

**FREEDOM AND SACRIFICE IN ROLAND EMMERICH'S
THE PATRIOT MOVIE:
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



Research Paper

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Freedom is important in human life. Every nation wants to show the national pride. The fundamental danger to freedom is the concentration of power. The existence of a large measure of power in the hands of a relatively few individuals or country enables them to use it to coerce the others. Therefore, to get the freedom sometimes people have to struggle against the power that coerces them. Although to gain the freedom, there must be something to be sacrificed. Freedom and sacrifice are two things that cannot be separated, because in every freedom there must be something to be sacrificed. The common example is to gain national freedom of a country there are the citizen that must lose their soul.

The American Revolutionary War is the one of the world's events about freedom and sacrifice. In this war, an estimated 25,000 American Revolutionaries died during active military service. About 8,000 of these deaths were in battle; the other 17,000 deaths were from disease, including about 8,000 who died as prisoner of war. The number of revolutionaries seriously wounded or disabled by the war that has been estimated from 8,500 to 25,000. The total American military casualty figure was therefore as high as 50,000 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/american_revolutionary_war.html).

However, freedom and sacrifice are interesting objects to be explored. These themes are often used by the author of literary works to build their story, and the director also often uses it in their films. One of director that reveals the story about freedom and sacrifice is Roland Emmerich in his film entitled *The Patriot*.

It is interesting to analyze *The Patriot* movie since it presents a symbolically simple but remarkably deep conceptualization of British Colonists (Americans) sacrifice in gaining their freedom of their regions in American Revolutionary War. The movie shows the phenomenon of taking family and self-principle under the loyalty to the nations in gaining the freedom, that especially reflected in the main character of the film, Benjamin Martin.

The Patriot is a film directed by Roland Emmerich, starring by Mel Gibson and produced by the Mutual Film Company and Centropolis Entertainment, it was written by Robert Rodat, distributed by Columbia Pictures and released in June 2000. The film mainly takes place in South Carolina and depicts the fictional account of a war hero swept into the American Revolutionary War when everyone's family is threatened (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_patriot).

Roland Emmerich was born in Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. He attended the University of Television and Film Munich from 1977 to 1981 festival film, *The Noah's Ark Principle*, went on to open the 1984 Berlin Film Festival. Hoping to tap into the American market, Emmerich

began directing English-language supernatural fantasy features in his native Germany. Eventually, his science-fiction film *Moon 44*, went straight to video in the United States. Having caught the attention of producer Mario Kassar, Emmerich was invited to America.

Emmerich director of the action movie *Universal Soldier*, the science-fiction film *Stargate*, then hit his blockbuster stride with *Independence Day*, and *Godzilla*. Then he changes of pace directing the American Revolutionary War film *The Patriot*, in 2000. Emmerich returned once again to directing a visual effects-laden adventure with 2004's *The Day After Tomorrow*. His next project will be directing a remake of the 1966 science-fiction film *Fantastic Voyage*. In 2001 he directed his first and only television commercial, a 60-second spot entitled "*Infinite Possibilities*" for the DaimlerChrysler corporation. In 2006, he pledged \$150,000 to the Legacy Project, a campaign dedicated to gay and lesbian film preservation. Emmerich, who is openly homosexual, made the donation of behalf of Outfest, making it the largest gift in the festival's history (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/roland_emmerich).

The Patriot set in the late 18th century, in South Carolina. Benjamin Martin is a veteran of the French and Indian Wars and a widower raising seven children on his farm. Gabriel, the eldest, played by Heath Ledger, is anxious to join the American forces fighting the British in the Revolutionary War, without his father's permission. Martin, who knows from first-hand experience the horrifying carnage that war presents, is anxious to discourage his son from participating.

Against his father's wishes, Gabriel does join up only to return home wounded as he is carrying dispatches between commanders. Martin's second son Thomas, is killed trying to free Gabriel as he is taken prisoner, shot by the cold-hearted Col. William Tavington. This forces Martin to first free Gabriel with the help of his two younger sons Nathan and Samuel and then join up. During this time, Gabriel marries Anne Howard. However, Anne, her father and mother, along with all the townspeople are burned alive whilst locked in the church, at the orders of Tavington. Gabriel run after Tavington and have a battle with him that result to Gabriel's death.

In the final battle, Col. Harry Burwell and Jean Villeneuve help Benjamin defeat the British, beside the militia that have been recruited by Benjamin and Gabriel from various class of society. During this battle, Benjamin finally kills Col. Tavington, the man responsible for the deaths of two of his sons. Meanwhile, a disappointed General Cornwallis sounds the retreat as the rebels celebrate. As Martin narrates, we are told that the British were defeated when the French finally arrived to block the British off.

Based on the story of the film, the writer can take a point about freedom and sacrifice. There is an expectation of British Colonists (Americans) freedom from British tyrant. Nevertheless, to gain this freedom there must be something to be sacrificed. For Benjamin Martin, he has sacrificed his family and his own principle to reveal that freedom. In this film also presents the issue of slavery freedom, that there are many slaves participating in the war because they are promised to get their freedom as a

slave. Related to that, the writer is interested in study about the freedom and sacrifice from *The Patriot* movie using Sociological Approach.

B. Previous Study

In this study, the researcher does not find the other researcher from the university around Surakarta and Yogyakarta that analyzes this film, so as the writer knows this is the first time of research paper that conducts *The Patriot* film to be analyzed through Sociological Approach.

C. Problem Statement

In this study, the writer proposes a single problem statement. The major problem is how freedom and sacrifice is reflected in Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot*.

D. Objective of the Study

Concerning with the problem statements, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the film based on structural elements of the movie.
2. To analyze the film especially about the freedom and sacrifice using Sociological Approach based on sociological condition of North America society in the late of 18th century.

E. Benefit of the Study

The writer takes an expectation that this study gives benefits as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The result of the study is expected to broaden the writer's own comprehension about Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot*. This study is also expected to contribute to the development of the larger body of knowledge, particularly literary studies on Roland Emmerich's *The Patriot*.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is dedicated to the development of literary study in Surakarta University, especially in English Department and to give deeper understanding in literary field as the reference to the other researchers in analyzing the film that is analyzed in this research into different perspective.

F. Research Method

1. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *The Patriot* film to discuss the freedom and sacrifice that is reflected in the film.

2. Type of the Study

The writer uses a library research, which employs qualitative method. The writer also applies sociological approach

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

- a. The primary data are taken from the script of the film *The Patriot*; it consists of dialogue, plot, themes, conflicts, and the whole narration, etc, which are relevant to the object of the study.

- b. While the secondary data sources are taken from some books, web sites, other literary and other matters that support this analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The writer uses library research in collecting data, which involves several steps:

- a. Watching the film.
- b. Searching the script of the film from internet.
- c. Reading the script repeatedly.
- d. Marking the point in the script to make easy in analyzing it.
- e. Taking notes of important in both primary and secondary data.
- f. Classifying the data into groups according categories of elements of literary study.
- g. Selecting them by rejecting the irrelevant sources, that doesn't have important information to support the topic of the study.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The writer uses sociological approach and applies it by using the descriptive analysis. In addition, the writer also uses the structural analysis of the work. Firstly, the data are arranged in a list of data. Secondly, the researcher is looking for a selecting the correlation of data by using the chosen approach. Thirdly, all data from the second step are arranged. Finally, a conclusion is drawn.

G. Paper Organization

This research paper is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which consists of the background of the study, previous study, problem statement, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, and paper organization. The second chapter deals with review of underlying theory involving the notion of sociological approach that will be used to analyze the data. The third chapter is deal with the social background of North America society in the late of 18th century. The fourth chapter is a structural analysis. In this chapter, the writer explains the structural elements of the film. The fifth chapter is sociological analysis. The last chapter is conclusion and suggestion.