Ra for Android

By Benjamin Sklar

Last Modified: 2017-03-05

# Overview

‘Ra for Android’ is my class project for [UW PCE](https://www.pce.uw.edu/) certificate [Android Application Development](https://www.pce.uw.edu/certificates/android-application-development). The project is to port the board game ‘Ra’ to the Android platform. ‘Ra’ is an auction and set-collection game with an Ancient Egyptian theme.

# Links

Ra description: <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/12/ra>

Ra iOS version: <https://videogamegeek.com/videogame/86774/reiner-knizias-ra>

GIT repository: <https://github.com/brskl/ra>

# Summary of versions

## Version 0.1

The first version was my project for Autumn quarter 2016. The object is to get the game to function on the Android platform for a basic phone platform (tested using an emulator) with a textual interface showing the game state and buttons & dialogs to do game actions.

See ‘Project Presentation - Ra 2016-12.pptx’

## Version 0.2

The second version will/was my project for Winter quarter 2017. The object is to greatly improve the visual interface using graphics and other UI functionality that will be taught in the class for the winter quarter.

## Version 0.3

The third version will/did use ??? from Spring quarter 2017.

## Version 1.0

The first major version will be to make a commercial quality app, to be placed online for download. May charge for app, but will at least be a demonstration of my work to potential employers.

# Detail

## Version 0.1

### Overview

Ra for Android, v0.1 provides a textual interface with player actions occurring via buttons and dialogs. Full game functionality covering all the rules of the game. There is no networking, but multiple human can play on the same device. All game state is contained in the ‘Game’ class singleton object. The AI is very simplistic, more for testing purposes than actual game-play.

### Text abbreviations for the various tiles:

* DP: disaster – pharaoh
* DN: disaster – Nile
* DC: disaster – civilization
* DM: disaster – monuments
* M1-M8: Monuments, 8 types
* C1-C5: Civilization, 5 types
* P: Pharaoh
* N: Nile, NF: Nile Flood
* Au: Gold
* G: God
* R: RA

### Activities

* MainActivity – Initial activity providing player option to start a new game, resume an old game, or quit
* NewGameActivity – provides options to setup a new game including, number of players, name, and if player is AI or not. Currently there is no selection for AI player, and there is no mechanism for remote players.
* GameActivity – main game screen with action buttons. Shows Epoch #, # of Ra tiles, player’s Sun tokens, and current tiles available for auction. It does not show tiles each player has.
* TilesActivity – shows number of tiles each player currently has.
* ScoreActivity – shows score for each player if epoch ended at this point.

### Classes

Additonal classes other than activities

* Game – Contains all game state including player information using the ‘Player’ class
* Player – contains player information with 2 sub-classes
  + PlayerHuman
  + PlayerAI
* MyRandom – wrapper for pseudo-random number generator.

### Ideas

* Add ‘Ok’ button to ScoreActivity and TilesActivity to return to GameActivity
* Make TilesActivity and ScoreActivity have ‘ActionBar, Up button’ as a different way to return to GameActivity
* Add NavigationDrawer (see 1/24/2017 class notes) to GameActivity to move to ScoreActivity and TilesActivity instead of buttons.
* After API 23, android asks for permission at run-time not install time.  
  Can this be used to make app work only locally if permission is denied. Permission can be revoked in Android settings.

## Version 0.2

### Overview

Ra for Android, v0.2 implements various features taught during the winter quarter 2017. These include:

* Multiple layouts & Fragments: Provide different layouts for different devices and for orientation Portrait vs. Landscape
* Graphics: replace game elements that are currently text with graphics. Various types of drawables will be used.
* Strings: Make use of ‘Plural’ resources and provide Spanish (ES) and French (FR)
* ‘Up’ navigation from ‘Score’ and ‘Tiles’ views *up* to main game activity.   
  Add ‘swiping’ between detail views of individual players scores and tiles.
* Saving of game state.
* Some basic animation in movement of game elements
* Consider making use of ‘Application’ class
* Add Preferences/settings activity

### Implemented

* Strings: made use of ‘Plural’ strings
* Strings: translated into Spanish (ES) and French (FR)
* New launcher icon
* ‘Up’ navigation from ‘Score’ and ‘Tiles’ activities to ‘Game’ activity
* Saving of game state by saving ‘Game’ singleton from GameActivity
* Splash image that animates (alpha 0.0->1.0) on launch in MainActivity
* Updated ‘Score’ and ‘Tiles’ activity layouts to use images in header row.  
  (TODO: want to transpose row/column for portrait mode but haven’t been able to find a way to do this)
* Different layouts for ‘Score’ and ‘Tiles’ for portrait/landscape (just use bigger images in landscape, want to change table orientation, see previous item)
* Game activity, auction items: replaced text with LinearLayout of ImageViews that show PNGs of tiles.
* Created custom SunImageView (extends ImageView) class to drawText a number on top of a Sun Tile
* Use SunImageView to display player’s suns and sun in auction.

### TODO

* See if there is a better way to do ‘Sun tiles’ instead of a custom ImageView class, perhaps using LayerDrawable
* Get better artwork for PNG files and make in several resolutions
* Make additional layouts for different resolution devices, including tablets
* Make ‘Score’ and ‘Tiles’ activities into fragments
* Replace ‘Draw’ button with ‘bag’ image that somehow indicates it is enabled when player can draw
* Replace ‘Auction’ button with ‘Ra’ tile image.
* Write a game log file (different from Android Log() method for debugging)
* Add animations for various board-piece movement such as: draw tile from bag, acquire tiles won at auction.
* Add setting so that user can but does not have to press ‘OK’, ‘OK’, ‘OK’ when AI does something, have it move automatically with some amount of delay
* Add more detail to Tiles activity so that tiles for each individual player can be seen graphically