

CO GAME Videogame Research

General Information about the Game

Name of the game

Pro Libertate! / For Liberty!

Year of Creation

2006

Description of the game

A wargame that offered players a chance to relive the heyday of both the Rákóczi War of Independence against Austria and the American Revolution. Seeing the game land on our desks recently gave us a great excuse to revisit the glories of the Age of Enlightenment when war was an affair for brightly uniformed infantry, daring cavalry charges and thundering cannonades. There are two full campaigns for each war and a number of smaller campaigns that focus on just a few years of action. A reasonably thorough, if not overly friendly, tutorial will get players up to speed on the basics in short order.

The main point in each campaign is to accumulate victory points by capturing towns owned by your enemy. The towns serve as sources of income in the form of men, material and morale. Owning is not only the goal but also the means to achieving that goal. Taking towns also grants the player influence points which can be spent for political or material goals. You might use it to buy new units for your armies, or you might use it to spread propaganda to reduce enemy morale.

At the end of the campaign, the side with the most points wins. Discounting the inclusion of specific strategic objectives driven by political or geographical considerations, it's a nice way to determine a player's overall success or failure.

While moving armies overland and planning city sieges is fun, the most obvious drama in the game comes from the tactical battles. When two armies meet up, you're taken to a random (but geographically appropriate) map where you'll fight things out tactically. For Liberty! renders the tactical battles with all the elements wargamers expect: formation and facing controls, movement points, morale models, terrain and weather modifiers, ammo and supply levels, etc. Using the same hex-format of the strategic map, players will position and move their forces in hopes of forcing the enemy to retreat from the field.

Platform

PC

Type of the game

Strategy

Website

Download:

http://letoltokozpont.hu/letoltes_programok_reszletes.php?a=1149&k=23

Are there more institutions cooperating to the videogame development? Which profiles?

Developed by Hussar Games and published by Matrix Games (Hungary). The game was free, because it was co-financed by the Hungarian Educational Ministry.

BLOCK A. HERITAGE INTEREST

This part is for describing the heritage quality of the game.

Is there any distinctive heritage element?

There are many fascinating historical touches to For Liberty!, especially for Americans who don't know much about their own war of independence. Both sides have a huge roster of leaders, each with his own special attributes. Clinton, the British commander, is skilled but jealous, making him less likely to aid neighbouring armies. The American ranks are riddled with officers who are incompetent but influential, making them hard to replace. The various combat units have special abilities, such as rifle units picking off enemy officers (simulated by reducing the target unit's experience level). There are also colourful though goofy random events each turn, such as a fort garrison paralysed by drunkenness.

If yes, which are the different historical contexts (Who, when, where, why?) described.

For Liberty! is a turn based 18th century strategy game based on a upgraded game engine from the game 1848. Command the armies of the newly born United States or the British Empire during the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). As an added bonus, fight in Hungary, as either Rákóczi's rebels or the Austrians during the War of Spanish Succession, from 1703 to 1711.

Which are the main historical elements described?

18th Century (1701-1799) arms and tactics reshaped the battlefields to begin the "Age of Rifles". Gunpowder came onto the world stage in the form of ranged fire from muskets and artillery, giving rise to Dragoon units (horse-mounted infantry), the infantrymen and a famous world generals (including Napoleon Bonaparte of France).

The styles of warfare in the 18th Century changed by way of new organizational approaches to fielding and maintaining a professional army and the emergence of gunpowder for use in weaponry. The English Parliament was the first such governing body to act on this measure, creating the "New Model Army" as a professional band of soldiers under a strict organizational structure. This was a turn away from the old days of recruiting armies from the populace or hiring out non-aligned mercenaries to further political causes. In doing so, they created the world's first "professional" army.

Armies could also now utilize artillery as an effective ranged means to demolish their enemies. Infantry on horseback developed into equally effective killers as "Dragoons", armed with muskets and sabres, providing a fast-moving and powerful offensive battlefield piece.

The changes in warfare during the 18th Century fueled the cause of the super powers to spread their imperialistic tendencies through colonization against weaker nations.

A.) The Kuruc Rebellion of 1703-1711

Lead by Ferenc II Rákóczi, the Kuruc rebelled in 1703; by 1704 they controlled Hungary. Rákóczi was elected Duke of Transylvania, but exerted little influence there. The Kuruc even undertook cross-border raids into Austria.

Hopes invested in the French were destroyed by the Anglo-Austrian victory at Höchstädt in 1704 and further Austrian victories in Italy in 1706. The Treaty of Szatmár 1711 ended the rebellion; c. 12,000 former followers of Rákóczi promised to loyally support the Habsburg dynasty.

B.) The War of the Revolution 1775 to 1783

On the outbreak of the war the American colonies were, from North to South; Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut (making up New England), New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Are they rigorous or inspirational or simply scenarios for the development of the story?

Rigorous

Which are the most interesting elements regarding COGAME framework, and why?

The historical and the educational aspects of the game.

BLOCK B. EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

This part is about collecting information about the educational sense of the game.

Age addressed by the videogame

15 - 18

Is there any link with the national educational levels? (Is the game addressed specifically to any pedagogical level? To some pedagogical activity?)

Foster the attitude of the child to exploring and learning through play

Developing competences: mental courage, creative thinking, social interaction, forward thinking and strategic planning, historical knowledge,

The students learn spontaneously (through own curiosity) and intentionally (under the teacher's guidance). They discover and find functionality of things, fantasies or thoughts, realizes their changes.

Pedagogical activities:

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Which educational purpose has the game?

- it can assist children setting goals, ensuring goal rehearsal, providing feedback, reinforcement
- it is fun and stimulating participants
- it can act as simulations. These allow participants to engage extraordinary activities and to destroy or even die without consequences
- it attracts participation by individuals across many demographic boundaries (age, gender, ethnicity, educational status)

Target addressed by the project (List: community, classroom, subrepresented groups, disadvantaged, etc.)

children, young adults

Which are the main skills / knowledges / attitudes learned by using the videogame?

- A, historical knowledge
- B, mental and creative prowess
- C, social interaction
- D, forward thinking and strategic planning

Developing competences: mental courage, creative thinking, social interaction, forward thinking and strategic planning, historical knowledge,

The students learn spontaneously (through own curiosity) and intentionally (under the teacher's guidance). They discover and find functionality of things, fantasies or thoughts, realizes their changes.

BLOCK C. VIDEO GAME DESIGN

This part is for collect information about video game design

Graphics (Which type of graphics are used by the video game?)

For Liberty! is rendered entirely in 2D against at 2D hex-based map. In this sense, the game looks pretty decent: most of the units are detailed, the maps look realistic, and there are a number of small notes of detail, such as waving flags. For a 2-D game, For Liberty! looks good and it's generally easy to navigate. Almost all of the unit attributes and settings can be seen from the main screen, so there isn't much navigation away from the map. The icons are clear and easy-to-read, and the game includes extensive tool tips if you aren't quite sure what information you're looking at.

What is the storytelling of the video game? (Which are the main narrative elements?)

This game is about fighting campaigns in the 18th century and exploring the warfare of the age The sound is pretty much what you'd expect in a wargame: appropriate background music and generic unit movement and action effects. There are some good period pieces in the game, and the music fits the theme of well. The game is objective- and not narrative-oriented.

It means that the the player's personal experience stays in background, has just a few influence to the story. The explicit story stays in focus not the player story.

Is it future or past oriented? It is dystopian or utopian?

Past oriented

Main characters (How many characters the player can choose? Describe them.)

The players can choose between four options:

- a, Army of United States
- b, Army of the British Empire
- c, Rákóczi's rebels
- d, Army of the Austrian Empire

Interactivity (What is the level of interactivity inside the game? Describe.)

For Liberty! may be focused on revolutionary wars, but it is not a revolutionary game. Gameplay is hexagon-based (though without a hex grid) and of the standard point-and-click variety. Combat units are regimental, with artillery represented in batteries.

Players manoeuvre armies (composed of an unlimited number of regiments and batteries) over the main map. Armies can be given a variety of orders that affect their movement and combat capabilities, including attack, retreat, and train. Movement is fluid on the roads along the coast, but slower in the forests in the interior. Armies have a chance to react in support of other armies battling in adjacent hexes. There are also rules for forts, sieges, and entrenchments.

Usability (Has the game a complex screen? Number of controls (keyboard, screen, Joystick...))

Generally satisfactory gameplay, realistic troop recruitment and training, automated supply and naval operations, tactical battles add some variety, mostly excellent user interface.

Accessibility (Is the game prepared for people with mobility or control disadvantages?)

no

BLOCK E. ASSESSMENT FOR CO-GAME

Which are the elements you identify as relevans to be taken in mind for the development of the different IO for Co-Game?

- the game is challenging for the player
- the goal of the game really good determined
- good music and sound
- great tutorial

Which are the elements not to repeat while developing Co-Game?

- I. Lay greater stress on the story

it's important to point out that the story still plays a key role in a game's success. A great story can keep the player immersed in the world you've created. They should feel attached to the characters and want to continue playing to see how the story unfolds.

II. Gameplay and immersiveness must have been given a bigger role in the game.

Name of the organisation in charge of the questions (Write the name or your organisation (CEPS, LATERNA, MUNDANEUM, CIES; BFI)).

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