The Impact of JRPGs in the Western Game Industry

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Itinerary

1. What is JRPG?
2. History of JRPG
3. JRPG vs WRPG
4. JRPG in the Western world
5. Influence in Western Game Development

What is JRPG?

• Japanese Role Playing Game
• (Role playing) games that are developed in Japan
• Differences compared to Western RPG
  • Visual style
  • Larger focus on story
  • More Turn based Strategy vs Action
History of JRPG

- First JRPG were influenced by Lode Runner and Wizardry
  - Final Fantasy was influenced by Wizardry

- JRPG also influenced by Visual Novels
  - Perhaps this is why JRPGs are tied to a story

- Difficult to export due to hardware differences
  - Japanese computers had a higher resolution than western counterparts
  - Necessary to display Japanese Characters

Differences between JRPG and WRPG

- **WRPG = Western Role Playing Game**
- Culture influenced design

- Western Roleplaying Games
  - Free roam
  - More focus on gameplay (action)
  - More customization

- Japanese Roleplaying Game
  - More story driven
  - Turn based strategy vs Action
**JRPG in the Western World**

- First JRPG to gain popularity in North America were Dragon Quest and Final Fantasy
- This success attracted the attention of various Japanese developers
  - Proved that there is a market in the Western World
- Some popular JRPG games
  - Tales of Series
  - Valkyria Chronicles
  - Final Fantasy
  - Pokemon
  - Phantasy Star

**JRPG in the Western World 2**

- Modern JRPG are not doing so well...
  - Little difference from earlier titles
  - Core gameplay remains the same
    - E.G Pokemon has remained the same for as long as I have been alive
- Arguable that this is the “charm point” of the game
  - Problem is in new games that don’t offer gameplay variety
### Influence on Western Game Development

- **Cosmic Soldier: Dialogue Conversation System**
  - Allow player to recruit, kill, or spare allies/NPC

### Return of Ishtar

- 2 player co-op
- Dual stick control
- First game to feature a female protagonist
- Password based saving

### Influence on Western Game Development 2

- **Dragon Quest III**
  - Class Change System
    - Versus existing characters with set classes
  - Swappable Party Members
  - Day & Night system
    - Some quests available during certain time of day

- **Final Fantasy 2**
  - Activity based progression
    - Repeated usage levels skills
    - Same system found in The Elder Scrolls series
Influence on Western Game Development 3

- The popularity of JRPG shows the importance of a well written story in games
  - Heavy Rain
  - The Last of Us

- Deep, interesting characters vs create your own
  - Have player take on a role versus being a role

Thank You