



УДК 004.2

STYLE FEATURES OF GOTHIC STYLE IN MODERN LEVEL DESIGN**Zelenska V.S.***student***Turikova O.M.***c.p.s., as.prof.*

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Abstract. *This article examines the uses of the Gothic style in level design. Today, the Gothic style is not only a focus of architectural and historical heritage, but also a part of pop culture due to its unique aesthetics. With the development of technology, art appears in a new format - computer Gothic games.*

Modern technologies allow you to create increasingly detailed and realistic Gothic worlds in cinema, video games and virtual reality, which supports interest in this style.

Keywords: *Gothic style, Gothic architecture, Gothic, level design, verticalism, pointed arches, spires, towers, Gothicism.*

Introduction.***Historiography of research.***

Gothic art originated around 1440 in Ile-de-France. At first, it can be traced only in the construction of cathedrals and the most important abbey churches of this region. But soon Gothic spread throughout France, and then throughout Europe. Not limited to the sphere of sacred architecture, Gothic masters actively spread the new style in the sphere of secular construction. Gothic is the first architectural style in history, from which works of all genres have survived to this day. Among these remarkable buildings, a special place is occupied by cathedrals, abbey city churches, which are extremely diverse in stylistic terms. They are richly decorated with sculpture, stained glass windows and wall paintings, and in their decoration, works of jewelry art and luxuriously illustrated books occupy a prominent place. Along with Gothic temples, the modern viewer still continues to be fascinated by various city buildings, castles and palaces, decorated no less skillfully than masterpieces of religious architecture.

1. Application area and scope of architectural authenticity

Level Design is the process of creating levels in video games, which involves planning, constructing, and populating the game environment. It is a key aspect of game design that determines how the player will interact with the game and experience the game. The main goal of level design is to create game spaces that are functional,



visually appealing, and provide an immersive gaming experience. One area of application of level design is architectural authenticity. Visual design in games often uses architectural terms to create realistic and immersive game environments. Architectural authenticity involves accurately reproducing building styles, such as Gothic, Baroque, or Modernism, which adds depth and authenticity to the game world. Building facades, with their decorative elements and ornaments, play an important role in creating a visual impression. Interior spaces such as halls, corridors, and rooms must be functional and logically organized to support gameplay. Lighting, including natural and artificial, is a key element that helps create atmosphere and mood. Textures and materials such as brick, stone, wood, and metal add realism and tactile sensations. The perspective and proportions of buildings must be accurately reproduced to create a believable game world. Architectural details such as arches, columns, and vaults add visual variety and depth. Landscape design, including parks, gardens, and water features, complement architectural elements and create a cohesive environment. Historical accuracy, especially in games with historical settings, requires careful research and recreation of architectural styles and elements. Interactive elements such as doors, windows, and elevators must be integrated into the architectural design to ensure a smooth gameplay experience. Atmospheric effects such as fog, rain, and snow add realism and dynamics to the game world. Architectural styles from different cultures and eras can be used to create unique and memorable game environments. The composition and balance of architectural elements help create a harmonious and visually appealing game world. Attention to detail such as decorative elements and ornaments adds authenticity and realism.

The principles of level design are used to design buildings, cities, and interiors.

The realism of architecture in games can vary greatly depending on the genre, style, and purpose of the game. In some games, especially those that strive for historical accuracy or realism, the architecture can be extremely detailed and authentic. Developers may conduct extensive research, consult with architects, and use modern technology to create believable buildings and environments. For example, the Assassin's Creed games are known for their detailed reconstructions of historical



locations such as Rome, Florence, or Paris (Picture 1 – ‘Assassin's Creed (Notre Dame de Paris)’), where every building, street, and landmark is recreated with high accuracy. In such cases, the architecture is not only visually appealing, but also functionally logical, adding depth and authenticity to the game world.



Picture 1 – ‘Assassin's Creed (Notre Dame de Paris)’

However, in other games, especially those in the fantasy or science fiction genres, architecture can be more stylized and imaginative. Here, realism can give way to creativity and uniqueness, creating worlds that, while not existing in reality, still have an internal logic and consistency. For example, in fantasy games such as "The Witcher" or "The Elder Scrolls", architecture may include fantastical elements such as towers made of crystals or castles made of dragon bones, but still have a clear structure and functionality that makes them believable in the context of the game world.

It is also important to note that the realism of architecture in games can be limited by technical capabilities and performance. Developers must take into account the limitations of the graphics engines and platforms on which the game will run in order to ensure stable performance. This may require some compromises in the detail and complexity of architectural elements.

In general, the realism of architecture in games is the result of a balance between creativity, technical capabilities, and the purpose of the game. In some cases, the architecture can be extremely detailed and authentic, in others it can be more stylized and imaginary, but still logical and functional in the context of the game world.



Architecture in games serves as an important element of navigation, helping players navigate and navigate the game world. Architectural landmarks, such as tall towers, monuments, or unique buildings, serve as visual markers that help players determine their location and direction of movement. These landmarks often stand out from other buildings and can be visible from a distance, making them effective navigational tools. The structure and layout of cities and other game environments also play an important role in navigation. Logically organized streets, squares, and neighborhoods help players easily navigate and find the right places. Architectural elements, such as arches, bridges, and tunnels, can serve as transitions between different parts of the game world, creating natural routes for players. The interior spaces of buildings, such as corridors, halls, and rooms, should also be logically organized so that players can easily navigate within. Doors, windows, and other passageways serve as entry and exit points, and can also be used to create mazes or puzzles that require the player to think strategically. Architectural details such as textures, colors, and ornaments can serve as visual cues that help players distinguish between different parts of the game world. For example, different areas of a city may have unique architectural styles and decorative elements that help players identify where they are. Lighting and shadows can also be used to create navigational cues. Natural and artificial lighting can highlight important objects or routes, while shadows can serve as visual barriers or clues for players. Architectural elements can be integrated with game mechanics such as platforms, stairs, and elevators that help players move vertically and horizontally. These elements can be used to create complex routes and challenges that require the player to use skill and dexterity.

2. Gothic motifs in level design

Let's consider how faithfully the depiction of existing historical architectural monuments is in various video game series.

The game "Assassin's Creed" is known for its detailed and historically accurate reconstruction of architectural styles of different eras, and the Gothic style is no exception. In the series of games, especially in parts such as "Assassin's Creed Unity", which takes place during the French Revolution, Gothic architecture is presented with



high fidelity. The game's graphics allow you to recreate in detail the characteristic elements of Gothic architecture, such as pointed arches, ribbed vaults and tall towers with spires.

French designer Damien Hippolyte compared the virtual Paris of the French Revolution from the action game *Assassin's Creed: Unity* with a real modern city. He printed out a dozen screenshots from the game, comparing them with modern buildings on French streets.



Picture 2 – ‘An example of the Notre Dame de Paris in Assassin's Creed Unity’

Notre Dame Cathedral (Picture 2 – ‘An example of the Notre Dame de Paris in Assassin's Creed Unity’), one of the most famous examples of Gothic architecture, is meticulously recreated in the game, including its intricate facades, stained glass windows, and interior spaces. Details such as the buttresses and arbutus that support the cathedral's high walls are also accurately reproduced, adding to the realism and authenticity. The interior spaces of the Gothic buildings in the game feature many decorative elements such as sculptures, ornaments, and carvings that match historical prototypes. The lighting inside the Gothic buildings is also realistically reproduced, creating the atmosphere and mood characteristic of these structures. Stained glass



windows, which are an important element of Gothic architecture, are detailed and illuminated, adding color and life to the interiors. Gothic rosettes and other decorative elements are also accurately reproduced, adding to the elegance and symmetry of the buildings.

The game also includes many details, such as phials, pinnacles, and chimera-shaped gutters, which add uniqueness and mystique to the Gothic buildings. The streets and squares of Paris that surround the Gothic buildings are also recreated in detail, allowing players to fully immerse themselves in the atmosphere of that time. Architectural details, such as Gothic vaults and transepts, help create complex and multifunctional spaces within the buildings. The game also includes many historical references and details that add authenticity and realism. Overall, "Assassin's Creed" demonstrates a high degree of fidelity in depicting the Gothic style, which makes the game not only exciting, but also educational, allowing players to explore and enjoy the architectural masterpieces of the past.

Not every game aims to replicate certain architectural styles or historical landmarks as closely as possible. Often, in such cases, the design of objects in video games is more procedural. Game designers, inspired by a certain style, use the most striking features to create the necessary atmosphere of the game. For example, Bloodborne is inspired by the Gothic architecture of Victorian London, which enhances the atmosphere of horror.

Architecture in the game "Bloodborne" (Picture 3 – 'Bloodborne') from the studio FromSoftware is one of the key components that creates a unique and exciting atmosphere. The game takes place in the Gothic city of Yharnam, which resembles the Victorian era with elements of Gothic architecture. Immersion in the Gothic atmosphere occurs due to the presence of high pointed arches, dark corridors and mystical details that are perceived by the player unconsciously. Gothic and horror are often associated with each other due to their common themes, atmosphere and visual elements. That is why the perfect scene is created for terrible events and battles. Gothic cathedrals, castles and other buildings in the game have intricate facades and interior spaces with sophisticated details that add realism and authenticity.



Picture 3 – ‘Bloodborne’



Picture 4 – ‘The scene in Bloodborne’

Thanks to the use of an accumulation of geometric shapes (round and pointed), we see an imitation of stained glass windows. Architectural elements such as buttresses and arbutus support the high walls of the buildings, creating an impression of grandeur



and antiquity. The interior spaces of the Gothic buildings (Picture 4 – ‘The scene in Bloodborne’) in the game have many decorative elements such as sculptures, ornaments and carvings, which resemble historical prototypes, but are more fanciful. Gothic rosettes and other decorative elements are also accurately reproduced, which adds elegance and symmetry to the buildings. The streets and squares of Yharnam that surround the Gothic buildings are also recreated in detail, allowing players to fully immerse themselves in the atmosphere of that time. Architectural details such as Gothic vaults and transepts help create complex and multifunctional spaces inside the buildings. The game also includes many historical references and details that add authenticity and realism. Overall, the architecture in "Bloodborne" demonstrates a close to high fidelity depiction of the Gothic style, which makes the game not only exciting, but also inspiring self-development. Players, immersed in the atmosphere of the city, involuntarily seek information about the existence of similar buildings in real life, enjoying the architectural masterpieces of the past.



Picture 5 – ‘The game “Elden Ring” ’



Picture 5 shows an impressive example of Gothic architecture, which can be seen in the game "Elden Ring". This architectural style is characterized by high pointed arches, intricate ornaments and a multitude of details that create an atmosphere of grandeur and mysticism.

The main elements of the architecture in the photo are:

1. *Pointed arches*. Tall, narrow arches that rise toward the sky create a sense of verticality and grandeur. These arches are a characteristic feature of Gothic architecture and are often used in cathedrals and churches.

2. *Tall towers and spires*. The photo shows several tall towers and spires, adding verticality and grandeur to the building. These elements are often used in Gothic architecture to create the impression of reaching for the sky.

3. *Intricate ornaments and carvings*. The facades of the buildings are adorned with many decorative elements such as sculptures, carvings and ornaments. These details add richness and sophistication to the building.

4. *Stained glass windows*. The photo shows a large round stained glass window, a characteristic element of Gothic architecture. Stained glass is often used to create a play of light and shadow inside buildings.

5. *Buttresses and archbutanes*. These architectural elements are used to support tall walls and arches. They help distribute the weight of the building and prevent it from collapsing.

6. *Dark and gloomy tones*. The architecture in the photo is done in dark and gloomy colors, which gives the building an atmosphere of mystery and mysticism. This is also typical of the Gothic style.

7. *Statues and gargoyles*. The photo shows statues and gargoyles adorning the facades of buildings. These elements add a Gothic atmosphere to the architecture and create a sense of the presence of mystical and supernatural forces.

Overall, the architecture in the Elden Ring photo is a prime example of the Gothic style, which creates an atmosphere of grandeur, mysticism, and mystery. These elements help create an immersive and captivating game world that immerses players in the atmosphere of medieval fantasy.



Gothic is often found in video games and in modern level design in general for several key reasons that make this style particularly attractive to developers and players.

Gothic architecture creates a unique atmosphere and mood that is ideal for horror, mysticism, and fantasy games. Tall pointed arches, dark corridors, intricate ornaments, and stained glass windows help create a sense of mystery, fear, and grandeur, making the gaming experience more exciting and immersive. Gothic elements, such as detailed sculptures, carvings, and intricate ornaments, make game environments visually appealing and memorable. This detail and richness of visual elements add depth and realism to the game world.

Gothic has a rich history and cultural significance, making it attractive to developers who want to create games with a deep historical or mythical context. Incorporating Gothic elements allows for the creation of game worlds that feel realistic and authentic. The Gothic style can be adapted to a variety of genres and settings. It is suitable for both historical games and fantasy or even science fiction universes. Gothic can be used to create both realistic and fantastic environments, making it a versatile choice for level design. Gothic architecture is often associated with mysticism, the supernatural, and mysterious forces. This makes it an ideal choice for games that want to create an atmosphere of mystery, magic, and the supernatural. Gothic elements such as gargoyles, crypts, and abandoned castles add a sense of the unknown and mysterious to the game world. Gothic buildings and environments often have a complex structure with many rooms, corridors, and secret passages. This creates an ideal environment for exploration and interactivity, allowing players to explore and discover new areas and secrets.

Gothic has a long tradition in literature, film, and art, making it recognizable and popular among players. The use of Gothic elements in video games helps to attract the attention of the audience and create an unforgettable gaming experience. In general, Gothic is often found in video games and modern level design due to its ability to create a unique atmosphere, visual appeal, historical and cultural significance, flexibility, symbolism and mysticism, as well as its popularity and recognition among players.



Conclusions. Gothic, as an architectural style, manifested itself precisely in the Middle Ages, when national differences were mixed in the consciousness of religious and ecclesiastical unity, which encompassed the entire European society. remains relevant today due to its ability to create a unique and captivating atmosphere that attracts both developers and consumers of various forms of art, including video games, cinema and literature. Its characteristic features, such as high pointed arches, complex ornaments and stained glass windows, allow you to create visually attractive and immersive environments that immerse you in a world of mystery, mysticism and grandeur.

The Gothic building towers over humanity, like a monumental monument to time, its high pointed arches, complex ornaments and stained glass windows that create a sense of grandeur and mysticism, immersing you in a world of mystery and wonder. It has a rich historical and cultural heritage, which makes it attractive for creating authentic and realistic game worlds. It is also flexible and versatile, allowing it to be adapted to a variety of genres and settings, from historical dramas to fantasy and science fiction universes. In addition, the Gothic style is associated with mysticism and the supernatural, making it an ideal choice for creating an atmosphere of mystery and fear. This allows developers to create immersive and interactive gaming experiences that capture the attention of players and leave a lasting impression. Overall, the Gothic style remains relevant due to its ability to create a unique atmosphere, visual appeal, historical and cultural significance, flexibility and symbolism, which makes it popular and recognized among a wide audience.

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Article submitted: 20.03.2025 г.

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