

A Structural Approach to God of War, a Video Game by Santa Monica

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Abstract: *Every literary narrative (or any form of art) follows some rules or structures that beside its mode of narration are common in all literary forms. In this research, it has been tried to demonstrate another mode of narration and depicting theories of Northrop Frye and Vladimir Propp's structuralism in a video game named God of War. In this regard, after a very short introduction on structural school, and a short explanation on each of these theories, those structures will be represented in the video game. Frye's notion of genre analysis will be applied on GOW with a summarized introduction; and then for structure of narrative present study uses Propp's category of structures. His theory does not include only the narratemes in the story, but in fact beside 31 narratemes, there are still five categories of elements, plus seven character types. The result clearly indicated that video games have the capacity to be analyzed from structural point of view and also these structures were common on genre, characters and elements, too.*

Keywords: *Structuralism, Northrop Frye, Vladimir Propp, Narratemes, God of War, Video Game.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Structuralism is school of a very wide concept and in practice includes different theories and approaches. Although according to Mastin: "Structuralism is widely regarded to have its origins in the work of the Swiss linguistic theorist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 - 1913) in the early 20th Century, but it soon came to be applied to many other fields, including philosophy, anthropology, psychoanalysis, sociology, literary theory and even mathematics."

"Structuralists try to uncover the 'grammar', 'syntax', or 'phonemic' pattern of particular human systems of meaning, whether they be those of kinship, garments, haute cuisine, narrative discourse, myths or totems. The liveliest examples of such analyses can be found in the earlier writings of Roland Barthes, especially in the wide-ranging *Mythologies* (1957) and *Système de la mode* (1967)" (Selden et. al. 68). There are numerous structuralists in France, Russia, USA, and Prague more famously, but present study's focus is on the Russian school and mostly Propp and Frye's method of analysis.

When "in 1925 Boris Tomashevski, juxtaposed two concepts of *suzhet* and *fabula*; [until the time when they were-] introduced by Shklovsky in 1921, the *fabula* became a straightforward account of something i.e. it tells us what actually happened. Such a manipulation of the *fabula* creates the *suzhet* i.e. the story as it is actually told, and it is the *suzhet* that has the defamiliarizing effect that devices have in poetry: like for instance rhyme, the *suzhet* calls attention to itself.

It will immediately be obvious that one and the same *fabula* can give rise to a good many *syuzhets*. That insight became the basis for a book that much later would enjoy widespread influence, Vladimir Propp's 1928 *The Morphology of the Folktale*" (Bertens 36) which will be present study's major focus and other notions and theories of structuralism stand secondary in the analysis of GOW.

Morphology i.e., "a description of the tale according to its component parts and the relationship of these components to each other and to the whole" (Rivkin and Ryan 72). Propp intended to have a

scientific approach to the grammar of folktales of his country; not just on the *suzhet* but also on the character types and elements of narratives. He identified sequence of 31 functions, 5 elements of narration and 7 broad character functions in the 100 tales. Present study briefly will go through these classifications and will represent these structures on a video game called *God of War* and mostly focused on the last story of this trilogy.

2. DISCUSSION

There are two main streams in the structuralism school, one on the linguistic field continuing what Practical Criticism and New Criticism left off by focusing on the individual meaning of individual texts, and the other one following Formalism with their endeavor to discover general laws_ the more general, the better. Structuralism base on Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic insights into the structure of language as a system (*langue*) continued former schools. That is why "structuralism takes language seriously. But they most take language for granted" (Bertens 120). Later on the time, structuralists no more limited themselves only to find general rules in language system and started to find general structures on the sentences, genres and narratives as a whole.

Present study intends to extend the realm of narratives analysis to other modes of narrations like video games or any mode narrating a narrative. For the first part, genre of GOW will be analyzed based on the Frye's theory of analysis and then narrative will be analyzed based on the Propp's structures. These two figures are core figures of structuralist schools on the narrative theory and the rest are those who try to improve those established rules or make them more general and abridged.

2.1. Structure of Genre

It is good to start the present discussion of structuralist approach to genre of video games with a simplified and summarized version of one of the most complex and sweeping examples what which Northrop Frye calls his 'Theory of Myths', and indeed it is a theory of genres that searches the structural principles underlying in the all literary tradition. "Mythoi (plural of *mythos*) is a term Frye uses to refer to the four narrative patterns that, he argues, structure myth. These mythoi, he claims, reveal the structural principles underlying literary genres: specifically, comedy, romance, tragedy, and irony/satire. According to Frye, human beings project their narrative imaginations in two fundamental ways: in representations of an ideal world and in representations of the real world" (Tyson 221).

Based on Frye's definitions and his later explanation in his essay *Anatomy of Criticism*, the real world is world of experience, uncertainty and failure; therefore, Frye calls it the *mythos* of winter. He relates it with both genres of irony/satire. Irony is the real world but overwhelmed with tragic situations and their heroes can be/are defeated by the forces of universe. They may do their best to be heroic, powerful, righteous and all, but they never achieve their goals. And as Frye puts it in a sentence they are human like us, so they suffer. Examples of such works include *Animal Farm* (1945), *Twelfth Night* (1601) for satire and *The Story of an Hour* (1894) and *Rape of the Lock* (1714) for irony.

While romance occurs within an ideal world and irony/satire occurs within the real world, the remaining two mythoi involve a movement from one of these worlds to the other. Tragedy involves a movement from the ideal world to the real world, from innocence to experience, from the *mythos* of summer to the *mythos* of winter, and therefore Frye calls tragedy the *mythos* of autumn. In tragedy, a hero with the potential to be superior, like a romantic hero, falls from his romantic height into the real world, the world of loss and defeat, from which he can never rise. Well-known examples of tragedy include Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* (5th century B.C.) and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1601) (Tyson 221).

This description of Frye's framework is merely a skeletal map of his detailed analysis of each *mythos* and the genre to which it is related. He argues that each genre identifies itself with a particular repertoire of themes, character types, moods, kinds of action, and versions of the plot formulas. Frye notes that the traditional quest has four structural components: conflict, catastrophe, disorder and confusion, and triumph. Conflict, he observes, is the basis of romance, which consists of a series of fantastic adventures in which superheroes encounter obstacles. Catastrophe is the basis of tragedy, which consists of the hero's downfall. Disorder and confusion are the basis of irony and satire, which require that confusion and anarchy reign supreme and that effective action be impossible. And triumph is the basis of comedy, in which the protagonist and his or her beloved become the centerpiece of some sort of improved social order. Taken together, then, the genres of romance, tragedy, irony/satire, and comedy—in that order—spell out the structure of what Frye calls a 'total

quest-myth.’ Thus, for Frye, all narrative is structurally related because it’s all some version of some part of the quest formula. (223).

But not always drawing exact lines between genres is possible and structuralist and Frye himself were no strangers to this fact. Sometimes there exist mixed genres in between or a change or twist in the plot and story make it possible for a certain narrative to be both tragic and comedy i.e. tragicomedy. It was one of the weak points per se that Frye tried to solve it by the notion of ‘Master Plot’. He states: “Taken together, the four genres form a kind of master plot, or key to understanding narrative as a whole. And for Frye, that master plot is the structure of the quest, of which each mythos represents one leg” (Tyson 221). Based on the materials above, it is quite possible to consider GOW franchise a movement from tragedy to epic romance.

Kratos, son of Zeus from one of his mortal wives, indeed is superior in degree to humankind for being a demi-god and he is trying hard, all his life to defend his family and his village. He succeeds all his battles, never losing a single war. It catches the gods of Olympus’ attention and with their interference Kratos was about to fall. He makes a bargain with one of gods of Olympus (Ares, the god of war) to be completely obedient to all orders of the gods in return he defends his family and village. He takes the oath and follows all orders and tragic flow happens when gods of Olympus give their last order of sacking his own village and murdering anyone inside. Being under oath, Kratos sacks his own village and murders his own wife and daughter with his own hands. That is the time when he realizes what he has done which is too late.

To this part and first volume the narrative is tragic and Kratos fails in protecting his village and family and above all, he is the one responsible for this catastrophe. According to Frye catastrophe is the basis of tragedy which consist of hero’s failure. Again based on the Frye’s notion, in the first part of this franchise narrative is related to irony. Irony of situation happens when Kratos takes the oath to protect his family and village and the same oath causes sack of his own village and murder of his family, and above all in his own hands. Moreover, it is the real world overwhelmed by tragic situation in which their heroes are defeated by the forces of universe like Barbar king. At the first glimpse, it seems that by choosing either ways to be defeated by Barbar King or taking the oath, narrative tries to convey theory of fatalism and power of destiny but the story indeed tries to highlight the tragic fact that the forces of real world is greater than the hero’s power and struggle; and no matter how hard the hero tries, he is destined to be defeated. If Kratos had not been defeated by Persian king, he may have never taken the oath and may have never fallen, but forces of the real world defeats Kratos The hero. Another quality of Kratos’ being tragic hero is his struggle to be heroic, yet his downfall. All these years and fights, Kratos tries to be right, be brave and powerful; and his last act of taking oath is a desperate sacrifice of himself for his family and people is completely heroic and high morals. Nevertheless, he fails and never succeeds in his goal and according to Frye these are core of a tragic structure.

Regarding definition of tragic hero (a hero in tragedy), GOW is not just tragedy. A hero of a tragedy who has the potentiality of being superior like romance, falls from his romantic height into the real world of loss and defeat but in tragedy the hero never rises again while in romance although the hero might fall once or twice but at the end hero wins and villain is punished. Kratos in this regard is more like romantic hero rather than tragic hero. Though one may argue that he never gets his family back alive and fails in protecting them, which is absolutely right and true; but he takes their revenge (revenge in the past and mythological period is equal to justice, a high moral) and by the end of the narrative in third volume he gains comfort in forgiveness of his family and taking revenge and finishes his salvation by another moral act which is sending power of ‘hope’ to humankind.

Frye has classified the characters into modes based on the ‘protagonist’s power to take action’ and comparing them with the power and abilities of ordinary men also to power of their environment and society. According to Frye and other structuralists, protagonist whether is superior in kind to others like gods and demi-gods which is beyond access of ordinary people; or, merely is superior in degree by having the same positive characteristics that all ordinary human beings possess but having them to greater degree.

According to Frye’s “*Protagonist’s power Fictional mode Character type*” in Tyson’s essay, Kratos starts with one mode, moving toward the other mode below:

- Superior in kind to both men and their environment like Myth Divine beings

- Superior in degree to men but not to their environment High mimesis (imitation of life, like that found in epic and tragedy)” (223-4)

Kratos as son of Zeus indeed is superior to humans and environment. His extra ordinary power and his great deeds such as returning from death for twice, slaying a real god which is beyond any human power. And his climbing and slaying father (king of gods), slaying Ares (former god of war) and many more examples, all proves his high born and belonging to mythic divine being. On the other hand, on the first part of trilogy Kratos is defeated by Persian king, his turmoil and hard life shows that even though he is a potential (demi-god or future god of war) superior in degree, but he is not superior to environment like epic and tragedy character.

Frye himself later noted that for the most part, myths, though early forms of narrative, fall outside the ordinary literary boundaries or it seems absurd to include comedy and realism under the same heading. Robert Scholes, yet another structuralist offers different version of Frye’s categorization, believing that he has provided a more clear and useful bases of differentiation among genres by eliminating non-literary genres like myth and inserting a new category so as to highlight the difference between comedy and realism. Although his theory seems quite practical in practice but on the other hand his theory seems somehow not solving the problem and it seems more like cleaning the problem itself.

Finally on the genre structure, it is obvious that at least in practice, the genre structure of narratives in game scenarios follows some specific genres of literature. It means not all the genres in literature get a chance to be made into games. Speaking literally, here the im/possibility of making games in specific genre is not discussed or is not subject of interest. You can make games in any genres; but realistically speaking, no one will tend to play those games as a game and no one will supervise such an idea. In this case, you have just made a software not a game. A good example can be an absurd game which is in contrast with the definition and basics of the game itself. On the other hand, certain genres like epic or romances has been elevated in game scenarios to such an ideal level which is beyond the literary power.

2.2. Proppian Approach to God of War

Folk stories around the world form a web of connections and the same or similar stories with the same structures can be found in many places. These old stories also have formed the basis of many more stories since then and hence Propp's morphology is useful not only in understanding Russian folk tales but pretty much in any other stories [and genres]. There are other structural categorizations in literature by different scholars but the most organized, detailed and original one is Propp’s. According to Wikipedia encyclopedia:

Propp has been both lauded for his structural approach and criticized for his lack of sensitivity to subtle story elements such as mood and deeper context. Nevertheless, his analysis provides a useful tool in understanding stories ancient and modern and, after early influence on such luminaries as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, has become a classic of folklore and structuralist analysis.

➤ Elements of Narration

In his *morphology of folklore*, Propp has identified “Five categories of elements, defining not only the construction of a tale, but the tale as a whole” officially stated on Wikipedia. While not all the stories and video games (no matter computer video games or PlayStations or Xbox) will contain all of Propp's narratemes, but it is improbable to find stories that contain none, and many modern books and scenarios fit nicely into his categories. These structure in the *God of War* and on the elements of narration includes the list below and there is short introduction for each case before giving examples.

- *Functions of Dramatis Personae*[dram-a-tis per-soh-ny]

“The Latin phrase for 'persons of the play', used to refer collectively to the characters represented in a dramatic work or, by extension, anarrative work.” (Baldick 72) but in simpler terms it is “the characters in a play. Usually the names of these characters are printed at the beginning of the text. (Cuddon 241)

Kratos, son of Zeus who wants to take revenge;

Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom and Kratos' mentor and ally;

Zeus; king of gods;

Poseidon, the God of the Sea;

Hades, the God of the Underworld;

Hephaestus, the Smith God;

Hermes, the Messenger of the Gods and the God of Speed and Commerce;

Helios, the Sun God;

Hera, the Queen of the Gods;

Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love and Sexuality.

Gaia,

Cronos,

Epimetheus, Oceanus, and Perses.

Hercules; the demigod and half-brother of Kratos

Daedalus, the architect and father of Icarus;

Pandora, the created daughter of Hephaestus.

The three Judges of the Underworld: King Minos, King Rhadamanthus, and King Aeacus;

Peirithous, a prisoner in the Underworld who is in love with Persephone

Kratos' wife, Lysandra

Calliope, Kratos' daughter.

- *Conjunctive elements (ex machina, announcement of misfortune, chance disclosure – mother calls hero loudly, etc.)*

These elements are numerous situations that connect the events and reasons to each other. They are not motivations and reasons but indeed are effective in achieving coherence in a narrative. Deus ex machina (device from god) for instance, even in its literal meaning, happens in the narrative. The problem in GOW III is resolved through a power which at the end and out of nowhere, the story reveals that the power of hope was within the Kratos and only with the help of evils of box of Pandora (fear for instance) and help of good powers in the box (here hope), Kratos was able to defeat Zeus.

There is *medias res* (in the midst of things) in GOW III as well in which the narrative starts just after the gamer has left it off in GOW II fighting with Zeus. The whole collection is a big *medias res* when Kratos intended to commit suicide at the beginning of GOW I.

Fortune is another conjunctive element in this narrative. If Kratos was not in the war, if Kratos was not defeated in the war (he was defeated in only one war with Persian king), if Zeus had held him like Heraclius or if gods has treated him better and granted him a better situation and many other instances, the story would have been different at the end.

Fortune plays a critical role in this narrative which made some critics to consider it as a weak point in the scenario rather than artistic use of structural option. They argue that whenever the narrative uses a lot of coincident, it means that the author was blocked in creation of a good cause and effect relationship and it is the time that he has to use a lot of coincident. From the official and unofficial comments on the role of coincident, it is obvious that the simplicity of Pandora's sacrifice for Kratos who has already murdered Hephaestus, Pandora's father-like guardian, is so improbable or the reason why Daedalus, the architect and father of Icarus; without any reason helps Kratos to flood the world with chaos again, is so simplistic; since Daedalus is an architect and should love order and harmony. Also all architects love their works like their children and they are not so willing to give up on them so easily. On the other hand, there are other people who believe that these play of fortunes are artistic since in the scenario it is used as something new and original and they believe it was necessary to create the unity of effect and keeping the story leveled. Also some other critics believe that the role of chance here is, not allowing the actions to fall of their pace and rhythm that if they have tried to create such cause and effect relationship for everything that happens in the game it could have become overloaded and the scenario may have lost its charm and effectiveness.

- *Motivations (Reasons and Aims of Personages)*

The main motivation and reason is the revenge. This revenge causes all the events to happen and end. Kratos in whole story seeks nothing but revenge and nothing matters to him except taking his revenge. He repeatedly mentions his motivation explicitly during the game. When he slays former god of war, Ares, and takes his place, it is as if nothing changes at all and he is the same person before and after (that seeks nothing but his revenge). When he finally kills Zeus and when everything is over, he rejects Athena's help and although he had the chance to be king of gods both by *Blood* (succession) and *Iron* (fighting with weapons which are basic rules of ascension in realm of gods), he simply passes over and decides to sacrifice himself for mortal human beings.

The most important personage is believed to be Zeus. Zeus from the beginning is the reason for all that happens in the story. He dumps Kratos and his mortal wife to live in misery. Kratos had a brother with the same mark and when they were just children, he tries to kill him by sending them to Mountain of Death (Zeus didn't know that they are twins), but when Kratos' brother dies and he saw the mark; he lets go of everything believing in death of all his children. Again as king of gods, when he is aware of his son Kratos, he had the power to help Kratos or ease his pain; however, he arrogantly decides to wipe him out and commits the same family mistake over again.

Power also is another motivation in the whole mythology. Zeus is afraid of the ominous prophecy and tries to put an end to this curse by killing his son and protecting his own power for which he had struggled and suffered a lot, and believes that Kratos is after his power and kingdom. Athena who once sacrificed herself for Zeus, this time helps Kratos to kill Zeus but as a matter of fact, she has the ambition of regaining his power and Zeus and Kratos does not please her at all. Maybe Athena, who thinks of all male gods before him as unjust and unreasonable, believes herself to be a better king and she is after power too. That is maybe the motivation for manipulating Kratos for her purposes.

- *Forms of Appearance of Dramatis Personae (The Flying Arrival of Dragon, Chance Meeting with Donor)*

Most characters in this scenario are god/ess and they appear from nowhere, although some may argue that Gaya appears from land and or Poseidon appears first in form of human on top of the mount Olympus and later in form of three water-transparent-formed horses when he descends to fight with Kratos and Gaya who want to climb to the Olympus to kill Zeus. Zeus also appears at first in form of human but later turns into a soul moving around like hurricane and throwing lightening spears.

There are also other creatures which any of them have specific way of their appearance like three sisters of fate or furies. Titans also in this scenario follow the mythology appearing with eight hands and wings flying. Other gods depending to their power and quality has their own way; Hephaestus in his smith chamber, Hades in his gloomy Underworld, Aphrodite in her pretty seductive dress in her chamber etc.

- *Attributive Elements or Accessories (Witch's Hut or Her Clay Leg)*

Zeus is equipped with lightening and rides a quadriga and resides in Olympus. Heracles owns a magical shield and a sword. Ares as a god of war carries a spear and Hephaestus own a stove, blacksmith anvil and a hammer. Pandora has a box and other gods each of them based on their characteristics own something magical and special.

2.3. Four Spheres of Structuralism Based on the Propp's Theory

After 5 elements of narration in Vladimir Propp's theory of structuralism, it is time to start analyzing 31 Narratemes of structuralism in GOW (mostly GOW III), in form of 4 spheres. But since it a trilogy so interwoven with each other sometimes it is inevitable if the present study has to return to former volumes. But still the primary focus is on GOW III and it will be tried to achieve these situations from this specific scenario.

➤ 1st Sphere: Introduction

- *Absentation: Someone Goes Missing*

In this case at the beginning of narration (this part in the game scenario is so implicit but the book explicitly brings it) the gamer witnesses that Kratos' father is missing and neighbors give the family a really hard time because of that.

- *Interdiction: Hero is Warned*

There is a moment in the narrative when Kratos serves the Olympian gods specially Ares and they order him to sack his village. Kratos attacks his village and orders to kill everyone in the village and himself joins the army. When he wants to enter a sacred temple, an old woman warns him not to do and says "... an evil destiny awaits you in here".

- *Violation of Interdiction*

Kratos ignores the old woman's warning and starts slaughtering people and does not stop until he finds his wife and daughter murdered in his own hands.

- *Reconnaissance: Villain Seeks Something*

In this sense villain wants Kratos to be free from any emotion and just tinge everything and be obedient to gods of Olympus. His village and family were the last connection he had and when Kratos murders his own family indeed he is free from any emotion. Unlike what gods of Olympus has expected (thought), the only emotion that exists now is vengeance. Being loose from all connections is apparent right from the beginning of GOW I when Kratos who has recently murdered his family is determined to commit suicide. Also at the end of GOW III when suicide is replaced with vengeance and the revenge is taken, there is nothing to connect him to life and he commits suicide ultimately.

- *Delivery: The Villain Gains Information*

Ares and other gods especially Zeus gets the knowledge of the fact that he is coming to take revenge on them! They know that he is son of Zeus and they are aware of prophecy. Hence they know there is a possibility of Zeus' failure and they are afraid of the following possible fact that maybe Kratos is worse than Zeus and Cronus and they don't want to return to the previous jail of Tartarus. When Zeus freed his brothers and sisters from Tartarus, he divided the kingdom of god between them and treated them fairly. Therefore, Zeus and other gods who are sick of the prophecy decide to put an end to this father-and-son conflict and array troops against furious Kratos.

- *Complicity: Unwitting Helping of the Enemy*

Kratos in his war with Barbarians was going to be defeated and Barbarian king's hand with sword was up to kill Kratos when he accepts to kneel down for Ares and be his servant to him and gods of Olympus. Ares accepts the offer and makes Kratos his servant. This relationship continues for a while and gods order Ares to command Kratos to sack his own village. Kratos cannot disobey his direct order and follows the direct order and unwittingly helps the villain in their conspiracy. But when he murders his own family the siren bound's seal is off; then Kratos freely can see what he has done.

➤ **2nd Sphere: The Body of the Narrative**

The main story commences at the beginning of trilogy in GOW I when he realizes what should be done, but in GOW III the body which had started in first narrative continues here and starts with departure of the hero for his unfinished main quest.

- *Villainy and Lack: The Need Is Identified*

Kratos after all those years of pure service recognizes that he is betrayed at hands of gods of Olympus and what they have done to him must be revenged and paid back. He starts with Ares and heads off toward Zeus. If only GOW III is focused, Kratos at the beginning is chained so badly, both hands and his neck either, by the order of Zeus and he is awaiting for his momentum to escape and climb the mount Olympus to take his revenge and finish off the reign of Olympian gods.

But the real lack without considering trilogy is impossible because they are interrelated to each other and the real lack is when Kratos gave up the idea of committing suicide and replacing it with new purpose of vengeance for his family.

- *Mediation: Hero Discovers the Lack*

For a moment Kratos is stunned in his mind. He has killed his own family and there is nothing he can do about. Even when he is back to his senses, awake or later at sleep more specifically, he is haunted with memory of that incident. In order to deal with this problem he decides to take revenge and he understands that the only way to ease up himself is through revenge and punishing people responsible

for this ominous incident. It is possible that after punishing all people responsible for murder of his family, Kratos commit suicide to punish the last person, who is himself.

- *Counteraction: Hero Chooses Positive Action*

Here Kratos decides to stop gods of Olympus from messing with people's life. Kratos' life, his brother and his families' life are ruined by gods of Olympus and their whimsical decision-makings and beside his vengeance. Kratos decides to put an end to these kinds of indicants - playing with human's life and putting them in misery without deserving such a destiny.

At the end of the narrative when Kratos murders all gods of Olympus, as a legitimate prince and a demi-god, he deserved more than anyone else to ascend to the throne but he disgrace this throne and prefers dying rather than becoming someone like those selfish gods.

- *Departure: Hero Leaves on Mission*

Immediately when his eyes get open and he sees what he has done, and after a short moment of contemplation, he decides not to rest until he has taken his revenge from gods of Olympus.

➤ **3rd Sphere: The Donor Sequence**

In the third sphere, the hero goes in search of a method by which the solution may be reached, gaining the magical agent from the Donor. Note that sometimes this sphere in itself may be a complete story especially in video games.

- *Testing: Hero is Challenged to Prove Heroic Qualities*

Actually the challenges in this narrative are done through forced quest levels. In this sense it is fighting with the sea beast at the beginning of GOW I or the heroic battles that Kratos participates in them.

- *Reaction: Hero Responds to Test*

Maybe in literary narrative mode hero can be defeated for many times and it is enough to win only the final major quest; however, in game scenario mode of narration in order to reach the final test and final quest, the hero should pass all facing quests (except for optional quests and the games that for the first time hero fails in in order to fulfill it later in the narrative as a major quest). In this sense a good and brilliant example can be the time when Hephaestus sends Kratos to Titan's prison to get him back special stone from there. There are many other examples such as opening box of Pandora, leveling labyrinths etc.

- *Acquisition: Hero Gains Magical Item*

Each time that Kratos defeats (kills) a god from Olympus, he gains a magical item, for instance when Kratos kills Helios, he cuts his head off and whenever he needs light, he uses that head. It is because of the fact that when Kratos kills Helios there is no light, so the world falls into darkness. Also when he kills Ares, he uses his spear or back when he kills prisoner in the underworld, he gets his bow.

- *Guidance: Hero Reaches Destination*

When Kratos was in the underworld, his weapon was not with him since it was destroyed with ghosts of River Styx, so Athena again appears and gives him guidance on how to kill Zeus. To this end, she says the only way to defeat a god is to distinguish fire of Olympus and gives him sword of Olympus both as a weapon and as a guide which would guide him to the fire.

- *Struggle: Hero and villain do battle*

Kratos and Zeus fight for three times. In each part of this trilogy Kratos and Zeus do battle each time at the top of mount Olympus. These battles always happen at the end of the narrative and right from the beginning the gamer understands that this is inevitable.

- *Branding: Hero Is Branded*

Out of three battles that Zeus and Kratos do, Zeus wins the two first ones. In this case, Kratos twice goes to the underworld and everybody brands him as loser except Gaya and Athena who help him to escape the Underworld. In GOW III story is different. This time Zeus chains him badly instead of sending him back to Hades. The narrative in GOW III starts right from the Kratos in chains.

- *Victory: Villain is defeated*

In GOW III it is Kratos that in their third battle kills Zeus and even defeats Zeus's soul and sends him to the Underworld to his brother Hades and other family members.

- *Resolution: Initial Misfortune or Lack Is Resolved*

When Kratos in his third battle with his father defeats him, he takes his revenge and also ends the reign of gods of Olympus. In this way Kratos succeeds in his both goals.

➤ **4th Sphere: The Hero's Return**

As mentioned in earlier, this part of structure is totally optional and most of literary narrative and game scenarios do not include this part. In older games this part was mostly in form of ending episode when the hero fulfills his quest with honor; slots of movies or photos accompanied with people in charge of the game production process appear at the end of the game respectively or together and in the literary narrative and specially folktales the hero or heroine would return to his or her beloved, their village or kingdom to live happily ever after and having seven days of feasts and ceremonies.

Although it is possible to elaborate the narrative claiming that when Kratos sacrifices himself for mortal humans he returns to his family with vengeance taken and with honor, it can be elaborated as his return to where he will be happy with his family. It is just like the time when gamer witnesses in the psyche of Kratos, his daughter who helps Kratos to forgive himself and when Kratos dies, he returns to his family per se. But it is too much overgeneralization and too far-fetched connection if there is.

Story of Kratos in GOW is a trilogy with many related complete stories such as Kratos' past, story of Hades and Zeus, story of Pandora and Hephaestus, Aphrodite and Hephaestus, Zeus and his father and grandfather etc. each of which has a protagonist, antagonist, helper, donor, helper dispatcher and so on for themselves separately. This fact makes it difficult to decide what story is prior to the rest and which character in which story best describes the specific group. It is because sometimes subplot is nicely fit into the structure that the main plot may not have that feature in such quality. Nonetheless, for the sake of the name of the narrative, all examples are among the main story line which is Kratos' revenge.

2.4. Seven Character Type Based on the Propp's Theory

For the last part of theory of structuralism, present study continues by dealing and identifying seven character types proposed by Vladimir Propp. They include:

- *Villain: Struggles against the Hero.*

Zeus, who misuses his power and causes suffering for hero and then leaves the hero alone in the misery (and even for many times tries to kill the hero). He kills Kratos twice already and on his third time killing he fails. He does everything to suffer him and stop the hero, his son, Kratos. He uses his brothers and powerful allies in order to kill Kratos.

- *Donor: Prepares the Hero or Gives Him or Her Some Magical Object.*

Athena, Kratos' mentor and ally prepares him to defeat the Zeus and gives him the magical weapon (sword of Olympus) and tells him how to kill Zeus by distinguishing power of Olympus and prepares him to kill Zeus ultimately.

- *Helper: Helps the Hero in the Quest.*

Athena in different occasions appears in the narrative and helps the hero in different ways, from providing him advices to reviving his life and helping him to escape from realm of underworld.

Except for Athena who helped Kratos a lot, it is possible to add up Pandora and Daedalus to the list. Pandora is truly the only pure help that Kratos ever receives throughout the story. Pandora sacrifices her life for Kratos and his mission (mostly ending the reign of gods of Olympus). Another person who had been a great help to Kratos was Daedalus without whom nobody could ever open the labyrinth and he helps Kratos demanding nothing in return.

Discussing true helper here, the narrative needs some explanation. In GOW II Kratos was going to kill Zeus until Athena interferes and sacrifices herself for Zeus and Kratos fails. But why Athena should

do that? It is the moment when hypocrisy of Athena is discovered. As a matter of fact Athena is after her own power and does not care for Kratos and his revenge. Death of gods of Olympus also is not important for her since she never tries to stop Kratos from murdering any other member of her siblings. If Kratos has succeeded in taking his revenge and killing Zeus, she knows for the best that he will never admit to open the box of Pandora for her. She wants Kratos to open the box in order to get her own power back, the power of hope. Hence seemingly she sacrifices herself for Zeus but indeed she just pushes away Kratos to the path that she has planned and tells Kratos the only way to kill Zeus is using the power of box of Pandora, as she knows according to prophecy it can be only Kratos who can open the box. It is completely obvious at the end of the GOW III when Athena asks for her power. Kratos refuses to deliver the power because at the end Kratos realizes that she did not help him to take his revenge, she did that because she wanted to get her hand on the power of box of Pandora, and even maybe she wanted to ascend to the throne and rule the world. That is why Kratos prefers to send the power to humans rather than giving it to such a person who has abused a broken man and at the cost of her family members to get what she wants.

Therefore Athena was only a simple donor and the real helper is Pandora who sacrifices herself for Kratos without expecting anything from Kratos.

- *Princess and Her Father*

Athena gives many tasks to Kratos and guides him a lot throughout the scenario. When Kratos was in Underworld, when Kratos needed weapon, when Kratos needed a way out, when Kratos decided to kill Zeus and the way that he can kill him are not gained easily and freely. For each of them Athena gave Kratos difficult tasks to accomplish.

Other characters in the scenario give tasks to Kratos to fulfill such as Aphrodite, Hephaestus and others, but they all lack the quality enough for being considered as Princess Figure of Propp. They just give tasks to Kratos for a reason but it is not enough since they should be on the Kratos side of the story. They should help Kratos in order to adjust to the definition from chapter three.

Another character, a bit far-fetched, can be Pandora who tells Kratos how to raise the plate so she can reach the fire to extinguish it, costing her life.

- *Dispatcher: Makes the Lack Known and Sends the Hero Off.*

In the story of GOW III it can be Athena again. She is the one who makes it clear that in order to kill Zeus at first he needs to extinguish the fire of Olympus then open the box of Pandora, use its power to weaken him and eventually kill Zeus.

- *Hero/Heroine or Victim/Seeker: Reacts to the Donor, Weds the Princess or Prince.*

The hero and victim of god's whimsical poor judgment, Kratos; seeks his and his family's revenge on them. He reacts to donor, Athena who prepares him for final battle with Zeus. At the end of the narrative, Kratos after taking his revenge is united with his daughter and wife (here the princess characters of the story).

- *False Hero or Heroine*

"Takes credit for the hero's or heroine's actions or tries to marry the princess or prince". (Pullman, Chillers and Thrillers) It can be Kratos' brother who had the mark on his body and dies a little after the beginning as Kratos.

Ares can be a better example, he is the false god of war since Kratos easily defeats him in the fight proving he is the real god of war. Also when Kratos was serving the gods, fighting on mission, the whole credit was for Ares and when he dies the truth reveals itself that Kratos was the real god of war.

These are the main structures found in a literary narrative which are the most famous structures of all, and on the structure of narrative theory, they are core structures of structuralists. Propp's 31 situations, 7 character types and 5 elements are repeated in the game scenarios without any deviation or difficulty. The major difference in structure level is their number of repetitions which in video games, numbers 8 to 19 do not cease to happen until the end of the story and in most games, the major quest's fulfillment means the end of the narrative.

The repetition in these structure is quite logical. Since there should be actions in the games, there should be a good reason for them as well, and as you remember, 'Motivation' is one of the main

elements that Propp classified it in his category (number 3 in his elements of narration). This part of structure or the chain of cause and effect is the main structural element in the video game scenarios because it is something that makes the repetition something interesting and the real power of a good game is to create better cause and effect relationship and at the same time to cover the repetition behind turn of the events. In simpler terms, the structure here is like manikins that each time the author dresses her with a new clothes that you are immersed in those clothes that you completely forget the fact that you are looking at the same manikins.

3. CONCLUSION

Structuralism, starting with Ferdinand de Saussure, was trying to find general rules in language system and this movement little by little extended to finding these rules for analyzing genres, character types, elements of narration and, the tale and narrative as a whole. Northrop Frye and Vladimir Propp, two eminent figure of structuralism school, tried to classify these phenomenon so as to analyze narratives based on these categories easily. So far, these categorization on different kind of narratives all over the world were used and present study intended to apply these classifications on a video game (God of War III).

The results indicate that Northrop Frye's classification of genre analysis is completely suitable to be applied on video games. GOW trilogy starting with tragedy genre in the first narrative, slowly departed from tragedy to romance (or romantic epic) and the qualities defined by Frye proves belonging of first story to genre of tragedy. Second and third narratives, considering independent, move away from characteristics of tragedy to romance and all the elements indicate having romance for the last part.

Focusing on GOW III, Propp's classification of character type, elements of narration and 4 spheres with their sub-category proved practicality in action, which means that video games narrating a story (narrative) have the required features to be analyzed from structural point of view and they share great deal of similarity with literary narratives analysis from structuralist approach.

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