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Visual stereotypes in computer games as a medium of mass communication. Problem of imaging relations and commonplaces.

The subject of my study is computer games in relation to other artistic media, mainly to paintings and architecture. On the one hand, research has an interdisciplinary character because it is connected with a new area for the history of art, previously studied by different disciplines. On the other hand, I use methodological tools and analytical experience gained from the history of art. I would like to present computer games as an object of research for an art historian and being exact to show an impact of art field on numerous games. In my presentation I would like to cover a few general points. Firstly, I would like to discuss ludology (game studies), it is a scientific discipline which examines games. I will speak about the actual area of research of ludology and I will point out main representatives of this discipline. Next, I would like to discuss contemporary disciplines exploring games and indicate the problem with the autonomy of game studies. The present state of research brings to a conclusion that a majority of researchers forgot about the visual aspects of games, which offer imagining complexity. I want to prove that the history of art can bring something new to game studies, owing to experience with analyzing many visual artifacts.

However, in this case the most important thing is to compare two fields, because we can see many references to famous historical monuments as well as historical and modern paintings in games. My purpose is to find citations and allusions to historical objects, paintings and buildings in games. I do not want to just mention these examples, but also examine how these references exist in virtual word of the game and what meaning they generate. As a result, it is really important that games preserve visual stereotypes and create form of "commonplaces". Indicated notions incorporate this issues to broader context of "visual culture", where there is no difference between virtual space and reality since everything is a representation. Selected examples come from both historical and fantasy games, which indicates that references to art could be found in many types of games. At the beginning, I will discuss games in historical context, in particular Assassin's Creed series, which is based on famous monuments and

characters. I'm going to show quotes from historical architecture in Florence, Venice, etc. and from paintings of great renaissance masters, as well as interesting allusion to Leonardo da Vinci inventions form his workshop.

However, even more fascinating examples can be noticed in games set in fantastic reality, which indeed refer to monuments from many ages. The most important instances in this category are "Witcher III" and "Dark Souls" where we can see medieval architecture, but also citations from other epochs and cultures. As far as "Dark Souls" is concerned, its quotes have symbolic potential and these meanings co-create the story in the game. At the end, I will discuss category of Indie games (Independent game) being productions created by a small group of people with low budget but distinctive graphic style. These simple and usually two dimensions games are in many cases stylized as painting or show strong reference to paintings. As an example may serve "Tormentum: Dark sorrow" inspired by the works of H. R. Giger and Zdzisław Beskiński. In many cases it doesn't simply quote but rather presents complex transposition from many art works which also give metaphorical meanings. By contrast, "Apotheon" refers a player to black-figured Greece painting which we can see on ancient vases. In conclusion, we can treat games as the mirror for the history of art.