PIG Mod Design Goals and Description

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A mod for Civilization IV: Beyond the Sword 3.19

Note: For a more detailed look at what this mod includes, its features etc., please refer to the readme and the other included documentation.

Basic description:
Basically the mod is about changing existing features of the game, or game mechanics - not about adding new content. Many modpacks seem to go over the top adding units, techs, civs, leaders, civics etc. probably based on the assumption that more variety is always a good thing. This mod does none of that. It works with what already exists in the game. It attempts to improve the game, not just change the game. Hence the name – Probably Improved Gameplay.
"Less is More"

Goals for PIG

Multiplayer Compatible
One of the highest priorities for the mod. Any mod that is known to cause MP problems will not be considered for inclusion in PIG.

Balanced
Tweaks are made to units, buildings etc. that are either too weak or too powerful. Generally any balance tweak is done very conservatively so as not to accidentally make it less balanced than it was before.

Improved AI
PIG incorporates one of the best Civ4 BtS mods available - Better AI. Also, great care is taken with any changes made to gameplay to ensure the AI can cope. In other words, the AI is taught how to use new features and generally speaking any new game feature the AI will not understand is left out of the mod. This is one of the main reasons new "content" is avoided wherever possible e.g. new units, technologies, civics, game mechanics etc. Most of the changes made in PIG are essentially AI-neutral in that there is likely to be no negative impact on the AI, and usually no positive impact either (with Better AI mod being the obvious exception).

Small download.
Sorry but this means I won't be adding the huge graphics modpacks that are about the place. More than likely this mod will never reach a download size of more than 10MB.

Not intimidating, not confusing

Changes can't be too complicated. There's nothing worse than trying to get into a new mod but getting confused at just about every turn. If a change has the potential to be confusing, it will be well documented.

Stable, fast
If bugs or crashes are found to occur then more than likely the change that is causing them will be removed until it can be guaranteed to no longer cause a problem. Bug reports are always greatly appreciated and will be acted upon quickly.
This mod is also designed to run fast, or at least not any slower than stock BtS. In the case of Better AI, it is reasonable to accept that some speed may be sacrificed but with mods like stmartin's Civ AcceleratoR (CAR mod) the speed is made up again.

Well documented
Every single change that is made is documented. When other mods are incorporated (i.e. things I didn't write myself) the readme or help files for those mods are included.
Sometimes only a link to another page on civfanatics is all that's necessary.
I make it as clear as I can where to find more information about any included mod or what each change does.

Easy to install.
Just download the file, unzip it, run the installer and play. It doesn't get any simpler than that.

Gameplay impact
Changes are avoided if they have no real impact on gameplay. There's no point cluttering up a feature list with stuff no one cares about.
Generally a change is considered to have a positive gameplay impact if it increases the viability of alternatives to existing strategies. Conversely, if a change is likely to narrow strategic depth (e.g. making slavery even stronger) then it won't be considered at all.
This is core to the principal aim of the mod - improved gameplay.

Realism
Realism is only a very minor consideration for this mod but generally when a change is made, some thought is given to making it a reasonably realistic change.

Popularity
Generally features of the game may be removed if they are very unpopular. For example, the 5 barbarian uprising events are frequently complained about. They are not very balanced anyway, so it wasn't hard to make the decision to disable them. In many cases, overwhelming support for a new feature is not necessarily enough reason to include it. Always other factors are taken into consideration - mainly all the other things mentioned in this document.

Includes unaltered gameplay additions
BUG, Advanced Combat Odds, and so on. These improve the interface and have no effect on game mechanics or rules.

Bugfixes
This means including the Unofficial Patch as well as other bugfixes that are produced by members of civfanatics.

Configurable, customisable
Many of the game-changing features that are introduced in this mod can be enabled/disabled as options. For example, Influence Driven War has a pretty big impact on gameplay so it is a custom game option.

Easy to mod the XML
This mod can easily be used as a starting point for some XML modding by budding modders. The source files are always released with each version as well, if you're into merging this mod with other SDK mods.