

Coordinator

Prof. Univ. Dr. Ștefan Borbely

PhD Ioan Flaviu Pătrunjel

Faculty of Letters

University Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj Napoca

Eschatological narratives in computer video games

PhD Thesis

Summary

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Key words: narrative, eschatology, apocalypse, game, video game, horror, gothic, survival horror, ekphrasis, videoludophrasis, grotesque, aesthetics of the ugly, imperialism, simulation, chronotope, spectacle, ideology, monster, kairos, sacred, numinous, mysterium tremendum, utopia, dystopia.

Summary:

In our work we followed the phenomenon of changing the purpose and meaning of eschatological narratives in the narrative architectonic of horror video games. I emphasized the differences caused by the influence of Gothic literature, horror genre, technologies of spectacle, and video game mechanism. These new media gave a new function to the eschatological narratives that, originally coming from political, historical and religious spaces, were re-contextualized.

By eschatological narrative we understand those ensembles of texts that are a part of apocalyptic literature. Through the syntagm *horror video games* we refer to the *survival horror* genre.

In order to follow the eschatological narrative direction change phenomenon, from the religious, cultural and political space into the virtual space of computer games, we followed

several lines of interpretation, which gives our work an interdisciplinary character. We used multiple methods of interpretation; this approach highlights the complexity of the cultural topos – eschatological narrative – if followed in different historical periods, which are then compared with one of its possible re-instrumentalization – the one of digital entertainment represented by video games. The aim of this work was a comparative study between the characteristics of religious texts and apocalyptic horror games: both in terms of differences between the literary background and the video game mechanics, and from the point of view of the stake of the impact this type of narrative has on the audience. Violence directed as a show in which the human body is mutilated and tortured, represents the common reality of a Roman arena and of apocalyptic narratives. As a matter of fact, apocalypse emerges on the history scene in times of conflict, in contexts of war where the population the apocalyptic prophets identified themselves with was threatened with extinction, and violent death had become a daily fact. As a last resort we could conclude that, in secular and religious versions, the apocalyptic is profoundly revolutionary. Eschatological narratives exaggerate the violence reality, to motivate the oppressed masses to revolt, threatening political enemies with supernatural vigilante punishments, promising to the righteous utopias of beatitude equally fantastic. When the oppressed masses come to overthrow the political world order, a paradox is created, as is the case of Christianity that became the state religion of the Roman Empire and has not renounced the apocalyptic, but instead its structure was used to create external enemies, antichrists, rebels and heretics, whose invisible source terrorizes and motivates the Christian community to stand together, to not deviate from the commands of the Church, thus strengthening imperialism that was once condemned. But no matter how much videogames respect apocalyptic narrative content and structure, the imaginary and forms in which it is played, places the apocalyptic tropes into new cultural contexts, where the stake is no longer a political one.

The first chapter was dedicated to discussing the possibility of translating literature in the video game architectonic. There is a major difference between *ludus* and *diegesis*, they should not be confused. But it is also true that the horror video games we have discussed are equally defined by narrative and game-play. These are games where the protagonist follows a narrative while trying to escape from a binding and dangerous space. The limited resources, almost nonexistent ammunition and the option to use household objects as weapons to fight the avatar's superior monstrosities, causes the player to run in order to survive, to hide instead of fighting with the monsters. During that time, he must find the answer to certain questions

on which the moral purpose of his existence depends: who is guilty for the daughter's disappearance, for the wife's and younger brother deaths, etc. As the inexplicable causes ontological changes in the urban space, which suddenly becomes monstrous, references to apocalyptic are inserted: connections with millenarian religious groups and hints at magic rituals where terrible supernatural forces are invoked, appear. We defined the overall process by which literature can be translated in the narrative architectonic of the video game, using the term *videoludophrasis*, being aware of the hybrid (and intentionally monstrous) onomastic between the Greek and Latin language. Exactly the status of hybridity resonates with the Gothic genre specifics: those were extended by many critics on the whole hyper-technologized society. On the other hand, *videoludophrasis* has antecedents in concepts like *melophrasis*: musical *ekphrasis* – in the same way music can represent text by employing sounds, more so literary works can be expressed through interactive image. Eschatological narratives of horror video games are therefore framed in *videoludophrasis*, namely the act of converting written literature into the digital interactive game.

In chapter II we offered the reader a brief history of eschatological narratives and conceptions, in order to highlight those general features which fall into that kind of narrative. The term apocalypse is explicitly connected with eschatology by John of Patmos; but in essence, eschatological and apocalyptic narratives are more or less synonymous, given the fact that the *Apocalypse of John* complies with Jewish eschatology patterns, which are in turn influenced by Zoroastrian eschatology. There are academic voices (Ara Mitra, for example) who argue that eschatology represents an older type of narrative than Zoroastrianism, shared by extremely distant geographically civilizations and cultures. Hinduism, Assyrian-Babylonian religions, Buddhism, Native American religions etc. also have a very rich imaginary regarding the describing of hells, of cosmic battles between supernatural forces and the idea of judgment, punishment or reward after death. Nevertheless, apocalyptic literature is extended in the past, from *Apocalypse of John*, only on the Jewish eschatological writings, with the recognition of the influence of Babylonian imaginary and beliefs of Zoroastrianism. Up to Zarathustra time was perceived as circular, as a sequence of cosmic cycles where the universe is destroyed and recreated *ad-infinitum*, vision often connected with beliefs in reincarnation. Zoroastrianism, for the first time, raises the issue of linear time, from which follows the vision of history towards an end of times that is also its purpose. For Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity, the idea of a cosmic ending precludes the return to a new similar cycle, instead proposing a union with divinity in a perfect

metaphysical level, where time is no longer perceived in relation to death but in relation to eternity. Qualitative difference between historical time – *chronos* – and time of divine eternity – *kairos* – profoundly marked the eschatological vision of Apostle Paul and all of Christianity's speech. In contrast to the vision on cosmic cycles of ancient religions, apocalyptic literature takes into account one ending, followed by eternal damnation or an eternal bliss *located* in the kingdom of divinity.

But apocalyptic literature appeared in the context of the war crisis in which the Hebrew prophets, the same as Zarathustra, were together with the people and the tradition to which they belonged: danger of extinction after violent confrontations with superior military power. Zarathustra's Apocalypse is written in a period when the tribes of shepherds, with which he identified himself, were robbed by nomadic warrior tribes. Daniel's Apocalypse occurs in the context of the Seleucid's defeat against the Romans, with Jews being destined to spread into separate tribes. Early Christianity is also being persecuted and identifies the Roman Empire as a house of evil. In ancient times, and subsequently in millenarian sects and certain ideological currents (Marxism, punk anarchism), eschatology was connected with the present political situation, compensating the real trauma and violence with which community members were treated by the hostile imperial powers, by formulating scenarios that concomitantly avenged wrongs with justice, and also provided the promise of an utopia as a reward for those who do not deviate from the moral code. Eschatological narrative occurs primarily as an anti-imperialist manifesto, being a cry of protest of the oppressed masses against the world in which they lived and against the political forces leading it, identifying people and political power with demonic forces that defy the divine commandments, and who are to be punished in a *Last Judgment*, expected to be simultaneously and imminent to the end of ages. Therefore, the imaginary of supernatural divine and demonic forces that destroy the universe is connected to an anti-imperialist premise in which the world was seen as a place of death, suffering and vices, which is why it deserves to be destroyed, only to be rebuilt as a paradise where only the deserving were allowed to enter. Millenarianism, communism, anarchism, have in common the idea of the revolution designed to provide the perfect opportunity for egalitarian society development, where progress reaches its purpose, historically immanentizing the utopian ideal.

St. Augustine individual eschatology opposes this anti-imperialist vision, which reformulates the eschatological message and moves it from the Empire onto the rebels or heretics. For Augustine, the millennium of peace proclaimed by John of Patmos had come

with the advent of the Church. History, in this new vision, becomes a process through which the kingdom of God is created, step by step, with the help of the Church, although direct intervention of divinity is not ruled out. The Roman Empire accepted Christianity as the only religion of its state; therefore the Church had no incentive to consider the empire a shelter of evil. Evil remains to threaten the Christian community boundaries, but doesn't do it in a visible way, only occasionally, when it is identified in certain heresies or in forces that oppose imperial order. This type of discourse that justifies imperialist domination uses eschatology in contrary to millenarian / Jewish / Zoroastrian apocalyptic. This can be called pro-imperialist eschatology, because it identifies imperial forces with divine forces, portraying them as such, as opposed to anti-imperialist eschatology which condemns the empire and portrays it negatively. In the last chapter we showed that military imperialism still uses eschatological narrative, converting it into a technological spectacle in which the army (typically American) is invested with the divine *majestas* features, technology becoming the argument in proving the superiority of American / British civilization (also regarding the Gothic), justifying colonialism.

In chapter 3, having identified these two major apocalyptic narrative perspectives, we tried to locate them in horror video games. In this chapter we have shown the presence of apocalyptic allusions in several horror video games, in order to establish that the apocalyptic theme is actually defining this genre.

In chapter 4 we tried to understand the difference and report between the emotion over fear towards the supernatural divine/demonic – *deima panikon, mysterium tremenduum* – and the emotions specific to horror art: fear and disgust for irrational monstrosity. I called both on the interpretation of Rudolf Otto, and on the *Theory of Horror* in the vision of Noel Carroll. Likewise, I have resorted to some discoveries in neuro-psychoanalysis and from cognitive psychology, showing both the link between horror and comic, and the presence of the mirror neurons, that may explain the transmission of emotion from positive characters in horror movies in the audience that copies expressions of fear and disgust in empathy with them.

In Chapter 5 we discussed the apocalyptic chronotope, by comparing it with the genres from which *survival horror* games draw their inspiration: the literary gothic and the cinematographic horror – horror movies. Eschatological narratives are portrayed in horror games following the horror and gothic imaginary aesthetics, gothic architecture, extended to reinterpretations of urban spaces, topics of the mentioned genres: transgressive actions and

realities, ruin, invasion of the corruptive past in the present, disappearance of moral, ethical, physical, scientific boundaries, death, irrational and supernatural evil etc. We found that anxieties thematized by gothic and horror literature are influenced by certain secular apocalyptic visions – romanticism, idealism and anti-enlightenment thoughts – while keeping the supernatural apocalyptic imaginary specific to religious eschatology. We also discovered a continuation of the eschatological theme, in the gothic literary genre which uses the apocalyptic monstrous imaginary, in order to ideologically oppose the mechanical world-view specific to Enlightenment rationalism. Gothic perspective shifts from the religious progressive eschatological vision, which hopes in the coming of the Kingdom of God, bringing out hypocrisy and dangers of urbanization and industrialization, extending as a criticism over centuries addressed to the technological society, in all its aspects: digitalisation, globalization, spectacle and consumption. Gothic is imposed as a continuation of Romanticism, is positioned against the changes that natural sciences offer, which it condemns, and identifies as forms of monstrosity. Unlike this ideological tendency of the gothic, the horrors appears more like a duplicitous phenomenon: on the one hand it takes the transgressive theme of the gothic genre, just as it takes over the apocalyptic imaginary and staging the danger of violent death (individual localized or extended over the entire cosmos), and on the other hand is an apotheosis of the society from which all these transgressive forms come from. In the horror we encounter a reconfirmation of the values of modern societies, horror is reactionary towards the monstrous changes of the world from which the main character/ author come from, which is exactly the technologized world. There is a paradoxical accusation and apotheosis of the world, involving causal and apocalyptic religious vision, which is often condemned as foolishness or catastrophic ignorance.

Scenarios of horror video games give the player avatars and characters fighting to save the world order from transgressive actions of the monstrosities, which mean that they are struggling to defend the urban space, family life, institutions and values of the society from which they come. The paradox arises when horror space is visually connected to precisely these institutions that are seen as monstrosities. This conflict is reflected in the conscience of the characters. But the monstrosities cause is not infrequently associated with certain secret cult's and millenaries religious orders, which gives a clue to the meaning of recycling eschatological narratives in horror video games.

We studied the transformation of eschatological discourse from the religious plan towards the secular one. After this survey we could notice a double secularization of the

eschatological narrative: the first being the kidnap of its religious signification; the second being the defusing of the eschatological narrative of its revolutionary political stake. In horror video games, by the very fact these are games, any real ideological tension disappears: the game is a *topos* outside social reality, it represents a special time and place where the rules and laws of the world are suspended, that is why horror video games have no political stake, as they don't even suggest the same emotional response from the audience.

Medieval Christianity and the dawn of modernity were marked by the apocalyptic discourses that placed the accent on terrifying the audience with catastrophic images and the risk of the Judgment Day, presented in the form of sermons or religious theatre plays like *De Iudo Antichristo*, counting on fear in order to strengthen the feelings of religious obedience. The saving of the soul was portrayed as the sole purpose of human existence and, obviously, very hard to obtain, as the probability of eternal torment threatened all social strata. Such a terror isn't as present in the horror genre. Even though we are talking about a common imaginary which sets the scene for the universal catastrophe caused by terrifying supernatural forces, the religious *mysterium tremenduum* appears only as a simulated reaction in the horror genre audience. The emotion that is specific to the *horror art* refers to a paradoxical entertainment form in which scopophilia intersects with shock, fear and disgust towards a transgressive monstrosity, supernatural, violent and irrational in its behavior. We can observe the similarities in shape and content with the portrayal of the end of the world in various religions and mythologies, with the primitives' fear of Gods, demons, ghosts, vampires and spirits. One must keep in mind, however, that what the millennial believers thought was a way of perceiving reality - from where the fear of the reality of the fantastical creatures stems - for the readers of gothic literature, the spectators of horror movies and the players of horror video games, this monstrous imaginary has an entirely different function, even if it does not exclude fear and disgust. Through the fact that horror video games offer a virtual space in which an individual's experience is simulated in the imagined context of the end of the world, horror video games can be interpreted as simulations of eschatological narratives. Obviously, these simulations do not reproduce one eschatology or another completely, rather recycling and blending various allusions from religious texts with the storyline, always beginning with the situation of a banal individual whose existence is very well placed inside the contemporary context. In this way, the motif of eschatology splits from the political-historical context and situates itself in the contemporaneity of the literary author, director or horror video game company, or – which is the same thing – in any other imagined socio-political context. What

is essential is that, in the ekphrastic process which allows the translations of the eschatological narratives in horror video games, both the form of expressing the message - and the stakes that this message has in the original context - suffer changes.

After we identified the emotion of the horror art – fear and disgust – as a different emotion from the *deima panikon* or *mysterium tremendum*, the fear of *numinos* and sacred violence, we followed the narrative structure specific to the apocalyptic literary genre as well as the construction of the apocalyptic chronotope, comparing and showing the differences from horror video games.

Generally speaking, the religious eschatological narrative offers a panoramic point of view; the prophet sees the Demiurge's history and plan with his own eyes, yet is protected against the catastrophes he exposes. The characters of gothic and horror have limited vision, an almost inexistent understanding and an infinitesimal chance of survival – this is where their quest to find salvation stems from. At the same time, this is a road towards the discovery of the truth and a rational answer to the lack of sense the familiar universe is manifesting, a universe which has suddenly turned eerie, wild, chaotic and hostile, conquered by violent supernatural forces.

The point of view of the horror video game character is comparable with that of the prophet as he experiences the catastrophic Doomsday. It is a virtual incursion in the fiction of such a hypostasis, as is the formulation of such curiosity. Because of this, it needs a plausible narrative placement inside a certain concrete reality – usually tested by the horizon of expectation of the audience, constructed around the urban topos, with the rules, laws, shapes and limits that define it. Often enough, urban life is idealized, portrayed as a utopian iteration of the *American dream*. In this Eden-like place there occurs a burst of demonical monstrosities and their transgressive actions. Symbolically, the demons threaten to destroy the horror genre's heroes' paradise.

The targeted transgression leads to the aesthetics used in the discussed genres. By and large, even from myths and the religious apocalyptic, the supernatural forces were attentively described from a visual point of view, being assigned various epithets attesting to details concerning the shape and scale of their destructive powers. The epithets qualify these fantastical creatures for inclusion in the category of monstrosities: they are interstitial, irrational and supernatural, violent and disgusting. This is why we can talk about an imaginary content between the horror genre and the apocalyptical literature, at least in what

the elements of the narrative structure and the monstrous supernatural imaginary used are concerned.

In horror video games, as well as in the apocalyptic, we encounter the discrepancy between the real, urban world— normal according to the character's expectations (representative for the mentality of the contemporary society) and the *other* world, which is much more real because of the fact that it is understood as superior to the realities of human limits, being at the same time its cause. If the apocalyptic waits for a return to a paradise where man basks in the presence of God, having atoned for the Adamic sin inside history, the gothic genre brings with it the shadow of the past which transgresses, infiltrating into the present, where the sins of the past do not allow the character's evolution in a nightmarish world. Just like in the Biblical myth, the hero of gothic literature breaks the taboo and is banished from the convenient universe in which he was living. Frankenstein causes the appearance of the monstrosity because of his adventure within the realm of forbidden knowledge. The horror brings out the causality between the destruction of the world and the violation of laws by various individuals: these laws are primarily ethical and moral, although they initially appear under the inexplicable shape of the monstrosities only afterwards understood as expression of a transgressive trauma.

The apparition of demonic monsters in horror, gothic and apocalyptic is determined by the transgressive. Whether it is about the Roman Empire's Jew slaughter and Christian torture, being condemned from all points of view – political organization, conduit, lack of moral values, vices, violence and sacrilege – or about the transgression of the individual who ventures outside the laws and social, political and natural norms, the condemnable act is correlated with the violation of a certain law, and determines the punitive appearance of the demon or monstrosity. In Resident Evil 3, for example, Jill Valentine believes that the zombie apocalypse is nature's way of punishing a humanity which has violated all moral precepts, unconsciously venturing in the testing of biological limits, thus causing a universal catastrophe.

The monster problem directed us to the aesthetics of ugliness, which we discussed in connection with the apocalypse, gothic and horror from video games from the perspective of Karl Rosenkranz.

In chapter 6, after we showed how the eschatological techniques combine with the ludic-narrative architectonic of horror games in the monstrosity aesthetics and the virtual

chronotope, we specified the differences between them and then went on to the analysis of *Silent Hill*, in order to observe the allusions to the apocalypse and the recycling of the elements evoked in religious texts, as well as their intersection with the other elements borrowed from the gothic, horror, Shakespearean theatre, conspiracy theories, etc. We could observe a semantic amalgam derived from the juxtaposition of multiple ideological, metaphysical, ontological, sociological and psychological elements in the configuration of the ludic-narrative architectonic. The eschatological narrative works as a tool used in multiple ways in horror video games.

In chapter 7 we talked about the apocalyptic and horror spectacle, finding common elements with the death games from Roman arenas. Generally speaking, the imperial power turned staged violence into a show. The Roman Empire entertained and subtly threatened the masses in order to quell any rebellious desires. The role of the apocalyptic spectacle is also that of strengthening a certain vision of the divine empire, being in its turn an instrument of fascination and fright for the audience. Both the violent imaginary used in horror video games and the integration of these points of view in certain satanic cult ideologies of horror games narratives lead us to find complex eschatological elements used in their architecture. The horror game simulates the spectacle of executions, tortures and abuses in every shape imaginable, including the torture of the human body, a defining aspect of the shows that took place inside Roman arenas. The punishments and tortures of the souls portrayed, however, as tortured flesh are not excluded from the apocalyptic imaginary either. In horror video games there is an abundance of images in causal relation to the supernatural monstrosity, but also with certain millenarian religious groups. In *Silent Hill*, the demons are caused by the rituals of the satanic cult, in *Resident Evil* there is the millenarian sect called *Los Illuminados*, which is also a terrorist group aiming to destroy the world, in *Dead Space* the religion of the Unitologists is to blame for bringing about the end of humanity, triggered by its ambitions of fulfilling certain apocalyptic prophecies, etc.

The hero of the *horror survival* genre protects the world he stems from ideologically as well, because the monstrosities are connected to the millenarian religious groups from the game. The revolutionary ambitions are condemned from a reactionary point of view, the character being unable to survive in the conditions imposed by the change occurring in his world. The change is a monstrous one, disgusting and lethal – for the hero of the horror game, hope is not tied to progress and the utopia of a supernatural future, but is correlated with the need of regaining lost normality. The millenarian point of view, however, is not the only

element to be accused: urban space, state institutions and consumerism are in turn presented as being incarcerating and monstrous spaces. We see an accusation of not only rebellious tendencies towards a consumerist society, but also against vices and abuses that this consumerist society facilitates and nurtures. The apotheosis stems from this very place, due to the fact that the consumerist society appears as a space of absolute freedom where man can choose and is responsible for his actions. Man can choose evil because society cannot take away his free will, but choosing this evil becomes synonymous with the transgression of the laws and morals of said society. The corruption of the corporations in *Resident Evil*, the shady business of the *Silent Hill* police, the kidnapping and infanticide, drugs and illegal scientific experiments, they all emphasize transgressions to the social order. This aspect, however, does not change the fact that the image of the institutions gains monstrous shapes, inspired from sinister spaces such as jails, sanatoriums or concentration camps, strewn with corpses and mutilated bodies, comparable with the violent spectacle from Roman arenas but also with the imaginary from the millenarian apocalyptic narratives. Horror video games recycle and blend ideological, religious and revolutionary elements in their own narratives in the same way that they portray contemporary society as realistic as possible, with all its positive and negative aspects. Not infrequently, this feature of the gothic of problematizing the danger and effect of technology is inserted in the ludic narrative rhetoric from horror games. *Resident Evil*, *Silent Hill*, *Pathologic*, etc. portray the effects of industry and technology in a negative way. Simultaneously, this *inner enemy* of the mechanism of contemporary society, manifesting itself mysteriously through the possibility of corruption or the catastrophic effects of technology, is correlated with the apocalyptic imaginary and certain millenarian sects that frequently appear in these games. From this point of view, confusion is created, excluding the possibility of an ideological purpose in the eschatological narratives of the *survival horror* genre.

The ideological mixture and playful character push the eschatological narrative outside the political and ideological sphere. The stakes of the horror narrative are neither reactionary nor revolutionary, aiming for entertainment and utilizing ideology and eschatology not to control or realistically threaten, but to satisfy a certain type of audience. And yet, as an inevitable consequence, out of the sheer fact that it determines the real impossibility of the conflict simulated as a ludic and narrative act, the horror video game becomes an instrument of the technological imperialism it stems from. It abolishes the possibility of revolution, which becomes material for the horror narrative and the

entertainment derived from it. The eschatological narrative in horror video games loses both its religious stakes and the political-revolutionary ones. The religious and ideological dogmas are transformed into aesthetical ornaments corresponding to the narrative architectonics of the *survival horror* genre.

The games discussed in our paper: *The Walking Dead*, *Call of Cthulhu*, the *Silent Hill* series, the *Resident Evil* franchise, *Dead Space*, *Pathologic*, *Alone in the Dark*, etc. demonstrate the recurrent appeal to the eschatological imaginary and the apocalyptic narrative structure, according to which it varies in the conceptual interpretations both on a narrative and an audio-visual aesthetical level.

We were able to observe a preponderance of the temathization of individual eschatology, treated after the model of the typical character quest from H.P. Lovecraft's literature. The Doomsday simulation in its various shapes becomes a leitmotif of the aesthetics of virtual decors from *survival horror*. The world is destroyed and the character has to survive this destruction. The target audience does not necessarily identify with the positive character, but empathizes with him, according to Noel Carroll's opinion that argues the possibility of experiencing fear and terror for other beings, be they digital simulations or fictitious characters. Associating the ruin of the human body with aesthetical contemplation represents a theme present in Shakespeare's writings, gothic, horror and *survival horror*. In *Titus*, Shakespeare shows the raping and mutilating of Lavinia - in which Tamora's sons hack her hands and tongue off - as a work of art. The ruin of the body is associated with the ruin of Rome during the invasion of the Goths. It is interesting that this motif of the ruin was taken up in gothic literature and the extended gothic genre in new technological forms: in *Silent Hill*, we find it in the shape of Alessa Gillespie burned alive in a satanic ritual. She survives the ritual, but ends up mutilated and incapable to move, just like a statue. The statuary bodies of martyrs from the bloody spectacles of Ancient Rome, the body of Shakespeare's Lavinia, the corpses that wear the marks of transgressive abuse from the gothic and horror genres, these all have in common the same invitation to contemplation, in which the audience is expected to feel awe towards a certain aesthetic. Without aesthetics, death represents a mundane thing. Through its becoming aesthetic, however, through the hypostasis of suffering in a statuary emblem of the agonizing body, a perishable fact is immortalized. The corpse is granted an aesthetic function as well: zombies display their wounds and mangled bodies in an infinite dance of death, the dogma being volatilized in an entertainment show. The same happens with the ideology, the revolution and conflict between imperialism and rebellion.

In conclusion, we were able to notice the difference between the role that eschatological narratives have in religion and ideology, and the reinstrumentalization of the same content in the ludic-narrative architectonics of horror video games.

Video games simulate eschatological scenarios inspired from the horror, gothic and apocalyptic imaginary, depoliticizing a narrative structure that Barthes could not accept as being a myth, since in his opinion the apocalyptic claims to change historical reality. In video games this scenario is defused and utilized in commercial purposes, becoming a branding element of companies who produce digital-interactive entertainment shows.