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**The Aesthetics of Narration in *The Devil May Cry*
Video Games Generated to Novels,
Mangas, and Animated Series**

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for a
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilisation*

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved mother, who has supported me and taken care of me throughout my entire life.

My father, who has never given up on me, and was always a wise counsel, and a source of inspiration.

My dear younger siblings, my sister Asmaa, my sister Yasmine, and my youngest brother Yassine.

I also dedicate this work to the rest of my family as a whole, who have been nothing but supportive and caring for me every day for as long as I can remember, to the fallen ones that I carry in my heart, and the distant ones that I carry in my mind.

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In loving memory of a Bedjaoui Ismail.

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Table of Contents

Dedication.....	II
Table of Contents.....	IV
Abstract.....	VI
Résumé.....	VII
ملخص.....	VIII
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Literature Review.....	5
I. 1. Video Game: Genre and Definition.....	5
I. 1. 1. Video Games.....	5
I. 1. 2. Video Game Origin.....	7
I. 1. 3. Video Game Genres.....	9
I. 1. 4. The Aesthetics of Narration in Video Games.....	12
I. 2. The Relationship Between Novels and Video Games.....	15
I. 2. 1. Novels Generated from Video Games.....	15
I. 2. 2. Video Games Generated From Novels.....	16
I. 3. The Devil May Cry Franchise.....	17
I. 3. 1. Devil May Cry Video Game Background and Origin.....	17
I. 3. 2. Devil May Cry Video Game.....	17
I. 3. 3. Devil May Cry Novels Background and Origin.....	19
I. 3. 4. Devil May Cry Novels.....	20
I. 3. 5. Devil May Cry Animated Series and Manga: Background and Origin.....	20
Chapter Two: Storytelling in Video Games and Novels in the Devil May Cry Franchise.....	22
II. 1. Devil May Cry as an RPG Game.....	22
II. 1.1. RPG games description and definition.....	22
II. 1. 2. RPG Games Narration: the Tools Used by the DMC Games.....	23

II. 2. Characters in the DMC games and novels.....	24
II. 2.1. Characters in the DMC Video Games.....	24
II. 2. 2. Characters in the DMC Fantasy Novels.....	26
II. 3. Plots in the DMC Video Games and Novels.....	30
II. 3. 1. The Plot of the Devil May Cry Video Games.....	30
II. 3. 2. The Plot of the Devil May Cry Novels.....	35
II. 3. Main Differences and Similarities Between the Narration in Video Games and Novels.....	40
Chapter Three: Expansion in Storytelling Through Mangas and the Animated Series	44
III. 1. Mangas Description and History.....	44
III. 1. 1. Introduction to Manga.....	44
III. 1. 2. Mangas Evolution and Influence in Japan.....	45
III. 1.3. Devil May Cry Manga and Its Storytelling Tools.....	46
III. 1.4. The Narrative of the Devil May Cry Manga Compared to the Video Game and the Novel.....	48
III. 2. Devil May Cry Animated Series: Description and History.....	51
III. 2. 1. Animated Series Description and Origin.....	51
III. 2. 2. Devil May Cry Animated Series, and Its Storytelling Tools.....	53
III. 2. 3. The Narration Tools in the DMC Animated Series and Manga.....	53
III. 2. 4. The Narration of the DMC: Comparison Between Video Game, Animated Series, and the Novel.....	54
General Conclusion.....	57
Works Cited.....	61
Appendices.....	63

Abstract

Devil May Cry is a video game that was released in 2001 by a Japanese company named Capcom. They would later develop four other titles of this series, all of which would be released in both English and Japanese. This action role-play game features a storyline for players to go through across twenty separate missions. Shortly after the release of each video game, Capcom would also publish a novel. The *Devil May Cry* novels are an extension of the video game's story, and contain a separate story from that of the game. At the release of the third title, instead of making a novel to accompany the video game, Capcom made a manga. They would also make another manga for the fifth game on top of the novel, making it the only title that comes with both a novel and a manga. The saga has even featured an animated series in 2008, released under the same name *Devil May Cry*.

This dissertation examines the aesthetics of narration, the tools, and techniques used in each separate media and compares them. Each narrative media narrates different stories with different plots yet with the same protagonist. All the media share the same universe and spin around the same characters in various and different situations. Since the *Devil May Cry* games are oriented towards being action RPGs, all other media follow the same genre as the game and will be action and drama oriented.

The first chapter of this dissertation consists of a literature review, creating the foundation for the following chapters by studying the terminology, the history, and the rules of the narrative media that are being tackled in this research. Chapter two analyses the tools of narration used in the *Devil May Cry* video games and that of the novels and a comparison between the two, stating the differences and the similarities between the two media narratives. The last chapter tackles the Manga and the Animated Series respectively, and compares the narrative between each one of them with the video game and the novel, as well as with each other.

Keywords:

Aesthetics of Narration, *Devil May Cry*, Video Game, Novels, Manga, Animated Series, Action Role-Play Games, Drama.

Résumé

Devil May Cry est un jeu vidéo publié en 2001 par une compagnie japonaise du nom de Capcom. Cette même compagnie créera quatre titres dans la série de jeux vidéo, qui sortiront tous en Anglais et en Japonais. Ce jeu de rôle et d'action inclut une histoire pour les joueurs à travers les vingt missions du jeu. Peu de temps après la sortie de chaque jeu vidéo, Capcom publie également un roman. Les romans de *Devil May Cry* servent d'extension de l'histoire déjà existante dans les jeux vidéo, et contient une histoire complètement différente de celle si. A la sortie du troisième titre, à la place de publier un roman, Capcom publia un manga. Ils feront un manga également pour le cinquième jeu en plus du roman, ce qui fait de ce titre le seul à être sorti avec un roman plus un manga. Il y a aussi eu une série animée sortie en 2008, publiée sous le même nom *Devil May Cry*.

Cette dissertation examine l'esthétique de narration, les outils, et les techniques utilisés dans chacun des média narratif, et les compare entre eux. Chaque média narratif propose une histoire différente mais avec le même protagoniste dans le même univers, et tourne autour des mêmes personnages dans diverses situations. Vu que le jeu de *Devil May Cry* est orienté vers du jeu de rôle d'action, et tous les autres média narratif suivent le même genre que le jeu qui sera orienté vers de l'action et du drama.

Le premier chapitre de cette dissertation consiste d'une revue de littérature, créant les fondations pour les chapitre suivants en étudiant les terminology, l'histoire, ainsi que le règle des média narratif qui seront traiter dans cette recherche. Le deuxième chapitre analyse les outil de narration utilisé dans le jeu de *Devil May Cry* et celle du roman et les compare entre eux. Le dernier chapitre traite le manga et la série anime respectivement, et compare la narration entre eux et celle du jeu vidéo et celle du roman, ainsi qu'entre eux.

ملخص

ديفيل ماي كراي هي لعبة فيديو تم إصدارها عام 2001 من قبل شركة يابانية تدعى كابكوم. قاموا لاحقاً بنشر أربعة عناوين أخرى لهذه السلسلة، ويتم إصدارها باللغتين الإنجليزية واليابانية. تتميز هذه لعبة الأدوار بقصة يمكن للاعبين خوضها عبر عشرين مهمة منفصلة. بعد مدة قصيرة من إصدار كل لعبة فيديو، تنشر كابكوم أيضاً كتاب. تعتبر روايات ديفيل ماي كراي امتداداً لقصة لعبة الفيديو، وتحتوي على قصة منفصلة عن قصة اللعبة. عند إصدار العنوان الثالث، بدلاً من عمل رواية مصاحبة للعبة الفيديو، قامت كابكوم بعمل مانجا. سيقومون أيضاً بإنشاء مانجا أخرى للعبة الخامسة فوق الرواية، مما يجعلها العنوان الوحيد الذي يأتي مع رواية ومانجا. وقد تضمنت الملحمة سلسلة رسوم متحركة في عام 2008، صدرت تحت نفس الاسم.

تتناول هذه الأطروحة جماليات السرد والأدوات والتقنيات المستخدمة في كل وسيلة إعلامية منفصلة والمقارنة بينهم. تروي كل وسيلة سردية قصصاً مختلفة بمؤامرات مختلفة ولكن مع نفس البطل. تشترك جميع الوسائل في نفس الكون وتدور حول نفس الشخصيات في مواقف مختلفة ومختلفة. نظراً لأن ألعاب ديفيل ماي كراي موجهة نحو لعبة الأدوار إن جميع الوسائل الأخرى تتبع نفس نوع اللعبة وستكون موجهة نحو القتال و الدراما.

يتضمن الفصل الأول من هذه المذكرات مراجعة للأدبيات، مما يشكل الأساس للفصول التالية من خلال دراسة مصطلحات و تاريخ وقواعد وسائل السرد التي يتناولها هذا البحث. ويتناول الفصل الثاني أدوات السرد المستخدمة في ألعاب الفيديو ديفيل ماي كراي وأدوات السرد والمقارنة بين الروايتين، مع بيان أوجه الاختلاف والتشابه بين الروايتين الإعلاميتين. ويتناول الفصل الأخير سلسلة المانجا والرسوم المتحركة على التوالي، ويقارن السرد بين كل منهما مع لعبة الفيديو والرواية، وكذلك مع بعضهما البعض.

General Introduction

Since the release of *Donkey Kong* in 1981 on Nintendo, video games started featuring a narrative scenario within the game. Players can experience the story implemented in the video games through a series of animated cutscenes, dialogue between characters, or the actions they take while playing. The popularity of this phenomenon led to the improvement of the scenarios implemented in video games, and the use of already existing stories spread quicker than wildfire. Video games were brought to life from already existing stories in novels, movies, comics, Manga, animated series, cartoons...etc.

Stories from different media that are turned into video games, or the contrary, are either adapted the exact same in their respective original narrative, or they are to be expanded into exploring further aspects of the story by taking the exact same characters in the already existing universe and environment and putting them through a different plot, with a possibly different antagonist. This method of narrative expansion keeps on getting more and more famous, with many already known and famous stories that are adapted across different narrative media such as *Harry Potter* which was made from a novel to a movie and a video game, and the same could be said for *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Witcher*. On the other hand, many other stories are not adapted but rather pushed and expanded even further, a good example for this is the novel *Harry Potter* yet again, but not with the other titles in different media of the same name, but rather the newly released video game called *Hogwarts Legacy*, or the movie by the name of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*.

The story tackled through this research is that of a game named *Devil May Cry*, first released in 2001, by Capcom, with the main scenario and characters made by Hieki Kamiya. Shortly after, a novel under the same name was released in 2002, written by Shin-ya Goikeda under the supervision of Kamiya and Capcom, telling the story of the game's protagonist's past and the journey that led to the video game's events. The same thing would happen for the

second game released in 2003, with another book following it written by the same author. The third title of the saga was where the writer of both the game and the novels was given to Bingo Morihashi, who will carry on to write the fourth and the fifth game of the title. When the third game was released, instead of the usual release of a novel to accompany the game, Capcom released a manga instead and another one for the fifth game on top of the novel. Capcom also released 2007, an animated series that tells its own story about the protagonist's day-to-day life in his devil-hunting job.

As a child, when one is told or witnesses a story about greatness, a story fills his dreams, takes him adrift, and gives him hope. No other narrative tool could ever give me the same feeling as that of a video game's story, whether it is made with high-tech graphics that makes it look stunning enough like that of *Sonic Riders*, or the excellent writing, voice acting, and brilliant sound design of Blizzard Entertainment in making *Warcraft 3*. It is that invigorating feeling at the end of a favourite movie or after reading a favourite book, that sensation when hearing a favourite song. That is the feeling that finds you when you let your mind wonders as a child; sadly, many get that jewel stolen or beaten, and even when it subsides, it is not truly gone. Within a deep part of our hearts, that wonderful feeling is just waiting to resurface and take us back to that safe place, and even if that takes me astray, I refuse to let go and will hold on to it for as long as I have the strength to.

When I was young, I came across the third game of the *Devil May Cry* saga, the episode that allegedly made the entire franchise famous. The story was so well written and choreographed, and the gameplay was so well thought out that I became an obsessive fan. It was cartoonish yet dramatic, funny yet scary. Later on, as a literature student, I went through the novels attached to the game, and I was not disappointed. It was just as mesmerizing as the video game and only made me love the story more. As such, I decided to research this beautiful story's aesthetic and narration mechanics across different outlets.

The research aims to compare narration in video games and novels using the *Devil May Cry* games and novels as a model. The purpose is to show the differences between the two as well as the similarities, to showcase how the two can go hand in hand to narrate a story, and to expose the link between novels and video games with other media such as mangas and animated series. To achieve the analysis, the following research questions were asked:

Research Question 1: What are the storytelling tools and aesthetics used in the genre of the novels, mangas, and animated series in the *Devil May Cry* franchise?

Research Question 2: What are the aesthetics of storytelling in video games and novels emphasizing the *Devil May Cry* Saga?

Research Question 3: What tools do the other storytelling media, Mangas and animated series, use to stand out from the *Devil May Cry* novels and video games?

After a research around the subject, along with the knowledge of the story following the series across all of its media, the following hypothesis to the research questions were presented:

Hypothesis 1:

The *Devil May Cry* novel uses the same tools as an action fantasy novel, similar to the Manga. As for the video game, it belongs to an action-adventure RPG genre mixed with drama and shares the same aesthetics as these last.

Hypothesis 2:

The *Devil May Cry* Video games are much harder to make than novels. Writing a scene in a video game is multidisciplinary; it requires an architecture building the surroundings, orchestrating the right music for the right ambience, character design, voice acting, and sound design. It also requires many of the tools used in cinema, such as camerawork, editing, audio and lighting and so on, whilst novels rely primarily on language use.

Hypothesis 3:

Mangas are much closer to novels than video games. The essential tool to narrate the story in the mangas is through language use with the help of the drawings, in opposition to the animated series that has more in common with the video game regarding narration aesthetics.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is the foundation, offering definitions, terminology, history. It also elaborates the relationship between video games and novels, and states how novels can be generated from video games and vice versa. The last part of the chapter is an in-depth look at the *Devil May Cry* series, and how its story stretches across four different narrative media.

The second chapter is the exposition of the aesthetic of narration in the *Devil May Cry* on the two primary narrative media of the series, namely the video game and the novel. The exposition of the two narratives is done separately. The chapter concludes with a comparison between the video game's narrative and the novel's.

Similarly to the second chapter, the third chapter is a plain exposition of the two remaining narrative media of the *Devil May Cry* saga, the manga and the animated series. The *DMC* manga narrative is introduced, only to be later compared to that of the video game, and the novel. The animated series narrative is the last piece that is presented and compared to the video game, the novel, and the manga.

Chapter One: Literature Review

I. 1. Video Game: Genre and Definition

I. 1.1. Video Games

First and foremost, to state the obvious, all video games are games. In order to study and define the term “video game”, one must first understand the meaning of the term ‘game’. The online Oxford Languages dictionary has five definitions for the word game just as a noun, and that is due to the wide use of the term across different contexts:

One: The first one revolves around the concepts of fun, competitions, sports, and performances. “An activity that one engages in for amusement or fun. Example: the kids were playing a game with their balloons.”

Two: The second definition emphasises the barriers around an activity but is also a substitute for other terms when playing or competing, “A complete episode or period of play, ending in a final result. Example: a baseball game.”

Three: “a type of activity or business regarded as a game. Example: he was in the restaurant game for the glamour.” Substitute for a professional sector, secret, and a plan.

Four: “wild mammals or birds hunted for sport or food. Example: they hunted game in Alaska.” but also “the flesh of wild mammals or birds, used as food. Example: a game pie.” On a final and rare note, a group of swans can also be called: “a game of swans.”

Five: Another way to define the term Game: “A game is a voluntary interactive activity, in which one or more players follow rules that constrain their behaviour, enacting an artificial conflict that ends in a quantifiable outcome” (Salen Tekinbas and Zimmerman 28). ‘Game’ and ‘playing’ is all a matter of perspective, and that is due to their subjective nature. Any activity can be considered a game if it is entertaining for the one doing it; even activities that are considered work can become a game simply by making it into a competition. Though

most competitions can be considered a game, not all games have to be competitive, some games do not have an objective to work towards or a predetermined outcome. An example of this type of game would be a game all Algerian boys have played, “Wasta” also commonly known in English as “Keep away” or “Monkey in the Middle”: to play this game, one needs at least three players and a ball. One player is considered Wasta and has to stand in between the other two, and the two players need to pass the ball to each other whilst the one in the middle needs to intercept it midway; in doing so, the player responsible for losing the ball to the one in the middle has to take his place. This game can go on forever with no real winner or loser, as the primary objective of this activity is entertainment.

In his conference article of DiGRA 2005: “Changing Views - Worlds in Play”, Esposito Nicolas offered a simple and accurate definition of the term video game: “A videogame is a game which we play thanks to an audio-visual apparatus and which can be based on a story.” meaning that a video game follows the same definition of a regular game, but it is played using an audio-visual apparatus.

The website www.dictionary.com offers a more defragmented definition of the term: “any of various interactive games played using a specialised electronic gaming device or a computer or mobile device and a television or other display screen, along with a means to control graphic images.” This definition decrypts the term “audio-visual apparatus” into a more jargon description.

With all the above definitions of the term game at hand, one can define a video game simply as such: a video game is a game that is played on the screen of an interactive electronic device, it can be played alone or by a group of people, and it can involve a storyline.

I. 1. 2. Video Game Origin

In the introduction of the book *Before the Crash: Early Video Game History* by Mark J. P. Wolf, a brief passage about how video games came to be in North America and how they developed slowly over time, though with the specificity that the video game history is too long to be explored and has to be divided into parts, either by arbitrary means, technology, industry, innovations, or dominants. What can be described as the first-ever video game was called *the Cathode-Ray Tube Amusement Device* in 1947 by Thomas T. Goldsmith and Estle Ray Mann, creating patent #2.455.992 released on December 14th, 1948, for what is now considered the world's first description of an interactive game played on cathode-ray tube. The game is played on the face where you need to trace the ray or electron beam to target pictures of air planes, the player has to trace the beam into their positions.

The invention of the integrated circuit in 1971 was a big push for games to enter the marketplace, following the lead of pinball and other electromechanical arcade games. *Spacewar!* (1962) inspired the first two commercial games. In September 1971, *Galaxy Game* was the first-ever game with a coin slot. The first home video console system, Ralph Baer's Magnavox Odyssey, appeared in 1972, and its arcade imitator, *PONG* (1972), became the first hit arcade video game.

The success of video games in 1972 set the race for new games and systems, where video game companies appeared, and companies in other industries started releasing their games. The arcade led the way with groundbreaking games that were coming out every year, such as: *Breakout* (1976), *Galaxian* (1979) *Tempest* (1980), each innovating their gameplay to look unique.

In 1981, the home video game market tripled, and the arcade game industry had an estimated \$5-7 billion income. Hundreds of games from third-party developers took advantage of the boom to make many derivative, substandard, and cheaply produced games.

As the prices grew, the competition became fierce and cutthroat, and the sales continued escalating.

The craze continued into 1982, but warning signs had already appeared in October 1981. However, sales in the home video game sector were still up and were higher than ever. By the end of 1982, profits in the arcade video game secretary started to falter. Although the number of video game arcades more than doubled after 1980. Home video game sales dropped as the market became oversaturated and glutted with cheap products that disappointed consumers. The video game industry's profits in 1983 were down 35% from 1982. Attempts were made to rejuvenate the industry. Laserdisc games such as *Dragon's Lair* (1983) brought traditional hand-drawn animation into games, and three-dimensional filmed-polygon graphics were introduced the same year in Atari's *I, Robot* (1983), but this last was poorly received. In 1983, Atari lost over half a billion dollars, and Mattel, the third largest player in the home game industry due to its Intellivision system, left the industry in 1984; only one new home system appeared, Rick Dyer's Halcyon home laserdisc game system, and it was also a failure. The Golden Age of video games was over.

In 1985, a new system advanced home video games to a new level. The NES (*Nintendo Entertainment System*) was already a success in Japan, where it had already been released in 1983 as the Nintendo Famicom, and it, along with its extensive library of games, helped revive the American video game industry all while carefully avoiding the problems of the third-party developers. Nintendo was more careful with third-party game development, policing its licensing more closely to keep the NES's reputation intact.

The success of the NES gave a second wind and encouraged other companies to produce home systems again, but more complex and expensive technology of the NES generation machines ensured that smaller companies trying to milk the industry for cash could not compete. The arcades, however, would never recover as home console systems and

home computer games eventually managed to eclipse them, causing them to close. Furthermore, just as communities of arcades lost their gatherings, new ones were found online, where the BBSs and multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs). As of 2011, the industry has streamlined into an oligopoly of systems as games spread to new platforms such as the World Wide Web, cell phones, ipads, and practically every kind of interactive screen technology. Despite the new polished technology of the newest games, the old games have come back as nostalgia and the focus of the retro gaming movement, the same games well suited for the tiny screens on cell phones and other pocket devices. Many old franchises, like Pac-Man and Mario, are still around and continually evolving, opening a window of interest in video game history.

I. 1.3. Video Game Genres

Another aspect of defining video games is by their genres. Like novels, movies, and series, video games have many genres to label them for consumers so they have an idea about the video game before buying it.

In 2020, Dwight Pavlovic published an article entitled *Video Game Genres: Everything You Need to Know* explaining 10 video game genres in detail: Sandbox, Real-time strategy (RTS), Shooters (FPS and TPS), Multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA), Role-playing (RPG, ARPG, and More), Simulation and sports, Puzzlers and party games, Action-adventure, Survival and horror, and platformer. Though video game genres became very complicated very quickly as the author of the article explains: “Although video game genres were once fairly clear cut, that’s simply not the case these days. There’s a growing variety of genres and sub-genres to understand, especially as game developers mix and blend different types of games in new and unexpected ways” (Pavlovic). He explains that video game genres carry a big lack of accuracy in defining a video game.

He carries on saying: “Keep in mind that many genres have some degree of overlap with each other. Even in the early days of gaming, terms like “action” and “fighting” could cover a lot of titles. That’s why many gamers prefer to use more specific names like those covered in this article as a way to distinguish the style of gameplay” (Pavlovic.) To this day it is still the case where genres get tangled with each other or multiple genres are generated from an already existing broader ones.

Another article by Bryan Wirtz states 34 game genres: Stealth Games, Fighting Games, Survival Games, Survival Horror Games, Text Games, Interactive Movie, Role-Playing Games (RPG), Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG), Tactical Role-Playing Games, Sandbox RPGs, Strategy Games, 4X (explore, expand, exploit, and exterminate), Grand Strategy, Real-time Strategy (RTS), Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA), Tower Defense, Simulation Games, Vehicle Simulators, City-Building, Life Sim, Party Games, Trivia, Puzzle Games, Board Games, Sports Games, Team Sports, Combat Sports, Racing, First Person Shooters (FPS), Tactical FPS, Rhythm Games, Platformer, Educational Games, and Exercise Games.

Wirtz then concludes his article by stating: “Whether it be a role-playing game or point and click adventure, there are so many game genres, many of which mix and match different aspects of other genres, that you can truly hone down what you’re looking for in a game” (Wirtz). He presses on the idea that video game genres are very flexible and ever-changing.

David Dodge in his article *The Definitive Guide to Video Game Genres and Game Types*, offers 11 game genres, stating their own subgenres:

1. **Action Games:** Platformers, Shooters, Fighting Games, Stealth Action Games, Survival Games.
2. **Action-Adventure Games:** Survival Horror, Metroidvania.

3. **Adventure Games:** Graphic Adventures, Text Adventures, Visual Novels, Interactive Movie, Real-time 3D Adventures
4. **Role-Playing Games:** Action RPG, MMORPG, Roguelikes, Tactical RPG, Sandbox RPG, First-person party-based RPG, JRPG.
5. **Simulation Games:** Construction and management simulation, Life simulation, Vehicle simulation
6. **Rhythm Games.**
7. **Strategy Games:** 4X, Artillery, Auto-battler (Auto Chess), Real-time strategy (RTS), Real-time tactics (RTT), Multiplayer Online battle arena (MOBA) – Dota, League of Legends, Tower Defense Games, Turn-based strategy (TBS), Turn-based tactics (TBT.)
8. **Wargames:** Grand strategy wargames.
9. **Sports Games:** Team Sports, Racing, Esports Competitive Games, Sports-based fighting, Individual Sports.
10. **Puzzle Games:** Trivia Games, Logic Games
11. **Idle Games:** Idle games, Casual games, Party games, Programming games, Board games/card games, Massive multiplayer online (MMO), Advergames, Art games, Educational games, and Exergames.

As a conclusion to his article the author states: “This exhaustive guide to video game genres covers most of the most popular video game categories, yet sometimes certain games are difficult to place or sometimes even seem to fit into multiple video game genres” (Dodge). What can be noticed is that video games cannot be placed into a single category; most video game selling platforms, such as *Steam* or *Google Play* tag the games catalogued on them with multiple tags to offer the buyer as close as possible description of the video games.

When it comes to the number of genres, it is impossible to site them all due to the lack of accuracy, video games keep evolving very quickly and trying to label each game with a single genre is impossible, and that is due to the video game developers' ingenuity in creating games that are so big that they belong to multiple already existing genres such as *World of Warcraft* a fantasy game with steampunk, and science fiction, including gryphons, dragons, elves, steam-powered automata, zombies, werewolves, time travel, spaceships, and alien worlds. There are also video games that did not have an existing genre before, such as *H1Z1*, which gave birth to the "battle royale" genre opening new doors for new infamous games such as *PlayerUnknown's BattleGrounds*, *Fortnite* or even *Apex Legends*.

Even if one were ever to make a list of every single video game genre that has ever existed of every video game ever created, it would quickly become obsolete due to the ever-growing gaming industry and the innovation of video game developers that keeps on creating new, unique, and out of the ordinary video games.

I. 1.4. The Aesthetics of Narration in Video Games

The resurgence of video games has sprung many questions among consumers, with the most prominent one being about the influence of video game violence on players, but slowly more questions started to surge about other aspects of video games, such as the narrative aspect and if video games can be stories. Questions about the narration in video games have been the subject of debate for over half a decade with many interesting theories, but no generally accepted definition of video game narrative exists.

The longitude of the debate concerning video game narrative has sprung too many theories, and too many broad ones have been formed around the subject. There have been dismissing theories that do not acknowledge the need for a debate in this matter to begin with, while others claim that video games are a non-narrative medium, such as Markku Eskelinen's theory in which he claims that:

Outside academic theory, people are usually excellent at making distinctions between narrative, drama, and game. If I throw a ball at you, I don't expect you to drop it and wait until it starts telling stories. On the other hand, if and when games and especially computer games are studied and theorised they are almost without exception colonised from the fields of literature, theatre, drama and film studies. (Eskelinen)

Eskelinen is claiming that games do not serve as a narrative, but video games can have a foothold in other narrative media, such as theatre.

On the other end, some theories claim that video games will be the future of narrative media. Video games are considered simulations and often have two parts, the first part is what is referred to as gameplay, which is the tools that the developers give players to interact with the game, and the other one is the story that the players go through while playing the game. It is considered that the video game is not a story, but the bearer of one, and games vary in the emphasis that they give to one side of the coin or the other, but a modern game cannot succeed without both. Eric Hayot claims that:

In the last sixty years, the video game industry has grown from quite literally nothing to a behemoth larger than the film or television industries. This enormous change in the shape of cultural production has failed to make much of an impact on the study of culture more generally, partly because video games seem so much less culturally important than novels. No one has ever imagined the Great American Video Game. But video games have more in common with novels than you might think, and vice versa. Anyone trying to understand the combination of neoliberal individualism and righteous murderousness that characterises our world today will do well to pay them some attention.

Hayot is emphasising on the cultural power that video games promote, and its importance as a narrative media.

Other theories, like Brenda Laurel's, are drama involving enactment rather than spectatorship, intensification rather than extensification, and unity rather than episodic structure. Due to the prolonged nature of the debate and the foothold of the theories involved, it is impossible to come up with a conclusive statement concerning the narration of video games. What is certain is that some video games do contain story elements and tell a story with a protagonist, an antagonist, and a plot. Games do that through dialogue between characters, cutscenes, text screens, narrating voices, and other cinematic tools. Some games contain the most basic gameplay but are successful due to their entertaining storylines, and some even offer the players the choice to pivot the story whenever they see fit and come up with their own ending. These games are referred to as decision games, and a good example of such a game would be the *Stanley Parable*, where a narrator dictates to the player what to do, and it is up to the player to either choose to listen to the narrator or go against what he is saying through the journey, which will lead to various endings. Another example would be *Detroit: Become Human*, a game where the player is handed the control of three androids in a futuristic era, where humanoid machines are releasing themselves from their designed program to seek their own free will, instead of serving humans, and the decision is left to the player to dictate every action these androids do or say, ultimately either leading to the androids reaching freedom and cohabiting with the rest of the world or getting all destroyed by the humans, with the game featuring over forty endings all of which depend on the choices of the player.

Some other games contain a good balance between the script of the storyline and the gameplay, and that is by leaving the players freedom over the character they are in control of

and guiding them through the story. Games in this category include *God of War Ragnarök*, *Skyrim*, and *Devil May Cry*.

Other games have a blank page as their storyline, games that are devoid of a central plot for players to go through, and instead offer the players to make their own stories, either by putting them in a harsh environment they have to survive through or by allowing them to interact with each other and offer them the freedom to either harm or help their fellow players. This category includes sandbox games such as *Minecraft* and *Rust*; and MMORPGs such as *Albion Online*. Though many MMORPGs contain a storyline, the player base often overlooks it in favour of their own journey in the game.

I. 2. The Relationship Between Novels and Video Games

I. 2. 1. Novels Generated from Video Games

After the creation of the first video games, as it is stated in *Before the Crash* by J, P Wolf, the media started covering the phenomenon, and many of them have gained in popularity for doing so due to the luring nature of video games to the younger audience. Even though the first video games covered no actual storyline due to the lack of technology to accomplish such a task, video games of this era still had texts describing the game's objective and made-up stories around the premise of the game and its context. It will be until Donkey Kong released in 1981 on Nintendo, directed by Shiguri Miyamoto, for a game to have an actual story that is narrated and shown through pictures and texts for the players to go through.

Many games after Donkey Kong started to feature a storyline through text narration and text dialogues, to the point where the companies making video games started having a writer on the game development team for the game's stories. Eventually, they started to publish books as additional content following the story of the game, either narrating the events of the game through a novel or adding additional content to the story by following the

characters of the story through the aftermath of the game's events, or act as a prequel for the game's events.

In some instances, these novels are the only means to narrate the story of video game characters, as some modern games that do not have storylines and are made more for multiplayer are still required to give background to their characters, games like *League of Legends* that fall into this category by offering detailed bios about their characters and the lands featured in the universe of the game, as well as featuring books and comics telling stories about the characters such as *Ruination* by Anthony Reynolds, as it is a game that opposes teams of five against one another offering the choice of various characters. However, the players can play the game without needing the characters' backstory, yet it is necessary for the game not to have flat and boring characters with no life and no background.

Video game companies were never against additional literary content to their games due to their benefits and success, and slowly but surely, it became a pattern for game developers to publish books shortly after the game's release, hitting multiple birds with one stone. Firstly, it was a fan service to their players, as they could enjoy more of the story of their favourite characters, thus keeping the hype up for their games to ensure more sales for a future sequel. Second, it is very little work compared to the making of a video game and helps towards the advertisement of the game similar to video trailers, magazine articles, and so on, not to mention the profit the company can make from selling those novels.

I. 2.2. Video Games Generated From Novels

In the last quarter of the 20th century, video games were still somewhat of a new phenomenon, and many companies in the video game industry and even from other industries wanted a piece of the cake which led to the birth of derivative video games from books such as *Harry Potter*, movies such as *Aliens*, and comics such as *Spiderman*.

To this day, the situation did not change much as we are still witnessing many video game-making companies creating video games based on an already existing novel, such as *Metro Exodus* released in 2019, the third game instalment in the Metro video game trilogy based on Dmitry Gulkhovsky's novels, *God of War Ragnarök* a game published in late 2022, is based on Norse mythology as well as the Greek mythology, or even *Marvel Snap* a collectable card game released in 2022 based off of the comics books belonging to Marvel.

I. 3. The *Devil May Cry* Franchise

I. 3.1. *Devil May Cry* Video Game Background and Origin

Devil May Cry is a game created by Hideki Kamiya born in December 1970 in Matsumoto Nagano, Japan. He started his game design career with the Japanese company Capcom in 1994 as a Planner of *Resident Evil* and later the director of *Resident Evil 2*. After attempting to write a new character for the third game of the same title, Kamiya created Tony, a silver-haired mercenary wearing a red coat and armed with two pistols and a big sword. Kamiya saw the potential of this character and decided not to put him as a secondary character but as a main character for his own separate game, so his name was changed to Dante, named after the Italian poet Dante Alighieri, and thus the first *Devil May Cry* game was created. Later, for the second *Devil May Cry* game, Kamiya would not be called and would be replaced by Hideaki Itsuno, who would lead in directing the project from here on out. Kamiya would later completely leave Capcom and the project completely, never to work on it ever again. Because the second game did not do as well as the first one in terms of rating, for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th game, Bingo Morihashi would do the writing for the games under the direction of Hideaki Itsuno.

I. 3.2. *Devil May Cry* Video Game

The *Devil May Cry* video game series all share the same genre. The games are all single-player action RPG with many sub-genres: Hack and slash, Fighting game,

Action-adventure game, Shooter Video Games, Platform games, Beat 'em up, and Survival horror.

The game has also come up with a new concept in the gaming industry, as explained on its Wiki fandom page:

Being the first of the series, *Devil May Cry* introduced a host of new elements to the gaming community. Chief among them is the Stylish Rank, which grades the player's performance in combat. The game itself is split into Missions, which are individually scored according to various factors, such as Orbs gathered and damage taken. Additionally, *Devil May Cry* did away with the pre-rendered backgrounds of prior Resident Evil games in order to allow for a dynamic camera system. (Devil May Cry Wiki)

The fast-paced game rewards players that work on their fight combos and the complexity of their gameplay. The game can be gone through once and never touched again, as all the games feature 20 missions that guide the player through the plot of the story of each game, but it takes way longer to master the game. Players can spend a lot more time playing as they unlock a new difficulty once they finish the game for the first time, allowing them to challenge themselves to go through the game again with added difficulty offering them a new challenge that will ultimately require more skill and game knowledge to beat. Even though the players are already familiar with the storyline, many take on this challenge in an attempt to achieve the game 100% of the way.

The players are given the control of an overpowered character, i.e. Dante, in the first, second, and third games. He goes through the game's story from his perspective as he fights Mundus in the first, Arius in the second, and his twin brother Vergil in the third. Starting from the fourth game, another character is introduced, Nero. The players are given Nero as their new protagonist without excluding Dante, as he is the first foe that Nero has to defeat at the

start of the game, but with no success, as Dante is way too strong and chooses to leave and let Nero figure out what is happening on his own, but he proves to be incapable of defeating the antagonist Sanctus, and the player is given Dante back at the 12th mission out of the twenty to finish the job, but ultimately it will be Nero that will defeat Sanctus in the end. The newest game to date, *Devil May Cry 5*, introduces yet another protagonist called V, but the story does not exclude its previous characters but rather jumps back and forth between the three of them as they all go through the plot of the story together discovering the return of Vergil, the same antagonist of the third game.

I. 3.3. *Devil May Cry* Novels Background and Origin

The *Devil May Cry* novel came shortly after the first game of the same name released in May 2002, written by the Japanese author Shin-ya Goikeda with the guidance of Kamiya himself, evidently under the supervision of Capcom, which will be the case for all the novels of this title. The same author would come back to write the second novel. However, this time without the aid of Kamiya due to his removal from the project, the author would later be changed to none other than Bingo Morihashi, who will do the writing for both the video game and the novels for the two volumes of *Devil May Cry 4, Deadly Fortune, Devil May Cry 5* and *Before the Nightmare*.

The first novel unfolds the story of the game's protagonist before the game's events, though it tells an entirely different story from the game with a different plot, different side characters, and a different antagonist. It is the physical and emotional journey that the main character had to go through, and all the challenges and the loss that comes with it before reaching the state he was in at the start of the game, and that is portrayed by leaving the novel on a cliffhanger by putting into words the events that happen at the introduction of the game, which will be a recurrent pattern throughout all the *DMC* novels.

The subsequent novels will all follow the same pattern of being a prequel to the game's event, except for the fourth instalment, *Devil May Cry 4: Deadly Fortune*, which reaches further into the game's events and can be considered to be more independent than the other titles.

I. 3. 4. *Devil May Cry* Novels

The *Devil May Cry* novels are considered action fantasy novels. Each game release will soon be followed by a novel release that would act as a prequel to the game. In order to appreciate the experience of the novel to the fullest, one would have had to play through the game, as the novels themselves are made for the fans of the video game in order to grant the already existing story of the game more depth and life, as video game development is a long and challenging process that requires cutting corners that may take away the realism intended for the universe of the game such as character models, the architecture of the buildings and the city, far out view outside the bounds of the game, on top of all the trivial parts of the story that would disrupt the fast pace nature of the game.

I. 3. 5. *Devil May Cry* Animated Series and Manga: Background and Origin

There are two *Devil May Cry* Mangas in existence; the first one was released shortly after the release of *Devil May Cry 3*, the video game in 2005, and would shortly later be translated into English and published in October 2005. The Manga of *Devil May Cry 3* was set to have three different chapters, but in the end, only two were released *Code1: Dante* and *Code2: Vergil*, and the third chapter was set to be *Code3: Lady*, focused on the life of each respective character individually before the events of the game. The second Manga ever released by Capcom was *Devil May Cry 5: Visions of V* written by Tomio Ogata, published on a monthly basis the November 15th, 2019, and the last chapter of this Manga was released

July 2022. The Manga focuses on the character V, from the day of his birth all the way to the events leading up to the events of *Devil May Cry 5* the video game.

Chapter Two:

Storytelling in Video Games and Novels

in the *Devil May Cry* Franchise

Devil May Cry is a video game before all else, and from the video game novels were created to expand the story beyond the boundaries that limit the video game storytelling capabilities. All the character and the plot of the story were made for a video game, in doing so the expansion of the story from video game to the novel had to go through adaptations in order to make the story consumable for the readers, which ultimately led to the characters portrayal and the plots of the video game story and that of the novel to be very different.

II. 1. *Devil May Cry* as an RPG Game

II. 1.1. RPG games description and definition

Role-playing is a concept that existed before video games were even created, though the concept had many names, such as “make-believe”. It is a game in which participants pretend to be someone they are not, either a fictional character or mimicking a real person, and follow a story or make a story from scratch with said characters. This has quickly turned into a means to reenact stories, which ultimately turned into acting in theatre plays and later in cinema.

When it comes to video games, RPGs are all the games that offer the player a character inside the game's universe, whether it is a recreation of a real person or a made-up fictional character. Some games can give the players various choices, and some other games offer the players to make their own character and name it by themselves as it will be referred to by the other characters of the story by its titles or its titles achievements. This implies that

every single RPG has a storyline to go through, whether through the video game itself or by giving context to the characters in other media, such as short movies, essays, short stories, or novels.

The Oxford online dictionary describes role-playing games as follows: “a game, often an online or computer game, in which players pretend to be imaginary characters who take part in adventures, especially in situations from fantasy literature topics.”

RPG video games are a very popular choice for both players and video game developers, and that is because this genre of games is the best and the easiest one to implement a storyline into them. Due to the video game simulation-like nature, giving players a character to embody and making the player go through the plot of the story through the character’s eyes (or multiple characters) in the first person is the next step to novel narration in the first person, as the players not only get to go through the story through the main character’s eyes during the narration sequences, but they also get to be as them during the gameplay parts.

RPG video games are more storyline than gameplay, which is why RPG games are often associated directly with other genres that define the gameplay, such as action RPG games or fantasy RPGs... etc.

II. 1. 2. RPG Games Narration: the Tools Used by the *DMC* Games

RPG games rely heavily on the fact that the players are a character within the story and build up the storyline around that fact, the same way first-person novels are written. Although this is not always the case, and in some cases, the player is given the control of a large number of characters at the same time, such as real-time strategy games (RTS) like *Starcraft*, or several characters can control one at a time such as *Grand Theft Auto V*.

Many RPG games rely heavily on cinematic rules to tell their story by relying on cutscenes between gameplay phases and dialogue between characters during both phases, all

of which have the same cinematography methods. Though some games mix gameplay and narration sequences by offering quick time events for players to follow or giving them a multi-choice scenario, it still follows the cinematographic rules.

The *Devil May Cry* video games are no exception to the other RPGs regarding the storyline. The games follow the same rules of alternating between gameplay and cutscenes, with missions sometimes containing multiple cutscenes at the encounter of every vital character ally or enemy and the character dialogues during the fighting on the gameplay phases. The gameplay of this game relies very little on the storyline as it relies on the old school way of splitting between the two separately, and so a character losing a fight in the gameplay phase does not mean he or she is defeated canonically. That will be determined by the scripted cinematographic cutscenes that will happen after winning the level, allowing the player to advance through the story.

II. 2. Characters in the *DMC* games and novels

II. 2.1. Characters in the *DMC* Video Games

Character portrayal is immensely important when it comes to narration in video games. A good storyline is only half the work; the other half lies within character design, as it will keep the players hooked throughout the game. There are two sides to building a character in any video game: the first one is the graphic design of the said character, and the second part is the personality trait of the said character and his abilities and actions in the universe of the video game.

Character design is one of the pillars of *Devil May Cry*, if not the most important one. Since the first game was released in 2001, the franchise made a massive footprint in the gaming industry with the character design of its protagonist. Dante, a mercenary turned demon hunter equipped with dual guns Ivory and Ebony, his iconic giant sword Rebellion, his bright red coat, his silver hair, and his witty personality were possibly the most powerful

selling argument in the game. The same character design will be further explored with the third game acting as a prequel showing a younger, more lively version of Dante, even more childish and disrespectful, and expanding the character from there on in the fourth and fifth titles of the saga. The other infamous feature about Dante is his half-demon, half-human nature, having the demon lord Sparda as his father and the human Eva as his mother. Having the blood of both demon and human made him stronger than both, making the protagonist stronger than any foe he will face except for his twin brother Vergil who shares the same powers as him.

The fourth game of the saga changed the rules by introducing the young Nero, a new character as the main protagonist of that game, following the same prominent design as Dante with silver hair, a long blue coat, Red Queen his big sword similar to Dante's Rebellion, and his usage of firearms such as his signature gun, The Blue Rose. Being much younger than Dante, Nero was given a more childish persona with many traits young teenagers have such as a quick temper, an ego, and recklessness...

Evidently, every protagonist in any story must also have an antagonist. The first title of the *Devil May Cry* franchise gave us Mundus, also known as the prince of darkness, ruler of the underworld, a powerful demon that has a thirst for conquest and vengeance upon Dante for the betrayal of his father Sparda who was once one of Mundus's lieutenants but ended up betraying him. Mundus is portrayed as an intelligent strategic thinker, powerful, and egocentric, and it is the same for the second game with Arius, a rich business man corrupted by demonic powers and overwhelming greed.

During the third game, the antagonist of *Devil May Cry* starts to differ with the games having two antagonists: Vergil, Dante's twin brother seeking to claim the power of his father for his own gain and Arkham, a man who wants to steal that same power for himself. Unlike the previous two protagonists, Arkham is a man whose thirst for power is the only thing that

drives him forward, going as far as to kill his wife and stabbing his daughter's leg for more power.

Although Arkham is an antagonist of the third game, he is not the main antagonist, as the real and final foe that the protagonist Dante has to deal with is his own brother Vergil. Starting from the third game, Vergil will be set out to be one of the fans' favourite characters of the saga. Vergil is as powerful as Dante, but unlike him, he is not overconfident in his abilities and keeps pushing himself to become more robust and more powerful. He is calm and speaks softly and very little, only when necessary, rarely ever gets angry, determined, and focused, and cares very little for the consequences of his actions as long as his primary goal to get more power is achieved. Vergil possesses his father's sword Yamato, a katana capable of piercing the veil between the two worlds and a pivotal component to sealing the gate between them. This weapon gives Vergil incredible speed and allows him to move faster than the eye can see, making him an overpowered character in the story. Vergil will return for the fifth game as the main antagonist once more (appendix 1).

Devil May Cry has no shortage of side characters, from the allies helping the silver-haired demon hunters Dante and Nero, such as Nicoletta Goldstein making weapons for Nero, or Trish and Lady helping Dante in his hunt for demons, to the ever different types of demons encountered along the way such as Agni and Rudra, or Berial. There are other characters in the story that neither fight nor get fought but exist to either give motivation to the main characters, such as Kyrie, Nero's girlfriend, and her brother Credo, or characters that are there to give the story a more realistic aspect such as Morison, the broker, that brings gigs to Dante (appendix 2).

II. 2.2. Characters in the *DMC* Fantasy Novels

Character-making in novels is fundamental; engaging characters in the story will keep the readers engaged and curious about what will become of them throughout the book.

Fantasy novels are no different when it comes to characters; if not put more emphasis on them, due to the fantasy aspect and unrealistic nature of such novels, they will create additional or multiple additional layers to the characters, consisting of whatever makes the novel a fantasy one, such as magic or race, all of which must be explained carefully and in details.

The *Devil May Cry* characters in the novels are portrayed through various means, each of which is made to bring them to life and make them as realistic and relatable as possible, despite some of them being not humans and with unrealistic capabilities and an abnormal train of thought. One of the first requirements for character building in a novel is the physical description. The physical description of a character is highly important as it can access the readers' imagination easily, helps them make up the reflection of the character's appearance, and helps them understand the characters more. The physical appearance description in the *Devil May Cry* novels includes the facial description, hair, uniform, and pose, along with some other hints and details of other non-humanoid creatures such as demons and imaginative figures in a character's mind. The *Devil May Cry* novels are also comprised of some illustrations that help build an image that can be hard to imagine or emphasise on a dramatic scene by simply putting it in a drawing (Appendix 3).

The second step to character creation is bringing it to life, giving it a personality, and traits that make it think in a specific way, why it wears certain clothes and so on, amongst all the other aspects of the human psychological profile. This goal can be achieved through different human personality trait descriptions, such as a character's decision-making, initiatives, goal description of a character, and emotional response to various situations. Following the example of Goldstein's death as is depicted on the novel:

Suddenly, Tony noticed that Goldstein was clutching something in her other hand. It was the picture she kept on her desk. Tony had seen it many times – a

photograph of a smiling young boy, holding a gun one hand and petting a dog with the other. “This... your mommy... I have to give it back to you.” Goldstein lost her strength and the frame tumbled to the floor. Tony held her quietly, straining to listen to her hollow voice. “Was another... Tony... that child...” Tony's eyes widened at the sound of his name. Goldstein fought to get the words out, every breath an agony. “A lot like you... a good kid. Please... Tony... look after him...” “Old lady!” But Goldstein could no longer hear him. Her body went limp in Tony's arms, a serene smile etched on her face. The .45 Caliber Artist had passed into heaven amid the hellish inferno of her beloved shop. (Goikeda 160)

Although Dante is a half demonic being that cannot be hurt by mortal weapons, he still has a caring human side that can get deeply wounded and sad at the death of one of his closest friends.

There are other aspects to a character's personality in a fantasy genre, such as the *Devil May Cry* books consisting of a character's power level, as the reader must clearly distinguish which character is stronger than the other. This is achieved by putting them in a fight against one another or by simply taking the reader through the thought process of both of them and their emotional response to one another without a confrontation. This sort of character description can be noticed at the first encounter “Tony pulled his massive sword free from its sheath. Gilver gripped his own hilt with his other hand, moving with relaxed grace. Both of them knew that a single step forward would bring them within striking distance. But Gilver masterfully commanded the empty space with his sword, putting Tony at a disadvantage.”(Goikeda 60) The author makes it clear that both characters possess similar strength, yet the antagonist finds an advantage over the protagonist simply by being more thoughtful.

Characters such as Dante, as he was under the alias of Tony Redgrave in the first novel, was described as a soft-hearted yet incredibly powerful mercenary. He was respected by everyone and known for his efficiency and trustworthiness in getting any job done, but he was also known to be very picky about the jobs that he took and would not accept any job that was not from a source he trusted. Tony did not care about himself as much as he cared about the very few people that he considered his friends and family, and he was loyal enough and would not hesitate to put himself in harm's way to help them.

The antagonist of the same novel was named Gilver, he was a man with great precision whose strength and speed were rivalled only by that of Tony. He was described and illustrated as a man hiding his face with bandages and thus his true identity was never revealed until the very end of the novel. He was described as a calm, gentleman-like, and calculated person who had little value for the money he made while working with Tony as a mercenary. He would later reveal himself as none other than Vergil Dante's twin brother.

To continue with the example of the first novel. *Devil May Cry* also relies on many other side characters, many of whom are recurrent and many who are not. These characters can vary drastically from the ever-weak assassins trying to get rid of Tony to the powerful demonic horrors lurking in the shadows that are hard to distinguish if they are even real or only in the mind of the tormented protagonist.

Fantasy novels characters are no different from real stories novels characters, but they have the addition of being in an unrealistic world which gives them traits of power and strength. Such traits can be shown through different description's variations, and for the reader to be aware of which character is strong and which is not, is shown through a variety of techniques such as the first chapter of the *Devil May Cry* novel where a thug with many of his men are faced against the silver-haired protagonist Dante under the pseudonym of Tony, all of which he defeats without breaking a sweat or taking any injury. Another example could

be how Voldemort is portrayed in the *Harry Potter* novels or Smaug in *The Hobbit*. Without them being present, the reader knows of the strength of such characters and the dangers the protagonist will face, as it is written in the first *Devil May Cry* novel:

“Just die!” Denvers pulled his trigger, and forty thugs followed suit. Hundreds of bullets volleyed toward tony, kicking up a dust cloud that soon swallowed the alley. The guns sputtered out a few seconds later. Denvers smacked his lips as his men lowered their spent weapons. “Maybe that shower woke you up.” He cackled. If you like this book, buy it! Tony emerged from the dust, brushing off his jacket. “Didn't I just say let's make this quick? (Morihashi 10)

This passage shows how Tony cannot be killed by men made weapons such as guns, and this is shown very early in the story with this confrontation between a thug by the name of Denver, and the protagonist. Denver ambushes the son of Sparda with his men and shoots him over and over again, but Tony comes out of it unharmed.

II. 3. Plots in the *DMC* Video Games and Novels

II. 3.1. The Plot of the *Devil May Cry* Video Games

The storyline in any video game is the basis for it; it is the backbone in which it will be structured. The storyline is the one thing that dictates everything about the game's key components, such as the characters, the place, the conflicts, the outcome... Even with a good gameplay experience, a game with a weak story will still feel off to players, bland and tasteless, ultimately leading to an unenjoyable experience.

Every game of the *Devil May Cry* saga has its plot and antagonist but follows the same protagonist throughout the games. The story in each game seems to follow the same pattern of being highly unrealistic regarding the main characters' strength, which is highly due to its fantasy nature and the main protagonist being extremely overpowered and capable of defeating any enemy without breaking a sweat. Conflict themes such as family drama,

betrayal, and deception have been explored between the five games. Most of the games also have a mystery hidden from the main protagonist and thus also from the player pushing the player to investigate in search of answers that will ultimately be revealed the more they advance through the game.

The first game, released in 2001 and the second in 2003, share the same storytelling model. They both start with a job handed to the demon hunter, a job that would end up being a long, drawn-out fight with said antagonist's minions and soldiers, ultimately leading up to Dante's victory and the antagonist's death. The third game, released in 2005 is where the story started to take a significant turn due to a higher budget from Capcom on the project due to the success of the previous titles, a better-organised team under the leadership of Hideaki Itsuno, and the technology advancements allowing for more fluid and more complex animations.

Devil May Cry 3: Dante's Awakening is the prequel to the first game opposing the two twin brothers one against another as one of them is searching for power and the other is simply trying to preserve the safety of humankind from the demons. The interesting part about how the story of the game goes is that both the protagonist and the antagonist follow the same rules going even beyond the canonical wall all the way to reaching the gameplay aspect.

At the start of the game, Vergil is well aware of his power and his limits and has complete control of them. That is due to his calm and disciplined personality, as well as his thirst for more power. Unlike his brother, Dante is cocky and embraces his human side more than his demonic side. This differential of power is shown at the start of the game by throwing the player at the start of the game Hell Vanguard, a powerful demon to fight. The player will struggle to fight this foe as they are just starting the game, which is a clear canonical reflection on Dante's skills. After the fight with Dante the demon escapes and

attacks Vergil, but he quickly dispatches the demon by slaying it with a single strike. This interaction is a clever way to show and present the two characters with their power limits and personalities before the conflict between them even begins. Another aspect of this analogy is Beowulf. All the powerful demons that Dante slays grant him a new weapon, except Beowulf, who manages to escape and will get killed by Vergil who will be rewarded with the weapon and use it at the subsequent encounter with the protagonist.

The game closes itself with the victory of Dante finally managing to win a fight against his older twin. The demon hunter's journey is what gets him to that victory as unlike his brother he is the only one that progressed and grew in that adventure. Starting off as an overconfident fighter and neglecting his demonic heritage, Dante learns humility after losing to his brother and Arkham and ends up accepting what he is and his brother's traits and searches to avoid conflict and resolve the issue with discourse unlike their first encounter in which he was the one that engaged the fight. All of this shows how Dante has matured and learned from his fights and defeats, unlike his brother who from start to finish is convinced that the only way to progress in the world is by gaining more strength and power, his arrogance and ego will eventually lead him to throw himself into the demon world and pick a fight with Mundus, a fight that will end up getting him enslaved and used as a demon puppet for the prince of darkness.

Devil May Cry 4, released in 2008, has similar mechanics to the third one, except Nero is the main protagonist, and Dante is portrayed as a mentor for the young man who tries to unearth the mysteries of the order of the sword and organisation that is trying to gain power by enslaving humankind by summoning demons and using their demonic power. The story is oriented to be more a love story than a family feud, as Nero's girlfriend Kyrie gets abducted by the order and only through an alliance with Dante that Nero manages to free her and kill the head of the order Sanctus.

Devil May Cry 5 came in way later, with its release date being March 2019. The game came up with a new way to approach the story, as it is the first game in the series to be centred around the antagonist. The game is playable through three different characters: Nero, Dante, and V, Vergil's newly split human counterpart. The three make an alliance and seek to defeat Urizen, the demonic half of Vergil that broke free and is threatening the city of Redgrave. The game takes two days with one month of intervals between them. (Appendix 4)

Devil May Cry 5 offers a more modernist style of narration, as the video game isn't centred around a single character, nor a single time frame, but a back and forth between three primary characters within two eventful days, on a thirty days interval between them. This keeps frequently occurring throughout the game, in what seems to be a disorganised manner that keeps on revealing slow bits of the story as the player keeps jumping through time and characters slowly discovering pieces of the puzzle that will ultimately lead to the final conflict of the game between Dante and then Nero, opposing Vergil.

The first day, May 16th, is when the trio assault Urizen after he sprung a giant tree from the underworld in the city of Redgrave, but they get surprised by his strength and end up losing and forced to retreat. The game relies on many flashbacks that are dispersed throughout the entire game of this very day and the important events leading up to it, and all that is done through the point of view of each of the main characters, Vergil included. The rest of the story told by the game in between the flashbacks is of the second day, June 15th, in which Nero and V are attempting to get rid of the roots of the tree in order to reach Urizen and find out what happened to Dante who stayed behind in the first day to give them a chance at escaping. Nero manages to reach Urizen and strike him, which only makes him angry, and almost kills Nero, who gets saved by none other than Dante who acquired more power by absorbing his father's sword, the devil sword Sparda which is now the devil sword Dante.

The last quarter of the game is when the real climax happens. After the defeat of Urizen, V goes up to him to reunite with his demon half and springs Vergil back to life, who in turn challenges Dante to come look for him so they can settle their differences through a battle till death. At that moment, Dante also reveals to Nero that he is Vergil's son and urges him not to interfere with this conflict. Nero, filled with many emotions after this revelation and feeling helpless and powerless to do anything about it, unleashes his demonic heritage to put himself between his father and uncle and ends up fighting his own father in order to save him. The game ends on a nice note in which Nero goes back to his home and Kyrie and the brothers finally agree to root out the tree of the underworld and stay trapped in the underworld sparring and talking about their lives and their parents. Though the game makes it clear that they are no longer enemies, as when demons attack them they stop attacking each other and focus on killing them and having each other's backs.

An example of the modernist style of narration used in the fantasy game can be seen from the very first mission. The player is given control over the protagonist of the fourth title Nero, who goes into Redgrave City at the request of V, to help defeat the demon king Urizen. The uninitiated player cannot win a fight with such a foe, and thus is fated to lose, which is a set up to keep the story moving forward. Canonically, Nero loses the fight against Urizen, and gets rescued by Dante, who stays behind to give Nero and V an opportunity to escape. By this time it is not shown what happens to Dante, other than the fact that he is left at the mercy of the antagonist. The game then jumps one month forward, as Nero journeys back into Redgrave to have his second fight with Urizen. Nero finds the city at the mercy of demons, and the protagonist realises that it is the demon blade Yamato, that was once safely absorbed into his arm, that is responsible for this chaos. Yet again the player is taken back in time, even before the first fight with Urizen occurs, where a cloaked man attacks Nero in his shop at the city of Fortuna and rips off his arm with a single clean sweep.

Three formulas have been used to narrate the story in the *Devil May Cry* game series. The first and second games had the recipe of the old-school action movies where the hero was faced with an evil antagonist and would end up killing him while making him look as stylish as possible. The third and fourth games opposed two people of the same powers against each other, also offering a double antagonist story. The only difference between the two games is that the evil brother in the third one is considered the final antagonist and in the fourth one the similar antagonist ends up allying with the protagonist to defeat the villain. DMC's final form of storytelling gave us a more literary modernism style of narration using multiple flashbacks, moving forwards and backwards through time, and characters narrating over cinematics explaining their thoughts and feelings. Each game is made as a link to the chain of the previous titles, but with the precision to be also enjoyed as a separate entity, and on top of that, many references are made and characters that came to life through the accompanied novels, mangas, and the animated series.

II. 3. 2. The Plot of the *Devil May Cry* Novels

Unlike the video game, the novel's only purpose is to tell a story; there are no gameplay phases, distractions, or sound, and very limited, if non-existent, images and illustrations. Everything about the story of a novel happens inside the reader's mind, and a well-written and well-structured plot can take the reader to believe in what they are reading even if it is fiction, while on the opposite end, a poorly written fantasy novel will inflict its reader with frustration, and raise questions, ultimately leading to a poor experience. Fantasy novels follow the same rules of storytelling in literature i.e: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion.

The first book in the *Devil May Cry* book series, by Shin Ya Goikeda, was released nine months after the release of the first game of the same title in May 2002, and translated, by Paul Cheng and Gemma Collinge and adapted into English by Ethan Russell, and released

in the US in June of the same year. The novel's plot consists of two separate obstacles for the protagonist. The first one is the ever-growing near-demonic threat, this conflict is indirect and poses a threat to Tony with more and more supernatural events leading up to the certainty that the demons of the past that have killed his mother now pose a threat to his own life, and this threat is an ever-growing one and is what leaves the ending of this novel open as it is never solved permanently. The second more immediate threat to the protagonist is Gilver, the only other character in the story that is as strong as Tony, one that kills Tony's closest friends, the legendary gunsmith Nell Goldstein, for the sole purpose of making Tony angry enough to confront him. The story of the novels concludes with the victory of Tony after revealing his real identity of being Dante and revealing that Gilver is his twin brother Vergil who manages to escape using the enchantments of his sword Yamato, as the novel itself ending with the sequence of the introduction of the first game, when Trish enters Dante's demon hunter shop the Devil May Cry in order to hire him for a job.

The second book of the series was written by the same author and translated by the same team. The Japanese version was published in 2003 by Kadokawa Shoten Publishing, while Tokyopop first printed the English adaptation in November 2006. The second book loosely follows the same story as the first, with some distinct changes, mainly the lack of a character like Gilver. After settling and opening his business, the legendary devil hunter Dante gets offered a job and goes to help a lady named Beryl to help her in the chase and destruction of a powerful demon named Chen, as the central conflict is finding this dangerous foe and facing him together with his female associate.

Devil May Cry 4: Deadly Fortune released in 2009 by Bingo Morihashi; it takes a different approach to the novels of the sage. This book has never been officially translated into English by Capcom. However, an unofficial translated version of the book has been made by The Original *Devil May Cry*, a non-profit fan project from a small team of two

people passionate about the franchise and dedicated to the original franchise and everything about it.

Instead of being a prequel narrating the story of the protagonists before the events of the game, this instalment narrates the events that happen during the game in a written form. There are still many additions and some deviations from the events of the video game that can be spotted in the two volumes of the novel as the novel's story stretches out from before the events of the game till way after the ending of the game.

The first difference is the addition of Nero's origins at the characters' exposition at the novel's start. The second noticeable addition added to the novel during the events of the game that can only be experienced through the novel is the attention to the characters' feelings, despite the fact of both media going through the same storyline, and that is achieved by using descriptive narration. How much they are precisely described in the novels and seems to be completely absent from the game, and this kind of change affects the knowledge of the reader as they go through the story, inquiring more information about the character, their origins, and their intentions more than the players of the video game, and the best example of this is the reveal of Nero's origin of being Vergil's son on this very book. In contrast, the players would have to wait until the next game where Dante will reveal it to Nero for them to know his origin.

The ending of this book is also very different from the game, as the game concluded itself on the separation of Dante and Nero, and a romantic scene between Nero and Kyrie finally admitting their feelings for one another. However, the novel's conclusion comes after this event, and after the downfall of the order of the sword, and states the post-invasion events of not only Nero and Kyrie but also of the city of Fortuna and its people and the measure that have been taken to rebuild and heal each other hand in hand to work towards a brighter future. The ending of the book is when Nero receives a package from Dante, a neon

sign stating Devil May Cry, and his excitement to hang it at the entrance of the shop and finally being able to say to the people of Fortune “If you’ve got demon problems, then come to Devil May Cry.” (Morihashi 310)

The last addition to the *Devil May Cry* novel franchise is *Devil May Cry 5: Before the Nightmare*, it was released March 1st 2019, written by Bingo Morihashi, the same writer for the two volumes of the previous title and translated into English by the same source. What is unique about this book compared to the other ones of the franchise is the time it has taken in the making. Unlike the first four, which were written between 2001 to 2009, this book was released ten years after its predecessor. The book is told through the point of view of many different characters, mainly: Nero, Nico, Dante, Morrison, Trish, Lucia, and V. Another crucial aspect of how particular this title of the franchise is the fact that it has tied every single piece of the story together whether it being the previous novels, the games, the Manga, and even the animated series, and in doing so, answering all the previous questions and open endings of the story.

The novel splits into different acts jumping from one character to another, all in between one of the two main protagonists of the previous game Dante and Nero. The first act narrates the meeting between Nico and Nero and how the two grew to become a team after she investigated the murder of her father Agnus, who was the researcher of the order of the sword, slain by Dante in both *Devil May Cry 4* the video game and *Devil May Cry 4: Deadly Fortune* the novel, Nero helped her uncover her father’s long lost research, and she helps him with fixing his weapons as she did the first time they met when she fixed Red Queen, Nero’s sword.

The second part of the novel takes us to Dante and Lucia from the second game, as he joins her to fight against Barlog, a powerful demon that has grown too powerful for her to handle. Dante beats the demon with no real challenge using Cerberus’s devil arm, which he

got from the third game after defeating Cerberus. Barlog, upon realising how strong Dante is, submits to turning into a devil arm until he gathers enough strength for a rematch with the protagonist.

The novel then goes through the Goldstein family and what happens to them, starting from Nell Goldstein's son Rock all the way to Nico. This family has been very important and indirectly always has a member playing a big part in the story, from Nell Goldstein making Dante's guns Ebony and Ivory, passing by Agnus figuring out how to open the hell gate that led to the events of *Devil May Cry 4*, all the way to Nico which is now working at Devil May Cry with Nero, hunting demons.

The story then penetrates the start of *Devil May Cry 5* the game, showing how Nero lost his arm, but through Nico's perspective, how Dante takes the job from V, the first fight of Lady and Trish against Urizen, who beats both of them without even trying, and V going to ask Nero for help as a back up to defeat Urizen in case Dante fails, Dante's fight with Urizen right after the one he had Trish and Lady which ended up in him losing, Nero fighting Urizen after Dante and also gets beaten and forced to retreat along side V.

The last part of the novel tells of what happens in the month between the two days the game takes place, as Nero and Nico prepare for round two with Urizen, and how V stays with the army and tries to help the city to minimise the loss of people. The book concludes with Nero and Nico taking his van and driving back to Red Grave city, following the traditions of the previous books thus far, as that moment is the exact moment in which the game starts.

The novels of *Devil May Cry* can all be read separately without playing the game and would be a complete story on their own, but without the video games the novels are merely poorly written fantasy novels. It is only when they are entwined with video games and their stories that it all starts to make sense and take shape. The novels are overall way more serious than the video games, which is due to the video games putting more emphasis on the fighting

parts of the game, the style of the fight, the weapons used, and the series' humour. In comparison, the novels put more emphasis on the thoughts of the characters during the fights as well as taking the time to describe in detail every move of significance during conversations, overall bringing about the dark thoughts of the characters that in game look way more friendly than what they really are.

II. 3. Main Differences and Similarities Between the Narration in Video Games and Novels

Although both novels and video games tell the story in the same universe, with a lot of similar characters, the way that these characters are presented and shown to either the reader or the player is very different, yet very similar in many ways, but it ultimately leads to a very different experience when going through one or the other. Additionally, the way the story's plot is presented in one medium can significantly differ from the other. At the same time, many similarities can also be noticed because they have the same characters and the same universe.

The novels and the video games sharing the same characters can be considered one of the most significant similarities between the two, as the characters are shown in the exact same way, whether it is being described with words in the novels or simply shown in the video games. The character's traits are also very similar between the two media, as they are shown through the characters' actions, goals, and motivations.

The game and the novel are considered action fantasy, meaning they rely heavily on action, with many fights and action scenes pushed into absurdity and unrealistic cartoonish fashion. Although both narrative media contain action sequences and passages, the emphasis on these last is way heavier in the video games than the novels, as such sequences can be gone through in less than a minute in the video game cutscenes but would take a long time to put all the action into words in the novels. Additionally, long and dragged-out video game

action sequences offer a much more enjoyable experience for the players but can quickly become tedious in a novel.

Since the *Devil May Cry 4: Deadly Fortune* novel and the video game *Devil May Cry 4* narrated the same story, it is the perfect spot to notice the differences in storytelling between the two narrative media. A common ground between the two narratives is the first meeting between the two protagonists, the young Nero and the legendary devil hunter Dante, as is shown in the novel:

As far as I was concerned, I was done there. “All of this preaching is putting me to sleep.” I walked away after saying that. Kyrie chased after me. Just then - I froze. My right hand had started aching. As if sensing whatever was approaching, the pulsating pain in my hand under the bandage steadily got clearer and more intense. “Is there a demon...?” I whispered low enough that Kyrie wouldn't hear. There definitely were demons nearby, but with the place crawling with knights, I'd thought it would be nearly impossible for them to get this far. No matter how I tried to rationalize it, the pain in my hand didn't get any fainter. If there was a demon here, within the range of where I'd be able to perceive it - well, it would have to be on the roof, seeing as it was the knights' only blind spot. Just as I turned to look at the ceiling, a man broke straight through the stained glass. He was tall, all dressed in red from head to toe, with pale silver hair and a huge sword strapped to his back. The man in red landed on the pulpit right in front of the vicar, and in a blur of motion grabbed something from behind his back. By the time I realized it was a gun, the shot already rang through the theatre. (Morihashi 68-69)

The video game shows these events through a third person perspective, as the player watches the events unfold before them. Nero appears to get bored from the ceremony and suddenly

takes off his headphones and stands up when the rest of the attendants start to pray. The same dialogue occurs between him and Kyrie, but it is much more spontaneous than that of the novel, and his feelings and inner thoughts are not shown nor mentioned. Nero then stops and stares at his arm that starts glowing, right before Dante shows up by entering from a top window, only to drop down and shoot the preacher in the head.

This example shows how the *DMC* novel contains much more plain information than that of the video game, although if analysed slowly and properly, the display would show roughly the same amount of information, but because it is at a regular time speed, the player can only take in so much information.

Another reverse example to the previous one would be the encounter between Nero and the demon Berial, which is shown through both the video game and the novel. In this case however, because this is a fighting sequence, the effect of the scene is much more pleasant and enjoyable in the video game than that of the novel. This sequence's purpose is to showcase the strength of the protagonist, and it is much more influential to see someone do something extraordinary than reading about it, this can be explained in appendices 5 and 6. In appendix 5: Nero is being calm and passes by Berial without showing any sign of concern or fear, while appendix 6 shows Nero stopping Berial's attack using his iconic sword Red Queen. The following quote explains the same scene in the novel,

As I looked at the demon getting farther and farther away, I took Red Queen from my back. I revved it to the max, and used the momentum to swing the blade around me in a circle. The movement sent a gust of wind all around me, instantly blowing out the fire. That seemed to get the demon's attention, who finally turned to look at me: "How curious..." I hefted Red Queen over my shoulder, and shrugged. "Fire's bad for the complexion. I burn easily, never tan." The demon cocked his head slightly, and puffed out a flaming hot breath

as he stared at me. “When I came to the world 2000 years ago, there was no such human as the likes of you.” “Wanna make it another 2000?” The demon’s voice rumbled in his chest, and he waved his sword high over his head: “Silence!” He shouted as his sword descended on me. If I hadn’t met the man in red, I might’ve been a little scared. Could I really win against an enemy so massive? Against a sword that big? But I’d already faced off against that man. After only a few rounds fighting him, I knew a demon like this one wouldn’t pose a real threat. His sword work wasn’t even half as fast or deadly as that man’s. As the tips of our swords clashed against each other, I didn’t panic. I made a movement to thwart the demon’s sword, and he staggered backwards. Once he’d found his footing, he stared at me. (Morihashii 113,114)

When it comes to an immaterial subject such as feelings, the best way to portray them is through a description, but when it comes to actions, no amount of description can overcome the fact of seeing it, and interpreting it by yourself.

Video games and novels narrations are very complex; they can share many aspects and yet be very different at the same time, offering different experiences even if they go through the same storyline with the same characters and the same plot, such as *Devil May Cry 4* the game and *Devil May Cry 4: Deadly Fortune* the novel. One significant difference between the narration in video games and novels is the characters' day-to-day life, routine, background, discussions, and many other aspects that can be considered boring and slowing the pace of the video game, but essential in a novel. On top of that, novels excel at describing characters’ feelings and emotions, especially during an action or a dramatic passage.

Chapter Three: Expansion in Storytelling Through

Mangas and the Animated Series

The storytelling expansion of *Devil May Cry* went further than novel, additional content about the game's story was made in manga and animated series. The manga is a substitute for the novel, as both manga and novel are to be consumed in the same manner, there by reading. The animated series on the other hand is a whole new and different thing compared to the previous content presented by the other narrative media, and thus more adaptation is to be made to accommodate the story for the consumers whether it being in the manga or the animated series.

III. 1. Mangas Description and History

III. 1. 1. Introduction to Manga

It is impossible to know for sure when mangas were first ever made, but it is believed that what could be considered the beginning of this phenomenon was the creation of Buddhist scrolls in the twelfth century, which were filled with expressive drawings on a variety of topics, often religious in nature. Slowly but surely, the development of literature and storytelling narrative has turned the Manga into what they are today.

Manga is “a style of Japanese comic books and graphic novels, typically aimed at adults as well as children.” It is a simple definition of the term showing the two key elements existing within it, “graphic” illustrations and drawings, and “novel”, a piece of literature.

Manga is a graphic novel narrating a story using illustrations and, in most cases, words to convey context to these illustrations such as dialogues, narrating contexts, narrator's point of view, character thoughts or inner dialogues...etc, and so on, giving the readers additional information the drawing cannot convey.

III. 1. 2. Mangas Evolution and Influence in Japan

Mangas started developing in the middle of the twentieth century by the prominence and popularity of stories conveyed through images, such as *Semiotic Folk Poem* (1966), which was told through squares and circles that needed a lexical key to understand and decipher. This technique of narration through coded images will remain for over a century, with many creative ways of reinventing this way of narration. This way of narration was quickly abandoned due to its difficulty not only in the making but also in reading and deciphering.

The term “Graphic narrative” was coined and used by David Kunzle and later used by other scholars that followed and studied the same subject. The graphic novel is a two-word identifier; graphic means that there are visual aspects to it, and narrative hints at the existing crafted story within it. The term manga as a graphic narrative and its definition also applies to comic books and graphic novels. The only difference between the three is cultural, as the West makes graphic novels and comics while mangas were initially made in Japan, with distinct separations between the three.

Historically speaking, the use of graphic narrative was used before the appearance of the regular novel. It was used by both the Egyptians, such as the pallet of Narmer (3200 BCE) and the Assyrian Stele of Vultures (2525 BCE), both containing images of brutally vanquished armies, which served to demonstrate the military superiority of the ruling power that commissioned the works. This form of narration goes as far back as twenty-seven thousand years ago, with the most striking case in the San rock paintings from South Africa, which is believed to be the work of a long-lost Phoenician civilisation discovered in the nineteenth century.

Graphic novels can narrate a factual or fictional story using illustrations and text bubbles and can be designed for educational or entertainment purposes, and are aimed at

young and old audiences alike. Comics are mostly fantasy books made for a much younger audience, usually involving superheroes and over-the-top action. Manga is a Japanese graphic narrative made for both old and young people, mainly used for entertainment with expressive faces and a specific art style, and a specific way of reading, as well as using text bubbles, and the stories they tell can be both realistic or fantasy and follows almost the same genres as a regular novel.

Manga is a graphic narrative, made in Japan and following the Japanese culture and traditions. Mangas were always popular even when people needed a special key to understand the basic drawings, which were nothing more than symbols, placed together in a specific order which must be read in a specific way in order to understand the story. With the advancements of technology, language, and art, the Manga transform into a graphic novel style, while keeping its roots within the Japanese culture. Mangas are mostly written and read for entertainment, and can contain all kinds of stories similar to that of a regular novel genres. Manga started to become way more popular, and not only in Japan, but also in the western world and later in the rest of the world starting from the 1950s with its peak being at the edge of the twentieth century. By the twenty-first century Manga has become such a titanic phenomenon that over 80% of Japanese teens have been reported to be reading Manga on a regular basis.

III. 1.3. *Devil May Cry* Manga and Its Storytelling Tools

The *Devil May Cry* Manga are considered to be action fantasy graphic novels, with the second Manga *Devil May Cry5: Visions of V* also leaning towards drama. Both mangas are considered as a prequel to their respective games: *Devil May Cry3*. The Manga follows the story of the two main characters of the third game (Dante and Vergil) in two different chapters. With the game acting as a prequel to the first title, the Manga tells of the events that happened after the first DMC novel, leading to the events of the third game. The second

Manga follows the new character V, the human counterpart of Vergil, after he split between his demonic and human sides, creating Urizen and V. The Manga follows V in his conquest to resolve the issues that his other demon half might cause.

The *Devil May Cry 3* manga is split into two chapters named *Code1: Dante* and *Code2: Vergil*. In the first chapter, we follow Dante when a recurrent character of the series named Enzo, who is a friend of Dante and gets him demon hunting jobs, gets him a job to rescue a little girl named Alice that was led to leave her family by a demon that possesses her toy doll. The rabbit doll then revealed to Dante that it was him that hired him in the first place so he could meet with him and see one of Sparda's descendants with his own eyes, and he tries to convince him that demons are better than humans by claiming they are more powerful, stronger, and more loyal than humans. All of that is shown with Alice refusing to go with Dante due to the powerful mind control of the demon. All the while Vergil is shown to be lurking in the dark, planning for something as he meets with Arkham for the first time, he is also talked about a couple of times with Dante, but he still believes that he is dead due to the events of the first *Devil May Cry* novel. The Manga concludes on Dante having a nightmare about his past, and the day that he lost his mother to the demons and his brother, and Vergil reveals himself to be the puppeteer of all the events that have happened and kills the rabbit demon before taking off to his next plan.

The main second chapter is Vergil plotting for the opening of the demon world with the help of Arkham, and Dante chasing demons. It is not until the very end that Dante and Vergil meet for the first time and have a small fight over Dante's amulette, an artefact that is needed to open the hellgate, and a key element to Vergil's plan. The difference in strength between Vergil and Dante is clearly shown as he takes it from him without him even realising what happened, but then Vergil gives it back to him and takes off to carry on with the rest of his plan to go to the demon world, knowing full well as he said that he can take it back from

him whenever he pleases. The Manga concludes with Arkham and Vergil talking about starting the ritual right after the fight with Dante.

Devil May Cry5 Visions of V is a manga comprising over 36 small chapters. The graphic novel tells the story of Vergil after his return and his decision to split his human and demon sides to defeat his twin brother, Dante. In doing so, he creates Urizen, his demon side and V, his human side. The story of the Manga follows the adventures of V after his birth as he tries to stop his demon counterpart from destroying the world by asking for help from Dante and Nero. In addition to this, V has many visions of trauma from Vergil's past, from the day that his house got swarmed by demons that killed his mother, beat him, and stabbed him with the sword that his father handed to him as a child and the overall existential crisis that the character feels.

The *Devil May Cry* Manga, both the third title and the fifth follow the same key core elements of narration. The third Manga is much darker in terms of story, as the Manga depicts many deaths, disturbing demon illustrations, and the use of dark pages with white texts to emphasise a stressful or desperate situation for a character, which ultimately means it is targeted for an older audience. Even with all the threats, demons, and nightmares that V goes through in the graphic novel, the fifth title remains much friendlier to younger readers.

III. 1.4. The Narrative of the *Devil May Cry* Manga Compared to the Video Game and the Novel

At the end of the day, the *Devil May Cry* Manga, the *Devil May Cry* video games, and the *Devil May Cry* novels all share the same story premise, with the same characters, following the same rules. This fact is that, even though each narrative media has a different plot, they are bound to have many similarities and considerable differences. Some of them can either be better or worse at some narration aspects in comparison to the rest.

The mangas share a lot with the video games regarding the narration tools used in both. Their reliance on graphic illustrations is one aspect they have in common. Even though one graphic style is animated and the other is not, both can send the reader or the player information about the story at hand without using dialogue or written or oral explanation. Another aspect they share is the emphasis on the action sequences and the long duration of action sequences.

The slight similarity between video games and Manga can also be considered as a difference, as they both rely on graphic aid to narrate the story, but the video game relies on animated graphics while the Manga relies primarily on unanimated illustrations. The video game is more immersive than the Manga due to the game giving controls of the characters instead of just allowing them to go through the story from their perspective, the game takes it a step further and adds that extra level of engagement the player has with the character over the Manga. The graphic novel, however, has an advantage over the video game, as the feelings and inner thoughts of the characters are not only shown through facial expression and graphic design but also using inner dialogue and written feelings which cannot be done in video games as the only thing the game portrays is the facial expressions and the spoken dialogues which can be interpreted in several ways and lack of accuracy that the Manga provides.

An example of this would be the fighting passage between Dante and Vergil at the end of the manga *Devil May Cry 3: Code Vergil*, and the conflict between them in the game *Devil May Cry 3*. The conflict in the manga takes over thirty pages from the one hundred and fifty seven pages of the entire manga, all of which takes place from the moment Vergil engages battle with his brother, to the moment that the fighting ceases. The fighting sequence, much like that of the video game, is also illustrated graphically. (like it is illustrated in appendix 7)

That same low degree of immersion that the Manga provides compared to the video game is also shared with the saga's novels, as they both take the reader through the plot of the story by following and staying focused on a single or a group of characters and state their decision making and the consequences of their actions. The novel and the Manga also share the same amount of immersion the reader procures. Unlike video games, they offer the reader a stable, more relaxed, laid-back experience and rely on the reader's imagination. Even with the illustrations, the lack of animation pushes the reader's mind to create the scene, unlike the already digested scenes that the video game provides. The characters' thoughts, inner dialogues, and feelings are portrayed mostly similarly between the Manga and the novels by using literature as the main descriptive tool.

The most evident difference between Manga and novels is the illustration aids of Manga, and this feature changes the way the story is built and the way it is gone through by the reader and ultimately changes the experience of the plot. The main differences that the illustration aid causes reside within the visual aspect of the story, such as characters' physical features, reactions, or environmental surroundings, as the novels describe such aspects of the story through words while the Manga portrays them with illustrations. Another main difference between the two media is the Manga's shortness of story compared to that of the novel, which covers way more lapse of time and way more events, and that again is because of the illustrations, which require time and attention, ultimately requiring more work. Creating mystery in the story is essential, and the DMC does not lack in this department. The main difference between creating ominous and mysterious events to tease the ending of the story in Manga is that ninety per cent of the time done using illustrative media, unlike the novels that rely on literature and proper wording to create and raise questions on the reader's mind to self debate on the ending of the story.

The story of the *DMC* video game is to be played both hands on. It does not give the player time to rest as it is a fast-paced game that requires focus to win the fights and get rewarded by story elements at the end, so the story elements cannot be consumed laid down, which increases the immersion of the story elements compared to that of the Manga which is consumed casually from start to finish and not as a reward. The novel and the graphic novel's story can be consumed the same way and share a lot more similarities than differences, with both relying on the same basic tools, literature, to narrate the story. Evidently, the main difference between the two on paper narration media is the fact that one relies on literary description and the other on illustrations.

III. 2. Devil May Cry Animated Series: Description and History

III. 2.1. Animated Series Description and Origin

Japanese animated series, more commonly known under the minor name of “Anime” started in the making a very short time after the technological advancements of the West in making cartoons and small animated movies near the start of the twentieth century. Japanese animated series and movies are almost all made out of existing Manga and would take the same story as the Manga and turn it from a graphic narration style to an animated show to be watched instead of read.

The Japanese anime benefited greatly from the development of technology, paralleled its progress with better graphic designs, higher frame rate, smoother animations, better sound quality, the abundance and development of voice acting, easier made sound effects... and so on.

The popularity of the animated Japanese style series and movies has been notable since its birth. Due to the already ever-growing popularity of Manga in Japan, the population were very interested in seeing the graphic novels they had been reading come to life with animations, sounds, and voices. The popularity of anime in Japan has only been ever growing

in Japan for the rest of the century until it reached the Western world, where it blew up and reached a worldwide fame, which has only motivated the Japanese studios to make more and higher quality and more numerous episodes leading into the creation of massively popular series. Some of these have taken longer than a decade to finish, with some others that are still on going to this day such as *One Piece* with its Manga first released in 1997 and still ongoing as of 2023, and its anime seeing the light of day in 1999 and is also still ongoing.

III. 2. 2. *Devil May Cry* Animated Series, and Its Storytelling Tools

The Animated Series of *Devil May Cry* takes place between two games, DMC3 and DMC1, and shows a much more relaxed version of Dante's daily life. After opening his devil-hunting business "Devil May Cry", many clients come to Dante seeking help to get themselves rid of a demon troubling them. The animated series is built around this fact and shows how Dante handles these situations, which are still serious, but are no real challenge for the hunter of his talents. There are also many recurrent characters throughout the series, such as Morrison, Lady and Trish, and a demon that haunts the protagonist throughout the entire show.

The animated series relies on audio-visual tools to tell its story. Within each episode, a situation implicating a demon is presented on screen through the eyes of a victim or a witness, usually offering very little to no detail about the antagonist demon of that episode. Later in the episode, the issue is vocalised for the audience and the protagonist, and the devil hunter takes the audience through a mystery-solving quest about the case, ultimately leading to the demonic antagonist, and after a fighting sequence, the protagonist slays the demon.

III. 2. 3. The Narration Tools in the *DMC* Animated Series and Manga.

The *Devil May Cry* animated series was made separately from any already existing manga and has a unique story, offering the fans of the series a new experience to follow the main character of the saga in a time where there is no urgent threat to the entire world but rather follow his day to day life in his devil hunting job. The Manga and the animated series share a lot of similarities when it comes to narration. One of the major similarities is the use of the same amount of emphasis on the same type of situations, such as fight sequences, dramatic revelations, plot twists, and many others. The emphasis on these situations is shown by slowing the flow of time in the animated series or multiple long and wide illustrations in the Manga. Since there is much drama in the saga, both Manga and animated series share the

same codes of narration when it comes to showing off a dramatic moment. An example of this would be showing off up close the main character not responding to a stressful situation to signify anger, annoyance, seriousness... and so on.

While Manga lacks audio and visual animated drawings, the animated series of the *Devil May Cry* lacks the explicit emotional state presentation of the characters. The animated series has to show the emotions, and the emotional state of the characters, by the movements of said characters, as well as the tone of voice of the character, and even though they could be clear, it does not get more straightforward than spelling it out, which is what the Manga relies on to showcase this aspect of its characters. Similarly, the animated series does not feature internal dialogue and has to make its character vocalise their ideas either by talking to themselves i.e. out loud thinking or by having them discourse with another character. Conversely, Manga is clearly shown to feature long and wide internal dialogues of the characters using supplemented texts on top of the illustrations.

Due to the popular phenomenon of adapting manga into anime, they have grown to share many similarities, and in some cases going as far as to be nearly identical. Even though the *Devil May Cry* Manga and animated series have their similarities and differences, the same cannot be said about every other Japanese animated series with their Manga, and more often than not, the similarities and differences would be completely different, and that is due to the many genres of both Manga and anime in existence.

III. 2. 4. The Narration of the *DMC*: Comparison Between Video Game, Animated Series, and the Novel

Even though the animated series can be enjoyed as a separate attraction, its roots remain within the DMC franchise, which started with a video game, and each video game was followed by a novel, with the exception of the third game.

The animated series and the video game have a lot in common since they both rely on audio-visual apparatus to convey the story to their respective audience. This fact implies that both media share the same codes of cinematic narration to transmit information. They also both share long and epic action sequences designed to show how the main characters can beat the enemies in an over-the-top and unrealistic way to entertain and showcase the strength of their characters.

The story that is told in the animated series, compared to that of the video game, is very different. The animated series has a much more laid-back story, with very little to no threat to the real character, while most video game antagonists, if not stopped, can take down the entire world. The story in the animated series is thus much slower than that of the video game. The difference in audience is also to be noticed, as the animated series has viewers and the game's audience is players, meaning that the immersion in the consumption of the story is very different, same as the audience's implication and investment in the characters, as anything that happens to a character that the player controls will also alter the way the game is played, with an example of the weapons the character uses.

The novels and the animated series in the *Devil May Cry* franchise show minimal similarities regarding narration tools, but they still have some similarities. One of these similarities is the story's slow pace, as most of the novel's events take place before the major events of the video game. The novels have a different plot from the video game, with the first couple featuring an entirely different antagonist. The type of the story told is also very similar between novel and animated series, with both of them being outside the boundaries that the video game has set, and reaches into the personal and private life of the characters, and shows a more realistic side of the story.

The main difference between the DMC novels and the animated series is the change in the narrative relay; while the novel relies on traditional literary narrative, the animated

series relies on an audio-visual apparatus. The main difference in the experience of going through each story is the audience's reliance on imagination, which is much more amplified in the novel than in the animated series. The emphasis on the two narrative media in the story can also be observed in different places. While the novels have to put up a long and wide description to get the reader through a dramatic sequence, the animated series' emphasis is oriented more towards the fighting scenes and the action sequences, such as racing. It is also worth mentioning that the animated series does not comprise a single plot but rather has multiple situations within each episode, while the novels usually cover a single larger mystery and plot, featuring one or two antagonists at most.

The Manga and the novel share many narration aspects, both reliant on literary descriptions. The animated series and the Manga are also very similar in the narration tools and the art style, despite not featuring the same kind of story as each other. Lastly, the video game and the animated series, both reliant on audio-visual apparatus, also share a lot in common, both colonising the cinematographic side of narration. Some narrative media could not get further from each other, such as novels with animated series, novels with video games, and mangas with video games.

General Conclusion

Nowadays a story can stretch through different narrative media, either by simply being adapted, or by adding additional content to the story. The *Devil May Cry* series started as a video game but was accompanied by novels from the get-go, and was later pushed forth to explore the other sights of manga and anime. However the opposite already exists where novels are adapted into video games such as the *Witcher* which was turned from a novel into a video game and was later adapted into a Netflix series. This is not limited to novels and video games but stretches across every possible narrative media, and most of them already coexist or have done so in the past, for example, the matrix was first set as a movie and gave birth to a video game of the same name following the story of the after the movies.

Consuming a story through a media just to later on consume the exact same story or a story about the same characters in the same universe within a different situation, can offer the consumer completely and totally different experiences. That is because each media provides its own touch to the story, with each following different rules, with different narrative tools, and with each excelling at a specific part of the narration. Video games offer the players immersion and get them invested in the characters they are in control of, movies, animated movies/series offer an audio-visual story for viewers, giving them a plain view of the story. Novels offer literary descriptions of the story and let the reader's imagination run wild through the unravelling of the story.

The *Devil May Cry* saga stretching across four different media is a great example of what has been previously said. The video games of the series offer an over the top action game, where the players are given control of overpowered characters that can defeat any foe without even trying, with the exception of the main antagonist of each game, and pushes them to defeat said enemies with the most over the top, unrealistic way possible. The novels of the series offer a much more relaxed facet of the story, getting the reader through the day

to day life of the characters, and due to the reliance of the series on drama, no other media surpasses the novel’s description of dramatic scene, due to its ability to take the reader through the characters’ minds and feelings with great precision. The manga offers a similar experience to that of the novel, but is still able to offer the reader better choreographed fighting scenes due to the use of illustrations. The same can be said about the animated series, with the slight difference being the lack of internal speech of the characters, but that cannot be said about all of the other anime as it is very common for anime characters to have internal dialogues, or to vocalise what they are experiencing and feeling even in the middle of an intense fighting sequence.

Video game	Novel
Immersive first person narrative: the player is put in the protagonist's position.	Descriptive first person narrative: the story is told through the eyes of the protagonist.
Forced story investment: due to the gameplay phase and narrative phase, the players have to win the game in order to progress through the story.	Only narrative media: reading a fantasy novel is done only to experience the story
Highly action oriented: due to the action RPG beat em all genre of the game, the story has to follow suit and focus on the action sequences of the story.	Drama oriented: the novel’s main different characteristic is the stating of the main characters’ mind even in the fight passages, giving it a more dramatic tone.
Fast paced: the game takes place in a short canonical timeframe, leading to the story moving really fast.	Slow paced: the novel has more freedom than that of the video game opening the window to jump through time, add more characters, characters’ background, their thought process...
Audio visual storytelling: the story is experienced using an audio visual apparatus.	Imagination dependent: though all novels are, a fantasy novel is exceptionally imagination dependent due to the extraordinary nature of the story.
Technologically restricted: though they have more, the technological restriction is by far the one posing the most restraint on the video games storytelling capabilities.	Literary restricted: no matter how good the story is told the reader will never achieve 100% of the author’s vision, as such novels can only be interpreted by readers.

Manga	Animated Series
Polyvalent first person narrative: despite the fact that the story is first person there are still text boxes made to explain illustrations that require more context.	Third person narrative: the animated series breaks the chain and follows a more laid back narration style.
Only narrative media: reading a graphic fantasy novel is done only to experience the story.	Only narrative media: watching an fantasy animated series is purely for the benefit of the story.
Lenience to action over drama: even though it does tend to have much longer action sequences than that of the novel, the manga still has a fair share of dramatic scenes with characters thoughts, feelings, and emotions	Only action oriented: the lack of major plot to the story in the animated series has led to the heavy lenience on the action and fight sequences presented in the show in order to go through the story.
Shifting story pace: manga is the only narrative media that doesn't have a set pace in narration, and that is due to its graphic novel nature. The pace of the story can be fast when it comes to the day to day life of the protagonist, or really slow when it comes to the fights sequences.	Fast paced: the animated series much like the video game is highly fast paced, due to their action scenes lenience.
Graphic literary narration: manga tells its story through not only literature but mainly through illustrations, leaving the physical descriptions to this last and the emotional and contextual description to literature.	Audio visual storytelling: telling a story through animated visual imagery with the addition of auditory effects such as sound effects, dialogues, and music.
Illustration restricted: the biggest setback to a manga is how good and how precise can a drawing show the reader the actions and situations at hand, and that on top of a literature restriction and fittingness with the illustrations.	Technologically restricted: like all technologically dependent media the biggest restriction of an animated series are the technological restrictions such as, the frame rate, the quality and the fluidity of the images, the quality of the sound...

This phenomenon can be noticed more and more, where stories are being adapted through narrative media, and going through one media to consume the story will always be a completely different experience than the other one. This can be seen as a door to the future of narration, where telling a story in a novel, or a video game, is not enough to satisfy the audience. It may already be the case, to think if this is a favour done by the author of the story to his readers by adapting his story through different media or creating additional content to his story through other media, or if this will be expected off of writers in the near future, if it is not already the case.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Dante and Vergil fight, *Devil May Cry3*.

Pictured acquired from pxfuel.com, through google images.



Appendix 2. Devil May Cry 4 Characters.

Acquired from rare-gallery.com, through google images.



Appendix 3. Gold Stein's death. *Devil May Cry* novel.



Appendix 4. *Devil May Cry 5* main story playable characters

Acquired from wall.alphacoders.com, through google images.



Appendix 5. Nero being calm and passing by Berial without showing any sign of concern or fear.

Image screenshotted from (*Devil May Cry 4 Special Edition All Cutscenes (Game Movie)* 1080p HD) from the channel of “Gamer's Little Playground“ on youtube.com



Appendix 6. Nero stopping Berial's attack using his iconic sword Red Queen.

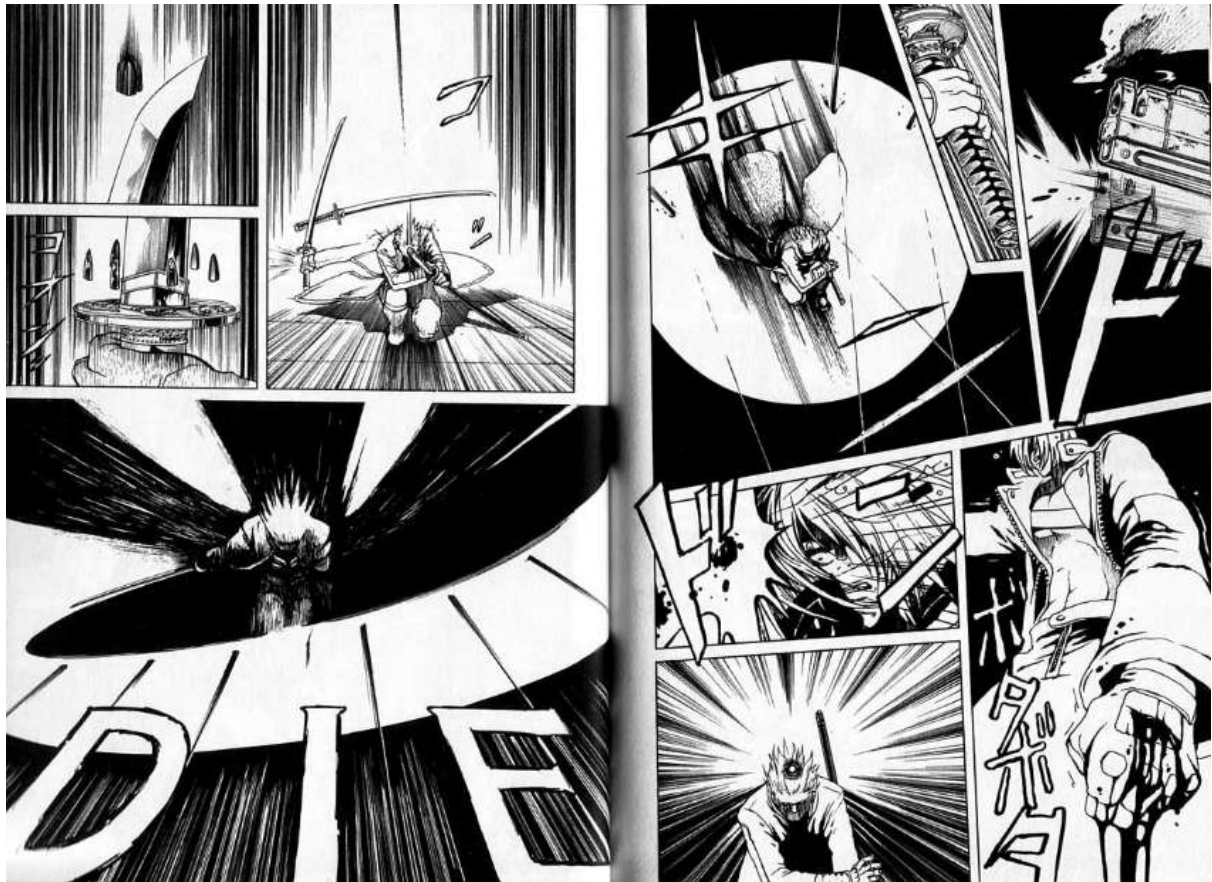
Image screenshotted from (*Devil May Cry 4 Special Edition All Cutscenes (Game Movie)*

1080p HD) from the channel of "Gamer's Little Playground" on youtube.com



Appendix 7. Two pages from the fight between Dante and Vergil at the end of manga.

Page 154-155 of the manga *Devil May Cry 3 Code Vergil*.



Appendix 8: *Devil May Cry* series character list

-**Sparda:** The demon that rebelled against his kind and banished them to the underworld, husband of Eva, father of the twins Dante and Vergil. Vanished under unrevealed circumstances, assumed dead.

-**Eva:** Wife of Sparda, mother of Dante and Vergil. Killed by demons.

-**Dante:** Son of Sparda, human demon hybrid, the legendary devil hunter, owner of the Devil May Cry shop, carrier of Rebellion, and later of the Devil Sword Dante. Seeks to safeguard the human realm.

-**Vergil:** Son of Sparda, human demon hybrid, carrier of Yamato (the blade that separates the demon world from the humans.) In constant search for more power to avoid losing anything after the tragedy that happened to his mother. The main antagonist of the first novel, the first manga, the third game, and the last game, *Devil May Cry 5*.

-**Nero:** Son of Vergil, renown demon hunter.

-**Trish:** A demon summoned by Mundus at the image of Eva to trick Dante and lure him into a trap, currently working with Dante on his demon hunting business the Devil May Cry.

-**Lady:** Daughter of Arkham, demon huntress partnered with Dante. Killed her own father because he murdered her mother, and renounced her birth name.

-**Morrison:** The broker, works with Dante by bringing to his attention possible demon hunting jobs.

-**Kyrie:** Childhood friend of Nero as well as his love interest, sister of Credo.

Credo: Supreme general of the holy knights of the order of the sword, died by the hands of Sanctus.

-**Mundus:** Prince of darkness, ruler of the underworld, author of Eva's death, deceased by the hands of Dante. Antagonist of the first game.

-**Arius:** a wealthy and insane businessman, seeks to get power through demons, deceased by the hands of Dante. Antagonist of the second game.

-**Arkham:** Scholar, father of Lady, failed a ritual involving sacrificing his wife, Kalina Ann, he then gained an alter-ego known as the Jester. Slayed by a union between Vergil and Dante. Antagonist of the third game.

-**Sanctus:** Leader of the order of the sword, seeks power through deceit by summoning demons against mankind and slaying them. Slayed by Nero. Antagonist of the fourth game.

-**V**: Vergil's human half after he separated his two sides using the power of the Yamato. One of the protagonists of the fifth game.

-**Urizen**: Vergil's demonic half after he separated his two sides using the power of the Yamato, seeks to further his demonic strength by using the Qliphoth, a tree that grows in the underworld. Antagonist of the fifth game.