THE ADVENTUROUS ARCHAEOLOGIST AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE HELLENISTIC STATUE: AN ARCHAEOGAMING EXCAVATION OF THE JAPANESE VIDEO GAME SITE *LA MULANA*

by

ZANE A. CASIMIR

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of the History of Art & Architecture
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

March 2021

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Zane A. Casimir

Title: The Adventurous Archaeologist and the Discovery of the Hellenistic Statue: An Archaeogaming Excavation of the Japanese Video Game Site *La Mulana*

This thesis has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Art degree in the Department of the History of Art & Architecture by:

Dr. Kristen Seaman	Chair
Dr. Maile Hutterer	Member
Dr. Maxwell Foxman	Member

and

Dr. Kate Mondloch	Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Graduate School.

Degree awarded March 2021.

THESIS ABSTRACT

Zane A. Casimir

Master of Art

Department of History of Art & Architecture

March 2021

Title: The Adventurous Archaeologist and the Discovery of the Hellenistic Statue: An Archaeogaming Excavation of the Japanese Video Game Site *La Mulana*

Taking the 2012 Japanese video game *La Mulana* as a case study, this thesis investigates the contemporary reception the popular culture idea of 1.) an adventuring archaeologist who finds 2.) an artifact in a moment of 3.) discovery. I work within the paradigm of contemporary reception theory, as well as performance studies as a means to better understand and parse the aesthetic experience of video games as a medium. Further, I employ the concept of kitsch, looking at how ideas of what is authentic and what is reproduction inform how we are receiving the ancient world within pop culture. I appeal to the game studies theory of procedural rhetoric, arguing that games persuasively—if fictionally—convey the ancient world into our contemporary moment. Ultimately, I argue that this game presents us with an example of playable kitsch, a reproduction of an original reality constructed via performance and play.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Zane A. Casimir

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene

Ohio State University, Columbus

Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah

Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan

Purdue University, West Lafayette

DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Arts, History of Art & Architecture, 2021, University of Oregon

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Sequential Art, 2007, Savannah College of Art and Design

Bachelor of Arts, Japanese and Asian Studies, 2005, Purdue University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Video Game Studies

Reception Studies

Play Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Teaching assistant, Department of History of Art & Architecture, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 2019-2020

Teaching assistant, Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures,

University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 2018, 2019, 2021

AWARDS AND HONORS:

Graduate Teaching Assistantship, Japanese, 2018-2019 to present

Graduate Teaching Assistantship, History of Art & Architecture, 2019-2020

For my parents, Karen and Larry. This evolved this way because of you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure Page

Figure Page

Figure Page

Figure Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION[1]

"History may not repeat itself, but it does rhyme..."[2]

What do you get when you cross the *Venus de Milo*, Indiana Jones, and video games? While it sounds like the set-up for a joke, this thesis takes this prompt in all seriousness. One of the things we get is *La Mulana*, an "indie" Japanese video game *(figure 1)*. "Indie" being short for "independent," the colloquial way a game's developing company is characterized in order to convey that it was not developed by large, well-established game companies. This game has especially clear connections between a represented ancient past and the technological mediums of the present, which contribute to better illumination of this paper's hypothesis under exploration. Specifically, the avatar identity that takes shape within *La Mulana* through costume, performance, and exploration is that of an adventurous archaeologist *(figure 2)*, which in turn resonates with the player act of exploring a game's space regardless of narrative. In order to present a thorough case study of the platform-adventure game, *La Mulana*, I played through the game in its entirety. All information referencing game play mechanics, narrative, and visuals, including screenshots, come from the author's own play-throughs of the 2012 *La Mulana (Remake)* on a Windows PC platform.[3]

---

[1] A brief terminological note to address as we begin: throughout this paper, I employ "classical" to refer to classical antiquity, "Classical" to refer to the specific period that spans c. 479-323 BCE, and "Hellenistic" to refer to the specific period that spans c. 323-31 BCE.

[2] Joseph Anthony Wittreich, *Feminist Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 150. It is usually misattributed to Mark Twain.

[3] *La-Mulana (Remake)*, developed by Naramura Takumi (Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012), PC/Mac.

La Mulana was released first in 2005 and then again in 2012 online, both as digital downloads only, and has continued to gain popularity to the point of release upon major home consoles, specifically Sony (Playstation Vita), Nintendo (Switch), and Microsoft (X-Box multiple models).[4] Initially released in 2005 as a Windows-only personal PC game,[5] the game was made in homage to early computer game pixel graphic styles and chiptune music of the 1980s. It was only available in Japanese until a fan-made English translation patch appeared in early 2007.[6] The game subsequently grew in popularity through mention in online video game news and review websites, to the point where it was remade with more advanced graphics, an orchestrated score, and some minor changes. The graphics for the 2012 remake resemble graphics from the late 1990s, but remain two-dimensional and pixel-based, reminiscent now of games from consoles such as the Super Nintendo (1990-2003) or the Sega Genesis (1988-1997).[7] So while these are "updated" graphics, they still nostalgically reference an earlier period of video game graphics.

[4] Admin, "About LA-MULANA and the future of Japanese Indie Games," Nigoro, Nov 5 2012, http://nigoro.jp/en/2012/11/about-la-mulana-and-the-future-of-japanese-indie-games/.

[5] Nigoro, "Consoles," La-Mulana, last modified 2020, https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/consoles.php.

[6] The 2005 version of *La Mulana* specifically emulated the computer console MSX, developed by Microsoft/ASCII and released in 1983. The MSX proved an especially popular game-playing console machine in Japan before the Nintendo Entertainment System came on the scene. For more information about the MSX and the many home computers put out by numerous companies throughout the 1980s that bridged the gap between arcade gaming and home console gaming, see Brett Camper, "Fake Bit: Imitation and Limitation," in *Digital Arts and Culture 2009*, https://escholarship.org/content/qt3s67474h/qt3s67474h_noSplash_259d9d2b393852619bea73156baca2f9.pdf, 2009a.

[7] La-Mulana Staff, "Graphics Remade Completely," La-Mulana Official Site, Sep 9, 2009, https://la-mulana.com/en/blog/graphic_full_remake.html.

The *La Mulana* franchise now has a sequel, released in 2018, and it released a "Hidden Treasures" special edition in 2020, bundling the two games together.[8] *La Mulana* ultimately owes its success story in large part to digital internet-driven video game discourse, the online game economy, and the rise of the independent creator. Fan translations, fan-created FANDOM wikis, a successful Kickstarter, online video game journalism, and instant-purchase-instant-download digital storefronts on personal computers and home consoles have enabled *La Mulana* to travel quickly to a global audience—or at least an internet-using gaming audience—over the course of nearly two decades.[9]

La Mulana sits within a nexus and history of archaeology-inspired video games, going back nearly forty years. Andrew Reinhard has put forth the most complete list of video games featuring a player-controlled avatar who is an archaeologist, including fourteen different franchises. His criteria for which games he includes are games whose publishers explicitly state that the player character is an archaeologist.[10] His list,

---

[8] Nigoro, "La-Mulana 1 & 2." NIS America, last modified 2020, https://nisamerica.com/la-mulana-1-2/#intro.

[9] For examples, see "project La-Mulana," AEON GENESIS, Gideon Zhi, Feb 3, 2007, https://agtp.romhack.net/project.php?id=lamulana; "Home," La-Mulana Remake Wiki, FANDOM Games Community, accessed Feb 22, 2021, https://lamulana-remake.fandom.com/wiki/La-Mulana_Remake_Wiki; Playism Games, "La-Mulana 2," Kickstarter, last modified Deb 22, 2020, https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/playism/la-mulana-2; Marcel van Duyn, "La-Mulana Review (WiiWare)," nintendolife, Sep 21, 2012, https://www.nintendolife.com/reviews/wiiware/la_mulana; Limarc Ambalina, "La-Mulana Creator Says Game was not Inspired by Castlevania or Metriod," KEEN GAMER, Sep 22, 2019, https://www.keengamer.com/articles/features/interviews/la-mulana-creator-says-game-was-not-inspired-by-castlevania-or-metroid/.

[10] Reinhard's list is extensive, but by no means exhaustive; it includes *Amaranthine Voyage: The Tree of Life* (Big Fish Games, 2013), *Baal* (Psygnosis, 1989), *The Ball* (Teotl Studies 2010), *Buried* (Tara Coppleston and Luke Botham 2014), *Dig-It! Games* (development studio), *Glowgrass* (Nate Cull, 1997), *Hunt the Ancestor* (BBC, 2014), *Indiana Jones* (series, various publishers, fifteen titles as of 2016), *Lego Indiana Jones* (series, Lucas Arts, 2008 and 2009), *NiBiRu: Age of Secrets* (The Adventure Company, 2005), *Oh Mummy* (Amsoft, 1984), *Riddle of the Sphinx II* (Dreamcatcher Interactive, 2004), *Sphaira* (UBI Soft, 1989), *Tomb Raider* (series, various publishers, sixteen titles as of 2016), *Uncharted* (series, Naughty

however, does not include *La Mulana*, an issue I will return to in the historiography. For the purposes of this study, I situate *La Mulana* not within a genealogy of archaeology-inspired video games, but within a typology of three broad groups of video games (though to be clear, this typology is for the sake of this study only--the categorization of and means of relationships between games and genres is an active area of game studies research, and the paradigm I am putting forward here is in place to best situate *La Mulana* and the art historical investigation within this thesis only). Some of these video games have more elements than others: 1.) Video games that pull on the visuals of the adventuring archaeologist, 2.) Video games that lack the visuals, but the procedurality of the game mechanics reflect the performance of the adventuring archaeologist, searching out, exploring ancient ruins, and discovering artifacts, and 3.) Video games that have both the visuals and the game mechanics of the adventuring archaeologist.

Video games which fit into the first group are games like *Growl* (Taito for Sega Genesis, 1990).[11] *Growl* is a "beat 'em up" belt-scrolling video game which was originally produced as an arcade game. It features four possible "rangers." One is a fedora and adventurewear clothing conservationist named Gen. Gen traverses the globe punching poachers who resemble the enemies in *Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)*. *Raiders* is the first film in George Lucas and Stephen Spielberg's *Indiana Jones* franchise. These movies chronicle the exploits of the titular archaeology professor, played by Harrison

Dog, seven titles as of 2018). Andrew Reinhard, "Playing as Archaeologists," *Archaeogaming: an Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 64-70.

[11] Retro Gamer Team, "Growl," retro GAMER, Aug 19, 2009, https://www.retrogamer.net/retro_games90/growl/.

Ford, who travels the world discovering and recovering ancient artifacts.[12] Other games that evoke the visuals of the adventuring archaeologist are ones like *Fantastic Dizzy* (Codemaster for numerous platforms, 1991). Its main character is an anthropomorphic egg who wears a plinth helmet.[13]

The second group of video games which employs the game mechanics of the adventuring archaeologist but lack the visuals are games like the *Zork* trilogy (Infocom for PC, 1980-1982); *Zork: The Great Underground Empire – Part 1* (1980), *Zork II: The Wizard of Frozbozz* (1981), and *Zork III: The Dungeon Master* (1982). These games were originally interactive fiction text-based video games; therefore, they had no visuals. It is not an archaeologist adventure game. However, players procedurally explore the ruins of the ancient Zork empire where they discover and loot artifacts through its text parser.[14]

There is then the third group which includes both the visuals and the game mechanics of the adventuring archaeologist. *Mask of the Sun* (Broderbund Software for Apple II, Atari 8-bit family and the Commodore 64, 1982, 1984) is an interactive fiction video game that features archaeologist Mac Steele as the main character. Mac needs to find the Mask of the Sun to find the antidote to the poison "afflicting him." The game takes place in Aztec ruins in Mexico. Its game play is mostly text with some graphics with simple animation.[15] *Spelunky* (Mossmouth for PC, Playstation, Xbobx, 2008) was

---

[12] Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, "Tomb Raider Archeologists and the Exhumation of the US Neoimperial Cinematic Fantasy," *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Volume 47, Issue 1 (February 2014), 113.

[13] Retrobates, "Fantastic Dizzy," retro GAMER, Jan 5, 2014, https://www.retrogamer.net/retro_games90/fantastic-dizzy/.

[14] Marc Barton, "The History of Zork," Gamasurtra: The Art & Business of Making Games, June 28, 2007, *https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/129924/the_history_of_zork.php*).

[15] Bob Guerra, "MASK OF THE SUN" in *Ahoy!* Issue 10, Oct 1984, https://archive.org/stream/Ahoy_Issue_10_1984-10_Ion_International_US#page/n45/mode/2up, 47.

directly influenced by *La Mulana*. It is a dungeon crawl with elements of a rogue genre. Rogue genre games feature levels randomly generated every time a player encounters them, no save points, frequent player deaths, and discovery and looting mechanics. Its visuals are evocative of tomb and ruin exploitation. The characters also evoke archaeological semiotics. One of the possible playable characters has a large handlebar mustache and a blue plinth helmet—like an older 19th-century imperialist archaeologist—while the tutorial of the game takes the form of a non-player character (NPC) named Yang with the visuals of an Asian monk carrying a whip.[16]

The *Indiana Jones* franchise based on the aforementioned film franchise has nearly a forty-year history in video games for consoles, arcades, and personal computer systems. The first game goes all the way back to Atari 2600 in 1982 with the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* video game. There are as many as 27 titles in its franchise, including two *LEGO Indiana Jones* titles.[17] The titles star the titular character and adventuring

---

[16] The presence of this character evokes a discussion of orientalism within video game representations of archaeology, but that falls outside the scope of this thesis. Mossmouth, "What is Spelunky?," Spelunky World, last modified 2012, https://spelunkyworld.com/whatis.html.

[17] *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Atari 2600, 1982), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (arcade, Atari System 1, NES, C64, 1985), *Indiana Jones in the Lost Kingdom* (C64, 1984), *Indiana Jones in Revenge of the Ancients* (PC, Apple II, 1987), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade: The Action Game* (C64, NES, Game Boy, Amiga, Macintosh, PC, Sega Genesis, Sega Game Gear, Sega Master System, 1989), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade: The Graphic Adventure* (Amiga, Macintosh, PC, 1989), *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* (NES, 1992) *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (Taito Version, NES, 1991) *Instruments of Chaos starring Young Indiana Jones* (Sega Genesis, 1994), *Indiana Jones' Greatest Adventures* (SNES, 1994), *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis: The Action Game* (C64, PC, Atari ST, 1992), *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis graphic adventure* (PC, Amiga, Macintosh, FM Towns, 1992), *Indiana Jones and his Desktop Adventures* (PC, Macintosh, 1996), *Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine* (PC, Nintendo 64, Gameboy Color, 1999, 2000, 2001), *Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb* (PC, PlayStation 2, Xbox, Macintosh, 2003) *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Revolution* (PC, 2007, Included with *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Volume One, The Early Years*), *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Special Delivery* (PC, 2008, Included with *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Volume Two, The War Years*), *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Hunting for Treasure* (PC, 2008, Included with *The Adventures of Young Indiana Jones: Volume Three, The Years of Change*), *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (Blackberry, mobile phone, 2008), *LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures* (PC, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Wii, Macintosh, 2008), *Indiana Jones* (Didj Custom Gaming

archaeologist, Indiana Jones. They take place in not just well-established archaeological locations like Ceylon and Sudan, but also fictional locales like Atlantis.[18] The *Tomb Raider* series was originally "developed by Core Design Company to video game console and computer in 1996 and later by Square Enix Company."[19] It is a widely popular media and video game franchise whose main character Lara Croft is a British "female alter ego of Indiana Jones"[20] who fulfills both the visuals and the procedural game mechanics of the adventuring archaeologist by traveling around the world to sites of ancient cultures. For instance, she visits the sites of "the Incan Empire, the Classical Antiquity triumvirate (ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome), ancient China, ancient India or ancient Cambodia, or fictional cultures such as Atlantis."[21]

System, 2008), *Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings* (Wii, Nintendo DS, PSP, PlayStation 2, 2009), *Indiana Jones and the Lost Puzzles* (Blackberry, mobile phone, 2009), *LEGO Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues* (PC, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Wii, 2009), *Indiana Jones Adventure World* (facebook, 2011). "List of Indiana Jones Video Games," Indiana Jones Wiki, accessed Feb 17, 2021, https://indianajones.fandom.com/wiki/List_of_Indiana_Jones_video_games.

[18] Reinhard, 67.

[19] *Tomb Raider* (PC, PlayStation, Sega Saturn, 1996), *Tomb Raider II* (PC and PlayStation, 1997), *Tomb Raider III* (1998), *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* (PlayStation and Dreamcast, 1999), *Tomb Raider Chronicles* (PlayStation and Dreamcast, 2000), *Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness* (PC and PlayStation 2, 2003), *Tomb Raider Legend* (PC, PlayStation 2, Xbox, Xbox 360, PlayStation Portable, GameCube, Game Boy Advance, Nintendo DS, 2006), *Tomb Raider Underworld* (PC, PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Wii and Nintendo DS, 2008), *Tomb Raider (reboot)* (PC, PlayStation 3, and Xbox 360, 2013), *Rise of the Tomb Raider* (Xbox 360 and Xbox One, 2015), *Shadow of the Tomb Raider* (PlayStation 4, Xbox One, and PC, 2018), as well as seven spin-off games. Reinhard, 69.

[20] Interestingly, Lara was originally designed male, and then gender-swapped after it was determined that her character was *too much* like Indiana Jones—a gender-studies topic regrettably outside the scope of this thesis. Interviews of Toby Gard, Jeremy Heath Smith, and Ian Livingstone in *Unlock the Past: A Retrospective Tomb Raider Documentary,* directed by Chris Peeler (2007; Los Angeles: GameTap Entertainment, 2008), DVD.

[21] Daniel García-Raso, "Watching Video Games. Playing with Archaeology and Prehistory: Retrospectives and Perspectives into the Image that Video Games Spread about a Scientific Discipline and the Humankind Past," in *Online Journal in Public Archaeology*, Vol. 1 (2011), 81-82.

Finally, the *Uncharted* series has six games[22] and two mini-games. Players control fortune hunter Nathan Drake who searches for mystical treasure in far off locales and discovers hidden truths as he explores lost cities.[23] This third group which includes the intersection of both the visuals and game mechanics of the adventuring archaeologist is where *La Mulana* sits.

Within *La Mulana,* the player-controlled character/avatar is Lemeza Kosugi, a Japanese American archaeology professor, who is led to the mysterious ruins of La Mulana via a cryptic letter from his father, also an archaeologist.[24] There, following in his father's footsteps, Kosugi and the player embark on a grand scavenger hunt through a sprawling underground world. Kosugi's journey is perilous, swarming with enemies and traps, but he grows stronger on the journey as he defeats those enemies and finds more powerful weapons. While exploring the ruins' twenty interconnected areas each uniquely characterized through the visual motifs of different ancient civilizations, he pieces together an origin-of-humanity narrative via ancient clues on tablets and character dialogue.[25]

The core gameplay task is to solve spatial layout puzzles utilizing hints and discovered or bought items; solving such tasks increases the space the player can then

---

[22] *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune* (PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4, 2007)*, Uncharted 2: Among Thieves* (PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4, 2009), *Uncharted 3: Drakes Deception* (PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4, 2011), *Uncharted: Golden Abyss* (PlayStation Vita, 2012)*, Uncharted 4: A Thief's End* (PlayStation 4, 2016), *Uncharted: The Lost Legacy* (PlayStation 4, 2017). Reinhard, 69-70.

[23] Naughty Dog, "Games," Uncharted, last modified 2018, https://www.unchartedthegame.com/en-us/games/uncharted-collection/.

[24] Nigoro, "Introduction: Story," La-Mulana Official Site, last modified 2011, https://la-mulana.com/en/introduction/.

[25] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

access and explore *(figure 3)*. Using clues and looted treasure, they must overcome the obstacles of these treacherous ruins, and piece together a mysterious story about the origin of humanity.[26] Other tasks include surviving enemy encounters, evading traps, and defeating bosses. Exploration of each area, the environment of which evokes different ancient cultural artifacts and architecture, culminates in an epic battle with the guardian of the domain, or "boss" (*figures 4 and 5)*. Eight guardians must be defeated before the final challenge opens to Kosugi/the player, and the final task is to slay the "Mother" of humanity, lying at the heart of the ruins, who is now wrathfully intent on destroying the life she had brought forth.[27] Through this game, a hyperreality of archaeology is evoked and acted out, with the player starring in this "Archaeological Ruin Exploration Action Game."[28]

We also get a departure from reality—or at least, what we take as the physical reality we exist within. This is a work of fiction, and it depicts the practice of archaeology as one of thrilling (and dangerous) adventure. And yet, in order to construct this fiction, it draws again and again from that physical reality what I will be referring to going forward as reality prime. The ruins of La Mulana do not contain fantastical new ideas of ancient artifacts; rather they contain a visual smorgasbord of familiar forms: pyramids, Olmec heads, deity wall mosaics, holy grails, serpent staffs, crystal skulls, harpies, nagas, chimeras, bronze shields, polished jewels, sculpted idols, sleeping colossal giants,

[26] Nigoro, "Introduction: Seek the Hidden Treasure of Anima, Find Out the Anthropo-origin," La-Mulana Official Site, last modified 2011, https://la-mulana.com/en/introduction/.

[27] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

[28] Nigoro, "La-Mulana Teaser Page," Nigoro, last modified 2020, https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/index.php.

mysterious stone riddle tablets, and half-clothed marble goddess statues. [29] This game's stage, props, costuming, and story are built from what we know of history, and moreover, what we know of history from art, architecture, and artifacts.

But more than that: this game also is built from recent cultural artifacts. The main character Kosugi wears an iconic fedora and wields a whip, and his illustrated image in gold and earth tones bears more than a passing resemblance to Indiana Jones.[30] Kosugi carries his trusty laptop on his adventure, able to decipher runes and navigate on his journey due to software that can with magic-like capacity interface with many different portions of the ancient ruins. Some of that software is in fact game software, and the La Mulana village elder when spoken to professes his enthusiastic love of gaming often and repeatedly. *La Mulana* is a nexus of old and new things. It is a new thing (a videogame) using old things (artifacts and artworks) as part of its structure; it is an old thing (a heroic adventure story) using new things (the procedural rhetoric of video games) to express its contents. It contains the representations of things like c. 100 BCE half-clothed Aphrodite sculptures that resemble the *Venus de Milo* (but with arms), as well as a Japanese American doppelganger of the most iconic pop culture archaeologist of the 20th and 21st century.[31]

It is easy to look at something like this videogame, or an *Indiana Jones* movie, or a set of *Venus de Milo* salt shakers and document all the ways in which these material and visual culture objects deviate from the originals behind them. Why study a video game

---

[29] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

[30] Jeb J. Card, *Spooky Archaeology: Myth and the Science of the Past* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018), 187.

[31] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

when there is the actual *Venus de Milo* to study? Why study Indiana Jones when one could instead research the origins of antiquarianism and write biographies on actual archaeologists? Because it is here that we can see how these things exist within public perception. Here, we have a unique opportunity to not just look at the provenance of objects in material terms, but also in the terms of how they exist within the pop culture Zeitgeist as ideas. We can excavate these things in terms of how they have traveled as ideas—moving from whatever we may deem the "original," tracking what has changed, and then scrutinizing what virtual reality form of them we have today. Not to scathingly condemn that reality in its lack of faithfulness to the original, but rather to understand what kind of ideas regarding the ancient past and the art historical discipline are prevalent within contemporary culture, whether identical to reality prime or not. In other words, this is a reception study: to look at how the ancient world and those who study the ancient world are received and passed along.

Currently, many scholars who look at the ancient world and archaeology as they appear in video games spill no small amount of ink focusing on making clear what is "true to life" and what departs from it.[32] While this a useful starting point, it overlooks a great deal of what is true about human experience of engaging with life via our representations of that life. It overlooks something that scholar Jeb J. Card more astutely traces in his work: the sedimentation of ideas surrounding the archaeologist and the

[32] See Daniel García-Raso, "Watching Video Games. Playing with Archaeology and Prehistory: Retrospectives and Perspectives into the Image that Video Games Spread about a Scientific Discipline and the Humankind Past," in *Online Journal in Public Archaeology*, Vol. 1 (2011), 73-92; Kathryn Meyer Emery and Andrew Reinhard, "Trading Shovels for Controllers: A Brief Exploration of the Portrayal of Archaeology in Video Games," in *Public Archaeology*, Vol. 14 (2), (2015), 137-49; Andrew Reinhard, *Archaeogaming: an Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018). See also Christian Rollinger, *Classical Antiquity in Video Games: Playing with the Ancient World* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

"doing" of archaeology.[33] As an analogy to what I mean, consider the plethora of European Christian icon paintings showcasing Christ with a snow-white Caucasian skintone (a historical figure of Israel within the Middle East).[34] Or, closer to the subject matter we are investigating here, consider the idealized musculature of not only Classical Greek statues, but that same idealized virile musculature crowned with middle-aged and older portraiture heads, a genre of statues popular during the Roman period.[35] These sorts of artworks contain more than a mere visual deviation from reality prime. The fact that these specific visual narratives—in the use of this word I mean the "rhetoric" alongside its story-telling facet of meaning—is so prevalent in artworks despite it being a departure from reality is striking. The fact that these ideas exist, *per*sist, and grow to such large proportions within the popular consciousness that they eclipse accuracy is in itself a reality we cannot dismiss simply because it does not match whatever we have decided is the authentic "true" version of reality. Art history shines as a discipline in no small part owing to its work within the selvedge where realities meet, cataloguing the ever-shifting shapes of reality prime and our relationship to the constructed realities we put forward.

In the spirit of this cataloguing of aesthetic rhetorics, I contend that video games with their procedural rhetoric is another place in which departures from reality should not be dismissed owing to "deviance" but rather examined with all the validation afforded representations of reality (and their own constructed realities) art history has worked hard

---

[33] Card, 1-17.

[34] For such icon paintings, see Robin M. Jensen, "Jesus in Christian Art," in *The Blackwell Companion to Jesus,* ed. Delbert Burkett (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2010), 477-502.

[35] For such sculpture, see Christopher H. Hallett, *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 B.C.-A.D. 300*: *Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

to legitimize as a worthy locus of study. Further, I believe the study of what procedural rhetorics within games put forward, while unique to video games in their affordance of performance, enables us to look at video games as works of art in themselves, as archaeological artifacts to be excavated, as digital media, and as objects of practice and performance.

So, what do we get when we cross the *Venus de Milo*, Indiana Jones, and video games? We get a robust case study wherein we can investigate the contemporary reception of 1.) archaeologist, 2.) artifact, and 3.) discovery by archaeologist of artifact. In order to investigate these things, I work within the paradigm of contemporary reception theory, that is, an interest in and focus upon how artworks are *received*, and the subjectivity and relativity necessarily bound up in this (as opposed to the goal being to unearth an objective, creator-intention-driven meaning). I invoke performance studies as a means to better understand and parse the medium of videogame, which in turn organizes the discussion of aesthetic material presented to game players. I bring research into the concept of kitsch to bear within this argument too, looking at how ideas of what is authentic and what is reproduction inform how we are receiving the ancient world within pop culture. And I ultimately will appeal to the game studies theory of procedural rhetoric—the idea that via the programmed structure of games, persuasive arguments can be made to those who play within them—and the role it plays in conveying the ancient world into our contemporary one.

Chapter 2 provides a historiography of previous scholarship about *La Mulana* and what needs to be studied regarding this video game. Chapter 3 focuses on Kosugi, Indiana Jones, and excavating how the idea of "archaeologist" became characterized with

adventure. It argues that the costuming of Kosugi is one of the latest iterations of an established visual semiotic of archaeological "adventurewear," one that has become indelibly linked with the pop culture icon Indiana Jones.[36] However, this adventurous archaeologist did not just spring fully formed into the present moment. In fact, archaeology has a long history being tied ideologically to adventure, mystery, and treasure-hunting.

Chapter 4 shifts from archaeologist to artifact. It will in particular examine the *Venus de Milo*, a statue that equals Indiana Jones in looming presence within contemporary popular culture. This chapter also brings forward kitsch as a concept, first in relation to the authentic, museum-held original versus the reproduced, mass-produced copy. The tension-filled relationship between original (whether such a thing exists or not) and its copy becomes especially useful in investigating a game filled with ideas about what constitutes an archaeologist and what constitutes an artifact—both informed by some shadowy sense of an authentic original, and yet both simultaneously copies that have taken on their own lives.

Chapter 5 then looks at what happens between the archaeologist and the artifact, that is, the moment of discovery in which the former comes in contact with the latter. This chapter reiterates the usefulness of performance as a lens through which to view video games, and then brings in procedural rhetoric as a means to interpret this discovery-moment-relationship between archaeologist and artifact. Drawing on this game studies theory, I argue that *La Mulana* as a video game offers an aesthetic encounter with

[36] Card, 186-87.

the ancient past via the performed role of the adventuring archaeologist, and that this encounter is effected by the persuasive argument of playing the game.

Ultimately, this is a study not of the repetitions of history, but of the way it shifts and yet continues to rhyme. It is not enough to point out what lines of this metaphorical song are not the same, or to reject the chorus lyrics for not remaining faithful duplicates. We learn more in looking at what changes with every line, and the journey on which the song takes us.

CHAPTER II

HISTORIOGRAPHY

So much for what *La Mulana* is and where we are heading—now, does this game have presence within scholarship? Yes, though currently, a small one. Brett Camper investigates the game's nostalgic aesthetics and gameplay. By aesthetics, I mean the pixelated graphics, sound, and controls that are reminiscent of 1980s home computer consoles. Camper's work argues for a specific interpretation of 'retro,' that is, one in which a past moment of media development is revisited in aesthetic/technological choices, but simultaneously is improved upon. He contrasts this with "revival," that is, a reincarnation of an earlier moment of media development *but* does not evolve or improve.[37]

Camper's approach is solidly within the discipline of new media, with specific attention to the specific platform of old personal computer that the game nods to with its retrospective aesthetic choices *(figures 6 and 7)*.[38] He also seems keen on making a specific argument in relation to video games and the burgeoning movement of new games looking like older games. Coming at his work art historically, I would hazard Camper would benefit from some of the ways art historians have been theorizing style revivals, decontextualization and recontextualization, and ultimately the authentic back-in-the-old-days original versus the current-day reproduction. It is my hope that this thesis

[37] Brett Camper, "Fake Bit: Imitation and Limitation," in *Digital Arts and Culture 2009*, https://escholarship.org/content/qt3s67474h/qt3s67474h_noSplash_259d9d2b393852619bea73156baca2f9.pdf, 2009a; Brett Camper, "Retro Reflexivity: *La Mulana*, an 8-Bit Period Piece," in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2,* eds., Bernard Perron and Mark J.P. Wolf (New York: Routledge, 2009b), 169-195.

[38] Camper, 2009a.

brings some of this art historical approach to visual semiotics into this new media conversation.

In addition to Camper's scholarship, it is important to include what Nigoro has to say about their own work—similar to how we art historically would take the primary source of an artist or architect writing about their work as part of art-historical research. Nigoro maintains a website and blog regarding the game, and it is here that the developers address a number of topics such as the updates and changes between the original 2005 version of the game and the remade 2012 version *(figures 6 and 7)*. This blog and the game's website are published bi-lingually, but it is worth noting that the sites are not identical in content across the English and Japanese versions. In particular, the Japanese version offers a link to a 64-page strategy guide that was only translated into English in 2020 (likely due to the Hidden Treasures Edition special release). This strategy guide gives a fairly thorough introduction to the premise of the game; an introduction of things like the characters, enemies, mechanics, and maps. Of most direct import to this paper, it has several long-form articles called "columns" in which the developers write about topics related directly or indirectly to the game's content.

Of especial interest is a column article that writes about archaeology, and explicitly links the mechanics of the game to thinking like an archaeologist. It says: "*La Mulana's* protagonist is Dr. Lemeza Kosugi. He is an archaeologist. His very occupation and business is that of searching through the ruins. Try to approach the game as if you too were an archaeologist…"[39] The instructions might be more akin to thinking like a

[39] 「**LA-MULANA** の主人公はルエミーザ・小杉博士。考古 学者だ。遺跡を調べることが職業の主人公なのだ。遊ぶ 側も考古学者になったつもりで挑んでみると。。。」Naramura Takumi,

detective and solving mysteries, but its very presence equating archaeology as mystery-solving is part of the adventuring archaeologist idea put forward by the game.

Given the dearth of scholarship on *La Mulana*, there are many possible directions for future scholarship. In the introduction, I mentioned Reinhard's list of video games featuring an archaeologist main character as stated by the publisher.[40] Despite Reinhard's book's release in 2018, he excludes *La Mulana*, a game released in 2005 and again in 2012. Because Nigoro directly states on the game's official website that Dr. Kosugi is, in fact, an archaeologist, any discussion of archaeology in video games should include *La Mulana.* The exclusion of *La Mulana* in Reinhard's scholarship on archaeology in video games is an oversight I intend to address in this thesis.

La Mulana has much to offer in expanding our understanding of archaeology and the archaeologist within video games as well as the reception and reproduction of ancient artifacts in video games. Future scholarship has a rich site to excavate here, given the video game's breadth and globe-spanning reproductions of ancient art and artifacts within the ruins of La Mulana. Future scholarship could potentially investigate anything from pixelated reproduction of these artifacts and artworks to pursuing the narrative architecture of the environments where these artworks and artifacts are discovered within the ruins of the game and how that frames their reception by the players. While it would take an entire book to discuss the myriad artifacts in *La Mulana*, I intend to limit my scope to only one of these artifacts as it relates to the adventurous archaeologist.

"Column No. 1: The Mental Attitude of Ruins Exploration," in *La Mulana Official Guidebook (Fundamental Knowledge Volume)* (Asterizm: Japan, 2011), 9. Translated by author.

[40] Reinhard, 62-70.

While Camper focuses on the 'retro' aspects of *La Mulana's* aesthetics as a video game, I investigate art historically the visual semiotics of the archaeologist as adventurous. To accomplish this, I analyze the player character costuming of Dr. Kosugi as well as the representation and reception of ancient artifacts in *La Mulana*, specifically a variant of the Hellenistic *Venus de Milo.* I then explore how this variant's reproduction in an archaeological adventure video game authenticates itself as an object worthy of discovery. I show how this is accomplished in the game through Matthew Gumpert's theory of art as kitsch[41] and the receiver's own knowledge of the statue and popular ideas of archaeology and archaeologist. I end my investigation by showing how the procedurality of player performance and the game mechanics of the player's discovery of the *Venus de Milo* variant reinforces archaeology as adventurous as it exists in the popular consciousness.

[41] Matthew Gumpert, "Venus de Kitsch: Or, The Passion of the Venus de Milo," in *Criticism*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Spring 1999), 155-85.

CHAPTER III

THE COSTUME

The starting point for this project is Kosugi's explicit given identity, that of an archaeologist. As previously mentioned, Nigoro calls *La Mulana* an "Archaeological Ruin Exploration Action game" (*figure 1)*.[42] However, this transmission of an archaeologist's role via the game's backstory and advertising is only the beginning of the game's presentation, and an extra-diegetic one at that. Consider now Kosugi's avatar visual representation, persisting throughout the game as the controlled on-screen persona of the player. How does this avatar communicate archaeologist identity to the player? One especially salient aspect is the clothes that he is rendered as wearing: dull and earth-toned (brown or green, depending on the image), he wears a shirt full of utility pockets, hiking boots, a leather-looking jacket, and a wide-brimmed fedora (*figures 2, 4, and 8)*. He is also seen often holding a whip, and occasionally with a bag and rope slung over his shoulders.

The paradigm through which I examine these immaterial-but-quite-visible clothes takes as its foundational layer the assumption that video games and the playing of them constitute a performance. Darshana Jayemanne characterizes video games thusly:

> A videogame can be seen as an archive that is accessed, modified, and manipulated in a very particular way: playful performance. The sequence of events as the text unfolds in any one play session is determined on the one hand by player skill and player choices; on the other by the actions of computer-controlled and designed rules, devices and entities. Performance in a videogame is hence constitutively hybrid.[43]

[42] Nigoro, "La-Mulana Teaser Page," La-Mulana, last modified 2020, https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/index.php.

[43] Darshana Jayemanne, "Introduction: Video Games as Performances," in *Performativity in Art, Literature, and Video Games* (London: Palgrave Macmillan; Ciam, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing GA, 2017), 2-3.

While there are many contact points between player and game, the most obvious visual locus of player and video game meeting, hand-in-hand constituting performance, is the controlled avatar. Among the many characteristics of performance one could analyze, I start first with *costume* as one of the means via which a video game contributes to the hybrid performance between player and game, and it is in turn the focus of this chapter.

Donatella Barbieri identifies several ways in which a costume mediates performance for the performer:

> Costume… is viewed as a crucial aspect of the preparation, presentation, and reception of live performance, revealing the relationship between dress, body, and human existence in a way that causes us to question the extent to which it co-authors the performance with the performer. As a method through which performance can happen, costume embodies histories, states of being, and previously unimagined futures in the temporary space of performance. It can guide movement, define place, and structure relationships, as well as of course reveal character.[44]

If these things are true about Kosugi's archaeologist clothing, and I believe that they are, then this clothing is in fact more accurately termed a costume. Useful for this discussion is the extant scholarship to draw upon concerning this "archaeological costume," and even more usefully, these sources examine the way archaeology has been re-presented within the media of movies, television, and video games.

One of the most cohesive of these sources, and one that specifically focuses on video games at that, is Andrew Reinhard's work.[45] Within his growing body of scholarship, Reinhard often cites and condenses scholar Cornelius Holtorf as he explores the way

---

[44] Donatella Barbieri, "Introduction," in *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture, and the Body* (London/NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), xxii. Granted, she focuses on the immaterial of the material in her costume investigation, but I hazard that immaterial costumes rendered within video games carry immaterial ideas just as the material costumes of an actor on stage do.

[45] Andrew Reinhard, "Chapter 2: Playing as Archaeologists," in *Archaeogaming: an Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018), 62-87.

archaeology is portrayed in video games, and for good reason: Holtorf's research has focused on the public perception of archaeology, with special attention on how it is presented in the media.[46] Reinhard relates that Holtorf identifies four public perceptions of archaeology:

> 1.) Archaeology is about searching and finding treasure underground.
>
> 2.) Archaeological fieldwork is about making discoveries under tough conditions in exotic locations.
>
> 3.) The archaeologist is a detective of the past.
>
> 4.) Experiencing archaeological practice and imagining the past constitutes the magic of archaeology.[47]

Whether these beliefs are actually true or not about archaeology and archaeologists is beside the point. Holtorf establishes these as *public perceptions*, a set of beliefs held, circulated, and evoked within narratives about archaeology and the identity of an archaeologist.[48] In our contemporary moment, perhaps there is no publicly perceived archaeologist—an idea in the form of a fictional character—that demonstrates Holtorf's observations more clearly than Hollywood's Indiana Jones.

Representations of archaeology like this have a history just as material artifacts do; they do not come from nothing. It is a convenient shorthand to describe *La Mulana's*

---

[46] For more, see Cornelius Holtorf "An Archeological Fashion Show: How Archeologists Dress and How They are Portrayed in the Media," in *Archeology and the Media*, eds., T. Clack and M. Brittain (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2007), 69-88; Cornelius Holtorf, "Imagine This: Archeology in the Experience Society," in *Contemporary Archaeologies: Excavating Now*, 2nd ed., eds., C. Holtorf and A. Piccini (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011), 47-64; Cornelius Holtorf, "Popular Culture, Portrayal of Archeology on Screen," in *The Oxford Companion to Archeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 650-51.

[47] Reinhard, 72. Reinhard here distills the main ideas from the book: Cornelius Holtorf, *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas: Archeology as Pop Culture* (Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2005).

[48] Holtorf, 2005, 42.

Kosugi within as a kind of Indiana Jones *(figure 9)*. Kosugi could be considered a "descendant" of Indy, one who benefits from an ancestry of archaeological representation that has been built up from hundreds of years of public perception and narrative sedimentation. Looking specifically at Indiana Jones informs both who has come from him and where he in turn has come. This fictional archaeologist is mentioned without fail in any discussion of archaeology within the media: "How many archaeologists," asks Reinhard, "have been asked what they do, and when they say, 'I'm an archaeologist,' are met with the astonished reply of, 'Wow! Like Indiana Jones?' The best known archaeologist in the world is a work of fiction."[49]

Indiana Jones stands as a nexus connecting many histories of archaeology; Kosugi is far from his first descendant. Indiana Jones himself was inspired from fictional characters like the pulp serial pseudo-superhero Doc Savage; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's zoologist Professor Challenger; lost world fiction writer Sir H. Rider Haggard's big game hunter character Allan Quartermain; and a hearty dash of James Bond thrown in for good measure.[50] Indiana Jones movie trilogy costume designer Deborah Nadoolman offers another influence: the 1954 Charlton Heston movie *Secret of the Incas*, and the adventurer protagonist Harry Steele whom Heston plays. "*Raiders* [*of the lost Ark*] stands on its own as a modern classic," she says in an interview, "But the fedora, jacket, and whip are right there on Charlton Heston in 1954."[51]

---

[49] Reinhard, 63.

[50] "Exclusive: George Lucas Prepares Us for *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*," Superheroflix, May 5, 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20081205015223/http://www.superheroflix.com/news/NE0ab607ewPH26; Card, 190.

[51] "Deborah Nadoolman interview," by Mike French, & Gilles Verschuere, theraider.net, September 14, 2005, http://www.theraider.net/features/interviews/deborah_nadoolman.php.

The fedora, the jacket, and the whip: All objects Kosugi wears or carries *(figures 8, 9, and 10)*. Reinhard catalogues typical archaeological clothing as "sturdy trousers and a work shirt, both khaki. Pair these with a fedora or pith helmet for an Instant Archaeologist."[52] He later zeroes in on the hat in particular: "The iconography of the character [Indiana Jones] most easily rendered in 8-bit [pixel] art? His famous hat."[53] Adrian Praetzellis, an American historical archaeologist, actually constructs a genealogy of archaeological headgear *(figure 11)*. A careful examination of a screenshot from *La Mulana (figure 8)* depicts an older figure in the lower left. This is Kosugi's father Shorn, who wears a pith-helmet-like hat and a leather jacket. Kosugi's immediate ancestor wears a hat that in turn is an ancestor to his fedora hat… at least according to Praetzellis' genealogy.[54]

Holtorf also comments on the iconography of archaeological headgear on several permutations of archaeological outfits in media representations.[55] He uses photographer David Webb's portraiture of archaeologists as part of his analysis, showing several styles such as "field wear," "managerial wear," "professorial," and the more recent appearance of "health-and-safety wear."[56] But the style category that stands out is what he calls "adventure wear," the discussion of which he leads off with by tracing the origins of

---

[52] Reinard, 63.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Adrian Praetzellis, *Death by Theory: A Tale of Mystery and Archeology Theory*, rev. ed. (Plymoth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2011), 36.

[55] Holtorf, 2007, 80-88.

[56] Ibid., 78-79. David Webb at one point had an archive website of his photography (archdiggers.co.uk), but the website is no longer accessible. The closest I have come so far to finding samples of his work is through the blog "Archaeologists Photographers: New Visuality in Archaeology," in a post dated April 8th, 2010. https://archaeologistsphotographers.wordpress.com/2010/04/08/dave-webb/.

Indiana Jones' iconic fedora. "Today," he says, "if you want to create an archaeologist recognizable at first glance, *adventure wear* is the look you choose… Even archaeologists themselves can find the adventure look irresistible."[57]

Here, Holtorf brings up an important link between the fashion and what it signifies. As he notes, "The traditional archaeological adventure-wear not only evokes colonial times, but also the great time of traveling at the turn of the last century."[58] But to emphasize the *adventuring* aspect of archaeological clothing, part of his chapter is spent surveying archaeological television shows showcasing travel to exotic dig sites in pursuit of ancient artifacts, such as the German program *Terra X: Schliemanns Erben (Schliemann's Heirs)*.[59] The show takes its name from Heinrich Schliemann *(figure 10)*, a businessman-turned-amateur archaeologist. Jeb J. Card reports that Schliemann "became famous by excavating the mythic city of Troy into a real place."[60] There is much academic criticism concerning Schliemann's destructive archaeological methods (such as digging down through several layers of otherwise potentially relevant material deposits on his search for evidence of Troy). But, as Holtorf says, "The name of Heinrich Schliemann still evokes a range of colourful associations about digs in foreign places, rediscovering lost empires, hidden golden treasures—and the eventual rewards of

[57] Holtorf, 2007, 82.

[58] Ibid, 80.

[59] *Schliemanns Erben,* directed by Gisela Graichen, Klaus Kastenholz, Peter Prestel, Lothar Spree, Michael Tauchert, and Dietrich von Ruffer (1996; Germany: Aspekt Telefilm-Produktion GmbH, 2009), DVD.

[60] Jeb J. Card, "Myth and Protohistory," in *Spooky Archaeology: Myth and the Science of the Past* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018), 107.

persisting with a controversial quest against much scholarly opposition and many practical obstacles."[61]

Card's book also goes into detail about the historical precedent for an archaeological search for protohistories—a "collapsing of origins into the boundary between the 'historic' and the 'prehistoric,' the edge of mythic time and the realm of heroic or supernatural actors."[62] The late 19th century saw people like Schliemann searching for Troy; mineralogist and archaeologist William Niven looking for the Lost Continent of Mu; and Populist Politician Ignatius Donnelly arguing for the existence of Atlantis.[63] This is quite an assortment of people, occupations, and quests—but all of them in one way or another draw on the allure of adventuring archaeology.

This brings us back to what Holtorf calls clothing and fashion, and what I argue via Barbieri is costume.[64] The histories of archaeology embodied within a fedora, a jacket full of pockets, and mud-colored pants persist within the immaterial video game *La Mulana*. We receive information about the archaeologist *role* Kosugi plays through narrative dialogue within the game and rhetoric accompanying the game. However, the performance—the hybrid performance between player and game—enacts "archaeology" as it is publicly perceived. As the player guides Kosugi to collect treasure in underground ruins, fighting enemies in highly varied areas, Kosugi is on a quest to solve the mystery of the origin of humanity. What stays present before the player's eyes at all times

[61] Holtorf, 2007, 83.

[62] Card, 104.

[63] Ibid., 107, 136-41, 126-7.

[64] Barbieri, xxii.

throughout their play is the costumed avatar. Kosugi's iconic fedora, comfy-looking dig-site-colored clothes full of pockets, and whip certainly reveal character, but even more, they structure the player relationship with the game world around Kosugi.[65] Kosugi has come to the ruins of La Mulana on an archaeological mission; his costume is not a James Bond tuxedo, or superhero spandex, or even just a tee-shirt and jeans. He is costumed not in fieldwear, but in *adventurewear*.

One additional aspect of costume within *La Mulana* to consider: the nature of *items* in their relation to Kosugi's visual representation. I leave aside the question of whether to consider these items as props or costumes. For the purposes of this research, regardless of which of these theatrical categories they fall into, they serve the same expression of adventuring-archaeologist role. As the player travels through the game, they collect many items, often of mystical nature, that bestow new abilities on Kosugi. While he collects many smaller or hand-held prop-like items (that he presumably squirrels away in one of his many adventurewear pockets), he also collects several articles of clothing: an ice cape, speed boots, gloves, and fairy clothes. These items, once collected, will appear on the inventory screen representation of Kosugi, being worn *(figure 2)*. These items bestow new powers upon Kosugi, as mystical objects often do throughout heroic tales from antiquity to present day speculative fiction. The ice cape, for example, greatly reduces damage taken from lava. These items are ambivalent: they are artifacts of power, and also items to be worn at the same time. Some worn items "guide

[65] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

movement," too: the speed boots, which enable the character to move faster, are visible on this inventory representation of Kosugi.[66]

These items change the way the game "feels," the way the avatar handles, the way the gameplay mechanics operate. This changes the "feel" of the costume, which is translated to the player through the change in responsiveness, or else the increase in stamina or the ability to kill enemies with fewer hit. This tactile feedback given to players, while not visual, is nevertheless an aesthetic—that is, sensory—experience. For every portion of clothing/costume gathered, Kosugi's in-game capabilities and fidelity of movement improve, a tactile experience of a hero's adventure in which they grow in power. This tactile experience is in turn visually indexed and reinforced by the costumed appearance of Kosugi on the inventory screen, updated as new clothes and items are collected. And while Kosugi's appearance grows increasingly whimsical, decorated Christmas-tree-like, his adventurewear archaeology gear persists, still visible amidst it all.[67] Costume structures the relationship between the player and the game world through the semiotics evoked by the visual, the tactile, and the ideological. For *La Mulana*, the costume put forward is that of an adventuring archaeologist.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE STATUE

Does costume end at the pixellated edge of the avatar? Is Kosugi constituted as an adventuring archaeologist purely on the basis of a fedora, a whip, and pockets full of collected power-ups? Is Kosugi an archaeologist in the cultural idea of adventure-hero by costume and prop alone, or is there perhaps another element—a great artifact embedded within an ancient environment?

The discovery of such as great an artifact as a representation of the *Venus de Milo* will be the focus of the next two chapters. The presence of a variant of the *Venus de Milo* within not just a popular medium like video games, but within a game which reinforces archaeology as adventurous intersects with both the history of the statue itself and its many representations and reproductions. The original "discovery" of the *Venus de Milo* and its inexorable ties to the mythos of archaeology as adventurous cannot be understated in its importance to understanding its presence within *La Mulana* and its reception.[68] In order to understand the presence of this variant of the *Venus de Milo* within *La Mulana*, a discussion of archaeologist as one who discovers, the history of the *Venus de Milo*'s controversial discovery, its many reproductions, and art as kitsch becomes necessary.

[68] For more information and previous bibliography about the *Venus de Milo*, see Francis Haskell and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 328-30; Rachel Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Vénus de Milo and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005), 227-50; Rachel Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture: the Allure of the Classical* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 28-34; Andrew Stewart, *Art in the Hellenistic World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14-15, 24, 161-63, 170.

This too sits upon precedent, mentioned in Jeb J. Card's explorations of historical figures like Heinrich Schliemann.[69] An archaeologist's "job" is to excavate and discover objects of the past… even if the public perception of this adventurous "excavation" process seems to involve more dodging pitfalls, avoiding snakes, and finding shiny artifacts on boobytrapped display pedestals than painstakingly brushing dirt off excavated sherds of pottery while withstanding whatever harsh elemental conditions of the dig site.[70] Kosugi is only complete in his identity of archaeologist if he *finds* something.

Kosugi finds more than one thing on his ventures through the labyrinthine passages of La Mulana, everything from treasure chests *(figure 4)* to familiar icons of ancient history. While a real archaeologist might only discover one major find in a lifetime, Kosugi's journey discovers one major find after another, as if he were methodically working his way through an ancient art history textbook. These include Mesoamerican megalith Olmec heads, an Egyptian pyramid, and murals of Indian deities *(figures 12-15)*. And among these many finds, one looms especially (and literally) tall: a monumental half-clothed statue that greets the player/Kosugi within a sub-area of La Mulana called "The Tower of the Goddess."[71] She looks strikingly like a half-clothed Aphrodite statue,[72] combined with traces of the Alexander the Great with Spear statue

---

[69] Card, 103, 107-8.

[70] Ibid., 108.

[71] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

[72] The *Venus de Milo* is one of the many types of Aphrodite statues that were made and copied in the Hellenistic and Roman world after Praxiteles created his *Aphrodite of Knidos* in the 4th century BCE. While the *Aphrodite of Knidos* is one of the most well-known Aphrodite statues, it is not half-clothed, like the statue in *La Mulana*. A closer typological Aphrodite is *Aphrodite of Thespiae* also by Praxiteles. It is due in part to Aphrodites like these that there was such a push in France to attribute the *Venus de Milo* to Praxiteles. Another example is the *Venus Capua* as a Roman copy of this earlier Hellenistic type. For more information and previous bibliography about the Hellenistic half-clothed Aphrodite types, see Rachel Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture: the Allure of the Classical* (New York: Cambridge

type *(figures 16-19)*, which could be dated to the Hellenistic period of Greek art (c. 323-31 BCE).[73]

This statue requires its own investigation, and one that ultimately has implications for Kosugi and the presented role of adventuring archaeologist as widely known fictional adventurous archaeologist (Indiana Jones) served as a guiding light to better understand the sedimentation compressed into the visual semiotic of adventurewear archaeologist costume, a widely known artwork within scholarship and popular culture can light our way here. It is one of the most famous of half-clothed Aphrodites: the *Venus de Milo (figure 16)*.[74]

The Discovery of the Venus de Milo

Chronologically, the *Venus de Milo's* origin—as far as we can tell—is the small Cycladic island of Melos, within the Aegean Sea *(figure 20)*. Rachel Kousser's work is the most useful here for setting the stage of origin for the *Venus de Milo*. Kousser's work

University Press, 2008), 12-14, 17-44; Andrew Stewart, *Art in the Hellenistic World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 170-85. For the *Aphrodite of Knidos*, see Kristen Seaman, "Retrieving the Original Aphrodite of Knidos," in *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche* Ser 9. Vol. 15 (2004), 531-94; Antonio Corso, *The Art of Praxiteles II: The Mature Years* (Rome: L'ERMA de Bretschneider, 2007), 9-186.

[73] An example of the Alexander with Spear type is *Nelidow Alexander* after an original by Lyssipus (c. 330 BCE). Andrew Stewart, in fact, argues that the *Nelidow Alexander* is a blending of the *Aphrodite of Knidos* with representations of Alexander the Great. Related to this type of Alexander with Spear is the *Alexander Thunderbolt-Bearer* (c. 330 BCE), preserved in a copy on an engraved Hellenistic red cornelian gemstone signed by Neisos. For information and previous bibliography about the Alexander with Spear type, see J. J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 22-23, 19-58; Andrew Stewart, *Art in the Hellenistic World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 10, 44-54. For Alexander's portraits, see Andrew Stewart, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1993).

[74] Rachel Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture: the Allure of the Classical* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 28-34.

includes an account of the statue's discovery and some assumptions in previous scholarship, in particular the 1890s hypothesis by Saloman Reinach that the statue and the numerous pieces found along with it came from a lime kiln. Reinach goes on to posit that the pieces are unrelated.[75] Adolf Furtwängler takes issue with this and argues instead for the pieces coming from the same statue.[76] Kousser then documents her own material examination of the pieces and cautiously agrees with Furtwängler on the basis of similarity between the marble of the pieces.[77]

Kousser's article then attempts to reconstruct the statue's original setting *(figures 21-22)*. She dates it to c. 150-50 BCE, and she argues that it was a didactic and identity-reinforcing artwork that stood within a local Hellenistic gymnasium on Melos. Gymnasiums were educational centers, cultural centers, and, as Kousser argues, places "to define the essential components of Greek identity."[78] Kousser argues that gymnasium spaces fostered their own reception and interpretation of the past, and that we can recover traces of how a Hellenistic community such as the one on Melos interacted with the Classical past through exploring the original context of the *Venus de Milo*.

It is unknown what happened between this moment in history and March 1820, when the statue was dug up by a Greek farmer. The story of how the *Venus de Milo* reemerged has become a kind of myth in of itself: the same theme plays out, though with

---

[75] Salomon Reinach, "LA VÉNUS DE MILO," in *Gazette Des Beaux-arts 32, no. 3* (1890), 380-84.

[76] Adolf Furtwängler, *Masterpieces of Greek Scuplture,* trans. E. Sellars (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 367-78.

[77] Rachel Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Vénus de Milo and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005), 234-35.

[78] Ibid., 228.

variations of the details and the agency of different people involved, depending on the source. In his book *Disarmed! The Story of the Venus de Milo*, Gregory Curtis highly dramatizes the intrigue of French discovery.[79] Olivier Voutier, a French naval officer stationed on a ship that had briefly paused at Melos, one day went out looking for artifacts—according to Curtis, Voutier fancied himself an amateur archaeologist, a statement that points back to our traced genealogy of the public perception of archaeologists, in this case specifically as treasure-hunters making discoveries in exotic locations.[80] During his exploration, he came across a farmer who had uncovered the top half of what we know today as the *Venus de Milo*.[81]

Voutier contacted the vice-consul of France on the island, Louis Brest, though Brest was reticent to purchase the statue on account of not knowing whether he would be reimbursed. However, Brest showed the statue (kept in the farmer's cowshed and guarded by his wool-spinning mother, Curtis specifies) to later visiting botanist Jules Dumont d'Urville. D'Urville then carried news of an extraordinary statue to Constantinople/Istanbul, where he met with diplomatic assistant Marie-Louis-Jean-André-Charles Demartin du Tirac, compte de Marcellus. Demartin du Tirac managed to get permission from Charles Francois de Riffardeau, marquis de Riviere, his superior and France's appointed diplomat within the Turkish Ottoman capital, to go to Melos and try to buy the statue. Demartin du Tirac ultimately succeeded in negotiating and purchasing the *Venus*, and in the nick of time, so the story goes—she sat upon a ship to be sent to the

[79] Gregory Curtis, "From Melos to Paris," in *Disarmed: The Story of the Venus de Milo* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 3-36. Curtis' story-telling writing takes some liberties in portraying the emotional psyches of the individuals involved in the story, but the book's bibliography is thorough and impressive.

[80] Reinhard, 72.

[81] Curtis, 3-36.

Ottomans during all the negotiations, and it was only unfavorable weather that prevented the ship from departing. Once the French purchase was made, however, the statue was retrieved and moved to Demartin du Tirac's ship, secured, stowed, and then taken back to France by way of Istanbul. De Riviere gifted it to Louis XVIII, who in turn gave it to the Louvre.

It is important to note that at this moment in history, the political forces that constitute the contextual background of the *Venus de Milo's* re-discovery are especially relevant to the discussion. To start, Melos was technically under the control of the Ottoman Turks; however, the Greek Revolution would begin in less than a year. Meanwhile, France as a country was coalescing after surviving several revolutions and upheavals. Louis XVIII, last of the Bourbon Dynasty, sat on the throne as a constitutional monarch.[82] The English Grand Tour, that is, the tradition of young English aristocratic men traveling from England down to Italy and occasionally into Greece as a part of their education had been long established, as had been a brisk trade in antiquities that always seemed to find their way back with returning travelers. English Lord Elgin had finished "removing" friezes from the Parthenon in 1812, and had sold them to Britain in 1816, only four years prior to this moment of the *Venus de Milo's* discovery.[83]

To add to this, one of the most important factors involved within this historical moment was Johann Joachim Winckelmann's book *History of Ancient Art*, published in

[82] Ibid.

[83] Amy C. Smith, "Winckelmann, Greek Masterpieces, and Architectural Sculpture: Prolegomena to a History of Classical Archeology in Museums," in *Diversity of Classical Archeology*, eds., Achim Lichtenberger and Rubina Raja (Turnhout, Belguim: Brepols, 2017), 23-46.

1764.[84] This book is commonly looked to as one of the birth moments of art history as an intellectual discipline.[85] It in particular evangelized Classical Greek art as an exemplar of beauty and the ideal of artistic creation.[86] Though riddled with errors, this Enlightenment-era treatment of art and its rhetoric of Greek political liberty had made its way deep into European psyches by the early nineteenth century.[87] Winckelmann's writing about Greek democracy, in fact, was one of the intellectual influences within the recent French revolutions.[88]

Another rapidly evolving cultural institution at this time was the museum. Collectors of art like Lord Elgin had been around long before, [89] but it is in this moment that museums are shifting from odd assortments of bequeathed collections, cabinets of wonder, and hobby research to containers of designated cultural objects in turn tied to national identity.[90] The Louvre itself had been established as a public museum during France's turbulent first revolution and had soon become the receiver of artworks "selected" as spoils of war from numerous Napoleonic imperialist victories. However,

---

[84] Johann Joachim Winckelmann, and Alex Potts, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, trans. Harry Mallgrave (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2006), 1.

[85] Alex Potts. *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 15; Daniel Orrells, "Burying and Excavating Winckelmann's History of Art," in *Classical Receptions Journal 3*, no. 2 (2011), 166-88.

[86] Potts, 4.

[87] Ibid., 16.

[88] "Winckelmann's belief that Greek art flourished because of the political freedom in classical times became almost a mantra for orators during the French Revolution." Curtis, 49.

[89] Smith, Amy C., 33.

[90] For more information on museums as they were coming into existence in this period, see *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in the 18th- and early-19th-century Europe*, ed. Carole Paul (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012).

France had but recently been forced to return an enormous amount of these art objects as part of their war reparations. In particular, the country was still in mourning for the loss of the *Apollo Belvedere (figure 23)*,[91] a statue that Winckelmann had waxed eloquent about as the epitome of classical sculpture. [92] Napoleon Bonaparte had brought the statue from Italy to Paris in 1796, but France had been made to return it to the Vatican in 1815. France had also had to return the *Venus de Medici (figure 24)*[93] to the Italians.[94]

What does France's acquisition and relinquishment of art pieces like this mean in relation to the *Venus de Milo*? It shows that Greek statuary, in no small part due to Winckelmann's writing and the imperialist aspirations of many European countries, had become a site of political power. Having Classical Greek objects within one's country—and not just that, but within one's country's national museum, a privileged place of cultural sanctity hard at work establishing its own legitimacy—translated into cultural and political currency for the country in question.[95] In other words: whoever possessed artifacts of the idealized past, and in the most pieces (or the most prestigious pieces, as defined by antiquarians and art historians such as Winckelmann), had the most power.

---

[91] For more information and previous bibliography about the *Apollo Belvedere*, see H. H. Brummer, *The Statue Court in the Vatican Belvedere* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell,1970), 44-71; Francis Haskell and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 148-51; Mary Beard and John Henderson, *Classical Art: From Greece to Rome* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001), 106-13.

[92] Potts, 5.

[93] For more information and previous bibliography about the *Venus de Medici*, see Francis Haskell and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 325-28; Mary Beard and John Henderson, *Classical Art: From Greece to Rome* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001), 116-20.

[94] Curtis, 3-36.

[95] Ibid.; Smith, Amy C., 28.

France had just lost several prestigious pieces, much like it had lost territory.[96] If a brand "new" Greek statue were to be discovered—one that would be able to compete with and even eclipse the aesthetic ideal of the *Apollo Belvedere* or the *Venus de Medici*—France would stand to gain far more than a mere few tons of sculpted marble in the acquisition.

Curtis' book continues from the moment of discovery to another no-less dramatically charged nexus: the academic-tinged political intrigue within the Louvre concerning attribution and restoration. At one point, the statue had a partially legible base, upon which reads "[?]andros son of [M]enides of [Ant]ioch-on-the-Maeander made [it]" *(figure 25)*. This implies that the statue is Hellenistic, and certainly not a work of a well-known Greek sculptor from the Classical period (c. 479-323 BCE) such as Praxiteles.[97] This base has been lost. Curtis' story, as do many other accounts, more than implies that it was either deliberately destroyed upon its arrival at the Louvre, or otherwise hidden. Louvre curator Louis Nicolas Philippe Auguste de Forbin is assumed to be the person who effected the disappearance in order to preserve Classical-era origin narrative of the statue. A Classical Greek statue would be a priceless treasure for France; a mistaken statue of a later era such as the Hellenistic period would be a national embarrassment.[98]

---

[96] Curtis, 3-36.

[97] See Adolf Futwängler, *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture*, trans. E. Sellars (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1895), 369; Francis Landry and N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 330.

[98] "if the statue was anything but a product of the classical age in Greece than its value would presumably fall... worse, it could not stand with the Elgin marbles in England or the Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican as the great prize whose glory animated, even sanctified, the national identity." Curtis, 71.

Interestingly, while the practice of the 19th-century Louvre was to restore statues such as this—regardless of whether the restoration was accurate or not— armchair scholar Antoine- Chrysostome Quatremere de Quincy recommended not restoring it. Quatremere had been specially picked by Forbin to publish conclusions on the *Venus de Milo* as a part of the intensely orchestrated publicity surrounding the statue's arrival to France. Part of Quatremere's argument rested on his own scholarly opinion that the statue originally had been standing next to a statue of Mars, and that without some part of that Mars statue, there was no way the *Venus* could in turn be restored *(figure 26)*.[99]

But the base is not the only piece of the *Venus* that has gone missing. While perhaps obvious, let us be explicit about the missing statue's arms. While some accounts reference two arms discovered and shipped to France along with the rest of the statue, others reference three arms. Currently, the Louvre website claims that "[t]he arms were never found."[100] Kousser only notes that a hand and a fragment of an arm were found with the statue.[101] Kousser, Fürtwangler, Reinach, and many other scholars have weighed in on this puzzle, attempting to solve it—and recall, one of the prevalent public perceptions of archaeologists is that they are puzzle-solvers, "detectives of the past."[102] The discovery of the *Venus de Milo* has effectively satisfied all of Holtorf's four public

[99] Curtis, 80-88, 149-52, 189-90.

[100] While a museum's website is not a source of scholarship, this quotation is included to show the Louvre's narrative regarding the *Venus de Milo's* arms. "*Aphrodite*, known as the "*Venus de Milo*," Louvre, accessed Feb 23, 2021, https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/aphrodite-known-venus-de-milo.

[101] Kousser, 229-36.

[102] Reinhard, 72.

perceptions of archaeology: treasure-hunting, exotic location discoveries, solving the past's puzzles, and imagining the past alongside archaeological practice.[103]

The Reception of the Venus de Milo *in Modern and Contemporary Visual Culture*

The *Venus de Milo*, in no small part due to the Classical-Greek origin propaganda issued by the Louvre, Forbin, and Quatremere, grew to an enormous presence within art from this moment forward—and a presence that has taken on a self-conscious complexity as artists began interrogating the idea of a Greek classical ideal within the ever-more-quickly evolving practice of art. In particular, Avant-Garde artists such as Salvador Dali began using the *Venus de Milo* as a part of their surrealist and dadaist work. Stephanie D'Alessandro offers a succinct article on the Art Institute of Chicago's acquisition of Salvador Dalí's *Venus de Milo with Drawers* (1936), for example, showcasing Dalí's experiments with psychoanalysis and art *(figure 27)*.[104] And Elizabeth Prettejohn notes that "...the Surrealists were fascinated both by the statue's mutilation and by its status as a paradigm of the classical ideal, on which artists such as Magritte and Dalí could draw in paradoxical subversion of the modernist mainstream."[105]

---

[103] Holtorf, 2005, 44.

[104] "The only difference between immortal Greece and contemporary times is Sigmund Freud, who discovered that the human body, purely platonic in the Greek epoch, is nowadays full of secret drawers that only psychoanalysis is capable to open." Salvador Dalí, quoted in Stephanie D'Alessandro, "Venus de Milo with Drawers," in *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 32 No. 1, Notable Acquisitions at the Art Institute of Chicago (2006), 64.

[105] J. P. Cuzin, J.R. Gaborit, et al., *D'apres l'antique*, exhibition catalog (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2000), 460-7; Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Reception and Ancient Art: The Case of the Venus de Milo," in *Classics and the Uses of Reception,* eds. Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publications, 2006), 241.

The *Venus de Milo* persists within artistic discourse well into contemporary art as Jane Ursula Harris has demonstrated. It is now a recognizable silhouette and a compressed, immediately readable semiotic of classical Western art, due to its citation and re-citation within artist discourse. Harris collects several citations of the statue. For example, Jillian Murray, a performance artist, performed a piece (*H.I.L.M.D.A.*, 2011; *figure 28)* in which she presents herself painted marble-white as the *Venus*, and rips one arm off and then chews the other one off. Irish artist Mary Duffy, born without arms, has also performed a piece *(Cutting the Ties that Bind*, 1987; *figure 29)* taking on the look of the *Venus de Milo*, questioning ideals of beauty and body image. In some ways, "citing" the *Venus de Milo* as a famous artist has become familiar refrain: Kusama Yayoi *(Statue of Venus Obliterated by Infinity*, 1998; *figure 30)*, Andres Cerrano *(Female Bust*, 1988; *figure 31)*, and Jim Dine *(Looking toward the Avenue*, 1989; *figure 32)* have all offered their versions, identified by their brand-like artistic style. Throughout all this, the *Venus de Milo* and her iconic armless form is being reached for more and more to interrogate ideas of feminine, ideas of beauty, ideas of disability, and the body within art.[106]

---

[106] Jane Ursula Harris, "The Role of the Copy," in *The Believer*, August 15th, 2016, https://believermag.com/logger/2016-08-15-the-role-of-the-copy-2/. It is explained that this article is one of a series of "excerpts from Jane Ursula Harris' forthcoming book, *After: The Role of the Copy in Modern and Contemporary Art."* Searching for the book itself has yielded no results; it is uncertain whether this book is still forthcoming. After an extensive search, no previous scholarship on *H.I.L.M.D.A* could be found. For information and previous bibliography about *Cutting the Ties that Bind* (1987), see Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Reception and Ancient Art: The Case of the Venus de Milo" in *Classics and the Uses of Reception,* eds. Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publications, 2006), 227-49; Elizabeth Grubgeld, "New Media, New Lives: Self-Publication, Blogging, Performance Art," in *Disability and Life Writing in Post-Independence Ireland* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 139-66. For information and previous bibliography about Kusama Yayoi's work, see Kristine C. Kuramitsu, "Yayoi Kasuma's Body of Art," in *Decomposition: Post-Disciplinary Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2000), 62-78; Pam Meecham, "Contemporary Displays of Modern Art," in *A Companion to Modern Art,* ed. Dana Arnold (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2018), 145-66. For information and previous bibliography about Andres Serrano's work, see Amelia Arenas, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Bell Hooks, *Andres Serrano: Body and Soul* (Tokyo: Takarajima, 1995). For information and previous bibliography about *Looking toward the Avenue* (1989), see Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Reception and Ancient Art: The Case

But the *Venus de Milo's* presence extends beyond the museum pedestal, the installation piece, or the video performance. As Francesca Bonazzoli has demonstrated, its cultural presence grew in no small part thanks to the art practices of advertisement, graphic design, and mass-produced product design in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.[107] Bonazzoli collects several examples, but there are two of note. First, a pun-filled print advertisements for a "hands free" speaker phone from 1963 sold as a twentieth-century art print *(figure 33).* Second, she points to a more subtle but striking *Venus de Milo* citation: the statue's armless silhouette has been cleverly evoked through the careful costuming of women with long dark gloves in a movie poster for *Blonde Venus* in 1932 *(figure 34)*.[108] Matthew Gumpert also points to twentieth-century "antique" *Venus de Milo* salt and pepper shakers *(figure 35)* as an example of its mass-produced reproduction,[109] which are still sold via twenty-first century commercial internet listings. In the course of my own research, I discovered that the *Venus de Milo* has been paired not infrequently with Michelangelo's *David.* For instance, each has been featured as one half of a set of twenty-first-century handmade earrings sold online *(figure 36)*. It is a curious pair of time-crossed and theologically dissonant statues, united only by their presence as statues of highly-classicized Art-Capital-A—even though one may have come from c. 150-50 BCE and one originated in 1504 CE. From my own observation,

---

of the Venus de Milo" in *Classics and the Uses of Reception,* eds. Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publications, 2006), 227-49.

[107] Francesca Bonazzoli, *From Mona Lisa to Marge: How the World's Greatest Artworks Entered Popular Culture* (New York: Prestel, 2014), 30-33.

[108] Ibid., 32.

[109] Gumpert, 169, 171.

there is also Disney's animated film, *Hercules* (1997). During the film, a sequence shows the *Venus de Milo* with arms still intact in the middle of a fountain. Hercules then inadvertently breaks off her arms with a skipped stone *(figure 37)*.[110]

However, it is Matthew Gumpert who synthesizes many of these disparate variants of the *Venus de Milo* into a theory of reproduction and reiteration across art and material culture. Kitsch has had many definitions, but one Gumpert uses is the aesthetic species of falsehood, or the imitation. Another is offered via the infamous Modern art critic Clement Greenburg: "ersatz culture, the debased simulacrum of genuine culture."[111] Gumpert's work seems to start modestly, first outlining the assumed existence of a binary knowledge structure concerning art objects. There is first the original, which is true culture, authentic and genuine. Then there is the copy, which is a reproduction, inauthentic, and false. He then deconstructs this binary, using the *Venus de Milo* as his primary case study. Among many things, for Ancient Kitsch he argues: "The Hellenistic era is an Age of Kitsch par excellence. Nostalgia for the past; new technologies of reproduction; the commercialization of a 'classical canon.'" Gumpert is not arguing that the Hellenistic Greeks had a concept of kitsch. Rather, he is focused on dismantling as much as possible the illusion of original and copy within our contemporary thinking.

---

[110] For information and previous bibliography on *Disney's Hercules* as a depiction of Ancient Greece and Rome in film, see Lisa Maurice, "Greece and Rome on the Comic Screen," in *A Companion to Ancient Greece and Rome on Screen*, ed. Wiley Pomeroy (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017), 209-32; Alastair J. L. Blanshard, "High Art and Low Art Expectations" in *A Companion to Ancient Greece and Rome on Screen*, ed. Wiley Pomeroy (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017), 429-47; Martin Lindner, "Mythology for the Young at Heart," in *A Companion to Ancient Greece and Rome on Screen*, ed. Wiley Pomeroy (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017), 515-34.

[111] Clement Greenburg, "The Avant-Grade and Kitsch," in *Partisan Review* 6 (Fall 1939), 34-49.

Gumpert also argues that the institution of the museum is a kitsch factory, and that it sets up a specific encounter with subject and authentic object. He emphasizes, however, that this encounter is not just set up, but is also contained and thereby influencing all the semiotics rippling out from it. The kitsch copy that is characterized dismissively as false and debased implies a kind of insult to the original, and yet, the copy only exists due to the idolization *of* the original. Further, an original definitionally tends to be singular. A copy, meanwhile, is multiple, and like in the case of the *Venus de Milo's* modern and contemporary variations, can grow to legion-like proportions.[112] Gumpert ultimately argues for a friction-filled ecosystem characterized by idolatry—that is, the adulation of the object deemed the original— and iconoclasm, the desecration of the icon—into a "conflict and collaboration... [that] is constitutive of all art."[113]

I would like to argue that this conflict and collaboration of reproduction of the classical past extends into video games as well.

The Reception of the Venus de Milo *in La Mulana*

Video games, a new digital medium, provide a virtual space of imagining the past wherein immaterial copies and narrative semiotics of classical past proliferate. One of the most technically and graphically impressive recent games is the Greek mythology installment of the Assassin's Creed Franchise, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* (2018, Ubisoft),

[112] Gumpert, 157-58, 164.

[113] Ibid. See 162-64 for Gumpert's use of Mike Tyson encountering the *Venus de Milo* for context for how he is applying the concepts of idolatry and iconoclasm.

taking place in the year 431 BCE during the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta *(figure 38)*. However, this high-fidelity graphics style is not where classical antiquity got its start in video games. In fact, antiquity often appears in games the same way it has appeared haphazardly in our lives—in artifactual fragments, or in architectural ruins. Sierra Online's *King's Quest* games (1980-2018), by Roberta Williams, offers random screens of colonnaded pools, mythical minotaurs, or classical-form statues *(figure 39)*. Nintendo Entertainment System games like *Battle of Olympus* (1989) and *Kid Icarus* (1987) showcase the semiotic power of columns, or even their fragments *(figures 40-41)*. And of course, Indiana Jones was off looking for artifacts in simple pixel form since the days of Atari and first-generation home computers in the 1980s *(figure 42)*.[114]

Between these two temporal moments of video game technology—early pixel graphics and more recent high-definition modeling—all manner of games involving classical antiquity have put in appearances. This is where *La Mulana* can be found: nestled securely within the 21st century, but with its own classical pixelated antiquity of videogame history that it nostalgically referenced via its 'retro' graphics and sound *(figures 6-7)*.[115] Recall too that *La Mulana* references the visual semiotics of Egypt, Mesoamerica, India, Babylon, and many more ancient cultures and mythologies in addition to those of classical Greek antiquity *(figures 12-15)*. Through data visualization research, this author graphically represented online game guide database information and

[114] For more information on this, see Andrew Reinhard *Archaeogaming: an Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2018); Daniel García-Raso, "Watching Video Games. Playing with Archaeology and Prehistory: Retrospectives and Perspectives into the Image that Video Games Spread about a Scientific Discipline and the Humankind Past," in *Online Journal in Public Archaeology*, Vol. 1 (2011), 73-92.

[115] Camper, 2009b, 169-95.

discovered no fewer than thirty-three unique countries' cultural mythologies are in some way cited within *La Mulana*. This game offers up a smorgasbord of antiquity, all loosely united within a mystical archaeological fantasy narrative. The representation of the *Venus de Milo (figures 17 and 43)* is only one sema within an ensemble of ancient art history references, each with its own contextual background with complexity like that we have traced here. However, all are encountered through Kosugi the adventuring archaeologist, who is in turn guided/controlled by a twenty-first century player. A player who, because of all the excavated layers of media and culture references we have looked at in this chapter, is likely to be in some way familiar with the narrative architecture.[116]

Kosugi and the representation of the *Venus de Milo* share a commonality as aesthetically evoked semiotic descendants (one of archaeologist, the other of classical Greek statuary): discovering subject and discovered object. This variant of the *Venus de Milo* within *La Mulana* reinforces and legitimizes the mythos of the adventuring archaeologist as one who discovers something which is instantly recognizable as a statue of classical antiquity, and therefore worthy of discovery. This encounter does not occur within the mediation of a museum which authenticates it as "original." Instead, it occurs outside the museum, in the ruins of La Mulana. There are several pieces influencing the player's reception of the representation of the *Venus de Milo* in *La Mulana.* First, there are the artistic and commercial reproductions, and the ubiquity of the *Venus de Milo* in popular culture. Second, the *Venus de Milo's* own history helped to establish archaeology as adventurous. Third, when we pair that ubiquity and the statue's history, the *Venus de*

[116] Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," in *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game,* Wardrip-Fruin, Noah, and Pat Harrigan, Pat, eds. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004). Online version used.

Milo variant in *La Mulana* immediately reads as a classical statue. All these pieces create a dramatic moment. A moment where a pixelated copy of the *Venus de Milo* within a video game represents original and authentic for the player. This reception occurs because the player discovers the statue in the context of the ruins of La Mulana. It, as Indiana Jones says, belongs in a museum.[117] There is more to excavate, but only if we move our focus from nominals (objects) to verbals (actions): the game-mediated action of *discovery* itself.

[117] Card, 170.

CHAPTER V

THE DISCOVERY

A familiar relationship within contemporary art historical discourse is that of the subject and the object—usually assumed to be the viewing subject of an artwork, and the artwork object. This is also where reception studies has found its footing, legitimizing the viewing subject's experience as just that—subjective. Part of what I wish to add to this paradigm is that receiving process itself, operating between subject (player) and object (the *Venus de Milo* variant) in *La Mulana.* Specifically, I will investigate how the discovering subject of the adventuring archaeologist controlled by the player receives the discovered object of the variant of the *Venus de Milo.* Though the avatar is controlled by the player, this reception is achieved through the procedural rhetoric of the game mechanics which forces the player to perform the act of adventurous archaeology—the act of discovery. I specifically focus on this as a process as a progressive-tense verb that serves as action and change-of-state taking place, a process that establishes connection between subject and object via game mechanics.

The videogame medium provides an especially clear opportunity to look at "reception" modified into the verbal "receiving," specifically because of its procedural and performative characteristics. These characteristics are linked in turn via concepts of narrative, mechanics, representation, and theater. We have looked in Chapter 3 at performance in relation to video games and this project. Now, let us fill in details concerning procedurality and the videogame studies concept of procedural rhetoric.

"In a procedural medium meaning is communicated through participation in the experience," John Ferrara writes.[118] Michael Mateas and Andrew Stern add that "The *procedural…* refers to the machinic nature of computers, that they embody complex causal processes, and in fact can be made to embody *any arbitrary* process (emphasis in original)."[119] Procedurality has been of central importance to game studies, as regardless of the complex debate concerning the definition of "games," rules and the building of an interactive space via these rules remains a commonality.[120] Procedurality has strong roots within computer studies, as demonstrated by Janet Murray's work. Murray argues that computers and the narrative spaces they offer—digital environments—are characterized by being four things: procedural, participatory, spatial, and encyclopedic.[121] As she discusses procedurality, she relies heavily on examples from video games, such as the 1980 text-based computer game *Zork*. In other words, video games offer some of the most salient examples of procedurality within new media because of how central this quality is to their medium.

---

[118] John Ferrara, "Games for Persuasion: Argumentation, Procedurality, and the Lie of Gamification," in *Games and Culture*, Vol. 8 (4) (2013), 289-304.

[119] Michael Mateas, and Andrew Stern, "Writing *Façade*: A Case Study in Procedural Authorship," in *Second Person: Role-Playing and Story in Games and Playable Media,* eds. N. Wardrip-Fruin & Pat Harrigan (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2010), 183. For a short but thorough discussion of the evolution of the term *procedurality* as it relates to game studies, see Eric Kalten, "Procedurality," in *Debugging Game History: A Critical Lexicon,* eds. H. Lowood & Raiford Guins (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: The MIT Press, 2016).

[120] For an excellent overview of the historical evolution of the debate concerning game definition as well as an introduction to the landscape of game studies in general, see Simon Egenfeldt-Nielson et al. *Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction, 4th ed*. (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[121] Janet Murray, "From Additive to Expressive Form: Beyond 'Multimedia,'" in *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 87.

This leads to Ian Bogost, one of the pioneering videogame scholars, and his well-known work on what he calls the "procedural rhetoric" of video games.[122] He argues that video games, being procedural, are a medium offering the unique capacity to be persuasive and to argue via systems of rules.

For a more nuts-and-bolts approach to procedurality, Mateas and Stern (both game designers and scholars) offer an extensive breakdown of their interactive drama game *Façade*.[123] They walk the reader through the complex process of building an interactive narrative videogame, moving from first considering social behavior to then constructing the narrative to then shifting into coding. They speak specifically about how procedurality is a process of granularization, breaking down complex system mechanics into programmable steps. This making visible of the "engine underneath" what players see and the choices they have within games shines a much-needed spotlight on how games have more moving parts than just their story, just their aesthetics, or just their mechanics. It is also analogous to an art historical study which examines not just what is represented and seen within a work of art, but also how the piece was made and what import the materials, artist skill, setting, and so forth have on the resulting art object. To say that the restraints and capabilities of programming—the creation of machine-

---

[122] Ian Bogost, "The Rhetoric of Video Games," in *The Ecology of Games: Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning*, ed. Katie Salen (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 117-140. Bogost admittedly minimizes the emphasis on the politics inherent in procedural rhetoric; he treats the term as a tool with which to argue, and maintains a strange kind of neutrality despite the fact that, like any number of formats that seem to imply neutrality, there are actually power dynamics embedded within them. I am specifically thinking here of J. B. Harley's work pointing out the power dynamics within the seemingly neutral, factual practice of cartography. See his chapter "Maps, Knowledge, and Power" in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, ed. Paul Laxton (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 52-81. See also Ian Bogost's flagship work *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007).

[123] Mateas and Stern, 183- 207.

executed rules, the language of procedurality—influence the final product that a videogame is would be a deep understatement.

What does procedurality have to do with performance? In addition to Murray's work linking the two, there is also Brenda Laurel's work. Laurel makes a case that looking at digital spaces as theatrical spaces—and more than that, at their mechanics and interactions specifically as theatrical—offers a more accurate and useful approach than the basic assumptions of the human directly interacting with a machine through the thin "mediating" layer of whatever the offered interface might be.[124] Laurel writes as she sets up why she believes theatre is such a useful metaphor with which to explore computer media that "confusion over the nature of human-computer activities can be alleviated by thinking about it in terms of theatre, where the special relationship between representation and reality is already comfortably established, not only in theoretical terms but also in the way that people design and experience theatrical works."[125] Video games, according to Laurel, are especially good at revealing the theatrical aspects of digital spaces.

One further addition to this paradigm of procedure and performance: J. L. Austin and his earnest research into the performativity of words.[126] Austin's work, while inconclusive and at times obscured by changing terminology, could be taken as his efforts to map out the rules— the procedurality—of words as they relate to performance. Austin's initial premise is to note that in certain circumstances, and in certain contexts,

---

[124] Brenda Laurel, *Computers as Theatre (*Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co, 1993).

[125] Ibid., 31-32.

[126] Austin, J. L., *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).

words seem to have power and capability that they do not necessarily have in other situations.[127] His trying to isolate the socio-linguistic rules that govern this performativity may not have been a resounding success, but neither was it a failure, either: he drew especial attention to the very presence of procedurality within our use of words.[128] Others have built upon his work, modified it, or argued with it. This linguistic discourse, however, is about figuring out how the procedure of performance with words (and more, as the discourse has spread to other disciplines) works. Darshana Jayemanne's work (brought forward in Chapter 3) is an attempt to apply Austin's theories to video games, which is the foundation of why she argues that this procedural medium can specifically be characterized as performative.[129]

While it is hopefully clear at this point that video games sit within a nexus of procedurality and performance, I hesitate to attempt a minute application of Austin's theorized system of rules. Rather, without needing to define every twist and turn of it, I wish to draw out the fact that there is always *a* rule system when it comes to video games and when it comes to performance. The variance and potentiality of such rule systems is enormous, but we can assume some kind of procedural system is in place.

Some final (and admittedly formally logical) clarifications before moving on. 1.) All games are procedural. 2.) Not all games are video games. 3.) However, because video games are games, they are procedural. 4.) Not all computer programs are video games. 5.) But all video games are computer programs. 6.) From all these statements, video

---

[127] Austin, 76-82.

[128] Ibid., 14-24.

[129] Darshana Jayemanne, *Performativity in Art, Literature, and Video Games* (London: Palgrave Macmillan; Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017), 2.

games are A.) Procedural and B.) Programmed. Finally, video games are C.) theatrical spaces. If we take video games as these things, we can then more easily see them as spaces of action—stages upon which action takes place between actors, and reception of the visible and acted-out action takes place.

In previous chapters, we have looked at Kosugi's appearance, as well as the representation of the *Venus de Milo* thus far. Now, how are they put in a relationship with each other? It is noteworthy first and foremost that Kosugi—and the player— do not first lay eyes upon the statue within the context of a museum. Within *La Mulana*, the player instead "comes across" this statue within a sprawling labyrinth of ancient ruins. The object is easily assumed as *in situ* due in part to there being no evidence that the statue once existed elsewhere in the portrayed virtual space.[130] Another part of this evidence returns to assumptions related to the adventurous archaeologist: the assumption that this foreign space narratively characterized as ancient ruins, being experienced by the player for the first time, *must* be that statue's origin point.

Henry Jenkins' argument that video game environments serve as narrative architecture—spaces whose choice of construction, akin to set dressing on a stage contribute directly to advancing the narrative within the game. He proposes we "examin[e] games less as stories than as spaces ripe with narrative possibility."[131] Jenkins argues for a wider definition of narrative, one that reaches beyond a literature text or a theatrical script. A player interacting with objects and viewing the environment of a game

[130] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

[131] Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," in *First Person: New Media Performance, and Game,* eds., Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004). Article accessed online, http://web.mit.edu/~21fms/People/henry3/games&narrative.html.

also serves to advance narrative—a phenomenon about sculpting space that art and architectural historians have long been studying.

Brett Camper's work on *La Mulana* notes that, whereas older games' backgrounds were not usually interactive (or what was of the background was very clearly highlighted in contrast to the rest of the environment in order to orient players), *La Mulana* went counter to that tradition and instead made its backgrounds *extraordinarily* interactive.[132] More than this, the game company Nigoro ties this interactivity to the procedure of "doing archaeology" by evoking the "detective of ancient riddles" popular idea about adventuring archaeologists:

> La Mulana's protagonist is Dr. Lemeza Kosugi. He is an archaeologist. His very occupation and business is that of searching through the ruins. Try to approach the game as if you too were an archaeologist: don't just focus on hints and the paleograph tablets. Hints are also hidden within the ruins environment visible on-screen. If you don't understand things like the murals or stone statues you've seen, perhaps you have noticed similar murals elsewhere? You might not be able to figure the solution of the riddle purely based on these mural or landscape clues, but reasoning that there might be a connection based on similarity is the idea."[133]

The very fact that this game was programmed to involve hunting carefully through its myriad environments and to find an ever-increasing number of unique structures, objects, items, and riddles with which to interact further emphasizes this game's procedural rhetoric of adventuring archaeologist. As John Ferarra so eloquently puts it: "Games are

---

[132] Camper, 2009b, 169-195.

[133] 「**LA-MULANA** の主人公はルエミーザ・小杉博士。考古 学者だ。遺跡を調べることが職業の主人公なのだ。遊ぶ 側も考古学者になったつもりで挑んでみると、ヒントは 古文書などの文章だけではないことがわかる。例えば遺跡画面にもヒントは隠されている。遺跡には 何を意味しているかわからない壁画や石像が並んでい るが、似たような壁画がいくつかあることに気づいた だろうか?壁画や風景からだけでは仕掛けの解き方まではわからないが、似たような壁画があるものは何かしら関連があるのでは?と推理するわけだ。」Naramura Takumi, "Column No. 1: The Mental Attitude of Ruins Exploration," in *La Mulana Official Guidebook (Fundamental Knowledge Volume)* (Asterizm: Japan, 2011), 9. Translated by author.

arguments. Play is evidence."[134] In every action a player takes to explore the environment, discover hidden descriptive text, or use an item in attempt to solve an environmental puzzle, they are narratively presented with evidence to support the persuasive argument that they are "doing" adventurous archaeology.

This idea of discovery via exploration is at the core of *La Mulana's* procedures reinforcing its rhetoric, and within the game one of the most striking examples of that is the discovery of the representation of the *Venus de Milo* we have been examining. When Kosugi first enters the Tower of the Goddess area of the ruins, he finds himself in a dark room. Even the music has cut out—all we can hear are his echoing footsteps as he tries to find his way with only a small circle of light around him. That echo is marked, not present in other areas of the game, implying a cavernous space. However, once he has moved far enough into the room, the lights flash on and the music kicks in—and he finds himself confronted by enormous half-clothed statues as the sub-area's name flashes on screen, title-card-like. The attention of the player goes from trying to see in the darkness to seeing these enormous statues towering over the player during this dramatic reveal, as if Kosugi had been struck briefly motionless with awe.[135] This dramatization carried out is a procedural imitation of the adventurous archaeologist's most glamorized task: that of climactically discovering artifacts. The circuit is complete between subject and object, each of which I have covered in previous chapters. Here, it is specifically the wire along which the electricity travels that is my point.

---

[134] Ferrara, 299.

[135] *La Mulana (Remake)*.

A final observation to make, and one that requires all of our previous case studying to do so. Taking the adventuring archaeologist subject, the discovered statue object, and the playing-as-evidence connection between them, we are presented with a complex system of what it means to live the life of an adventuring archaeologist—a fictional and virtual reality that diverges from the reality prime version of archaeology and the academics who practice it, certainly, but a reality with many moving parts all the same. Consider this reality kitsch as well: a reproduction of reality, able to exist because of the assumption of and social practices governing a true, "authentic" reality existing. We know the fake, the knock-off, the shadow of the original in part due to the discomfort it can cause at diverging from reality. We also know it for how it comes into resonance with the original. And as we have taken note of concerning kitsch, we have also traced as far back as we can whatever we might consider the "original" of archaeology, which in reality prime too has undergone many an evolution such that its present-day incarnation may look more like a reproduction or copy than any sort of original.

Ultimately, I believe that it is most useful to approach the study of this kitsch version of archaeology not as lesser and therefore to be dismissed in favor of a focus on the assumed authentic version carried out by actual individuals, but rather as a means to better understand our relationship *to* that reality prime version. As Matthew Gumpert has so eloquently advanced, the copy and the original cannot exist without each other: "the conflict and collaboration between idolatry [supposed original] and iconoclasm [supposed copy] is constitutive of all art."[136]

[136] Gumpert, 164.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

So: within the Japanese videogame *La Mulana*, the *adventuring archaeologist* has *discovered* a *Hellenistic statue*. Pop culture ideas about who the archaeologist is, how they appear, and how they carry out their archaeological work are invoked within this playable performance space. In Chapter 1, we established the history of the 2012 remake of *La Mulana*. We then situated *La Mulana* within the history of video games that employ visual and procedural semiotics of archaeology and of the archaeologist. We categorized those video games by typology and not by genealogy. Video games fitting into our typology either employed a.) the visual semiotics of the adventuring archaeologist or b.) game mechanics reflective of archaeological practices. In addition to this binary, we introduced a third type of video game that combines and employs both types. We saw how *La Mulana* fits within this third type. We then saw how *La Mulana's* game play, its narrative, and its visual aesthetic rely on and employ popular conceptions of the archaeologist as adventurous.

Finally, in Chapter 1, we saw that the reception of the ancient world and those who study the ancient world, namely the archaeologist, within popular culture needs to be studied further. We proposed that this study needs to reach beyond analyses of whether these representations within video games are accurate to the ancient world, real archaeology, and real archaeologists. Instead, these representations within video games and their reception should be studied as works of art themselves. We saw how they are digital media sites to be excavated, and we established our site of excavation as *La Mulana*.

In Chapter 2, we traced the previous direct scholarship about *La Mulana* by Brett Camper which approached the game from the discipline of new media and investigated its nostalgic 'retro' aesthetics and game play. We saw that the developer and publisher Nigoro explicitly linked the game's play mechanics to thinking like an archaeologist. Finally, we saw how this thesis as an art historical investigation of *La Mulana* would analyze a.) the visual semiotics of player character costuming and a variant of the *Venus de Milo* and b.) the procedural rhetoric and player performance of discovery as both reinforcing the archaeologist as adventurous.

In Chapter 3, we saw that the player is given a specific costume, one that has a history of association with fictional adventurous archaeologists and fantastical protohistory discoveries. Throughout Chapter 3, we traced the ancestry of this adventuring archaeologist costume and looked at how this costume is standing on a narrative about archaeology since the discipline's inception. We looked at this through the lens of taking video games as hybrid performances between player and rule-governed game program.

In Chapter 4, we shifted from subject to direct object: the Hellenistic statue. While *La Mulana* contains innumerable ancient artifact and artwork references, the representation of the *Venus de Milo* presented an especially compelling case study-within-a-case-study due to a.) what specific reality prime statue the form of it evoked, and b.) the specific facet of old-and-new interaction that scholarship on the *Venus de Milo* reveals. Specifically, analyzing this statue within the context of its reality prime ancestor, we find the concept of kitsch of especial use: to look at where this immaterial

pixel-rendered statue sits within the complex shifting tides between what is considered authentic and what is considered reproduction.

Finally, in Chapter 5, we shifted from nouns (objects) to verbs (actions): we looked at the action of discovery as one of the most vital arguments within the procedural rhetoric of *La Mulana*. For this action, we needed the adventurous archaeologist, and we needed the object of discovery. We also needed the paradigm of the persuasiveness of games via their governing rule-based systems. We also connected this paradigm of procedural rhetoric full circle back to performance and the fact that video games are a performative medium. Procedural rhetoric is one that is enacted, that is practiced, and persuades through interacting with the rule system, and *La Mulana*'s argument is that archaeologists are adventurers. They are adventurers due to the way they dress, the environment they encounter, and the acts of discovery that they make. They are a kitsch version of archaeologists: a reproduction, cast from some assumed authentic original. It is difficult to determine what we should take as that original: the parallels between a currently-practicing archaeologist within academia (and the museum) grow visible as we examine how the archaeologist of today is both similar to and different from the archaeologists and antiquarians of the past.

Much like how the many iterations of the *Venus de Milo* and Gumpert's theory of kitsch critique the sanctity of the authentic within art history, I have intended to reach beyond the mere notation of what is "true," "real," or "authentic" about *La Mulana* as a performative play aesthetic experience. Such an activity risks the value judgments that have long plagued art historical discourse. Instead, taking play experiences as by their nature simultaneous constructed realities and ones that are different from our reality

prime, I have endeavored to approach this case study with an eye to contemporary reception of forms inhabiting classical landscapes—whether those forms are of a Hellenistic statue or of a pop culture archaeologist. I have endeavored to highlight how the past persists in the present, and quite enthusiastically due to the insurmountable distance between now and then. Further, our reception of the past will always be reproduction-rich, cast by long shadows of the mythological authentic original. And finally, our new media, which will certainly continue to develop into the future, continues to speak most coherently to its receivers via the familiar forms of the past—especially if those forms are adventurers whose very job is to find fantastic evidence of a history we can only encounter in performance, procedure, and play.

APPENDIX

FIGURES

Figure 1. Screenshot from Nigoro's La Mulana website, showing the self-claimed label "Arcaheological Ruin Exploration Action Game." (Nigoro, "La-Mulana Teaser Page," La-Mulana, last modified 2020. https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/index.php.)

Figure 2. Inventory screen, depicting items and the full figure of Kosugi wearing many of his found items. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

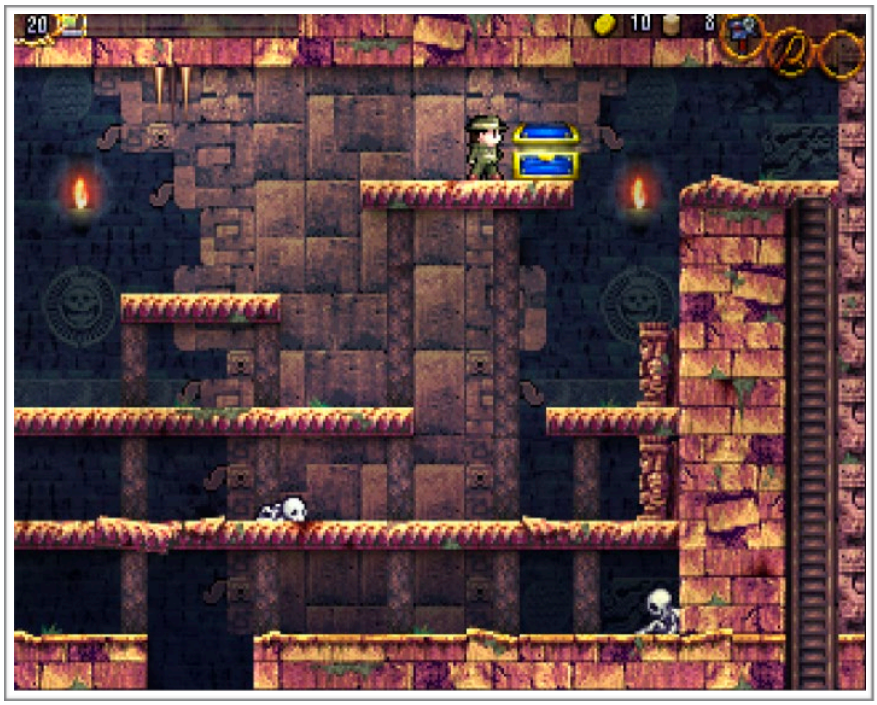

Figure 3. Unlocked treasure chest within La Mulana ruins, glowing from the inside. This glow disappears once its treasure is looted. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 4. Using the Red Jewel object found elsewhere in the ruins to activate one of the statues, which will become a boss that must be fought. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 5. Boss battle against Viy, Guardian of the Inferno Cavern Area. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

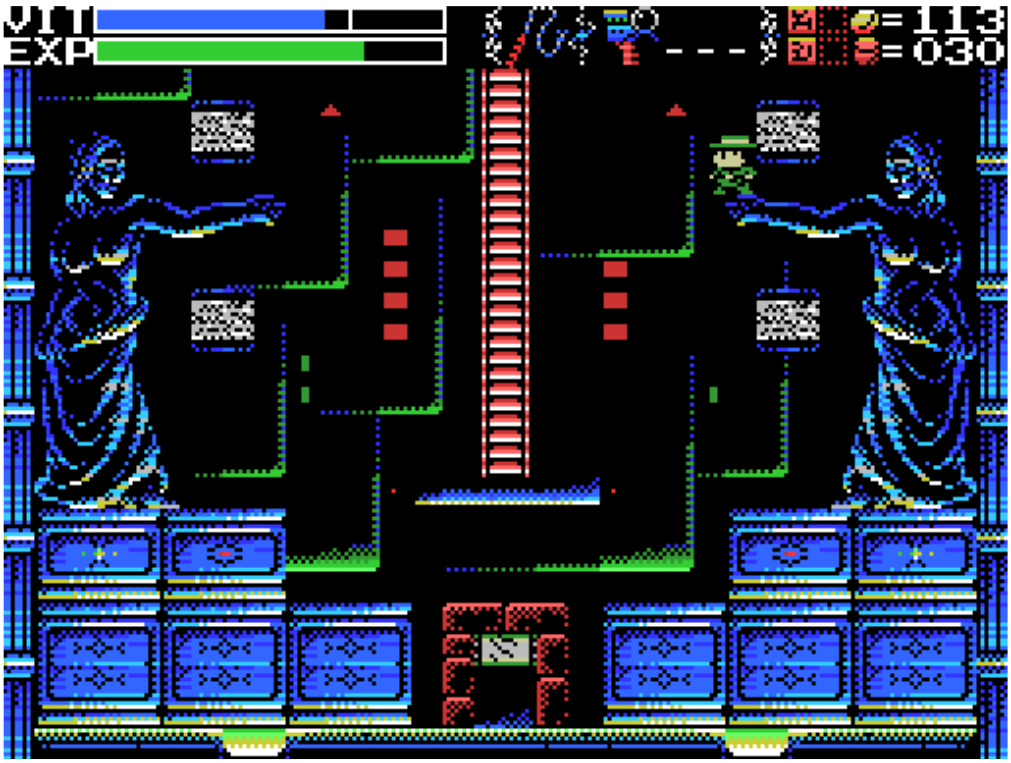

Figure 6. *La Mulana* in 2005, paying homage to MSX graphics circa 1980s. (*La-Mulana.* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2005. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 7. *La Mulana* in 2012, paying homage to 16-bit graphics circa 1990s. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 8. Cover art for La Mulana website/instruction manual. (Nigoro, "Downloads," La-Mulana Official Site, last modified 2011, https://la-mulana.com/en/specials/download/.)

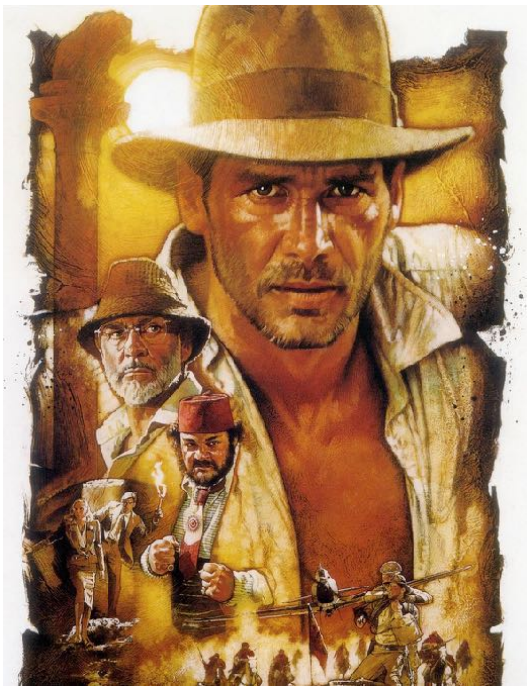

Figure 9. Artwork for posters/copies of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.* (Drew Struzan, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade,* 1989, http://www.drewstruzan.com/illustrated/portfolio/.)

Figure 10. *Untitled (Portrait of Heinrich Schliemann).* Heinrich Schliemann photograph portrait, 1880s. Heinrich Schliemann Papers, American School of Classical Studies at Athens. (Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan, "All Americans Must Be Trojans at Heart: A Volunteer at Assos in 1881 Meets Heinrich Schliemann," *From the Archivist's Notebook*, Aug 1, 2015, https://nataliavogeikoff.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/05_600dpi.jpg.)

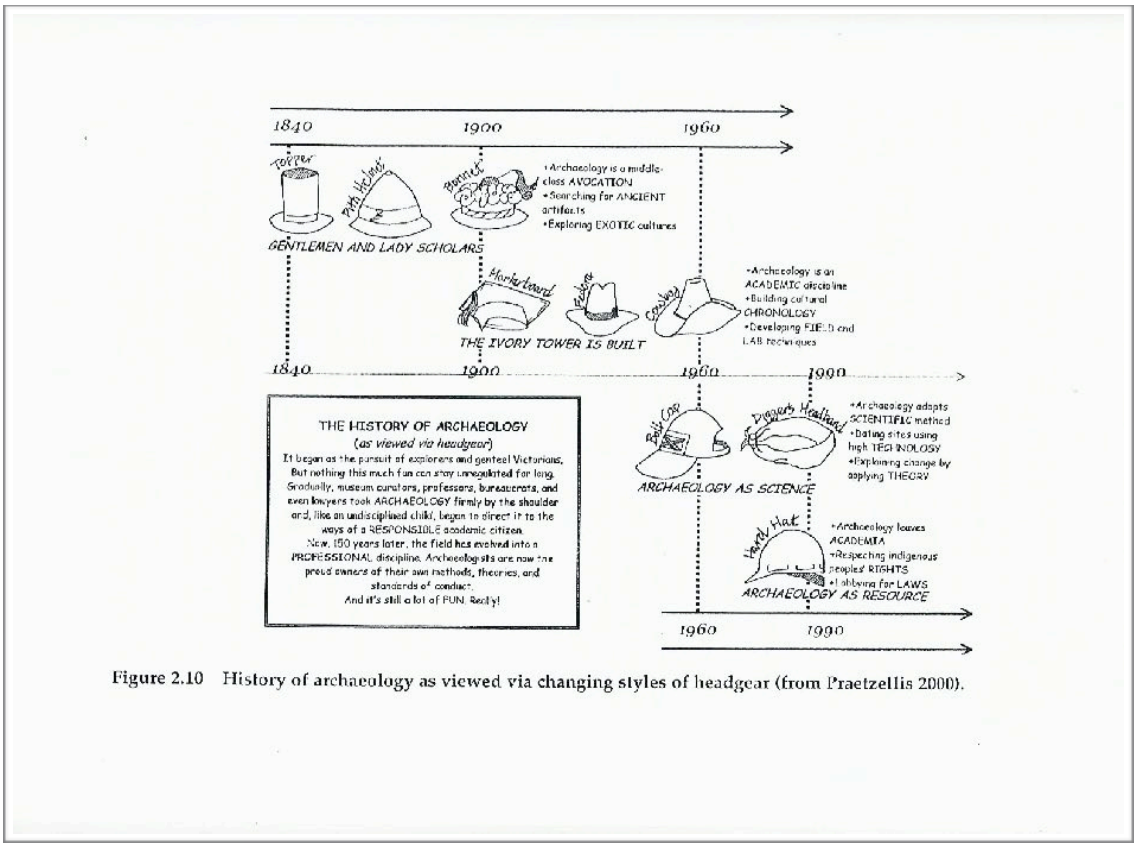

Figure 2.10 History of archaeology as viewed via changing styles of headgear (from Praetzellis 2000).

Figure 11. *Untitled (Adrian Praetzellis' hat chart). (*Adrian Praetzellis, *Death by Theory: A Tale of Mystery and Archeology Theory*, rev. ed. (Plymoth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2011), 36.)

Figure 12. Egyptian Area within La Mulana ruins, including both environmental cues and enemy design. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 13. Mesoamerican area, featuring an Olmec-like megalithic sculpted head. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

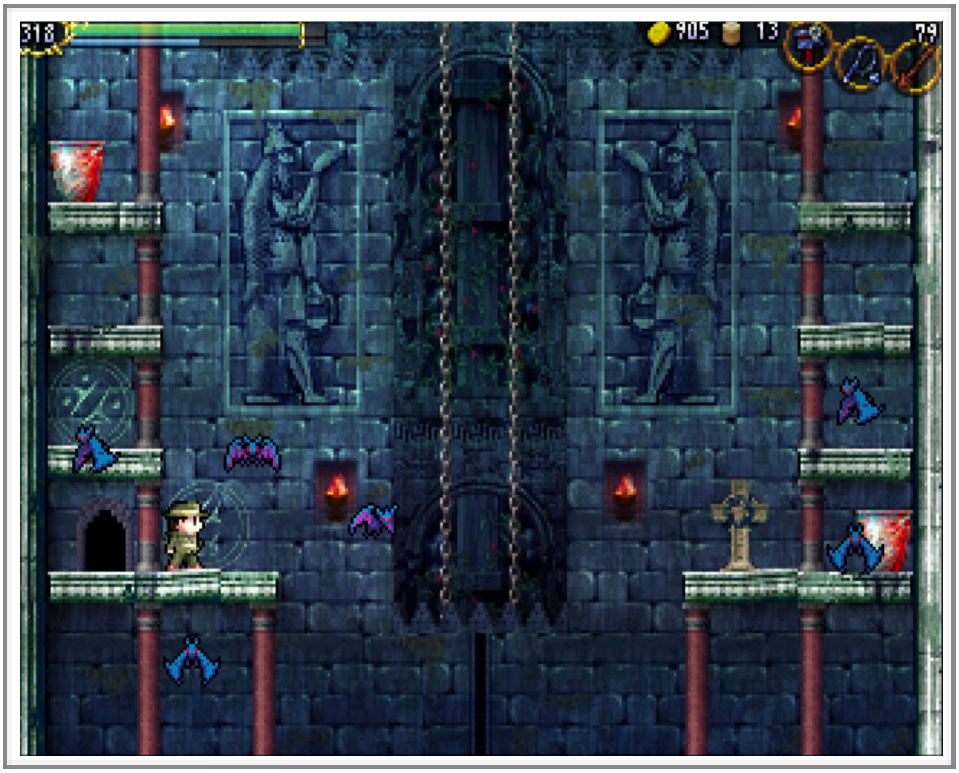

Figure 14. Babylonian area, featuring carvings of a water god. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 15. Indian area, featuring turban-wearing elephants as enemies and durga-like statuary, but also Kabbalah Sephiroth tree-of-life symbols. (*La-Mulana (Remake).* Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 16. *"Aphrodite (Vénus de Milo),"* Melos, ca. 150-50 BCE, Paris, (Anne Chauvet, Musé du Louvre Online, 2010, https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/aphrodite-known-venus-de-milo.)

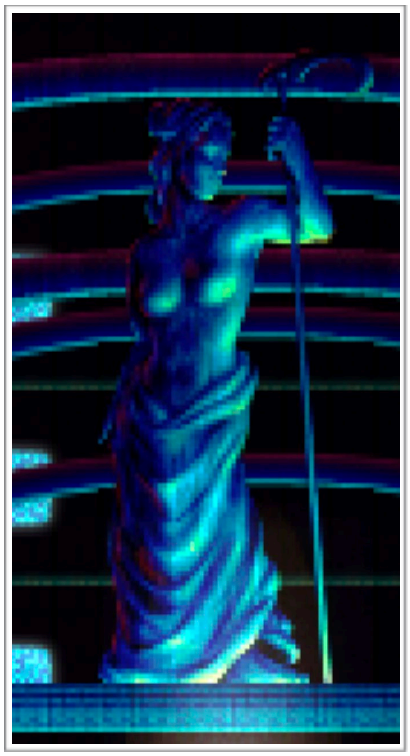

Figure 17. Variant of the *Venus de Milo.* Half-Draped Goddess Statue with Staff in La Mulana ruins. (*La-Mulana (Remake)*. Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

Figure 18. "*Venus,* Amphitheater, Capua, Hadrianic, Inv. No. 6017," (The J. Paul Getty Museum, accessed Feb 12, 2021, https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/aphrodite/venus_capua.html.)

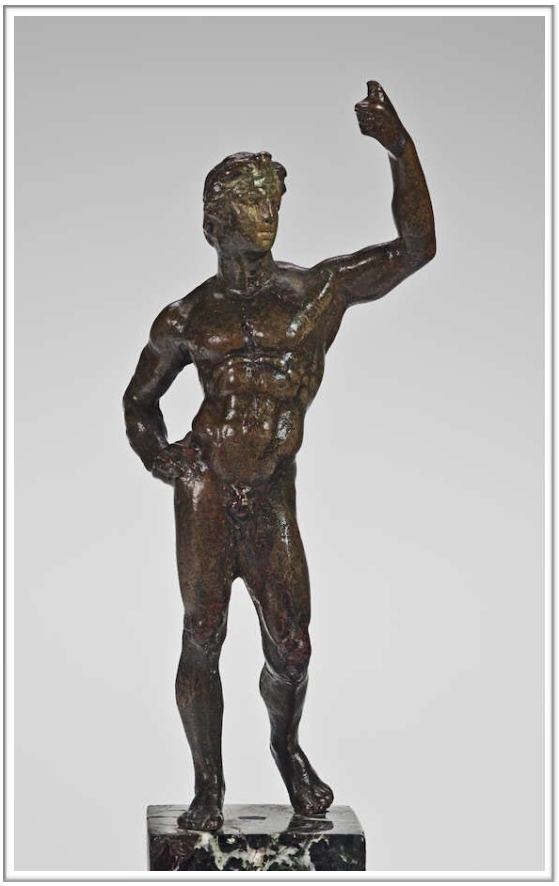

Figure 19. "*Alexander the Great*, 1956.20." (Harvard Art Museums collections online, last modified 2013, https://hvrd.art/o/312306.)

Figure 20. Map of the Aegean Sea, showing the island of Melos. (Kurzon, "Melos Sparta and Athens 416 BCE.svg," WikiMedia Commons, Sep 3, 2015, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b9/Melos_Sparta_and_Athens_416_BCE.svg.)

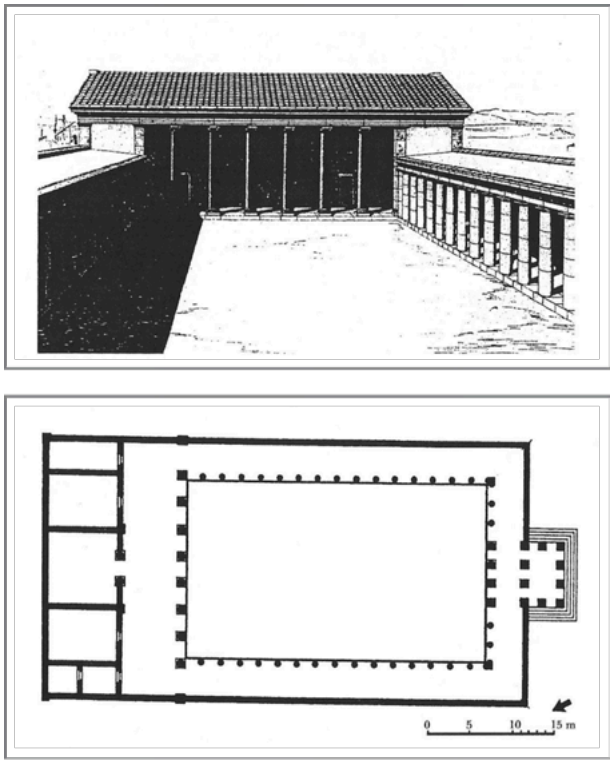

Figure 21. Restored perspective and plan of gymnasium, Miletus. (Rachel Kousser, "Creating the Past: The *Vénus de Milo* and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," in *American Journal of Archaeology 109* (2005), 247.)

Figure 22. *Aphrodite of Melos* in original setting. Original drawing by architect Charles Doussalt aided by Louis Brest. (Rachel Kousser, "Creating the Past: The *Vénus de Milo* and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," in *American Journal of Archaeology 109* (2005), 234.)

Figure 23. *"Apollo Belvedere*, after Leochares, circa 120-140 CE, Vatican Museums," (David Lown, *Pictures from Italy* (blog), June 27, 2019, https://www.picturesfromitaly.com/vatican/apollo-belvedere.)

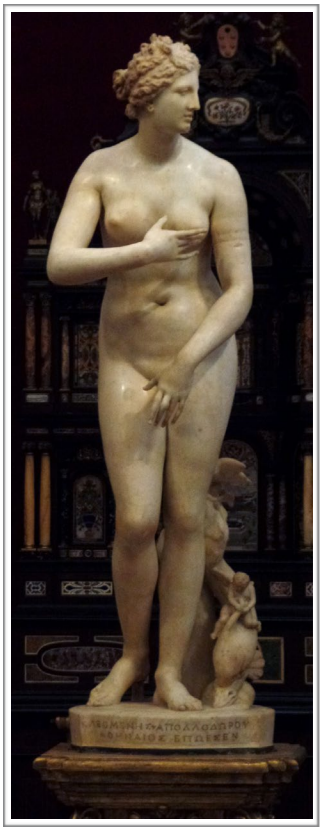

Figure 24. "*Venus de Medici*, 1914 no. 224." (Le Gallerie Degli Uffizi, accessed Feb 12, 2021, https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/medici-venus.)

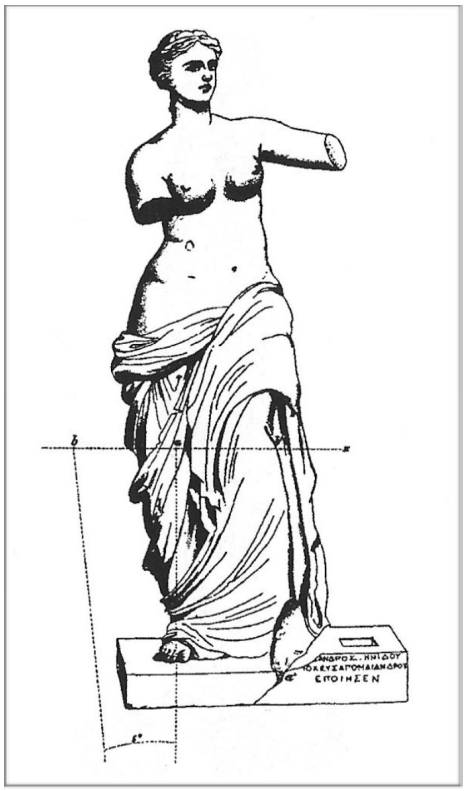

Figure 25. Auguste Debay's drawing of the *Venus de Milo*, with base/plinth. (Rachel Kousser, "Creating the Past: The *Vénus de Milo* and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," in *American Journal of Archaeology 109* (2005), 232.)

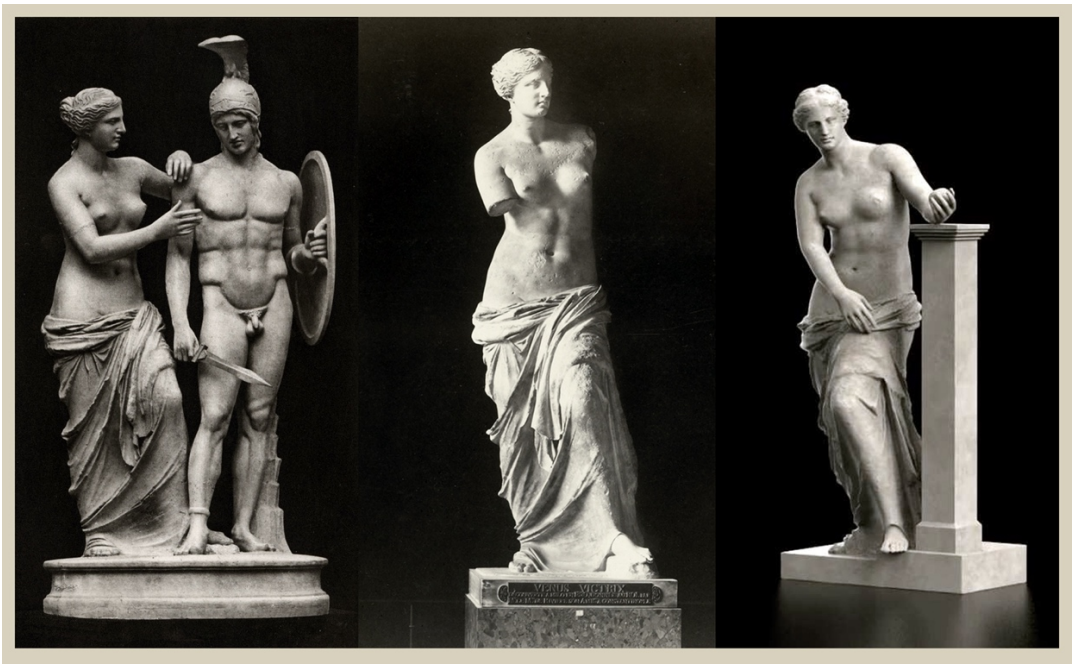

Figure 26. The reconstruction of the *Venus of Milos* as proposed by Ravaisson (1890 CE) of the *Venus of Milos* together with the *Borghese Mars* (left); an older presentation in the Louvre (1855-1875 CE) with a plinth identifying the statue as "*Venus Victrix*" (middle); the reconstruction as proposed by Furtwängler (1895 CE) recreated by Rådén (right). (Branko van Oppen, "The Reconstructions of the *Venus de Milos*," Ancient History Encyclopedia, May 6, 2019, https://www.ancient.eu/image/10516/reconstructions-of-the-venus-of-milos/.)

Figure 27. *Venus de Milo with Drawers*, Salvador Dalí, 1936. ("*Venus de Milo with Drawers*, 1936," dalipaintings.com, accessed Feb 13, 2021, https://www.dalipaintings.com/images/paintings/venus-de-milo-with-drawers.jpg.)

Figure 28. *H.I.L.M.D.A* (video still), Jillian Mayer, 2011. (Jane Ursula Harris, "The Role of the Copy," *The Believer*, Aug 15, 2016, https://believermag.com/logger/2016-08-15-the-role-of-the-copy/.)

Figure 29. *Cutting the Ties that Bind*, Mary Duffy, 1987. (Jane Ursula Harris, "The Role of the Copy," *The Believer*, Aug 15, 2016, https://believermag.com/logger/2016-08-15-the-role-of-the-copy/.)

Figure 30. *Statue of Venus Obliterated by Infinity,* Yayoi Kusama, 1998. (Jane Ursula Harris, "The Role of the Copy," *The Believer*, Aug 15, 2016, https://believermag.com/logger/2016-08-15-the-role-of-the-copy/.)

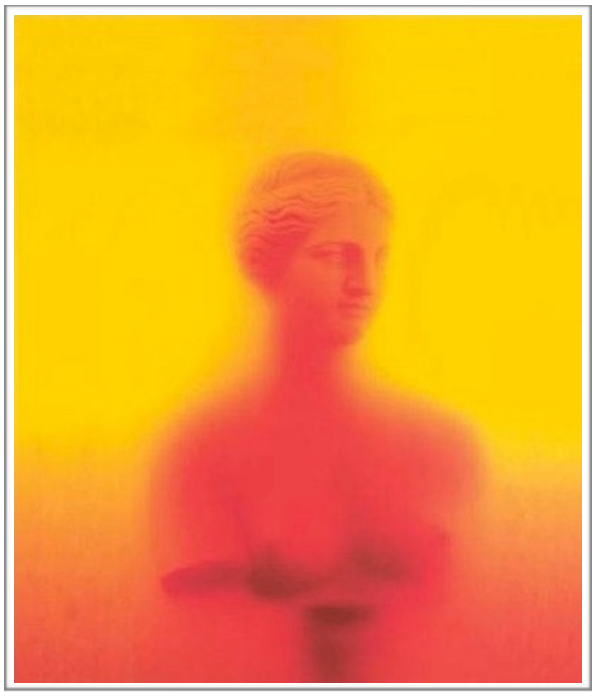

Figure 31. *Female Bust*, Andres Serrano, 1988. (Jane Ursula Harris, "The Role of the Copy," *The Believer*, Aug 15, 2016, https://believermag.com/logger/2016-08-15-the-role-of-the-copy/.)

Figure 32. *Looking toward the Avenue,* Jim Dine, 1989. (Lori Zimmer, "Jime-Dine," Art Nerd New York, Nov 8, 2016, http://art-nerd.com/newyork/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2012/06/Jime-Dine.jpg.)

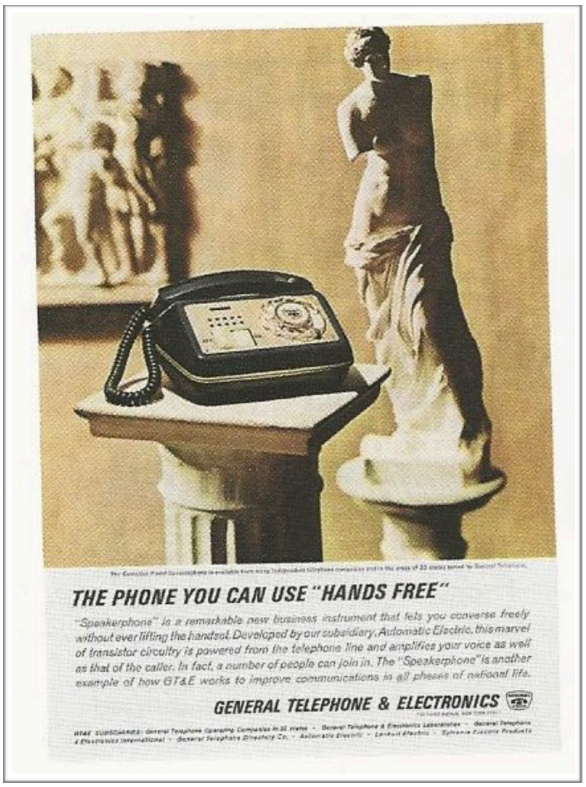

Figure 33. Print Advertisement for a "hands free" speaker phone, 1963. ("1963 Vintage Print Ad for General Telephone & Electronics | Hands Free," amazon.com, accessed Feb 15, 2021, https://www.amazon.com/Vintage-Magazine-Advertisement-Telephone-Electronics/dp/B015JLSC5E.)

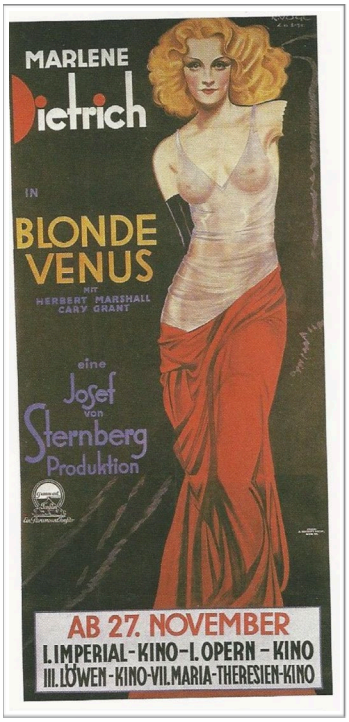

Figure 34. German film poster for *Blonde Venus*, 1932. ("*Blonde Venus* (1932)," IMDb, accessed Feb 15, 2021, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0022698/mediaviewer/rm2628109056/.)

Figure 35. Listing for "antique" *Venus de Milo* salt and pepper shakers—though missing hip drapery. (Sportscards.com, last modified June 27, 2018, https://www.sportscards.com/item/vintage-hard-plastic-venus-de-milo-salt-pepper-shakers/232486146848.)

Figure 36. Screenshot of *Venus de Milo and David Statue Art earrings* listing. (Lotusfairy, Esty.com, accessed Feb 12, 2021, https://www.etsy.com/listing/291495711/venus-de-milo-and-david-statue-art.)

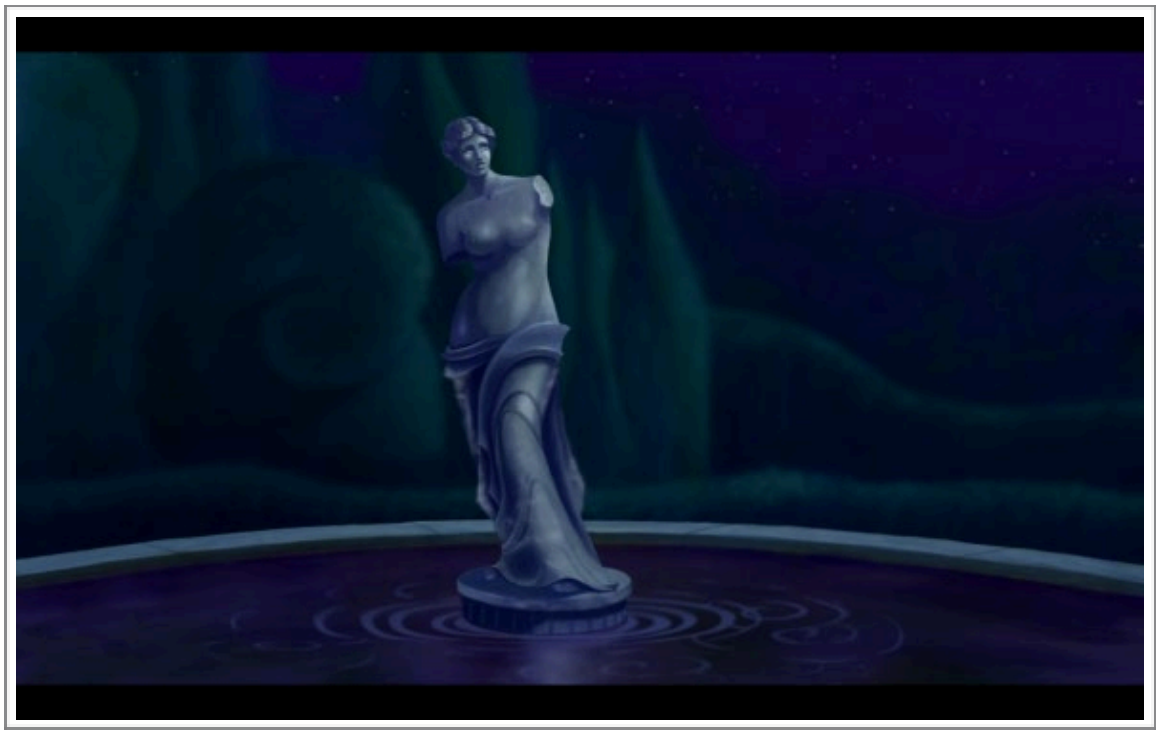

Figure 37. *Untitled (Screenshot from Disney's Hercules, 1997).* ("*Hercules* (1997), Image 40," Animation Screencaps, accessed Feb 12, 2021, https://animationscreencaps.com/hercules-1997/40/.)

Figure 38. *Assassin's Creed Odyssey,* Ubisoft, 2018 (Multiple Platforms). ("*Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* (2018) - Alexios / Michael Antonakos," IMDb, accessed Feb 15, 2021, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8545606/mediaviewer/rm2011982080/.)

Figure 39. *King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella*, Roberta Williams, Sierra-Online, 1988, for Personal Computer. Nancy Smallwood, ("*King's Quest IV*: A love letter from my 3-year-old heart," Rock Paper Shotgun: PC gaming since 1973, April 25, 2018, https://www.rockpapershotgun.com/kings-quest-iv-a-love-letter-from-my-3-year-old-heart.)

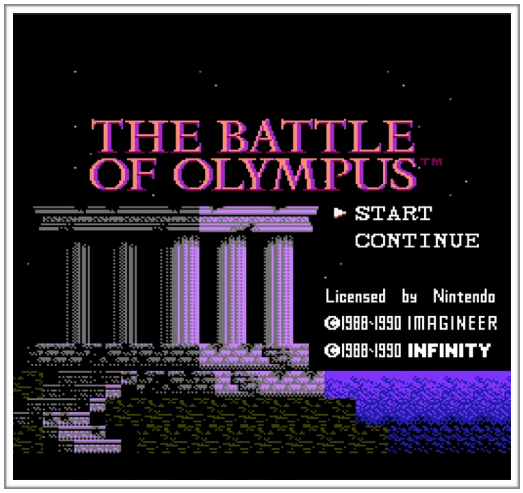

Figure 40. *The Battle of Olympus,* Imagineer/Infinity, 1988, NES. ("*The Battle of Olympus* NES," Retrogaming History, Dec 19, 2008, https://www.retrogaminghistory.com/articles/recensioni/nintendo/nes/231406-the-battle-of-olympus-nes.)

Figure 41. *Kid Icarus*, Nintendo, 1986, NES. ("*Kid Icarus*," GameFabrique, last modified 2021, https://gamefabrique.com/games/kid-icarus/.)

Figure 42. *Indiana Jones and Raiders of the Lost Ark,* Howard Scott Warshaw, Atari 2600, 1982. ("The Games of My Years: Atari – Part One by Mr Biffo," Digitiser, Nov 20, 2015, https://www.digitiser2000.com/main-page/the-games-of-my-years-atari-part-one-by-mr-biffo.)

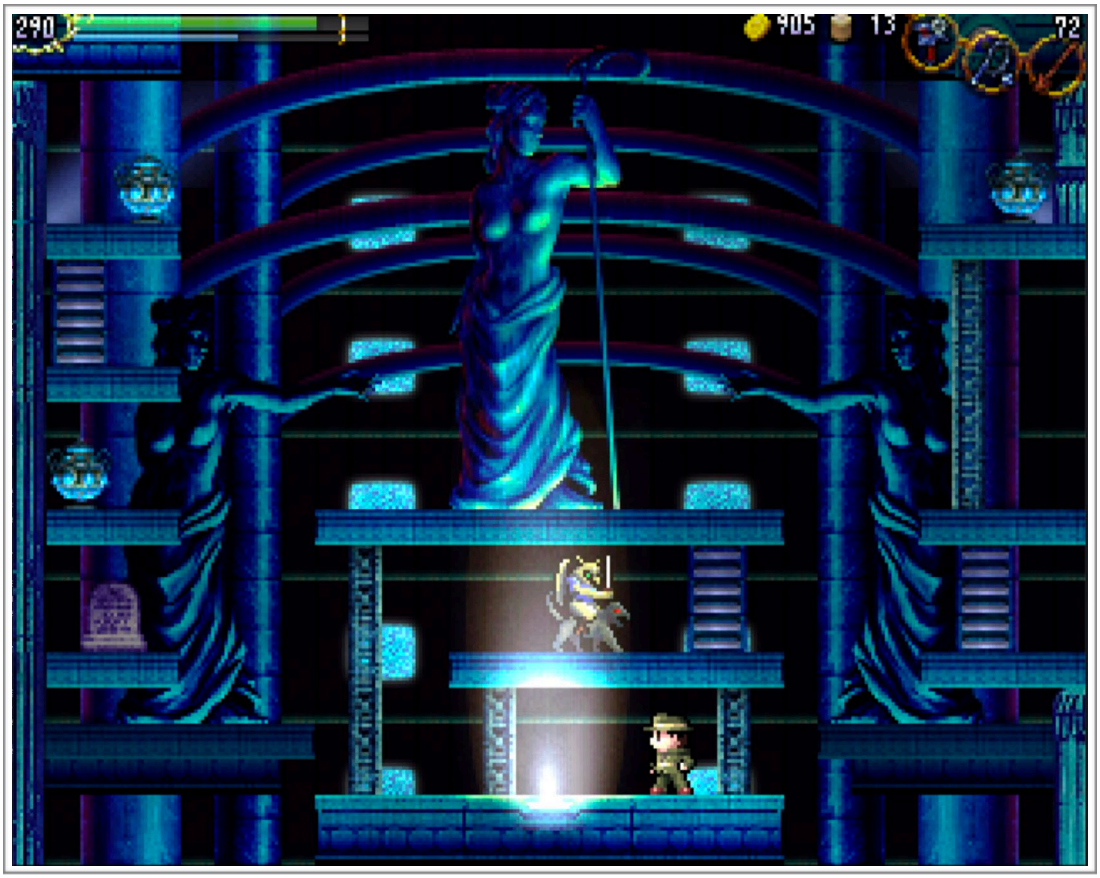

Figure 43. Variant of the *Venus de Milo*. The Goddess Statue in situ in La Mulana ruins. (*La-Mulana (Remake)*. Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac. Screenshot by author.)

REFERENCES CITED

Admin. "About LA-MULANA and the future of Japanese Indie Games." Nigoro. Nov 5 2012. http://nigoro.jp/en/2012/11/about-la-mulana-and-the-future-of-japanese-indie-games/.

Ambalina, Limarc. "La-Mulana Creator Says Game was not Inspired by Castlevania or Metriod." KEEN GAMER. Sep 22, 2019. https://www.keengamer.com/articles/features/interviews/la-mulana-creator-says-game-was-not-inspired-by-castlevania-or-metroid/.

Arenas, Amelia. "Broken: The Venus de Milo." In *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics.* Third Series, Vol. 9 No. 3 (Winter 2002), 35-45.

Austin, J. L. *How to Do Things With Words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.

Barbieri, Donatella, with a contribution from Melissa Trimingham. *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture, and the Body*. London; NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.

Barton, Marc. "The History of Zork." Gamasurtra: The Art & Business of Making Games. June 28, 2007. *https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/129924/the_history_of_zork.php*)

Bogost, Ian. "The Rhetoric of Video Games." In *The Ecology of Games: Connecting Youth, Games, and Learning*. Edited by Katie Salen. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008, 117-140.

- - -. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007.*

Bonazzoli, Francesca. *From Mona Lisa to Marge: How the World's Greatest Artworks Entered Popular Culture.* New York: Prestel, 2014.

Camper, Brett. "Fake Bit: Imitation and Limitation." In *Digital Arts and Culture 2009*. https://escholarship.org/content/qt3s67474h/qt3s67474h_noSplash_259d9d2b393852619bea73156baca2f9.pdf, 2009a.

- - -. "Retro Reflexivity: *La Mulana*, an 8-Bit Period Piece." In *The Video Game Theory Reader 2.* Edited by Bernard Perron and Mark J.P. Wolf. New York: Routledge, 2009b, 169-195.

Card, Jeb J. *Spooky Archaeology: Myth and the Science of the Past.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018.

Curtis, Gregory. *Disarmed: The Story of the Venus de Milo.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003.

D'Alessandro, Stephanie. "Venus de Milo with Drawers." In *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*. Vol. 32 No. 1, Notable Acquisitions at the Art Institute of Chicago (2006), 64-65, 95-96.

Donohue, A. A. and Fullerton, Mark D., eds. *Ancient Art and its Historiography.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Egenfeldt-Nielson, Simon, et al. *Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Emery, Kathryn Meyers, and Reinhard, Andrew. "Trading Shovels for Controllers: A Brief Exploration of the Portrayal of Archaeology in Video Games." In *Public Archaeology*, Vol. 14 (2) (2015), 137-149.

"Exclusive: George Lucas Prepares Us for *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*." Superheroflix. May 5, 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20081205015223/http://www.superheroflix.com/news/NE0ab607ewPH26.

Faedo, L. "The Post-Antique Reception of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture." In *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture.* ed. Clemente Marconi. Oxford: 2015, 417-39.

Ferrara, John. "Games for Persuasion: Argumentation, Procedurality, and the Lie of Gamification." In *Games and Culture*, 8(4) (2013), 289-304.

Fürtwangler, A. *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture*. Translated by E. Sellars. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1895.

García-Raso, Daniel. "Watching Video Games. Playing with Archaeology and Prehistory: Retrospectives and perspectives into the image that video games spread about a scientific discipline and the humankind past." In *Online Journal in Public Archaeology*, Vol. 1 (2011), 73-92.

Gard, Toby, Smith, Jeremy Heath, and Ian Livingstone, interviews. *Unlock the Past: A Retrospective Tomb Raider Documentary.* Directed by Chris Peeler. 2007; Los Angeles: GameTap Entertainment, 2008, DVD.

Gardner, Andrew. "The Past as Playground: The Ancient World in Video Game Representation." In *Archaeology and the Media*. Edited by Timothy Clack and Marcus Brittain. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc., 2007, 255-272.

Greenburg, Clement. "The Avant-Grade and Kitsch." In *Partisan Review* 6. Fall 1939, 34-49.

Guerra, Bob. “MASK OF THE SUN.” *Ahoy!* Issue 10. Oct 1984. https://archive.org/stream/Ahoy_Issue_10_1984-10_Ion_International_US#page/n45/mode/2up, 47.

Gumpert, Matthew. “Venus de Kitsch: Or, The Passion of the Venus de Milo.” In *Criticism*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Spring 1999), 155-85.

Hallett, Christopher H. *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 B.C.-A.D. 300*. *Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Haskell, Francis and Penny, N. *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

Holtorf, Cornelius. “An Archaeological Fashion Show: How Archaeologists Dress and How they are Portrayed in the Media.” In *Archaeology and the Media*. Edited by Timothy Clack and Marcus Brittain. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc., 2007, 69-88.

- - -. *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas: Archeology as Pop Culture.* Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 2005.

“Home Page.” La-Mulana Remake Wiki. FANDOM Games Community. Accessed Feb 22, 2021. https://lamulana-remake.fandom.com/wiki/La-Mulana_Remake_Wiki.

Jayemanne, Darshana. *Performativity in Art, Literature, and Video games.* London: Palgrave Macmillan; Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2017.

Jenkins, Henry. “Game Design as Narrative Architecture.” In *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game.* Edited by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004.

Jensen, Robin M. “Jesus in Christian Art.” In *The Blackwell Companion to Jesus.* Edited by Delbert Burkett. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2010, 477-502.

Kaltman, Eric. “Procedurality.” In *Debugging Game History: A Critical Lexicon*. Edited by H. Lowood & Raiford Guins. Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: The MIT Press, 2016.

Kousser, Rachel. “Creating the Past: *The Vénus de Milo* and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece.” In *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005), 227-50.

- - -. *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture: the Allure of the Classical*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

La-Mulana. Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2005. PC/Mac.

La-Mulana (Remake). Developed by Naramura Takumi. Tokyo: Nigoro, 2012. PC/Mac.

La-Mulana Staff. “Graphics Remade Completely.” La-Mulana Official Site. Sep 9, 2009. https://la-mulana.com/en/blog/graphic_full_remake.html.

Laurel, Brenda. *Computers as Theatre*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co, 1993.

Lowe, Dunstan. “Playing with Antiquity: Videogame Receptions of the Classical World.” In *Classics for All: Reworking Antiquity in Mass Culture.* Edited by Dustan Lowe and Kim Shahabudin. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub, 2009.

Mateas, Michael, and Stern, Andrew. “Writing Façade: A Case Study in Procedural Authorship.” In *Second Person: Role-Playing and Story in Games and Playable Media.* Edited by N. Wardrip-Fruin & Pat Harrigan. Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press, 2010, 183- 207.

Mossmouth. “What is Spelunky?” Spelunky World. Last modified 2012. https://spelunkyworld.com/whatis.html.

Murray, Janet. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace.* New York: The Free Press, 1997.

Naramura Takumi, “Column No. 1: The Mental Attitude of Ruins Exploration.” In *La Mulana Official Guidebook (Fundamental Knowledge Volume)*, 9. Japan: Asterizm, 2011. Translations by author.

- - -. LA-MULANA (ラ・ムラーナ) 公式ガイドブック基礎知識編 (*La Mulana Official Guidebook, Fundamental Knowledge Volume).* Japan: Asterizm, 2011.

Nadoolman, Deborah. “Deborah Nadoolman interview.” By Mike French, & Gilles Verschuere. on theraider.net. September 14, 2005. http://www.theraider.net/features/interviews/deborah_nadoolman.php.

Naughty Dog. “Games.” Uncharted. Last modified 2018. https://www.unchartedthegame.com/en-us/games/uncharted-collection/.

Nigoro. La-Mulana. Last modified 2020. la-mulana.com.

- - -. “Consoles.” La-Mulana. Last modified 2020. https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/consoles.php.

- - -. “La-Mulana Teaser Page.” La-Mulana. Last modified 2020. https://la-mulana.com/en/l1/index.php.

- - -. “Downloads.” La-Mulana Official Site. Last modified 2011. https://la-mulana.com/en/specials/download/.

- - -. “Introduction: Seek the Hidden Treasure of Anima, Find Out the Anthropo-origin.” La-Mulana Official Site. Last modified 2011. https://la-mulana.com/en/introduction/.

- - -. “Introduction: Story.” La-Mulana Official Site. Last modified 2011. https://la-mulana.com/en/introduction/.

- - -. “La-Mulana 1 & 2.” NIS America. Last modified 2020. https://nisamerica.com/la-mulana-1-2/#intro.

Orrells, Daniel. "Burying and Excavating Winckelmann's History of Art." In *Classical Receptions Journal 3*, no. 2 (2011), 166-88.

Playism Games. “La-Mulana 2.” Kickstarter. Last modified Deb 22, 2020. https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/playism/la-mulana-2.

Potts, Alex. *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Praetzellis, Adrian. *Death by Theory: A Tale of Mystery and Archeology Theory*, rev. ed. Plymoth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2011.

Prettejohn, Elizabeth. “Reception and Ancient Art: The Case of the Venus de Milo.” In *Classics and the Uses of Reception.* Edited by Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publications, 2006, 227-249.

“project La-Mulana.” AEON GENESIS. Feb 3, 2007. https://agtp.romhack.net/project.php?id=lamulana.

Reinach, Salomon. "LA VÉNUS DE MILO." In *Gazette Des Beaux-arts 32*, no. 3 (1890), 376-394.

Reinhard, Andrew. *Archaeogaming: an Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2018.

Retrobates. “Fantastic Dizzy.” retro GAMER. Jan 5, 2014. https://www.retrogamer.net/retro_games90/fantastic-dizzy/.

Retro Gamer Team. “Growl.” retro GAMER. Aug 19, 2009. https://www.retrogamer.net/retro_games90/growl/.

Rollinger, Christian, ed. *Classical Antiquity in Video Games: Playing with the Ancient World.* Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Schliemanns Erben. Directed by Gisela Graichen, Klaus Kastenholz, Peter Prestel, Lothar Spree, Michael Tauchert, and Dietrich von Ruffer. 1996; Germany: Aspekt Telefilm-Produktion GmbH, 2009, DVD.

Skolnik, Michael Ryan. "Strong and Weak Procedurality." In *Journal of Gaming & Virtual Worlds*, 5(2) (2013), 147-163.

Smith, Amy C. "Winckelmann, Greek masterpieces, and Architectural Sculpture: Prolegomena to a History of Classical Archeology in Museums." In *Diversity of Classical Archeology*. Edited by Achim Lichtenberger and Rubina Raja (Turnhout, Belguim: Brepols, 2017), 23-46.

Smith, R.R.R. *Hellenistic Sculpture.* London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1991.

Squire, Martin. "Theories of Reception." In *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture.* Edited by Clemente Marconi. Oxford: 2015, 637-661.

Stewart, Andrew. *Art in the Hellenistic World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Tarral, Claude. "The discovery of the 'Venus de Milo.'" In *Hands on the Past: Pioneer Archaeologists Tell Their Own Story.* Edited by C.W. Ceram. New York: Knopf, 1966, 69-77.

Turkle, Sherry. *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997.

Turner, Victor. *The Anthropology of Performance.* New York: PAJ Publications, 1986.

van Duyn, Marcel. "La-Mulana Review (WiiWare)." Nintendolife. Sep 21, 2012. https://www.nintendolife.com/reviews/wiiware/la_mulana.

Weaver-Hightower, Rebecca. "Tomb Raider Archeologists and the Exhumation of the US Neoimperial Cinematic Fantasy." In *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Volume 47, Issue 1 (February 2014), 109-128.

Winckelmann, Johann Joachim, and Alex Potts. *History of the Art of Antiquity*. Translated by Harry Mallgrave. Los Angeles, Calif: Getty Research Institute, 2006.