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ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORICAL AUTHENTICITY OF FACTUAL MATERIAL IN COMPUTER VIDEO GAMES OF THE GENRE "HISTORICAL STRATEGY"

Sapytska O.M.

АНАЛІЗ ІСТОРИЧНОЇ ДОСТОВІРНОСТІ ФАКТОЛОГІЧНОГО МАТЕРІАЛУ У КОМП'ЮТЕРНИХ ВІДЕОГРАХ ЖАНРУ «ІСТОРИЧНА СТРАТЕГІЯ»

Сапицька О.М.

The variety of media genres causes a large number of objects through which you can display a popular story. In addition to the entertainment value, teachers and scholars have begun to take into account the educational value of historical thematic films and video games. Even if games and reconstruction are lost in the historical method, they compensate, stimulating historical curiosity. With a relevant scientific critical approach, computer video games can become a powerful toolkit for teaching history along with traditional educational approaches.

On the example of several popular computer game games with historical content in the article are analyzed the historical authenticity of certain historical facts, which are reflected in the space of selected computer video games genre "historical strategy".

Key words: *academic history, computer video games, historical strategy, public history, historical content, reconstruction*

Introduction. Video games have recently become a topic for learning in academic space. Areas of research are separated from the video game algorithm to the critical analysis of the theory of video games and their quality. As the popularity of computer games is steadily growing, developers carry out thematic research more profound to reproduce historical events closest to the real ones and set up the mechanics of games for them as much as possible.

Well-known companies-developers for the fulfillment of these tasks attract professional historians (for example, Mike Loades – the famous British military historian, who advised Ubisoft – the developers company of the very popular video game Assassin's Creed), because consumers of digital video games on historical topics are no more satisfied with the common entourage of this or that epoch. They require maximum realism and accurate detailing of a particular historical era in the game. Historicity of games consists of a number of parameters: the re-creation of historical realism of events, the re-creation of architectural models of a certain era,

military equipment, the inclusion of historical personalities, the historical landscape etc. The combination of these components forms the playing space of the historical game.[1]

The relevance of the theme of the work is determined by the fact that history as a discipline is not limited to text materials, but also includes a component of the media. At present, historical themes are actively used in games and films, which can be called interactive modeling of events and a relatively new method of scientific knowledge of facts. It is important to use factual materials and how reliable they are to modify and interact. At the same time, historical accuracy often remains an underdog issue in the study of authenticity in media formats.

Formulation of the problem. By analyzing the critical discourse of a historical object in the media space, one can display the relation to the representation of history in the form of video games. Because video games are one of the many tools of public history, their accuracy should be analyzed. The scientific significance of videogames is not confirmed by the domestic historical community, so the obvious problem is the need to investigate their authenticity, as many developers often face negative stereotypes and feedback that hold the media and relevant studies that show people's opinion.

Analysis of recent research and publications. It should be noted that there is a significant lack of specialized historical historiography of the issue under study. In the domestic space in general, there are no highly specialized historical studies of this issue. However, foreign historiography on this topic, especially concerning the top computer videogames with historical themes, is quite significant [2]. The whole array of such historiography can not be analyzed within the framework of one article, but in some studies it is worthwhile to stop.

It is important to recognize video games both in the media environment and in history as part of public history that can expand the line between the fictional video game space and historical research. This is stated in the publication «Privileging Form Over Content: Analyzing Historical Videogames» A. Chapman[3].

Chapman begins his article by saying that he hopes that most historians are at the point where they can take certain historical video games (he calls «Civilization» and «Assassin's Creed» as examples). The author believes that video games should not be thoroughly analyzed since their content or history is historically accurate or inaccurate, but videogames as a specific environment or tool can be used to study. It should be noted that although Chapman suggests that comparing historical instruments is useless, his subsequent conclusions seem much more biased in the field of video games. It goes on to say that the "feeling" of history can often be more informative than specific historical details, and the presence of players passing through historical situations helps to understand more than just tell people how things are happening.

The next publication is «Being Historical» R. Gilles [4]. He thinks about in what sphere the historical theme of video games is popular and where the «history creation» format fits in the general definition of «history». The author is surprised at what happens when player take a topic that is similar to a history that is usually considered a record of the past event and opposes itself or a fictional idea of oneself to it. Like Chapman, he calls «Assassin's Creed» and «Civilization» as examples, where players get theoretical direct control over how the game world is formed. As an example of the foresight and diversity of historical games, Gilles claims that historical games allow players to be «historical» rather than simply «studying history». The author also argues that while there is a gap between factual history and fictional history, somewhere between this split, there is a «popular history», and he says that the games seem to rely on the fact that they focus more on entertainment and storytelling than in education.

The work of Kurt Squire is quite substantiated from the point of view of the applied research of the functioning of computer video games in the educational space [5]. As a social research, he studied the effectiveness of using the video game "Civilization III" to help study history in class. The study envisaged the training of students how to play the game, place them in realistic scenarios based on their civilizations and conduct a discussion after trying to play for discussion both the process of the game and the problems they encounter.

The author noted that the students quickly realized the importance of the various resources needed to advance their civilizations and, consequently, the need of trade and war. Although the game does not correspond to any historical scale, it includes the simulation of «geographical and materialistic processes», which allowed to simulate a historically similar picture.

Squire was surprised during this study that there was a lot of students who began to reproduce historical

events on their own and actively comparing them with actual stories. Many students also began to explore civilization to study new strategies and understand how some groups actually managed a trade policy or war to reproduce their identity.

Consequently, we must state that the question under investigation is, for the most part, the information space of English-language resources, publications, journals, etc.

The purpose of research. On example of several popular video games with historical content to analyze the problems that a developer may encounter when selecting and processing factual material for video games, as well as highlighting the variability of realism and the overall selection of material in historical strategic games. The research of the above problems is based on their distribution into several categories: visual, strategically important and balance. Thus, we will be able to assess the historical authenticity of the selected computer video games genre «historical strategy».

Materials and research results.

When trying to identify the video games academically, researchers have even developed controversial views on how to define «video games» and how to describe a gaming process for a player. In this case, two directions of thinking were created known as «Narratology» [6], or a story, and «Ludology» [7], or interaction.

Narratology defines video games as a narrative environment, similar to movies or books, and so, events can be analyzed in a similar way. The interaction of the player with the game, according to the idea of narratology, does nothing but progress in the game for its ultimate outcome. The ability to reproduce events such as war, and watch how they unfolded, with the ability to change the smallest details to see their specific impact - this is something that one can never hope for another form of media.

Originally in computer historical games, the following topics dominated: World War II, Napoleonic wars, American Civil War. Since the mid-1990s, with the advent of new game genres, strategies began to take shape that addressed a broader historical period, in particular strategies devoted to ancient history, the history of the Middle Ages, and the New Times. Today the dominant theme is still the history of the Second World War, and at the same time the ancient period of world history is actively being considered.[8]

Historical accuracy often remains an unfinished topic when studying the problem of authenticity in video games. This topic is extremely interesting and important and deserves attention. The use of history for the development of video games has led to the creation of the best series of the genre "historical strategy", which has attracted a multimillion audience. Thus, the popularity of video games with the use of historical facts has led to the creation of new, even larger games, and, as a result, has increased the focus on the authenticity of the presentation of historical events.

The material of this research is the computer game video genre «historical strategy». We chose for an ex-

ample the most popular series of them - the Sid Meier's Civilization series by Firaxis games, the Total War series by the Creative Assembly, and Grand Strategy games such as Europa Universalis and Hearts of Iron by Paradox Interactive and others.

If you divide the components of computer video games into general categories, the first is visual changes. These are things that do not have a significant effect on the gameplay. In other words, if these things have been changed, the player may not notice them.

The second category is strategically important issues. This is something that can affect the gameplay to a large extent, covering ideas that are directly related to the gaming model of the world, and how this world is going to behave. Players should present a plausible historical world.

However, real systems, such as diplomacy, including written and unwritten deals, are too complicated to accurately bring them into the game. Approaching real historical events is usually done for playback. A simple example can be found in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949, which states that: «an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all...[9]».

The attack on the French Guiana (the main European cosmodrome) in the Europa Universalis game is obviously not real, but an attack on Saint-Pierre and Miquelon (small French fishing islands off the coast of Canada) could have been. Given these assumptions, there are some difficulties in modeling such situations close to historical events. At the same time, the war may be limited or colonial. But in the game of developer Paradox interactive the principle is all or nothing. It is almost impossible to exist a «semi-war», but only a full-scale war that activates alliances. And, for example, in the Supreme Ruler: Cold War video game, the developer tries to create a more realistic situation where there may be countries that sponsor insurgents or spy invading missions (sea or air) without actually being declared war. And the player interactively plunges into the reconstruction of historical events of the times of bipolar confrontation in the second half of the 20th century. But at the same time, the player needs to know the facts of events well in order to understand the psychological aspects of the opponent's behavior in order to achieve success in the game.

The third component is the balance, or system design. Regardless of the developer's intentions or efforts to be fully authentic in displaying data, a tank or ship may have a more authentic look and other features than a combat model, but the game as a means of display requires abstraction. Otherwise, the game quickly becomes bulky, impossible for playback, and generally unpleasant for the consumer.

Now give examples of the visual changes that have no real impact on the game process. Some people can see this difference, some not. As, for example, the Swiss flag uses a 1: 1 aspect ratio, while almost all others use 2: 3. This has an effect on the game interface, because it requires settings for handling different flags. The 1: 1

side flag is displayed correctly, but players begin to assume that the game mistakenly displays this flag because it is different from the other. Also, the player may be confused with the difference between the current flag and the past, if the player doesn't know which flag was before and may make it an error. For example, the modern flag of Canada has nothing to do with the flag until 1921 [10].

In addition, confusion may occur when two flags are very similar, for example the flag of East Germany and West Germany or the USSR and the People's Republic of China, where there are differences, but in the absence of knowledge, one can not notice the difference.

Another area of visualization is the choice of toponyms. Difficulties may arise when using short forms, such as, for example, the United Kingdom, instead of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, etc.

Issues of strategic importance are changes that can significantly affect the historical credibility, namely political and economic components, an attempt to turn the industrial base of the country into an «industrial potential» or to divide the military, industrial production and reproduce the simplified version of the world. However, simplifications are not performed in the interest of reliability, and therefore compromises that developers resort to, cause curiosity. For example, in the game, Indonesia at the time of 1949 is still a Dutch colony, although it actually gained independence in 1945. This was done to increase the curiosity of the game, although it would be more practical to make it independent, as it was in fact, and to forget about the colonial struggle.

In addition, game developers often have discussions about the territory's membership to a particular country. For example, there was a question about the French occupation zone in Germany. The area in which they wanted to keep the time frame was the French territory until 1956, but the developers wanted to continue to leave the territory beyond France, and not Germany. Subsequently, they realized that the change of one event would entail other changes, especially since Saar, which was referred to, was a source of coal and steel.

Resources are another important area in video games. On the one hand, the player can know in which country there are rich reserves of oil or ore and chooses the way for their processing in advance, on the other hand the player may not know this. Placement of resources in the game may be historical or random. But for the successful development of the character in the game, the player needs to know these features. This stimulates the cognitive function of the player. The more nuances the developers take into account and prescribe, the more real facts the player needs to know. For example in «Europa Universalis III», unoccupied colonies can not use resources until they are colonized. This model retains the macroeconomic situation as a whole and leaves the player with a legitimate historical dilemma - which region to colonize more profitable, which adds the game to the effect of unpredictability.

The Europa Universalis series allows players to make complex decisions on all issues, from economics to diplomatic relations, such as royal marriages or military alliances. The changes in historical sense can lead to a lot of strangenesses, such as the fact that Sweden will become a great superpower country or to Irish colonialism in India. In a world, that containing thousands of political systems, with an ever-increasing number of written and unwritten rules, it's simply impossible to correctly model leadership of the country everywhere all at once. The player is entitled to choose, even a democratic state or a dictator. It is impossible to exist if the player can not make a choice in the real world, when several overwhelming elections can determine further events.

Rather than having the game look at politics as built from people, it usually takes the point of view «I am a state», where automation serves to reduce micro-management for a player, rather than acting as a realistic counter to their desire.

Balance is a problem at all times. Subjects in the game have certain costs, some statistics, which determine their different attributes, abilities, and so on. Various military systems use different statistics - it can be labor, money, building slots, production time, and resource types consumed by a certain type of troop or population. Also, any historical strategy reflects national assets such as industrial base, economic assets, military potential, etc. The importance of these things is that by their destruction or capture, there are consequences that are then reflected on the population and the country. The biggest problem of balance is the imbalance and unpredictability of the world and events. Sometimes it is impossible to predict which solution is better than the other. To improve the situation, the game introduces statistics that help stabilize the situation and achieve a balance between the historical events and the possibilities of video games. Before the developer, among other things, there are legal and social issues in the event that the territory is controversial or under the control of one of the factions present in the game. It's always worth remembering that the real world can not be programmed like computer video games. However, historical facts can not be changed, unlike the possibility of varying events in time and space in the game world.

Among the problems of balance and systematization there are units that simplify the understanding of the game. So, for example, to make «Total War: Shogun 2» simpler in terms of gameplay and balance among troops, the samurai units use swords, while the vast majority of samurai during the Sengoku period used a bow or spear in combat, and kept the sword as a minor and almost last weapon. Including samurai units with swords emerged from the popular idea of samurai fencer. Despite some inaccuracies such as the above, the level of research and attention to the details that have been achieved by the developers allow players to immerse themselves in a very detailed picture of Japan of the XVI century.

Creating global changes in the historical scale may be interesting. But most games of this kind also include a script that allows players to reproduce certain moments from history and actively interact with the resource without significant deviations, which may have a limited effect on the final result. Experiments with these games can help those who are not familiar with the history of a certain time to understand the importance of specific events.

The creator of the first historical strategy on a global scale Civilization Sid Meier said: «To the game was interesting, details should not be too deep or abstruse [11]». Historical information for the making of this game he scored in children's libraries. This view was shared by many developers of video games with historical content. However, former players-children grew up. And soon, among the players began to appear discussions and comments about the historical inconsistencies. This forced game developers to hire professional historians to write video game scripts to create new video games with the reproduction of the exact details of the relevant historical era and to improve the quality of existing video games of historical themes. For these purposes some games, for example Sid Meier's Civilization series, have a some sort of an in-game encyclopedia (like the games' «Civilopedia») or other way of giving more information about the history related to units, buildings, events ingame etc.[12] It was in the game «Civilization» that the first «tree of technologies» appeared with which improvements are being made in many areas of life. During development in this iconic game it is possible to change the structure and form of government, for example, to carry out a civilization from the tribal system and feudalism to democracy. Each form of government has its own specialization. For example, fascism gives advantages in the war, and theocracy in the spread of religion.

Instead of appealing to physical skills, in strategic games, the player must use the intellectual skills to achieve victory. Due to their abstract quality, strategic games have helped consolidate the notion of games not as formalistic systems, but rather a competitive framework with clearly defined goals in which all the possible movements of players are bound by rules and ultimate aims.

Conclusions. As shown in this paper, historical authenticity can be an interesting and important topic for discussion, which needs further attention and research. Developers are faced with many problems and challenges when creating strategies and other historical video games in general, as public opinion about the game and the events played in it depends on it. Players are growing with games, and over the years they start to require more and more detailed and historical accuracy of video games, which forces developers to hire professional historians for consultations.

The video game industry has grown into one of the largest forms of media in the world and has found its use not only in the entertainment field, but also as a learning instrument. As video capabilities improve and

develop graphic applications, video games appeal to the replay of real historical events. This move to realism and accuracy also leads to an increase in the number of historical studies performed to reflect the accuracy of the content of the game. Thus, the growing interest in historical accuracy has led to the fact that some video games are now created with great attention to detail, through careful research and the use of historical advisers, who working in the field of academic history and public history.

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Сапицька О.М. Аналіз історичної достовірності фактологічного матеріалу у комп'ютерних відеоіграх жанру «історична стратегія»

Різноманітність жанрів медіа обумовлює велику кількість об'єктів, крізь які можна відобразити популярну історію. Крім розважальної цінності, вчителі та науковці почали брати до уваги освітню цінність історично-тематичних фільмів та відеоігор. Навіть якщо ігри і реконструкції втрачають в історичному методі, вони компенсують це, стимулюючи історичну цікавість. Із відповідним критичним апаратом ігри можуть стати потужним інструментом для викладання історії поряд з традиційними освітніми підходами.

На прикладі декількох популярних комп'ютерних відеоігор з історичним контентом проаналізована історичну достовірність певних історичних фактів, що відображені у середовищі обраних комп'ютерних відеоігор жанру «історична стратегія».

Ключові слова: академічна історія, комп'ютерні відеоігри, історична стратегія, публічна історія, історичний контент, реконструкція

Сапицкая Е.М. Анализ исторической достоверности фактологического материала в компьютерных видеоиграх жанра «историческая стратегия»

Разнообразие жанров медиа обуславливает большое количество объектов, через которые можно отобразить популярную историю. Кроме развлекательной ценности, ученые и преподаватели стали учитывать образовательную ценность историко-тематических фильмов и видеоигр. Даже если игры и реконструкции теряют в достоверности исторической фактологии, они компенсируют это, стимулируя заинтересованность в изучении исторического процесса в общем. С соответствующим критическим аппаратом, компьютерные видео игры могут стать ценным инструментом для преподавания истории наряду с традиционными образовательными подходами.

На примере нескольких популярных компьютерных видеоигр с историческим контентом проанализирована историческая достоверность определенных исторических фактов, отраженных в среде избранных компьютерных видеоигр жанра «историческая стратегия».

Ключевые слова: академическая история, компьютерные видеоигры, историческая стратегия, публичная история, исторический контент, реконструкция

Сапицька О.М. – к.і.н., доц., доцент кафедри історії та археології Східноукраїнського національного університету ім. В.Даля, e-mail: helensapitskaya@gmail.com

Рецензент: д.і.н., проф., *Михайлюк В.П.*

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