army.

Table 3.7 *The Redcoats shooting at the Bostonians protestors*

Scene	Dialogue
	

The Scene from table 3.7 is representing the oppression from British soldier (The Redcoats) toward the American civil. Because in this mission, the situation in that scene was very chaotic. At that time the British soldiers were initially ordered to guard against the fury of the American people who were protesting at that time, without any attacks or orders to shoot. However, at that time when they (The Redcoats) should not have committed violence, it turned out that they immediately heard the sound of a gun firing, which was a sign of the order to shoot. After the British soldiers heard the sound of the gunshots, they brutally immediately fired their weapons at the American people. So there was a mass shooting of the American people, because of that, the event named the Boston Massacre. This was done in order to oppress the American people at that time so that they would be afraid of the British colonialists if they caused trouble with them.

here is a historical context in the mission scenes from table 3.4 until 3.6. The setting background from this mission is a real historical event named The Boston Massacre. The Boston Massacre was a deadly riot that happened on March 5, 1770 on King Street in Boston. It started from a brawl street between American colonist in Boston with a British soldier (Onion, 2023). Boston had a lot of tension in the early 1770s. The 16,000 colonists in the city were under occupation by about 2,000 British soldiers who were attempting to impose British tax regulations such as the Townshend Acts and the Stamp Act. The American colonists united around the slogan "no taxation without representation" to revolt against the taxes they perceived as oppressive (Onion, 2023).

So it can be clearly seen that the scenes in tables 3.7 take place before and during the Boston Massacre. From how people at that time protested by saying the phrase "taxation without representation", struggled with the British army, held

demonstrations because of the British government's tax policy until how the British army massacred Boston residents while they were protesting. But, in the game the cause of the Boston Massacre was due to the actions of a Templar, namely Charles Lee, who fired a gun into the air as a form of order to fire for the British army. The fact is, It is still up for question among many as to who actually yelled "fire" to order another soldier during the Boston Massacre (Kitchel, 2020). There are several opinions that say that the person who shouted "shoot" was a British soldier who at that time was restraining the anger of the people of Boston, but the soldier fell as a result of being hit by a thrown stick or club. After that, he immediately stood up and shouting "Damn you, fire!" (American Battlefield Trust, 2023).

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study, the main topic taken is about the American Revolutionary War as depicted in the video game Assassin's Creed 3. Therefore, this research focuses on how Americans were portrayed at that time while fighting against the British colonizers to strive for their independence within the video game Assassin's Creed 3. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive method to analyze the data used in this study. The aim of this research is to describe and explain the depiction of the resistance and oppression of the American War of Independence by the British colonizers during the American Revolution. The data for this research is taken from screen shots of dialog scenes from the video game Assassin's Creed 3.

Broadly speaking, this research can be concluded that in the game Assassin's Creed 3, the background is set during the American Revolution. Therefore, many real historical events are incorporated into this video game. Thus, in this video game, we can directly see how the situation in America was at that time, from the period of British colonization until the British began to leave America because it had gained

independence from British colonization. Therefore, we can observe the resistance of the American people to fight for their independence and how the oppression was carried out by the British colonizers (especially their troops) against the American citizens or Native American tribes. Although it portrays real historical events, Assassin's Creed 3 is not entirely accurate because it adapts to the fictional story taken from the Assassin's Creed series, thus slightly altering the storyline of real historical events to fit its main character. Nevertheless, in this video game, there are also many real figures in the history of the American Revolution, and the historical events portrayed are almost all present in the history of the American Revolution. Therefore, in the video game Assassin's Creed 3, it can serve as a general overview for learning about the history of the American Revolution.

Upon completing this research, the researcher hopes that readers can better understand how the history of the American Revolution is portrayed in the video game Assassin's Creed 3. Therefore, the researcher also hopes that this research can enhance knowledge, especially in the field of American history. The researcher also hopes that other researchers focusing on this topic can delve deeper into the discussion, such as examining the British perspective during the American Revolution or further discussing and comparing the real history of the American Revolution in this game with the actual historical events.

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