Typology of Game Principles in Digital Games: A Case Study of Mafia III

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ABSTRACT:
The presented study dwells on the issue of game theory by Roger Caillois to be applied to the contemporary dimension of digital games. The actual attempt is to find out the extent to which the game principle categories apply to media products, i.e. digital games. The paradigms by authors engaged in cultural anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology, besides others, served as key theoretical groundwork for the present paper. Nevertheless, the theories concluded within media study addressing the game and game principles in contemporary society have not been excluded either. In essence, the theoretical reflection introduces the basic terminology axis creating an apt platform for the game variants in use, to perform within the forms of new reality, i. e. virtual reality. The primary aim is to define elementary concepts like "game", "game principles", "media or virtual space", "digital game", and "game genres". Secondary is then to explicate certain game principles designated by Roger Caillois present in the particular game. Material to be applied for this study ranks among the genre of action games. "Action game" particularly is a digital genre that belongs to frequent genre types as well as RPG games, strategy and others. Drawing from this fact, one of the actual digital games called Mafia III was chosen for empirical study. The main purpose of the paper is through logical analysis to illustrate the issue of games, and subsequently point out the cases of their occurrence in the media space. Theoretical postulates by Roger Caillois are by author assumed to be potentially applicable to the current media reality of digital games that come under action genres.

KEY WORDS:
action game, adrenaline, agon, alea, competition, digital game, fortune, game, game genres, game principles, ilinx, Mafia III, media reality, mimicry, physical and mental identity, risk, vertigo, virtual reality.

Introduction

Games as a phenomenon may be seen as one of the most comprehensive concerns observed with interest within numerous classical social sciences, e.g. sociology, psychology, philosophy, cultural studies, history, fine art, etc. That is to say, "Pastime" moved in to the limelight of so-called media studies. This fact is an immediate implication of expanding technology, which brought about smooth transformations of games from socio-cultural reality to media or virtual reality. This movement is viewed identically as it goes on particular game principles, which each game actually is founded on. It was French theorist Roger Caillois who started to deal with game variants first; although, he designated the game principles exclusively applicable to games within socio-cultural reality. Yet, contemporary media studies do not tend to adopt these principles, and many authors still draw on the categorical basis developed in the period of the first introduction of digital games. Anyway, at the end of the last century, "digital games" as a product inspired a brand-new science – digital game theory. This comparatively recent scientific branch attempted to establish new terminology as an implement for new theoretical concepts resulting in new scientific findings. It is true, however, that research in this new branch of science is missing substantial verification based on earlier theories aimed at the phenomenon of games, still missing the focus of modern media theorists.

In the absence of a definite categorical apparatus, typology of game principles in the multimedia space is somehow vague. Therefore, the main objective of the present study is to render a general view of the subject related to game principles, concluded upon theoretical approaches shared among scientists, preferentially employed in the humanities, further to be applied in research within the domain of digital games. Elaborating on the subject in question, i.e. applying the game variants typology in media products, we draw upon the theoretical approaches of the following authors: J. Huizinga, R. Caillois, T. M. Malaby, M. Malíčková etc. Applied theoretical groundwork subsequently is exemplified in performances of the digital game *Mafia III*[1]. To implement the primary intent, a qualitative content analysis is to be applied, accomplished in the form of a case study.

Terminology Axis
of Examined Issue

Daily experienced reality can be entitled "social reality". The term "social reality" was mainly dealt with by the theorists P. Berger and T. Luckmann, who identified social reality as a property of common phenomena accepted to be an existence independent of our will. This reality is privileged, hence superior and regularly true. We go through everyday reality alertly, we take it as natural and self-evident, to be an immediate perception of the world. It is so called objectivized reality, a sequence of physical phenomena perceived as objects prior to be perceived by humans.[2] Indubitably, following this idea, *game* can be considered the object of an immediate every-day reality. "Game" means one of indispensable needs for individual humans, which can also be qualified as a means of cognition. E. Fink clearly defines game to be inconspicuous, familiar, imaginative and a common activity providing temporary relaxation. Gaming includes indulgence, lots of fantasy, varied forms, and rules autonomy. Game phenomenon is widespread, manifold, accommodating numerous forms and structures.[3] J. Huizinga introduces definition more in detail. He asserts that play is a voluntary activity or occupation executed by man within certain fixed limits of time and space, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding. Heading its internal goal it is attended with excitement, joy and a sense of oddity distinct from daily routine. He speaks about it being the most natural and powerful performance in human life, revealing the true perception of reality by the individual, together with their attitude to the world and most of all to themselves. J. Huizinga tends to view game as a factor accounting for culture.[4]

We appreciate the most pertinent definition of games by R. Callois whose opinions on game relevance in many areas concur with those of J. Huizinga. R. Caillois states that playing games is a free choice of an individual, who by no means is compelled to it. If the opposite is true, the game would abandon its entertaining property and, automatically, saturation of the needs of individuals – primary reality experienced on a daily basis, but it is a side part of common daily performance. It is set in designated time and space. He as well refers to it as an act of contingency – an activity with challenging (unpredictable) procedure and ending, based on self-governing. However, R. Caillois assumes that lack of

productivity, rule observance, and fiction are negatives.[5] T. M. Malaby adds to the point that games are semi-circumscribed arenas, relatively dissociable from everyday life. He continues that association of games with social reality only concerns the social and cultural capital of the man. Due to the emotional states of the individual conditioned by a given game, people become productive, holding potential to value each attended game context more or less significant, which reversely acts upon socio-cultural reality.[6] Based on the above utterances, it can be stated, the game has certain characteristics that undergo a degree of modification along with the advancement of society thanks to technical progress and expanding technology. Particular authors tend to put some game patterns above others, which, logically, results in interdisciplinary incongruence and thus differences in denotation. Nevertheless, quotations from J. Huizinga and R. Caillois[7] sound for us highly actual, since characteristics ascribed to digital games seem alike. We are always able to ascertain the place and time limits of the game. Actors are obliged to play according to strict rules concurrently heading delights from excitement, luck, exceptionality of the score man, etc. It can be concluded that almost original form of the gaming phenomenon has survived in digital media reality that far more promotes it.

In whatever reality the game is played, it is based on certain *game principles*, that is to say, the accepted rules of playing. They are in fact essential rules for creating the game area, which stands for standards applying to both social and media (virtual) reality. R. Caillois defines four basic game variants occur in gaming realms. He denotes the "Agon" principle representing discipline and obedience to strict rules of particular games or match. "Alea" variant is based on fatalistic approach of the actor characterised by passivity or submitting to fate in the game, though, still under fixed rules. The game principle "Mimicry" simulates reality and altering space within the game assuming heterogeneous identity. The last of the principles is called "Ilinx", or "Vertigo". The given game concept includes adrenaline emotion experiencing excitement, astonishment, or horror.[8] The group of games under *Agon*[9] is imaged as a contest or fight. Competitors or players meet under ideal and equal conditions susceptible of giving precise and incontestable value to the winner's triumph. Present rivalry hinges on a single quality within the game, e.g. speed, endurance, memory, etc. The position of the winner of loser actually depends on the particular actor's capabilities.[10] J. Dovey and H. W. Kennedy define Agon as a "competition game" principle that provides the substance for either a clear triumph or defeat. Performing exceptionality and skills in specific game areas is crucial. For playing "Agon", the primary preconditions are vigilance, training, strong effort, and determination to win, exerted along with other personal skills.[11] Accounting fundamental quality of Agon, which is profound activity, and then *Alea* is the most contrasting by profound passivity.[12] R. Caillois states to this that the player has no capability to influence the game result. The winner is not recognized by triumphing over his adversary, on the contrary, one scores

1   HANGAR 13: *Mafia III (Playstation 4 version)*. [digital game]. California, Brno, Texas : Hangar 13, 2K Games, Aspyr Media, 2016.
2   BERGER, P., LUCKMANN, T.: *Sociální konstrukce reality*. Brno : CDK, 1999, p. 9-39.
3   FINK, E.: *Hra jako symbol světa*. Prague : Český spisovatel, 1993, p. 31; 68-69.
4   HUIZINGA, J.: *Jeseň stredoveku. Homo ludens*. Bratislava : Tatran, 1990, p. 7-11; 240.

5   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 31-32.
6   MALABY, T. M.: Beyond Play A New Approach to Games. In *Games and Culture*, 2007, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 96-97.
7   For more information, see: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Dimensions of (Digital) Games from the Point of J. Huizinga and R. Caillois. In ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ., PETRANOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity – Digital Life - part 1. Conference Proceedings from International Scientific Conference 10th – 11th November 2015*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2015, p. 426-437.
8   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 35-47.
9   See also: BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: Historical reflection of the game principle agon and its application in the current creation of media reality. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2016, Vol. 12, No. 5, p. 25-37.
10   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 35.
11   DOVEY, J., KENNEDY, W. H.: *Game Cultures: Computer games as New Media*. Berkshire : Open University Press, 2006, p. 24.
12   For more information, see: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Historical reflection of the game principle alea and its presence in virtual reality. In *Communication Today*, 2016, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 30-45.

when more favoured by fortune than his counterpart is. The most frequent examples of this type game in socio-cultural reality appear to be games of dice, roulette, heads or tails, lottery, and so on. The entire motivation of the player is a hope for a positive chance. Player proves no qualities in this type of game, and they does not deploy their resources, skills, muscles, or cleverness. So to say, they are an "expectant" waiting what comes out. "Games of chance" generally are conditioned by a degree of risk accepted by the player; actually, they risk the whole stake. Despite all this, the players attending the games of chance still expect a kind of fairness.[13] The third of the principles is *Mimicry*[14] founded on simulation of other reality, on changing places; and means a playing part of heterogeneous identities. It involves the plays that embody imaginary fates, where the actor is alter-identity[15] M. B. Carbone, P. Ruffino and S. Massonet classify it as primary game variant serving to prove our identity in the context of game. They refer to this type of game as the process of fascination by using another personality that is not real.[16] The last game variant *Ilinx/Vertigo*[17] mostly present in combination with other variants already mentioned, i.e. agon, alea, mimicry. Vertigo effect is a typical sign of this game variant, which is an attempt to instantly destroy the stability of perception and inflict a kind of epicurean panic upon the human mind. This game variant aims to make a player yield to a convulsion, trance, or ecstasy that certainly will surpass the reality. Disorder in organisms heading for "vertigo" is desired by people of diverse nature[18], which increased popularity not only of this game variant but also in virtual reality.

Media reality, or a part of the domain – *virtual reality* – is, in some aspects, unique for socio-cultural reality. P. Virilio addresses the virtual dimension as an imaginary world or fantasy, which means fictitious or unreal being represented via play of dimensions and designs, or a simulation of reality.[19] Virtual reality is a border line between reality and fiction.[20] It is invented reality, artificial or less true.[21] Among most actual definitions pertains one by S. M. La Valle, who says about virtual reality as purposeful behaviour of organisms assisted with artificial sensorial stimulation, where the actor himself has a vague or no impression of interfering with the virtual reality. Going more in depth the author elaborates on four key components of the utterance. Deliberate behaviour demonstrates familiarity of the person with the activity created for him by the virtual space. The term organism may stand for any living entity influenced by artificial sensorial stimulation, i.e. deliberate impact on their sensory perception or subconscious mind.[22] The characteristics of virtual reality explained above denote exceptionality of virtual reality. Unrealistic nature and illusions conveying real images of non-existent phenomena are underlying. Virtual reality is simply a simulation of social reality. Nevertheless, it remains a fact that socio-cultural

reality and individual existence (human body and mind) considered within the reference framework are preconditions of ever present reality that despite markedly present virtual reality cannot be absent.[23]

Conspicuously, the game has been a fundamental component of socio-cultural reality, and many times in everyday life. Though the game format has changed as a consequence of invention of the new virtual reality media, the internal character of game is preserved, hence correlating with the definitions already mentioned. Development of the new media technology has brought about modifications of the terms addressing the examined phenomenon, gradually resulting in the collocations as follows: "electronic game", "computer game", and "video game"; all these presented under the current umbrella term "digital game".[24] Apart from the etymological ambiguity of interpreted term, several authors highlight also the enormous complexity of the issue in question. Claiming this they draw upon the fact that the concerned field of study includes the study of games in general, i.e. their structure, regulations, and genres.[25] J. Juul defines *digital game* as any kind of game practiced by means of digital technology. Interactive software of digital games is primarily exploited for the purpose of multimedia entertainment.[26] Digital game is a component of the media domain which counts upon the active actor who participates in creating virtual reality. The player represents or controls the game avatar (usually via instrumentation), and this way gets into interaction with the virtual environment and/or with other players. It can be generally defined as a set of programs designed for users of technology, e.g. personal computer, tablet, mobile phone, utilised mainly for leisure activity. Typical features of digital games are active user participation, submission to rules fixed in advance, player's responsibility for proper decision, player's opportunity to cheat and choose between truth and error.[27] Despite the designated characteristics of digital games, media theory experts particularly prefer some attributes of game. Digital game, or video game, stands for a unique and most significant phenomenon of the present era. Involved interaction is classified as one of the most distinctive features. Here we have a model of communication between the player (recipient) and digital game (composition). We speak about one of the key principles of digital game be prerequisite for pleasure in game.[28] M. Malíčková further conceives of games, or digital games, as an "escape from daily routine". Games offer the player an opportunity to attend and experience circumstances unattainable in workday living. Through playing games one can acquire special experiences otherwise unachievable encountering unreal space in the middle of reality.[29] In the frame of digital games, we identify restricted playing space and time as the game activities determinant. Digital games participants are governed by fixed rules meant to control their conduct.[30]

13   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 37-38.
14   See also: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Problém aplikácie konceptu R. Cailloisa mimikry na súčasnú digitálnu realitu. In ČÁBYOVÁ, Ľ., JÁNOŠOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Quo vadis massmedia, Quo vadis marketing. Conference Proceedings from International Scientific Conference of PhD. students and young scientists.* Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 140-154.
15   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 35-47.
16   CARBONE, M. B., RUFFINO, P., MASSONET, S.: Introduction: The Other Caillois: The Many Masks of Game Studies. In *Games and Culture,* 2017, Vol. 12, No. 4, p. 315.
17   See also: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Herný princíp ilinx/vertigo a jeho uplatnenie v digitálnych médiách. In PETRANOVÁ, D., MENDELOVÁ, D., RADOŠINSKÁ, J. (eds.): *Megatrendy a médiá 2017: Budúcnosť médií II. Conference Proceedings from International Scientific Conference 25th – 26th April 2017.* Trnava : FMK UCM, 2017, p. 192-209.
18   CAILLOIS, R.: *Hry a lidé*. Prague : Nakladatelství studia Ypsilon, 1998, p. 44.
19   VIRILIO, P.: *Informatická bomba*. Červený Kostelec : Pavel Mervart, 2004, p. 16-26; 133-144.
20   SAWICKI, S.: Kyberpriestor a kyberrealita. In GÁLIK, S. et al.: *Kyberpriestor ako nová existenciálna dimenzia človeka.* Łódź : Księży Młyn, Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2014, p. 68.
21   GÁLIK, S.: Kyberpriestor ako nová existenciálna dimenzia človeka. Filozoficko-etický pohľad. In GÁLIK, S. et al.: *Kyberpriestor ako nová existenciálna dimenzia* človeka. Łódź : Księży Młyn, Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2014, p. 9.
22   LaVALLE, S. M.: *Virtual reality.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2017, p. 1.

23   For more information, see: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Religious Motives as Part of Virtual Reality Created by the Digital Game „The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt". In *European Journal of Science and Theology,* 2019, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 223-233.
24   SALONEN, J., RUUTIKAINEN, P.: E for Experience – Using Game-Based Design Elements in Electronic Services. In KYLÄNEN, M. (eds.): *Digital Media & Games. Articles on Experiences 4.* Rovaniemi : University of Lapland Press, 2007, p. 92.
25   CRAWFORD, G.: Is it in the Game? Reconsidering Play Spaces, Game Definitions, Theming, and Sports Videogames. In *Games and Culture,* 2015, Vol. 10, No. 6, p. 574.
26   JUUL, J.: The Game, the Player, the World: Looking for a Heart of Gameness. In COPIER, M., RAESSENS, J.: *Level Up: Digital Games Research. Conference Proceedings.* Utrecht : Utrecht University, 2003. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <http://www.jesperjuul.net/text/gameplayerworld/>.
27   JENÍK, L.: Niektoré perspektívy a výzvy filozofického skúmania fikcie. In *Studia Aloisiana,* 2013, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 15.
28   ZLATOŠ, P.: Digitálna technológia a interaktivita. In MALÍČEK, J., ZLATOŠ, P., MALÍČKOVÁ, M. (eds.): *Zborník o populárnej kultúre. Popkultúrny hrdina vo virtuálnej realite.* Nitra : Filozofická fakulta UKF v Nitre, 2008, p. 39-45.
29   MALÍČKOVÁ, M.: Tematizácia herných modelov filmovým médiom. In MALÍČEK, J., ZLATOŠ, P., MALÍČKOVÁ, M. (eds.): *Zborník o populárnej kultúre. Popkultúrny hrdina vo virtuálnej realite.* Nitra : Filozofická fakulta UKF v Nitre, 2008, p. 49-50.
30   LASTOWKA, G.: Rules of Play. In *Games and Culture,* 2009, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 386.

The rules make games respectful. They eliminate conflicting situations to help maintain the joyful character of the game.[31] Anyhow, it is important when examining the phenomenon of game, or digital game, not merely to account for playing itself, strategy, play principles, or language, since study in reference to the particular genre is often a determinant for the game attributes already elaborated on.[32]

Game genres were established in order to achieve some broader classification units that draw on common attributes and features of particular digital games. The content of digital games gradually determined individual genres that consequently determined particular game design. The process of formation spans the period from the second half of 70's up to the end of 80's of the last century. The framework of major parts of genres was concluded at the beginning of 90's and it remained so until the present.[33] In principle we know the two types of genre – *ludic* and *narrative*. The first type describes the game mechanisms, i.e. actors moving in space, time, completing the tasks, etc., by which they resemble musical styles. The second describes the narrative and its audio-visual design, chiefly drawing upon the rest of narrative media, i.e. horror, sci-fi, fantasy, etc.).[34] F. L. Spiteri mentioned several dimensions that enable us to define the genre of a game as well as to clearly classify it. The core of his analysis rests in exploring the basics " according to subject", which he subsequently divides after specific common properties into smaller units that designate the genre itself.[35] Though the game genres differ in some way from those of literary, journalism, or film genres, each one of the genre types accents representation of some of existing phenomena[36] – literary work, journalistic text, film, or digital games actually pursued in this paper. Our secondary aim in the presented study is to clarify the gaming principles of Roger Caillois, applied in the particular game genre, i.e. action game. In our opinion, to render a thorough view of the issue in question is essential to this purpose. Identification and brief description of the chosen genre, i.e. "action game", we leave for later investigation and application of the game variants to the digital genre type in our study.

Action games are accounted in the theory of digital games as fundamental and the most popular genre. The nature of action games rests in exploiting the player's physical capacity (manoeuvring within the game platform), as well as his mental capacity (promptness, response, and reflex). These skills and practice acquired by the player himself through "playing" enable him to overcome all hitches along with eliminating all his "virtual adversaries". The term – action game – covers several subgenre, e.g. *First-Person Shooter* (FPS; "shooting from the first position"). FPS games are based on the simulation of a real fight or single combat. Reflexes and prompt reactions are crucial in this type of game, which implies the necessity of sufficient player's experience to advance the levels of FPS platform. It is, in essence, a form of simulation where the individual player themself represents the game avatar; however, he must abide by the rules that create the game narration, and that are established in advance. It is also important to point out that given subcategory of the action game is based on the principle "multiplayer" (game attended by number of players), which is instrumental in raising the excitement and interaction within

FPS games. Another relevant subgenre of action games is *Third-Person Shooter* (TPS, "shooting from the third position"). The basis of TPS games rests in the control of the avatar from, so to say, "bird perspective", where the actor watches the playing figure's back, in other words, he "keeps track" of its back and takes control over it. In regard to TPS, *action adventure* subcategory displays almost the self-same characteristics. Due to syncretic development of the mentioned subgenres, actually it is highly challenging to strictly divide TPS games from action adventure, sharing almost identical features.[37] However, it is important to note, that in most games of this type the avatar is not an essential element of the game. Despite this, "action games" can be declared one of the most frequent and popular digital genres in the gaming community. This status induced our immediate choice of the material for empirical study of the issue that is to clarify the Caillois' game principles present in the dimension of digital games, namely in action digital games. Open to question remains whether the adopted categorical apparatus is applicable to practical engagement in media.

Case Study: Mafia III

The research material was deliberately chosen from digital game production. Mafia III (2016) was concluded as an up-to-date product relevant to the genre of our interest, i.e. action games. Because it is one of the basic game genres, our examination focuses on game principles and the ways they are performed in the given digital genre, which involves the study of implemented plot and game avatars. The game subgenre TPS (third-person shooter – action game from the third person viewpoint) is actually the analysed case. The developer of the game is a Czech company 2K in association with the American video game developers Hangar 13 and Aspyr Media. The plot of the game Mafia III is set in 1968 in the city of New Orleans. The key figure Lincoln establishes a gang in pursuit of revenge on the Italian mafia. The main protagonist completes the tasks, communicates with other figures of the plot aiming at the primary goal – to build his own empire and rearrange the city he lives in.[38] The plot attractiveness and the product topicality were not the only determinants of the study material. The location of the company in the Czech Republic was equally decisive for the choice, together with pertinent visual representation of the socio-cultural reality of the given society, i.e. dialogues and avatars' conduct typical for the present day living.

The subject matter of the research is a digital game that belongs to the genre of action game. By means of quantitative content analysis – narrative analysis – we intend to explicate different representations of the game principles designated by Roger Caillois – Agon, Alea, Mimicry, and Ilinx/Vertigo. A number of particular game variants was manifested within the chosen action game Mafia III through elaborate description of the narration details. The *Agon game variant* happened to be the most frequent in multiform occurrence. The given variant based on rivalry was mostly detected in the form of a fight between the main protagonist and a single human (ally or antagonist); or, between members of opposed parties (members of the mafia or policemen, fighting with no weapons

31   KOSTER, R.: *A theory of fun for game design*. Scottsdale : Paraglyph Press, 2005, p. 36.
32   See also: BUČKOVÁ, Z.: Religious Motives as Part of Virtual Reality Created by the Digital Game „The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt". In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2019, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 223-233.
33   *Hry, ktoré definovali "žáner" – FPS (first person shooter)*. Released on 20th October 2010. [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <http://www.mickthemage.sk/2010/10/hry-ktore-definovali-zaner-fps-first.html>.
34   BUČEK, S.: Typológie hier nezaložené na herných mechanikách. In *Mediální studia/Media studies*, 2013, 3/2013, p. 324.
35   SPITERI, L. F.: The use of facet analysis in information retrieval thesauri: An examination of selected guidelines for thesaurus construction. In *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 1997, Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 21-37.
36   APPERLEY, H. T.: Game and Game Studies: Toward a Critical Approach to Video Game Genres. In *Simulation & Gaming*, 2006, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 8.

37   For more information, see: BUČKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: The issue of game genre typology in the Slovak online game-magazine Sector. In PETRANOVÁ, D., MATÚŠ, J., MENDELOVÁ, D. (eds.): *Marketing Identity – Brands we love - part 1. Conference Proceedings from International Scientific Conference 8th – 9th November 2016*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2016, p. 280-294.
38   *Píše se rok 1968 a pravidla se změnila.* [online]. [2019-02-12]. Available at: <https://mafiagame.com/cz/info/>.

(fistfight, throwing the enemy out of the window of a building, burning on the cross, fast driving vehicle, and so on); in other case armed (gun, knife, garnet, exploding barrels, etc.); alternatively, in combination of both forms of fights. The Agonal game principle also involves fights between groups; for example combat between the main protagonist and his ally, or group of allies, on one side, and a group of human enemies on the other. All participants are armed, and fight flexibly with fists and weapons. The performance of the main actor employed also skirmishes, when he himself, or with his ally/allies, verbally offend their opponent/enemies. Another image of the agonal game genre was unique in employing a fight of the main actor with a single animal, or group of animals (alligator/alligators), using weapons. The Agon game principle appeared in different forms that varied not only in the number of participants or in the way of fighting with rivals (with or without weapons; physical or verbal conflict). The scenes of the battles happened to be a distinguishing aspect (e.g. mainland, underground or sewage, ship, motor boat, road vehicle). One remarkable representation of the agon game principle is a fight of the individual (main protagonist) with three strange figures in a wrestling ring – a perfect example of the transformed game principle, where it is physical power that is sharply challenged. Considering the specifications above, actually any kind of contest where heterogeneous powers and skills of the player are confronted is believed to be a matter of an agon game. Returning to the analysed game, we may define it as a fight of the main protagonist together with his ally/allies against a group of human enemies riding motor boats; or, fight of the main protagonist against a human (adversary) or a group of human adversaries (policemen) running; or, fight of the main protagonist co-operating with his ally/allies against their enemy or enemy groups (mafia companions, policemen) driving road vehicles.

Furthermore, the agonal game principle occurred in the study material also in the form of fights of the main protagonist against inanimate objects, e.g. boxes, barrels, boats, cars, trailers, doors, distilling equipment, shop windows, rubbish heaps, cranes, gaming machines, chemicals, and so on; using weapons, e.g. guns, sticks, bombs, etc.; another case was the fight of the avatar against inanimate objects, e.g. doors, cars, ropes, instruments, filled boxes etc., with no use of weapons, e.g. kicking out, rubbing hands, flames. The author points out in his typology of game principles the fact that agon games always implicate a victory. In a particular case, this aspect was detected in gaming situations where the main protagonist was rewarded with material gains or financial bonuses for overcoming the enemy in physical conflict. Agon may be witnessed also in partial units of the narration, e.g. by winning a figure or object, revealing a secret, proceeding with the game plot and further utilising them as allies, currency and useful information crucial for achieving a winning end to the game. At the meta-narrative level of this game variant stands for the struggle of the main protagonist to govern the city of New Bordeaux or attend the partial missions; or eventually win the game.

In the contrastive view of agon, which is representative for the action game genre, and *alea* present in the plot of the digital game Mafia III, the latter occurred only minimally. It is true because the main protagonist is never engaged in gambling (cards, dice, etc.). Nevertheless, the basic feature of alea games – risk – was detected in our empirical material, particularly in cases when the main protagonist risked his life in physical conflict in return for material or abstract advantage (usually cash, utility objects, information, etc.), for which he uses different means of combat. Analysing the given digital game we identified the case of physical combat using no weapons (fistfight), in which the main protagonist may gain an exclusively material reward, e.g. wanted people. Anyway, fighting is not exclusively the only way to achieve material or immaterial gain. Different tasks assigned to the key figure by the side characters aiming to damage the opponents' property and alike. A further primary feature of the alea game principle – fortune – was apparent in the material under

scrutiny. This aspect was identified at the moment when the main protagonist is losing cash as a consequence of going down in battle. Eventually, winning is the "result of fate".

Although the *mimicry game principle* is not a representative aspect of the action game performed uniquely via beating enemies, its variable forms are present in the analysed material. The main protagonist assumed a physical identity by which he is able to walk, run, climb over objects (fence), climb up objects (container) and alike; sit on a bench or sofa, at the bus stop lean against a building wall; change clothes, utilise first aid kits and adrenalin injections; wear a tactical vest; drive a road vehicle, motor boat, or swim and dive; etc. The protagonist undertakes different activities within the game narrative, e.g. installs a wiretap into switch cabinets, takes up arms (loads, points, fires), beats the enemies with fists, throttle the enemies, pins a knife to the neck, seduces enemies by whistling, is able to acquire staff (for manipulation, reading, installing, etc.) moves and activates various objects (explosives, opens garages, dials the codes, etc.), buys stuff (weapons, first aid kit, etc.) from the street dealers to improve their fighting gear, is able to pry a door open, to carry enemy's dead bodies, rub his hands to unfasten the rope and release himself from capture. He assumed a mental identity that also is a component of the game principle mimicry, entailed by primary dialogues between the hero and his ally/allies, or his rival/rivals, or stranger/strangers.

The protagonist also utilises phones to contact his fellows, or speaks via walkie-talkie device. No one of these methods empower the player to influence the answers of protagonist, which implies that the player is not completely immersed in the game figure. Other situations in the given game makes the player sovereign when deciding on further conduct of the main protagonist, e.g. whether he kills or recruits a rival; or, whom he appoints responsible for each of his corporations. In pursuit of study of the given digital game we regard as unique the set of mimicry principle where a character can smoke a cigarette, provide customer service, or pour narcotics into wine bottles. Similar images of the mimicry game principle may possibly occur in other video games, though it seems less probable and regular. Moreover, in the concern of the mimicry variant, the concept "game in game" cannot be overlooked. In the study case, such situations are particularised by the main character hiding his true identity in order to have an advantage and control over the circumstances, e.g. disguised as a policeman, waiter, wrestler, etc.

Roger Caillois completes a distinct typology of game principles with the variant *Ilinx/ Vertigo*. This variant is defined by the sense of dread, uneasiness, adrenalin, dizziness, or loss of consciousness. All the stated emotions, anyway, are supposed to bring about a positive experience to the player. Adrenalin is mostly connected with acrobatic feats of the main character, observed in the examined product (e.g. somersault, jumps, rolls, etc.); life-threatening acts of the main actor (e.g. climb a ladder to the top of a building, or from the underground to the surface, through a window, breach a gate or fence by a motor vehicle, jump up a wall, rush on various terrains, jump over ravines, railings, buildings, entering a burning ship, etc.), or, the main character enters a lift to the top of a building. There are even more relevant points worth mentioning, connected with joyrides on motor vehicles or motor boats, in an attempt of the main protagonist and his fellows to run away from a police patrol. Examples of scenes that induce a blend of feelings like fear, uneasiness, portion of adrenalin are as follows: the main character and his fellows hide behind various objects running from their enemies or police patrols; the main character, himself or accompanied with fellows, chase the rival/number of rivals riskily driving a vehicle; the main character fighting with enemy/enemies hides behind nearby objects, or in a stealthy manner approaches the enemy; runs after a figure, familiar or strange to him, striving to catch it; chases an enemy; tries to steal motor vehicles remaining unnoticed ; or jumps into dark water.

The player solely gets scared in the moments when the main protagonist's life, or his fellow's life, is endangered while fighting against a single or a group of human enemies, or against a single or a group of animals. Furthermore, anxiety and a thrill is observed in situations when the main protagonist wrecks objects or eliminates figures all around, either with weapons or without; carries dead bodies of enemies he killed, moves within dark areas and tunnels, catacombs, streets, etc. Yet, etymology connected with the given game narration must not be omitted; it is definable by fascination, convulsion, or trance. This feature of the digital game variant Ilinx/Vertigo was conspicuously performed within the scenes as follows: the main character drives a motor vehicle around roundabouts; the character goes through shifts of consciousness, e. g. hallucinations of experienced accidents, or a complete loss of consciousness (be knocked out by a rival). Based on careful consideration of findings we arrived at through analysis of the chosen "action game", yet it proved tangibly that the set of game principles designated by Roger Caillois are present in the given game. However universal is the categorical apparatus by Roger Caillois, yet it is timeless and actual for contemporary dimensions of digital games.

Conclusion

Irrespective of the reality the game is set in, it can be claimed one of the most actual subject of media studies, especially the theory of digital games. In view of its broad concerns, our study was focused on categorisation in principle, applying the principles by Roger Caillois in the dimension of digital games. That is to say, this French sociologist in the last century designated a categorical apparatus dividing games into four basic groups distinguished according to certain dominating rules they are founded on. These clusters were designated as follows: *Agon, Alea, Mimicry,* and *Ilinx/Vertigo*, and they are widely applicable in socio-cultural reality. It was the fact that the current digital dimension differs from day-to-day reality, most of all in the territory where the participants behave, which made us determined to embrace the subject of game variants.

Incalculable kinds of digital games existing and developing nowadays rapidly enrich the volume of game genres. In most cases it is the process of hybridization of two or more genre types, which result in a new one. From these the most frequent genre majority which games are founded on is "action game". The provably steady position of the "action game" genre was decisive for choosing the research material, i.e. digital game *Mafia III*, finding out if the game principles by Roger Caillois are present in its narrative structure. Drawing upon the findings of theoretical reflections being subsequently utilised for the purpose of qualitative content analysis, the categorical apparatus of game principles elaborated by Roger Caillois was recognisable and thus applies to the contemporary digital dimension. The most frequent game principles revealed in the given game belong to the variants *Agon* and *Mimicry*; on the other hand, the least in number was, due to its distinctiveness, the game principle *Alea*. The proposed study not only aimed at presenting the theoretical groundwork put under scrutiny so as the current state of the issue is exhaustively mapped, but the major intent was to verify applicability of the typology of game principles to the sociocultural reality and to the dimension of digital games; in particular, applicability to the "action game" genre. Regardless of that, the intended has been achieved, i.e. to render a thorough insight into the issue of game principles and apply the knowledge to the province of digital games, it is recommended by the author to carry out another similar case study through all other digital game genres.

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