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Caesar III

United Kingdom (1998)

TAGS: Aedile Amphitheatre Aqueducts Caesar Cursus honorum Gladiators Hannibal Legionaries Procurator Punic Wars Quaestor Roman Empire Roman History Roman Religion

We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Caesar III
Studio/Production Company	Sierra Entertainment
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1998
First Edition Details	September 1998
Platform	Windows
Official Website	caesar3.heavengames.com (accessed: August 20, 2018)
Available Onllne	Trailer Available Online: youtube.com (accessed: August 20, 2018)
Genre	Simulation*, Strategy*
Author of the Entry	Naomi Rebis, University College London, n.rebis.17@ucl.ac.uk
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Caesar III had two predecessors, developed by the same company:

Caesar (1992) and

Caesar II (1995).

Caesar IV (2006) – released by Tilted Mill Entertainment.

Summary

In *Caesar III*, users play as a Roman governor, sent by Caesar to rule new provinces across the world. To complete each scenario, and rise in rank, they must build cities that meet the required levels of Population, Culture, Peace, Prosperity and Favour. With each success, the player is given the choice of governing either a peaceful or militaristic Province, meaning they direct whether they want to focus on cultural marvels and luxuries, or battling Rome's enemies.

Starting with nothing but funds from Caesar, a player must quickly ascertain what resources their province has (no two regions offer the same combination) so that they can plot their strategy for expansion. Trade with neighbouring governors will be vital for providing citizens with everything they need, so it is worth focusing on producing goods that they wish to buy. Additionally, if embarked on a military scenario, players will need to consider how to attain the weapons necessary to train Rome's famed legionaries.

As the fledgling town grows, players must provide citizens with access to entertainment, education, health facilities, and religious sites, if they are to attract immigrants and increase Population to the desired level. The last of these is particularly importance, since the gods Ceres, Neptune, Mercury, Mars, and Venus, each have the power to bless or curse a Province. It is therefore imperative to placate them with temples and festivals, unless users wish to risk pestilence or riot.

The player who can balance all these needs, to create a thriving and wealthy town, will quickly climb the *cursus honorum,* and may even aspire to the rank of Emperor one day.

The game also includes a 'City Construction Kit', through which players can create their own towns, without the goals or restrictions

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set by Caesar.

Analysis

As well as being a challenging and immersive game, *Caesar III* is a perfect introduction to the intricacies of Roman society.

Even in the game's most basic assignments, players place buildings that were integral to Roman life. Forums send tax inspectors to nearby houses, temples arrange festivals to the gods, and theatres display titles of ancient plays when clicked on. Aqueducts, the marvel of Roman engineering, are given a key role in city-building, because their placement provides fresh water for fountains and bath-houses. Admittedly, the game is not overly strict about chronology or location – every province can build a Colosseum, for example, long before 80AD) but such flexibility is necessary for this city-building set up. Houses can only evolve to certain standards if they have a Colosseum nearby, so restricting it to being the Flavian Amphitheatre in Rome would leave players unable to upgrade their housing in any other province.

These inaccuracies aside, the game succeeds in capturing the bustle and diversity of an ancient town. Actors, priests, traders, and many more walk the city's streets, offering the player their opinions on it. When houses have received enough luxury goods, Patricians joins that crowd, in a nod to the different strata of Roman society (though, interestingly, slavery is never mentioned: all workers are employed by the city, and receive a wage).

Since each scenario is based upon an actual Roman province, *Caesar III* models Rome's expansion across the globe. Not only is it necessary to foster trade-links with nearby cities, but Caesar himself will often demand goods from a player, nodding to the complex commercial network that kept Rome supplied with luxuries from across its territories. For example, when governing Tarraco (which was a reliable supply-camp during the Roman Republic) players are required to ship food back to Rome to help the city through famine.

Furthermore, military missions often bring players into contact with actual enemies of Rome, including Hannibal (complete with war elephants!), and Boudicca (who features on the game's trailer). In a subtler nod to Roman practices, some Provinces have barbarians in them, who will destroy any Roman buildings placed too close to their

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	settlement. Only by placing Missionary Posts, whose occupants walk around 'civilizing' the barbarians, can that land be occupied and used. This reflects the Romanization of conquered states, through efforts like the appropriation of local deities, and shows players that Rome did not keep its territories purely through military might.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aedile Amphitheatre Aqueducts Caesar Cursus honorum Gladiators Hannibal Legionaries Procurator Punic Wars Quaestor Roman Empire Roman History Roman Religion
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	History Knowledge Life Society
Further Reading	Ashinoff, B. K., *The potential of videogames as a pedagogical tool*, Frontiers in Psychology, 2014 [online] (accessed: August 20, 2018). Spring, D., "Gaming history: Computer and video games as historical scholarship", *Rethinking History, the Journal of Theory and Practice* 19.2 (2015): 207–221 (accessed: August 20, 2018).
Addenda	**Caesar III *(City Building Series)*** *Caesar III* was developed by **Impressions Games**, a UK-based videogame developer, which was bought by Sierra Entertainment in 1995. It was famous for its historical strategy games, but it was closed down in 2004. **Genre:** Single player, real-time, city-building, strategy computer game

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