

= 1979 Revolution : Black Friday =

1979 Revolution : Black Friday is an adventure interactive drama video game developed and published by iNK Studios , with assistance from by N @-@ Fusion Interactive . It was released on April 5 , 2016 for Microsoft Windows and OS X , and on June 10 , 2016 for iOS devices . Players control Reza Shirazi , an aspiring photojournalist , who returns to Iran amidst the Iranian Revolution . As he becomes more involved in the events of the Revolution , Reza is forced to make decisions in order to survive . Players make timed responses throughout the game , determining the outcome of the plot . They are tasked with taking in @-@ game photographs of their surroundings , and given historical background of the events .

The game was in development for four years , and was created to combine elements from video games and documentaries with an engaging narrative . Game director Navid Khonsari , who was a child in Iran at the time of the Revolution , developed the game with the intention of making players understand the moral ambiguity of the situation . The development team conducted extensive research for the game , interviewing historical scholars and Iranians who lived in Tehran during the Revolution , as well as gathering numerous archival photos and historical speeches . The game 's performances were recorded using motion capture , and each of the characters was developed with ambiguous attitudes and morals .

At release , 1979 Revolution was well received by critics , with praise particularly directed at the narrative , characters and performances , and historical representations , though some criticism was directed at the quick @-@ time sequences and visual quality . The game was also criticized by an Iranian journalist who declared it as propaganda . Khonsari felt afraid to reenter Iran as a result , and other members of the development team adopted aliases for protection .

= = Gameplay = =

1979 Revolution : Black Friday is an adventure interactive drama video game . Players control Reza Shirazi ? an aspiring photojournalist who returns to Iran amidst the Iranian Revolution . Throughout the game , players are presented with the ability to interact with their surroundings , including crowds of people on strike , and a homeless mother and her infant child . Upon interaction , players are frequently prompted to take photographs of the selected person or event using Reza 's camera . Menus appear on screen , comparing the in @-@ game photograph to real images of the event taken by photographer Michel Setboun . Players also collect tapes throughout the game , featuring the speeches of revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini .

Some parts of the game require timed responses from players , often leading to significant decisions that impact the game 's story . Some conversation trees require players to select a response within a limited time , otherwise Reza remains silent . The game also requires action choices , wherein players must decide what to do in specific circumstances ; for example , one sequences tasks players with choosing whether to take aggression during a protest , or to take photographs . Other characters will respond to the decisions accordingly , and a notification feature indicates that a character will remember the selected response . In action @-@ based sequences , players follow on @-@ screen prompts for quick time events in order to stay alive . Should players fail to follow the prompts in the allocated time , the game restarts from prior to the quick time event .

= = Plot = =

The game opens in 1980 , as 18 @-@ year @-@ old aspiring photojournalist Reza Shirazi ( Bobby Naderi ) is ambushed at his hideout by police , and taken to Evin Prison , where he is interrogated by Asadollah Lajevardi ( Navid Negahban ) . Reza , who was part of the Iranian Revolution in an attempt to overthrow the Shah , chooses whether to cooperate to Asadollah , who goes by the name of Hajj Agha . The game cuts to September 1978 , as Reza and his friend Babak Azadi ( Omid Abtahi ) watch crowds chanting about the revolution from a rooftop , and Reza takes photographs . The two then walk the streets , and arrive at a protest where revolution leaders are giving speeches

. Reza 's cousin Ali Shirazi ( Nicholas Guilak ) arrives and , when the protest is interrupted by soldiers and the crowd begins to disperse , he tries to convince Reza to throw rocks at the soldiers . Babak opposes , and Reza is left to decide whether to act aggressively and throw rocks , or act passively and voice his concerns instead . When the soldiers start threatening the crowds by firing , Reza and Babak flee into an alley , shortly followed by Ali and an injured Abbas ( Ray Haratian ) , one of the revolution leaders who was stabbed in the commotion . After briefly being tended to , Abbas is escorted away by Ali and Bibi Golestan ( Mozhan Marnò ) .

In a flashforward at the prison , Hajj brings out Reza 's brother Hossein Shirazi ( Farshad Farahat ) , and harms him if Reza does not cooperate in providing information about Bibi . The game returns to Reza and Babak , who arrive at the rebellion hideout . Reza meets with Abbas , who is convinced that one of the revolution leaders betrayed and stabbed him , and tasks Reza with discovering the culprit . As he is investigating , Reza is approached by some of the leaders and accused of stabbing Abbas . A brief argument ensues , but is shortly ended as police begin to ambush the hideout . Abbas hurriedly demands an answer from Reza regarding the betrayer , and Reza is forced to decide which of the revolution leaders stabbed Abbas . In a flashforward , Hajj reveals to Reza that he chose the wrong person , but they were killed shortly thereafter .

At the hideout , Reza is arrested by the police , but Hossein arrives and demands to know where Ali is located . Reza refuses to tell him , and Hossein drives him to their parents ' household . The following day at a protest , Reza and Babak discover that martial law has been enacted . They move to the streets and join the large crowds . Soldiers arrive and demand the crowds to disperse ; when the crowds hold their ground , the soldiers begin firing at them . Reza rushes to Ali , who has been shot , and bandages his wound . Babak and Bibi help move Ali away from the commotion and into an alley , where they find Hossein . Hossein aims his gun at Ali , threatening to shoot him for his crimes , and Ali produces his gun and threatens Hossein . Reza tries to convince the two to stop , but is interrupted by firing soldiers . Reza then chooses who to save from the gunfire : Hossein or Ali . Should Reza save Hossein , the latter is thankful and directs him to the nearest hospital ; Ali dies regardless of Reza 's choice . Bibi and Reza escort Babak , who was wounded in the gunfire , towards the nearest hospital , but he shortly dies of his wounds . In a flashforward to the prison , the ending is determined based on Reza 's actions to Hossein throughout the game : if Reza was unpleasant to Hossein , Hajj frees the latter , who begins to choke Reza and demands Bibi 's location ; if Reza was favorable to Hossein , Hajj shoots and kills the latter , before pointing the gun to Reza 's head and demanding Bibi 's location .

= = Development = =

1979 Revolution : Black Friday was in development for four years ; the first two years consisted of seeking money from financiers , and the game was developed over the following two years . The game is based on events that occurred during the Iranian Revolution , namely Black Friday . The development team chose this setting shortly after the founding of development studio iNK Stories in 2010 , as they felt the chaotic environment would make players wary of which characters to trust . The team coined the term " vérité game " to describe 1979 Revolution , based on the cinéma vérité style of documentary filmmaking . They consider it an interactive storytelling technique that combines elements from video games and documentaries , blending them with a flexible narrative . The team wanted to avoid the game being considered strictly educational , ensuring player entertainment and engagement was the highest priority . Director Navid Khonsari said that the game 's development was the result of " a culmination of doing games , falling in love with narrative storytelling and ... fascination with documentary " .

Khonsari first discussed the game in February 2011 , announcing it as 1979 : The Game . It was initially intended to be episodic , consisting of three or nine episodes , but was later reduced to one game . A crowdfunding campaign for the game was launched on Kickstarter in 2013 with a goal of US \$ 395 @, @ 000 , but failed to reach its goal , with a total of US \$ 304 @, @ 741 raised . Additional fundraising was set up on the game 's website . Following the failed campaign , the team partnered with the New Frontier Story Lab at Sundance in 2014 and 2015 , the Museum of the

Moving Image in New York , and the Doris Duke Foundation . 1979 Revolution was approved through Steam Greenlight in July 2015 , and was released for Microsoft Windows and OS X on April 5 , 2016 , and for iOS devices on June 10 , 2016 . A release for Android is planned in 2016 , with console versions also in development . The game is also planned to have Oculus Rift support ; the team rewrote one of the interrogation scenes to fit with the experience . 1979 Revolution runs on the Unity game engine . Khonsari has expressed interest in a sequel , stating that it depends on the commercial success of the first game . He is also interested in developing additional games about other historical events .

= = = Story and setting = = =

Khonsari was a child in Iran at the time of the Revolution , and left the country shortly after it ended . Khonsari developed the game with the intention of making players understand the moral ambiguity of the situation , due to the different beliefs in Iran , and to " feel the passion and the elation of being in the revolution " . When the initial game concept was conceived , the location of Iran had not been decided ; the development team was attracted to the idea of a game set during a revolution , ultimately settling on the Iranian Revolution . When representing the concept of a revolution , the development team wished to demonstrate the multiple definitions of the term . Khonsari stated that they " wanted to embrace that spirit of revolution , but we also show the trajectory of a revolution " , regarding the true negative and complicated results of real revolutions .

The team interviewed a group of 40 Iranians who lived in Tehran during the Iranian Revolution . The game 's setting and environments are based on photographs taken by real photojournalists during the era , such as Michel Setboun , and graffiti on the streets of Tehran at the time . The team also studied many documentaries , films , journals and documents regarding Iran , and sought feedback from academic , political , religious and cultural advisers . They interviewed over fifty history scholars , including sociologist and political scientist Jack Goldstone , gathered about 1 @, @ 500 archival photos , and collected many of Ayatollah Khomeini 's speeches during their research for the game . The home video footage featured in the game is that of Khonsari 's grandfather , recorded in Super 8 film from the 1950s to 1979 . Producer Navid Negahban , who portrayed Hajj Agha in the game , was a high school student at the time of the Revolution . He said that the script " brought back memories " , and he provided information to the writers based on his personal experiences of the time .

= = = Character development = = =

The game 's performances were mostly recorded using motion capture technology , with remaining audio elements recorded later in a studio . The motion capture studio ? House of Moves , in Los Angeles ? uses over 70 cameras , synchronized to capture the full @-@ body motion of each actor . The 90 @-@ page script for the game was recorded in three days of shooting on April 13 ? 15 , 2015 . Khonsari , who directed the performances , shot full " master " takes in which the actors performed the entire scene without cutting ; this was done to save time during production .

The game was initially set to follow the stories of 8 ? 10 playable characters , beginning with an American @-@ Iranian State Department translator trying to free American hostages . This was later reduced to a single character : an aspiring Iranian photojournalist . Khonsari 's goal was to allow players to " see the world is a lot more gray than black and white " , achieving this by having a protagonist who experienced the Revolution . The game 's characters are based on the interviews conducted with Iranians who experienced the Revolution . Executive producer Vassiliki Khonsari said the characters " do not fall into the typical good guy / bad guy , but everyone is a shade of gray ... to show the complexity of history " . The team featured a variety of characters from different families , beliefs and social classes .

Farshad Farahat , who portrayed Hossein Shirazi in the game , was present during the 2009 Iranian protests . He appreciated the game 's interactivity , and the choices that players are forced to make . The development team felt that allowing player choice for some of the game 's dialogue and actions

allowed for a more personable experience , and for players to connect with the story and characters . Khonsari felt that it allows for a better understanding of the events and experiences of the revolution . The team also ensured that most choices had some effect , stating " a subtle or significant decision has repercussions " .

= = Reception = =

= = Critical response = =

1979 Revolution : Black Friday was well received by critics . Review aggregator Metacritic calculated an average score of 81 out of 100 based on 22 reviews . Reviewers liked the game 's narrative , characters , and historical representations , though some criticism was directed at its quick @-@ time sequences , and visual quality .

IGN 's Chloi Rad commended the game 's blend of drama and action , as well as the realistic depiction of violence , and felt that the game 's setting and period helped demonstrate the spirit of the revolution . Andrew Todd of Gameplanet praised the game 's manner of dealing with issues like inequality , theocracy , and causes of anti @-@ Americanism , and noted that they help create the atmosphere of the story and setting . Eurogamer 's Jeffrey Matulef found the narrative 's moral ambiguity refreshing , particularly the depiction of corrupting good people . He felt that the development team being primarily Iranian added to the game 's authenticity . Kotaku 's Evan Narcisse similarly appreciated the ambiguity , noting its close imitation to the era . The choices presented in the game split reviewers ; some found them important and scary , while others found them ultimately inconsequential .

Eurogamer 's Matulef declared the game 's characters superior and more sympathetic over those in other games , which would depict them " as cardboard henchmen or stormtroopers " . IGN 's Rad found the character of Reza to be likable , and Game Informer 's Javy Gwaltney considered his story fascinating . The game 's acting also received high praise ; IGN 's Rad called the performances " powerful " , and Kotaku 's Narcisse felt that they have the ability to " pull players into the drama " . Gameplanet 's Todd felt that the characters often " speak in exposition rather than emotion " , but that " when the drama works , it really works " .

Alexander Kriss of Kill Screen found the game 's historical information to be " both genuinely educational but also tantalizing in their brevity " , noting their reinforcement of the story 's themes . IGN 's Rad commended the game 's ability to deliver enriching information " without bombarding " players . Gameplanet 's Todd deemed the setting of Iran " convincing and real " , praising its complexity and detail , although found the density of the history somewhat overwhelming . Eurogamer 's Matulef felt that the information may provide too much backstory for the characters and events , but attributed this to personal preferences .

Criticism was directed at the game 's quick @-@ time sequences . Kotaku 's Narcisse considered them clunky , and Eurogamer 's Matulef found them to be " poorly constructed " . Game Informer 's Gwaltney similarly felt them to be " shoehorned " in between dialogue encounters . Kill Screen 's Kriss wrote that such sequences are featured in games like The Walking Dead ( 2012 ) to reinforce a sense of urgency in players , but felt that this is unnecessary in 1979 Revolution , as " the tension already feels real enough " . The game 's visuals also received mixed responses . Game Informer 's Gwaltney considered the art and environments " impeccable " , but criticized the character models ; Eurogamer 's Matulef likewise condemned the models and textures , describing the graphics as " competent at best and an eyesore at worst " . IGN 's Rad echoed similar remarks , identifying awkward animations of background characters , and Gameplanet 's Todd felt that 1979 Revolution " lacks the polish " of works by Telltale Games .

= = Controversy = =

When the game started gaining popularity in June 2012 , Iranian conservative newspaper Kayhan

published pieces naming the game " pro @-@ Western propaganda " , and accusing director Navid Khonsari of espionage , and he felt afraid to reenter the country as a result . Members of the development team were also prompted to use aliases to protect themselves , and the game 's concept artist fled Iran due to his involvement in the development . " Anytime Iran has something written about them in the west , they feel as if it is propaganda against them , " Khonsari said . Following the release of 1979 Revolution in April 2016 , the National Foundation for Computer Games ( NFCG ) blocked all websites distributing the game in Iran , and began an operation to gather all copies illegally distributed in the country . NFCG director Hassan Karimi claimed the game has " hostile intentions and objectives " , stating that it may " poison the minds of the youth and young adults ... by means of false and distorted information " . Executive producer Vassiliki Khonsari felt that the ban is a result of the game documenting " the facts that different ideologies , different economic classes , different social classes came together to overthrow the Shah " , which she described as the " gray area " that the NFCG accused of being inaccurate .