

"Kingdom Come: Deliverance - A Historical Journey through 15th Century Bohemia: Unveiling the Accuracy and Controversies in Warhorse Studios' Masterpiece"

Kingdom Come: Deliverance is an action Role-Playing Game released in 2018 by the Prague-based Warhorse Studios. You play as Henry, the son and budding apprentice of the blacksmith in the small town of Skalitz. Henry faced with the death of his parents after a rogue band of soldiers raze his hometown, escapes with his life fleeing on horseback and arriving at the neighboring town's garrison with warning of the threat. The Lord gives Henry lodging for a time while he can regain his footing and ventures out to eventually join a resistance group pushing back against the invading forces. The game's granular gameplay offers quests where Henry can learn to read, wield a sword, and shoot a bow. The game received acclaim for its immersive gameplay as well as its use of period accurate weapons and clothing. (Hafer) Kingdom Come: Deliverance won Czech Game of the Decade in 2020. (Kingdom) This essay will review parts of the early game and discuss the historical accuracy of its setting, its people, and its buildings.

This game perfectly fits the genre of historical fiction. Most of the events and characters present took place and existed. The catalyst of the game's story, sacking of Skalitz happened on March 23rd, 1403, by Cuman mercenaries. This happened in retaliation by a jealous Sigismund, half-brother of king Wenceslas IV, for Sir Radzig of Kobyla sending silver and supporting

Wenceslas' claim to the throne. (Turnbull) The town of Skalitz was a small mining village that was a part of the Kingdom of Bohemia, an Imperial State of the Holy Roman Empire. It was known for its production of silver at the foot of the Silver Mountains. Today, Stříbrná Skalice (Silver Skalitz) is situated in the Central Bohemian region of the Czech Republic. (Lotha)

Since the game's release, there has been minor contention as to the lack of crossbows and portrayals of the Cuman mercenaries. Reid McCarter from *Unwinnable*, claims the Cumans and Hungarians in the game portrayed barbarians. The in-game non-playable characters (NPCs) refer to the invaders as "diabolical" and "savages." McCarter goes as far as to call the developers having white-washed Czech history and replacing it with their "exclusionary, xenophobic vision." (McCarter)

The game's next major town is Rattay, a bustling market town on the shore of the Sasau River. Today, Rattay is home to barely five hundred residents. The protagonist, Henry, seeks the Lord of Rattay, Sir Hanush of Leipa for help to avenge Henry's parents which died during the raid in Skalitz. He would later become Sir Radzig's envoy and recognized as Radzig's own son. Scholars such as Helen Young from Deakin University claim Henry's social mobility is so rare that it serves as this game's "only in Hollywood" moment that the audience expects from a hero. (Young)

In the game, places and buildings have clear influences or are even one-to-one recreations. One such example of this is the Sasau Monastery. The monastery built in the eleventh century was a center for Slavic liturgy. It is in the process of rebuilding during the events of the game and yet to this day. The architecture takes design influences from gothic styles from its pointed stained-glass windows and buttresses. A quest has Henry join the

monastic order of Benedictines, allowing the player to view the picturesque monastery close to its height in history. (Neumann)

Though the protagonist, Henry, has no evidence of existing, other characters and places did exist. Characters like Sir Radzig have nearly accurate stories and buildings like Sasau Monastery that still stand today help cement this game's place as true historical fiction. Researching for this essay was much harder than I expected. Any scholarly mention of this game's historical accuracy buried beneath tons of unremarkable Reddit, Quora, and blog posts. Very few relevant papers were found searching JSTOR directly either. I had the most success from poking through the Wikipedia article for the game and redirecting to the citation of an idea I wished to include.

After researching, I am surprised that I have found more articles talking about historical inaccuracies rather than accuracies. I have not come close to reaching this game's enormous 40+ hour storyline but researching this game has led me to have a greater appreciation for the historians involved in making a piece of media. The time invested from examining manuscripts and artwork to produce something with an ounce of accuracy only to be picked apart in the end is something very few can do. It is a shame I had to spoil myself of this game's ending to realize that.

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