CHRONO TRIGGER
超时空之轮
游戏设计分析

Have you ever thought about a game like this: It lacks any imperfections, exhibiting a seamless coherence: the pacing is impeccable, striking a balance where the game neither becomes overly lengthy and sluggish nor rushes ahead too quickly. The level of difficulty is just right, avoiding any sense of unfairness that might force you to exploit the game's mechanics, while still providing an enjoyable challenge. The experience points curve ensures a consistent feeling of being appropriately situated within the game's progression. Furthermore, chance encounters are absent, as all adversaries are visible on-screen, ensuring that every battle serves a purpose; many of these engagements can even be sidestepped if desired. Should the need arise, numerous foes can be faced anew for the purpose of leveling up, although such grinding is never obligatory.

你是否想过有这样一款游戏：它没有任何瑕疵，展现出绝佳的连贯性：节奏完美无瑕，游戏既不会变得过于冗长和迟缓，也不会过快地推进。难度水平恰到好处，避免了任何游戏机制造成的不公平感，同时仍提供了令人满意的挑战。经验值曲线确保了始终让人感到在游戏进程中处于适当的位置。此外，随机遇敌已经消失，因为所有敌人都公开可见，确保每场战

斗都有其目的；许多这样的战斗甚至可以在需要时被规避。如果需要，可以通过刷怪来提升等级，但这样的磨练从未是必需的。

Chrono Trigger is exactly one such game.

《超时空之轮》就是这样的一款游戏。

Even though many games are called "the best of all time" or "masterpiece", they always have some kind of flaws. Maybe game is too long, or too buggy, has balance issues, terrible controls, it is incomplete and so on. However, Chrono Trigger is perfect. It is undoubtedly the greatest JRPG of all time.

尽管许多游戏被誉为"有史以来最好的游戏"或"神作"，但它们总是有一些缺陷。或许游戏太冗长，或者漏洞太多，存在平衡问题，或许有糟糕的控制，游戏机制不完整等等。然而，《超时空之轮》是完美的。它无疑是有史以来最伟大的JRPG。

Dynamic World, Linear Dungeons
动态的世界，线性的地牢

The game comprises distinct narrative segments, many of which are obligatory for game completion. In the initial portion of the game, these segments are obligatory and follow a linear path, guiding the player from their 1000 A.D. home through various historical eras until they reach The End of Time.

游戏由独立的叙事片段组成，其中许多对于完成游戏是必须的。在游戏的初始部分，玩家必须要阅读这些故事，并且按照线性路径行进。玩家会被引导从他们的公元1000年的家园穿越各个历史时代，直到他们到达时间的尽头。

After fulfilling this mandatory introduction, which introduces players to the universe, gameplay, and storyline of Chrono Trigger, they gain the freedom to access previously visited time periods and traverse the world map at will.
在完成了强制性的部分之后，游戏的自由度大大提升。玩家可以自由前往先前访问过的时间段，并随意穿梭在不同时空的地图。

By granting players the ability to journey through time and space without restrictions, the developers expanded the game's scope for exploration. While a majority of non-essential narrative portions remain inaccessible until the player acquires the Epoch – a time machine that enables swift traversal of the game world – players are given the opportunity to navigate the primary narrative with minimal intervention.

通过赋予玩家在没有限制的情况下穿越时间和空间的能力，开发人员扩展了游戏的探索范围。虽然大多数非必要的叙事部分在玩家获得"纪元"（一台可以快速在不同时空穿梭时间机器）之前无法访问，但玩家可以把注意力集中在主线剧情上。

This is primarily due to the fact that enemy encounters are confined to specific dungeons and are not positioned on the world map. Consequently, even if players

venture into areas beyond the critical path, they can engage in some content and explore a significant portion of the map. Additionally, players with high-level characters can revisit earlier segments of the game without being continuously bothered by low-level encounters.

这主要是因为一些敌人的遭遇战被限制在特定的地牢中，而不是位于世界地图上。因此，即使玩家冒险进入主要路径之外的区域，他们仍然可以体验额外内容并探索地图上的大部分地区。此外，高等级角色的玩家可以重新访问游戏的早期部分，而不会不断受到低级敌人遭遇的困扰。

In stark contrast to games featuring ubiquitous enemy encounters across the entire game world, which was the prevailing norm when Chrono Trigger was released, with random battles occurring every few steps, the game takes a different approach. The presence of encounters often dissuades players from fully exploring the world map, as they might unwittingly wander into areas infested with high-level adversaries.

《超时空之轮》与其发布时占主导地位的在整个游戏世界中普遍存在随机遇敌的游戏形成了鲜明对比。这些游戏里（比如最终幻想6）随机战斗每隔几步就会发生。过多的随机遇敌经常会阻止玩家完全探索世界地图，因为他们可能会不知不觉地闯入充斥着高等级对手的区域，从而导致游戏无法进行下去。

These perilous zones are frequently inadequately marked, adding an element of risk to exploration until players attain

sufficiently high levels for that specific area or for the game as a whole. Moreover, even low-level, unrewarding encounters must be dealt with regardless of the player's level, making exploration a cumbersome endeavor. By sidestepping these complexities, Chrono Trigger actively encourages players to venture through the game world according to their own preferences.

这些与玩家等级不相配的区域经常标记不足，使得玩家在达到足够高的水平之前都会面临一定的风险。此外，即使是低级别的，无足轻重的遭遇，玩家无论级别如何都必须处理，使得探索变得繁琐。通过规避这些复杂性，《超时空之轮》鼓励玩家根据自己的喜好探索游戏世界。

This shift becomes most evident after players conclude the Zeal narrative segment and acquire the Epoch. With unhindered time and space travel capabilities, the game map unfurls entirely before the player, granting them the freedom to tackle optional narrative sections at their leisure.

在玩家结束强制性的叙事部分、获得"纪元"后，这种转变变得最为明显。通过无障碍的时间和空间旅行能力，游戏地图全面展现在玩家面前，赋予他们在他们自己喜好的顺序中处理可选叙事部分的自由。

The player could ride on Epoch to freely explore the map

Even prior to the game offering narrative clues about the locations of these dungeons, players can simply take flight over the relatively compact overworld and stumble upon them. These dungeons are also relatively straightforward to locate. For instance, an isolated factory on an island in 2200 AD houses an optional dungeon centered around the character Robo. Through the simple act of piloting the Epoch around, players can stumble upon numerous such dungeons and complete them.

甚至在游戏提供关于地牢位置的叙事线索之前，玩家可以简单地驾驶纪元在相对紧凑的超界地图上飞行，然后偶然发现它们。这些地牢的位置也相对容易找到。例如，在2200年的一个孤立的岛上有一个工厂，里面有一个以角色Robo为中心的可选地牢。通过驾驶纪元，玩家可以偶然发现许多这样的地牢并攻克它们。

Through a deliberate emphasis on linear gameplay within dungeons, the creators of Chrono Trigger ingeniously offered players the autonomy to either engage or bypass entire narrative segments, all in a sequence of their own preference. This approach of modular storytelling enabled

the developers to construct linear character progressions and interconnected storylines, all while granting players a sense of liberty within the broader narrative framework.

通过对地牢内线性游戏玩法的强调，《超时空之轮》的创作者巧妙地为玩家提供了完全自主探索的权力，可以自由选择参与或者规避游戏的某些部分。这种模块化叙事的方法使开发人员能够构建线性角色进展和相互关联的故事情节，同时在更广泛的叙事框架中赋予玩家自由感。

Leveling System as Guidance
以等级系统为引导　　　　　　⊙

However, this newfound freedom also poses a challenge: how can the game developer effectively steer the player along the crucial path? Despite offering readily available narrative clues about the next steps, the developers must still ensure that players don't veer too far off track. If a mandatory dungeon is completed in an incorrect sequence, it could prematurely activate specific storylines, fail to activate them altogether, or simply lack coherence due to the player's lack of context.

然而，这种自由度也带来了一个挑战：游戏开发者如何有效地引导玩家沿着主要路径前进？尽管提供了有关下一步的即时叙事线索，开发者仍必须确保玩家不会偏离太远的轨道。如果玩家按错误的顺序完成了强制性的地牢，可能会过早地触发特定的故事情节，触发错误的情

节，或者由于玩家缺乏背景知识而导致情节缺乏连贯性。

To address this dilemma and prevent players from becoming hopelessly disoriented, a leveling mechanism is employed to guide them through the primary trajectory of the game.
为了解决这个困境，防止玩家迷失方向，《超时空之轮》采用了一个等级机制来引导他们沿着游戏的主要轨迹前进。

The strength of enemies within each narrative segment is predetermined based on the intended player level upon entering the dungeon and remains constant, disregarding the player's actual level. Players who stray too far from the intended path or attempt narrative arcs outside the critical route will encounter overwhelmingly formidable adversaries, effectively nudging them to retrace their steps and seek an alternative route.

在每个叙事片段中，敌人的强度是根据玩家进入地牢时预期的等级来预设的，等级保持恒定，不考虑玩家的实际等级。远离预期路径或偏离关键路径的玩家将会遇到极为强大的对手，有效地促使他们回归正轨。

For instance, one of the initial time periods accessible to the player beyond the essential path is 65,000,000 BC, which becomes available right after discovering The End of Time. While players can freely explore the map, engage with NPCs, and traverse peaceful regions, their advancement within the dungeons is hindered by formidable foes that possess

significantly higher levels than the player characters.

例如，玩家在关键路径之外可以访问的最初时段之一是公元前65,000,000年，在发现时间的尽头后立即可访问。尽管玩家可以自由探索地图，与NPC互动，并穿越没有敌人的地区，但他们在地牢内的进展受到了强大的敌人的阻碍，这些敌人的等级显著高于玩家角色。

Visiting the Dactyl Nest too early results in a distinctly difficult battle -- the enemies here reduce the player character's health by half in a single hit.

Although victory in these battles is possible, the difficulty is notably steep. This dissuades players from tackling mandatory dungeons out of order; the Dactyl Nest area, specifically, is compulsory but only after certain triggers have been activated.

尽管在这些战斗中取得胜利是可能的，但难度明显很高。这阻止了玩家不按顺序挑战地牢；特别是Dactyl巢穴区域，虽然是强制性的地牢，但只有在特定条件被激活之后才能访问。

Chrono Trigger has a delightful start, as our protagonist Crono is roused from slumber by his cheerful mother. A charming feline companion even tags along as he explores his dwelling! Crono's journey leads him to the Millennial Fair, an event where he intends to catch up with his inventor friend Lucca. Along the way, he encounters Marle, who, as it turns out, is a spirited princess incognito. This trio becomes embroiled in a time-spanning escapade, joined by a group of equally vibrant and unforgettable companions. Frog, an honorable knight afflicted by a grievous curse, hails from the Middle Ages. Robo, a benevolent artificial warrior, originates from a grim future. Ayla, a formidable cavewoman from prehistoric times, brings her immense strength to the team. Lastly, Magus, a enigmatic and reserved figure, holds far-reaching ties to the temporal threats that loom larger than one might initially surmise.

《超时空之轮》有一个令人愉悦的开端，我们的主人公Crono在他母亲的唤醒下从沉睡中醒来，有一个可爱的猫咪会伴随着他探索他的住所。Crono前往千禧年庆典，这是一个他打算在那里与他的发明家朋友Lucca见面的活动。在途中，他遇到了Marle，她其实是王国的公主，装扮成了平民来参加庆典。这三人组成了一个卷入跨越时空的冒险，与一群同样充满活力和令人难以忘怀的伙伴一起。Frog，一位受到严重诅咒的高尚骑士，来自中世纪。Robo，

一位善良的机器人战士，来自一个荒无人烟的未来。Ayla，一位来自史前时代的强大穴居人，为团队带来了她的巨力。最后，Magus，一个神秘而沉默寡言的人物，与威胁时空的力量有着深远的联系。

The team boasts a well-balanced composition and exhibits distinct personalities, which I found appealing. I appreciated the compact and easily manageable roster size, especially when contrasted with the potential largeness and complexity seen in Chrono Trigger. Notably, even the supplementary characters bring valuable contributions, with the standout additions being the sorrowful princess Schala and Ayla's reserved boyfriend, Kino.

游戏团队非常均衡，每个角色都有独特的个性，我喜欢队伍的规模相对较小以便管理，毕竟《超时空之轮》中的世界已经非常庞大和复杂了。即使是游戏的配角也令人印象深刻，尤其是命运悲惨的公主Schala和Ayla保守的男朋友Kino。

Every character in Chrono Trigger has unique personality

Battles within Chrono Trigger turn out to be unexpectedly enjoyable. Combat occurs

in real-time as soon as an enemy visible on the screen becomes aware of your party's presence, introducing a strategic dimension to the fighting process. This demands timely decision-making, ideally before your adversary seizes an opportunity to attack. Even the battle speed can be adjusted at any point through the Settings menu. In instances of particularly chaotic engagements, reducing the speed and wait time to slower settings occasionally proved advantageous, allowing me to prioritize much-needed healing over the default or faster options. As the game progresses, certain team members gain the ability to employ magic spells, although exceptions like Ayla stand out, as they remain entirely proficient in dealing damage without relying on such abilities.

《超时空之轮》中的战斗出奇地令人愉悦。战斗采用即时制，一旦屏幕上可见的敌人接触到你的队伍，就会引入战斗。这需要及时做出决策，最好是在对手抓住机会发起攻击之前就主动出击。战斗速度可以在任何时候通过设置菜单进行调整。在特别混乱的战斗中，将速度和等待时间降低到较慢的设置会比较容易胜利。随着游戏的进行，某些队员获得了使用魔法咒语的能力，尽管像Ayla不常用魔法的例外也很突出，因为他们在不依赖这些能力的情况下也能造成大量伤害。

Conclusion
结语　　　　　　▶

Having luminaries like Hironobu Sakaguchi and Yuji Horii on the team, renowned for their contributions to Final Fantasy and Dragon Quest respectively, it's not surprising that I eventually found enjoyment in Chrono Trigger. Given my fondness for those series, my appreciation for their creation naturally followed, even though it took me a bit longer than most to finally give the title a chance. It's evident that the skilled development team invested a significant amount of care and effort, resulting in numerous enjoyable hours of gameplay for me. Chrono Trigger stands out as one of those rare titles that genuinely lives up to its illustrious reputation, and I can clearly understand why it holds the status of a timeless classic JRPG. It gives a new definition to JRPG, and its value has surpassed the time to live forever inside every player's heart.

有像坂口博信和堀井雄二这样的杰出人物在制作团队中（他们分别以其对《最终幻想》和《勇者斗恶龙》的贡献而闻名），我在《超时空之轮》中找到无限乐趣并不意外。考虑到我对这些JRPG经典作品的喜爱，我对他们的创作自然而然地也十分欣赏。显然，这个技术娴熟的开发团队投入了大量的努力，为我带来了许多愉快的游戏时光。《超时空之轮》是那些真正不负盛名的游戏之一，我清楚地理解为什么它被视为最伟大的JRPG。它重新定义了JRPG的玩法，它的价值已经跨越了时间的限制，在玩家的心中永存。

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