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Title: Narcissus's narcissosis : formation of self, disintegration of self: a question of interactive entertainment and player - character identity correlation

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Citation style: Gnat Tomasz. (2015). Narcissus's narcissosis : formation of self, disintegration of self: a question of interactive entertainment and player - character identity correlation. W: J. Szurman, A. Woźniakowska, K. Kowalczyk-Twarowski (red.), "The self industry : therapy and fiction" (75-88). Katowice : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego



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Narcissus's Narcosis: Formation of Self, Disintegration of Self: A Question of Interactive Entertainment and Player-Character Identity Correlation

Man only plays when in the full meaning of the word he is
a man,
and he is only completely a man when he plays.

Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*

Narcissus, *Australopithecus* That Became *Homo Ludens*

There is a painting by Caravaggio, depicting Narcissus transfixed by his own image reflected in the surface of a pond. The background of the work is murky and dim, seemingly depthless. The character's arms and their reflection in the surface form an almost complete circle, with the barely noticeable division of a thin film of water. The boundary between the real and the imaginary is hardly distinguishable, with Narcissus's hands reaching into the ephemeral world of light play on the mirror-like surface. Bearing in mind this particular imaging, it is interesting to now look at two typical representations depicting people partaking in two forms of modern entertainment – watching TV and playing video games. What is so fascinating about these portrayals is the fact that people involved in the former are presented usually with their hands behind their backs, or supporting themselves in various configurations. Images representing the latter form of entertainment depict scenes very much like that of Caravaggio's Narcissus. Characters, by holding various controllers, are reaching towards the image within the image; they are enclosing the space within the representation, forming a link

between the virtual and actual world. These dual representations may serve as an indicator that the two forms of entertainment, although at first glance similar (both are received through a mixture of visual and aural perceptions, both create a simulacrum of reality), differ in many respects.

Marshall McLuhan perceived television as a cool medium – one that forces the participant to become mentally and emotionally involved. According to the philosopher, “the TV will not work as background. It engages you. You have to be with it.”¹ In comparison, interactive entertainment becomes cool and, through that, engaging, to the point when without some form of participation it becomes almost completely static – the theoretical point of media absolute zero. The previously mentioned “reaching towards” the image underlines the importance of one factor that differentiates the playing of video games (or any games for that matter) from other forms of entertainment – interactivity. Game pads and joysticks, like no other tools before, allow participants to break the surface tension of a reflective surface and reach towards the character on the other side. The degree of involvement in video games is, therefore, different from that of TV, as it is based on interaction and not mere observation of the show. It is like the difference between being in the audience and taking a playing part in a theatrical performance. Involvement in the medium of TV requires attention but not reaction (at least not on the conscious level), while playing games calls for both. This phenomenon is not an emergent factor, like critical examination of writing or psychological analysis, but rather it is artificially created with the aim that the object is to be acted upon. Interactive entertainment, unlike any other medium or art form, offers the participant a unique opportunity to become incorporated in the creation process of the work itself. While in traditional narratives of novels, dramas, or movies the author remains a chthonic deity, below every perceivable surface of the work, in virtual worlds he or she becomes merely a partaker and a fellow player. Literary or cinematographic work is delivered as a finished product – the participant is asked to perceive, while any interpretations are external. The internal aspect of game interpretation comes from the fact that games require the participants to dynamically act upon the medium in order to further the narrative development. Tom Bissell provides a practical example of such a situation:

A late *Mass Effect* mission involves an assault on an enemy stronghold. While you are discussing your strategy, an unexpected revelation of what is inside the stronghold causes one of your squad mates to object to the mission’s objective, which could place the survival of his race in peril. Your attempt to reason with him along “the good of the many” lines causes him to march off and sulk on the strand of a nearby lake.

¹ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 2001), 334.

When you walk over to talk some sense into your squad mate, the conversation quickly escalates and, suddenly, you find yourself in a Mexican standoff.²

With novels and movies the audience's only involvement in furthering the story can be just to bear with the author and wait for the plot to develop. Video games advance the action to a point where without active involvement all that is to be seen is a static choice panel. While 1950s and 1960s science fiction movies ended with that inert screen and left the audience with the question "What would you do?," games begin at that point, forcing players to make their own choices. The buzzword of today's game industry is C&C, choices and consequences, allowing the players to create their own version of events. Interactive entertainment provides an easily accessible venue for creation and involvement, for reaching within the work and shaping the outcome with the very hands that broke the reflective plane. What surfaces from within is then not only the contrived "what the author had in mind" but is just as much a reflection upon the participants/players themselves – a psychoanalysis constructed of a binary code.

In McLuhan's view, media are the extension of our psyche. Just as a hammer may be seen as an extension of the fist, so the video game can be perceived as a projected purpose, a means to a certain end. The hammer drives the nails into the wood, and interactive entertainment, well, entertains, but that is not what was first investigated by McLuhan and now is pondered upon here. The philosopher considered rather the question of the relation between the extension and the "extende," an issue of how the action of wielding a hammer influences the one that holds it (resulting in "the law of the instrument" or "a golden hammer"). What sort of psyche is then extended by the likes of *World of Warcraft* or *Counter-Strike*? Here, a look back to the previously discussed depictions may prove illuminating. Images of players, though presenting both the actor and the method – a game controller – lack the presence behind the screen, the yang to the players' ying, their game characters. Without them the picture remains incomplete, similar to the action of gazing into the mirror and seeing just the silvery surface. Games are interactive; to act, however, the player must possess a certain in-game alter-ego, a prosthetic identity, granting the entrance and an executive power in the game environment. This identity may be as simple as a flashing dot, indicating "you are here," or as complex and well defined as meticulously developed characters of modern cRPG titles. In video game prehistory these identities took the form of paddles, tanks and other barely defined shapes representing spaceships or airplanes. Their existence was defined by performative function – they were there just to designate the place of action, a virtual limb into the virtual world. If all you had was a yellow circle with a munching mouth, every-

² Tom Bissell, *Extra Lives* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010), 61.

thing looked like a potential snack. However, similarly to the biological world, the characters evolved, acquiring identities and personalities. When in previous iterations these characters would happily jump off a cliff if forced to, now they advanced to a point where outright disagreement with a player's actions is not out of question. Characters and game worlds became more and more sophisticated, leading to a situation in which it was possible to allow not only a human guided re-run of the established role, but creation and performance of whatever persona the gamer imagined within the limits of the work. At this moment the player began to explore the strata of the self as much as the game world.

Liquid Crystal Display

Marshal McLuhan once stated that “the Greek myth of Narcissus is directly concerned with a fact of human experience, as the word Narcissus indicates. It is from the Greek word narcosis, or numbness. The youth Narcissus ... became the servomechanism of his own extended or repeated image. ... He had adapted to his extension of himself and had become a closed system.”³ The games of old, with their ancient paddles and tanks, could not form this mechanical symbiosis with the players due to their simplicity. Gamers looking into the screen did not see anything like their reflection. The prehistory of this medium required quite some imagination to perceive a barely recognizable group of pixels as a character and consequently form any relation with it. The high-quality graphics of modern games not only makes them look good, bringing the audience/participants in through aesthetical allure, but allows more players to identify better with their characters. But the graphical hyper-realities of video games are only one aspect of the digital ego massage. A more intangible development is connected with the greater emphasis on character customization – through the fact that the reflected image has become clearer and sharper. This is where the reasons for growing popularity of video games may lie – the better the reflection, the greater the identification, resulting in the increasing appeal of video games. The servomechanism of interactive entertainment is becoming more and more compatible through the adaptation to the image of the participant; the closed circuit of these systems is formed with the disappearance of differences. However, video games do not provide a perfect image of reflected reality – they are a simulacrum, a construct that hides the lack of any reality. This is where the metaphor of a mirror proves to be inferior to the Caravaggio's visualization. A mirror-like surface forms an impassable barrier, while the watery screen invites change, encourages dabbling in the

³ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 51.

medium. Modern video games transpire in the liquid crystal environment on more levels than just this particular technological solution.

However, it is important to remember that game participants construct their characters within the limits of an established world; they are not photocopying themselves into the game milieu, but recreating and re-imagining under constraints of that world. Narcissus did not fall in love with himself, but with an image produced, with a construct created by the medium of a reflective surface. The narcotic of interactive entertainment is the ability to become numb to those aspects of self that are considered redundant, and the self-amputation of playing video games is the ability to choose only a particular portion of "me" to become active. For McLuhan the reason behind this self-mutilation is "an immediate relief of strain on the central nervous system [that] applies very readily to the origin of the media of communication from speech to computer."⁴ The reasons why such relief is needed become readily visible when we look at two different types of gamers, the so-called casual and hard-core players.

The "I" in the Industry

Ostensibly, the division lies in the time spent playing any game. While casual players tend to spend a few hours on gaming a week, hard-core gamers could be "playing five to six hours a day on weekdays and at least ten hours a day on weekends."⁵ The differences, however, do not stop there. The approach and method of how someone is playing the game also differ between these two groups. The former group will approach it as any other type of entertainment, picking it up now and again, playing for the aesthetical value of a given product, or as a form of social interaction. Hard-core gamers will play for the challenge and excitement, approaching the game as a test of skills and ingenuity. This in turn may lead to such negative aspects of gaming as "grinding" the game – perform repetitive actions that allow the advancement of player character level, and "gold farming" – the practice of gathering a large amount of in-game currency (mostly in MMORPGs, that is massively multiplayer online role-playing games), and then selling the currency to other players for real world cash. McLuhan perceived technology as a counter-irritant that aids "the equilibrium of the physical organs which protect the central nervous system."⁶ He viewed pleasure as

⁴ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 53.

⁵ Tyrone Adams and Stephen A. Smith, *Electronic Tribes: The Virtual Worlds of Geeks, Gamers, Shamans, and Scammers* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 114.

⁶ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 53.

a counter-irritant, and comfort simply as the absence of irritants. In that respect even the two gaming styles reflect upon the character of the participants. Hard-core players seek the stimulation of the new and unexpected, while casual gamers look for reassuring customs and comfortable regularity. The identities of players are not only represented by the particular characters they choose, but even by the method in which the game is played. The therapeutic function of interactive entertainment is positioned, therefore, as much within the artifact itself, as in the very way this product is approached and used – its value lies both in producing an anesthetic comfort zone and a ground for an active, participative experience.

Interestingly, the existence of these two different groups of players influences the course of development in the game industry itself. In a way, the gaming public rewrites not only the role of the particular characters it is playing, but also the entire genre. Interactive entertainment is to a large extent (if not completely) a commercially oriented activity, and, therefore, susceptible to pressures of the economic mechanisms of supply and demand. While literary and cinematographic works have established recognition as art forms outside their particular field, a certain acknowledgment of value, given by general public, video games are usually appreciated only within their own community. A good example here may be the national media hype connected with the release of *The Witcher 2*, a 2011 Polish cRPG title. The reaction of the mass media in Poland was to a large extent not connected with appreciation of the game as a high-quality product in its own right, but an expression of an almost jingoistic “Yes, we can!” (with the usual addendum “make a profit”). That aspect, connected with the players’ expectations of a high-end product, whose production involves a great amount of effort and capital, results in orienting games toward sales figures and not artistic achievements. With that comes the fact that the success of a given product in this sector is measured mainly in cash turnover. Stating the obvious, games are produced to make money, and they do so if they tap into the larger share of the market. Products previously known for their hard-core game-play appeal become streamlined to make them accessible to the larger portion of the gaming community – not for egalitarian reasons, but for a purely economical rationale. This in turn causes a backlash from hard-core aficionados, leading to the formation of an opposition not unlike that between the apparent division between high and low culture. Elitism and a perceived higher moral ground serve as another identity-forming factor in the player’s self-perception.

The self in question is often the product of a natural process, one that comes from the interrelation of a player and a game, but it is often artificially created through presuppositions based on the player’s perceived characteristics. The self industry of interactive entertainment may be, therefore, understood as two different phenomena. Firstly, it is the psychological process of a player’s involvement in the creation and reenactment of a game character; a course of forming

an identity located on the border between the character and the player. Secondly, it may be interpreted as conscious attempts to manufacture and orient a player's development; the Pavlovian conditioning, based on the supposed target market for a given product, done for the reasons stated above. This, in turn, results in the atrophying of the players' development, forcing them to follow a certain path. Tom Bissell notes that:

The success of the first *Resident Evil* established the permissibility of a great game that happened to be stupid. This set the tone for half a decade of savagely unintelligent games and helped to create an unnecessary hostility between the greatness of a game and the sophistication of things such as narrative, dialogue, dramatic motivation, and characterization. In accounting for this state of affairs, many game designers have, over the years, claimed that gamers do not much think about such highfaluting matters. This may or may not be largely true. But most gamers do not care because they have been trained by game designers not to care.⁷

The perception of self is more pronounced in interactive entertainment, as it may be directly linked to the commercial success or failure of a given product. Matching the game aspects to the needs of a particular sector results in an improved reception, which in turn leads to creation of many digital "niches" catering for even the most obscure player's needs. With the development of worldwide communication systems, these niches are allowed to flourish without having to compete with industry giants. The village green of the global village allows the big players to take the centre of the field, while preserving the edges for a carnival of sideshows. In these circumstances participants in electronic entertainment are offered a chance to develop in any way they see fit, and create a subjective experience, depending mostly on the position they want to take.

What Does "+3 to Strength" Mean in the Real World?

Despite all these circumstantial means of influencing the player's self-development, there are other, more direct methods of player's inscription into the virtual world. First is the customization of a game character, the demiurgic act of assembling our alter-ego. The very possibility of being able to even superficially create the means of entering the simulation allows players to enhance their involvement. The opportunity to influence in any way the figure wielding your sword, carry-

⁷ Bissell, *Extra Lives*, 16–17.

ing your gun, or driving your car confers a possibility to develop personal attachment to this individual. To paraphrase McLuhan's catchphrase, the message of electronic entertainment media is the massage of identity, the possibility of a safe and controlled out-of-body experience. The modern Narcissus is not only gazing into the surface of the pond, but he is able to shape the image to his liking, use the reflection not only as a reality check, but as a method of expression, and of the articulation of conscious and unconscious desires. As a practical example of this trend it may prove worth examining one of the most well known products of the genre. Of all the protagonists of the *Grand Theft Auto* series, the least favourite among the fans⁸ is Claude – the main hero of the first iteration. He is also the least customizable and developed, being literally speechless (though other characters in the game are usually fully voiced) and with looks that remain unchanged throughout the whole game (while in other parts of the series the player is able to modify their characters from the clothes they are wearing to hairstyles and physique). Despite the fact that all four main characters possess a certain prescribed personality, the player's choice of how to influence something as basic as their looks remains an important factor in immersion into the game world and character association.

The visual customization of the game avatar is, however, in some cases just the beginning. In most cRPGs, players are able and even required to create a complete entity, or sometimes a whole party of individuals. The low temperature of the game medium is characterised by ultimate inertia, requiring the participant to create the tools to interact with the medium. It is a situation similar to being asked to create the author of a book one is supposed subsequently to read. Writing of self in video games involves in general answering a variation on the question of what strengths and weaknesses the character will have. These factors will influence the whole resulting experience – from the possible solutions of problems encountered, to ways of perceiving the game world. In *Planescape: Torment* (1999) the player is given a choice to modify the main character's statistics, describing both his physical and mental qualities. The effect is that the progress and the outcome of the game will be radically different. Characters with high Charisma, Intelligence and Wisdom will be able to better comprehend the world around them, will gain access to different dialogue options and will frequently avoid fights. Players who prefer more direct ways of solving conflicts will be able to do so, but to the detriment of understanding of their surroundings. Unlike many games, *Planescape: Torment* did not use the character just to push

⁸ PS3Trophies Forum, "Who Is the Best GTA Protagonist?," accessed July 2, 2001, <http://www.ps3trophies.com/forums/general-ps3-discussion/13444-who-best-gta-protagonist-2.html>; Xbox360Achievements Forum, "Best GTA Protagonist Yet?," accessed July 2, 2001, <http://www.xbox360achievements.org/forum/showthread.php?t=253234>; The Escapist Portal forum, "Poll: Favorite Grand Theft Auto Protagonist," accessed July 2, 2001, <http://www.escapistmagazine.com/forums/read/9.122767-Poll-Favorite-Grand-Theft-Auto-Protagonist>.

the narrative forward, but allowed for the creation and exploration of the game world at the player's own discretion. According to Chris Avalone, game designer of critically acclaimed cRPGs (among others, *Planescape: Torment*), the very definition of a well-authored game is "honoring the player's choices during character creation and advancement by having all choices given be viable tools to succeed in the game world, a world and its people that react and change based on your actions, and that reaction be meaningful for your characters and others."⁹ The chance to experience the development of a character from its very beginning to the successful completion of a story presented in a game, preceded by active involvement in the creation of this entity, allows the players to experience its success as their own. Though it may seem counter-intuitive, if the game is designed appropriately, the imperfections of the character, his or her battles lost, are felt as shortcomings of the player and not the game design – these inadequacies are, however, always possible to overcome. Individualization of the character leads to involvement, which in turn presents the players with a chance to perceive themselves as prevailing over difficulties, and accepting and winning the challenges.

Moreover, unlike reading a book or watching a movie, the individualizing nature of participation in the interactive entertainment allows the players to feel a certain kind of "ownership" of the experience. While writing may seem a daunting task to some, playing a game offers readily available handles that may encourage expression and self-realization. These handles include character archetypes, the chance to change statistics describing the in-game identity, pre-defined, but meaningful C&C, and possible paths of development, the choice of which rests solely on the player. Barrie Gunter notes that "since video games are skill-based and provide scores, they can be compared and provide a basis for future goals."¹⁰ It is considered a cornerstone of cRPGs that characters' statistics describing their skill levels, transcribed into digits, show players a clear reason for their success or failure. Likewise, they present the path of development – increase the skills and achieve the results. In that respect the therapeutic value of video games lies in the empowerment of a player, in showing the possibility of accomplishment. Understanding how the player approaches a given problem may well serve as a ground for psychological analysis – one that is particularly interesting since it is done without the subject being aware of the analyst, while at the same time being subjected to any scenario imaginable, hidden as long as it fits within the game world.

In the vein of classical comedy, the core mechanics of interactive entertainment presents its participants with an undercurrent of subliminal meanings, pro-

⁹ Will Ooi, "An Interview with Chris Avellone – Game Designer, Writer, and Former 'Unlucky Schlep'," in *Gamasutra, The Art & Business of Making Games*, accessed July 3, 2001, http://www.gamasutra.com/blogs/WillOoi/20110623/7848/An_Interview_with_Chris_Avellone__game_designer_writer_and_former_unlucky_schlep.php.

¹⁰ Barrie Gunter, *The Effects of Video Games on Children: The Myth Unmasked* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1998), 120.

tean development, overcoming obstacles or even death, the reassurance of continuity and “another try.” This palliative function forms a protected space that eases the consequent interactions within the medium. Significant is the fact that experimenting and development is conducted in a safe, controlled environment. McLuhan famously stated that “if the nineteenth century was the age of the editorial chair, ours is the century of the psychiatrist’s couch. As extension of man the chair is a specialist ablation of the posterior, a sort of ablative absolute of backside, whereas the couch extends the integral being.”¹¹ The psychoanalytical couch gave the patient a perception of comfort and safety, and prevented interference between doctor and patient. Interactive entertainment’s value lies in the invisibility of not only the examiner but also the couch itself, the chance to leave the players to their own devices. This is particularly important now, when some analysts begin to question the value of the piece of furniture that epitomizes psychoanalysis. As David Forrest suggests, “the couch is seen as a way of putting the patient’s feet to the fire. It may not be a rack, but it is a position of power for the analyst.”¹² With interactive entertainment the power is returned to one who holds the joystick or the gamepad.

Conclusions

Considering the fact that the trend of transition to an informational culture is one of the most significant changes of the modern society, then the rise of interactive entertainment may be considered as its most discernible sign, and certainly the most popular. Video games have opened up to the general public the digital arcana, previously locked in military bases and scientific labs – the masses have been allowed to toy with technology many times more powerful than that which was used to put a man on the moon. Computers, thanks to their applications outside spreadsheet calculation and word processing, started to become built to our image, and instead of HAL 9000 and SkyNet, the world received *World of Warcraft* and *Farm Town* (though some may say that all four are equally malevolent). The relationship formed in that process turned out to be working both ways, shaping in equal measure the man and the machine, no matter whether we call this symbiosis mutualistic or parasitic.

The question of formation and disintegration of self in interactive entertainment is an ambivalent one and it cannot be stated that one is necessary while the

¹¹ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 7.

¹² David Forrest in Joan Arehart-Treichel, “Analysts Urged to Consider Couch Replacement” *Psychiatric News*, accessed July 27, 2011, <http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/content/39/12/34.full>.

other without value. Just as medicine values both depressants and stimulants, McLuhan's perspective on the subject allows for the existence of technological sedatives in the form of comforting routine and the invigorating tonics of participative and challenging interaction. In contrast to the name, the self industry of video games is a social process, since though it is contacted on the player's singular identity, it operates within the realm of an artificially constructed environment. This environment has the possibility of seamlessly blending the outside authorship guiding the gamer, and players' own free creative processes.

The most interesting aspect of that amalgamation is the emergence of a new identity. It is a simplification to assume that players create their alter egos just by the transcription of their dreams into virtual worlds. The starting point of creating and modifying this identity emerges on the border between the real world, the player's psychological and emotional factors and expectations towards the progress of the game; and the digital world, the game environment, pre-designated characters' features, even the genre of the game. The consequent alter-ego is an amalgam of these characteristics, bearing features both of the player and the game, but occupying a different plane of existence than either of them. The therapeutic value of this type of formation may lie not only in the ability to express oneself, but also in the chance to put the expression into action, to safely conduct a process of creation and feedback. Learning the game is frequently fraught with disagreements between the player's expectations and the environment. Interactive entertainment at its best teaches that creation of self is not static and inert, but needs to involve adaptability, creativity and perseverance. The "game over" of a virtual world is by no means a conclusion, but rather an invitation to start again.

Tomasz Gnat

Narkoza Narcyza: formacja i deformacja „ja” gracza Analiza korelacji cech charakteru gracza i postaci przedstawionych w grach komputerowych

Streszczenie

Rozrywka interaktywna, jak żadne inne medium, pozwala widowni na aktywne uczestnictwo w świecie przedstawionym. W przeciwieństwie do klasycznie pojmowanego kina, teatru czy literatury, autor przestaje tutaj być wyłącznym twórcą i konstruktorem całości, stając się w pewnym sensie współuczestnikiem procesu twórczego – gracz zyskuje jednocześnie znacznie większe pole do kształtowania samej materii doświadczenia. By uczestniczyć w grze musimy jednak przyjąć pewne *alter ego*, które pozwoli nam na działanie w „magicznym kręgu”. Powstaje dzięki temu zupełnie nowy twór, z jednej strony kształtowany przez psychikę gracza, a z drugiej przez specyficzne środowisko świata wirtualnego. W niniejszej pracy autor analizuje powstały w ten

sposób „amalgamat”, próbując odpowiedzieć na pytanie, czy rozrywka interaktywna jest rodzajem autobiograficznego komentarza ze strony samego gracza, czy też pozwala jedynie na eskapistyczne stłumienie własnego „ja”. Możliwości odnośnie do eksploracji własnej psychiki, jakie oferowane są przez gry komputerowe, mogą odegrać ogromną rolę w procesie kształtowania osobowości. Dobre zrozumienie tych procesów ważne jest nie tylko z przyczyn czysto akademickich, lecz także może przynieść ważne wnioski w dziedzinie psychologii i psychoterapii, a także ekonomii obecnego, z informatyzowanego świata.

Tomasz Gnat

La narcose de Narcisse : formation et déformation du « moi » du joueur
Analyse des corrélations des traits de caractère du joueur
et des personnages présentés dans les jeux vidéo

Résumé

Le divertissement interactif, comme aucun autre médium, permet au public de participer activement à l'univers représenté. Contrairement au théâtre, au cinéma et à la littérature saisis d'une façon classique, l'auteur cesse d'y être le seul créateur et constructeur de l'ensemble tout en devenant en quelque sorte le coparticipant du procédé créatif : le joueur acquiert en même temps un champ considérablement plus vaste pour développer son expérience. Afin de participer au jeu, on est toutefois obligé d'assumer un alter ego qui nous permettra d'agir dans le « cercle magique ». Grâce à cela, une structure tout à fait nouvelle se produit ; elle est formée, d'un côté, par le psychisme du joueur et, de l'autre, par le milieu spécifique du monde virtuel. Dans le présent article, l'auteur analyse l'amalgame qui s'est produit ainsi, tout en essayant de répondre à la question si le divertissement interactif est une sorte d'un commentaire autobiographique du joueur ou permet uniquement un refoulement fugitif de son propre « moi ». Les possibilités d'explorer son propre psychisme, qu'offrent les jeux vidéo, peuvent jouer un immense rôle dans le procédé de formation de la personnalité. Une bonne compréhension de ces procédés est importante non seulement pour des raisons académiques, mais elle peut apporter aussi des conclusions significatives pour la psychologie et psychothérapie, ou encore pour l'économie du monde contemporain informatisé.