THE ADAPTATION OF MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS ON THE MECHANICS AND NARRATIVES OF THE HEROES IN MOBILE LEGENDS: BANG BANG

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Abstract

Recently video games have become a professional sport and a source of livelihood with the new sport, electronic sports (E-sport). E-sport is also held on several devices such as on PCs and smartphones. The video game itself can be seen as literature because players often encounter characters, mechanics and, storylines in a game. Yet the story and the characters in a game are presented differently. The characters in the game studied in this article are adapted from mythology from several regions into Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. Therefore, this research aims to describe the adaptation of characters from the mythology of several regions into Mobile Legends: Bang Bang in terms of appearance, mechanics, and narrative. In this research, researcher used descriptive qualitative method to explain the differences. The data collection technique used by the researcher is literary analysis. The result of this research shows that twenty characters have similarities with mythology until the end of 2020. Generally, these twenty characters are divided into four races, namely gods, humans, elves, and giants. Meanwhile, dominant characters adapted are of the elf race with ten characters who are told from Nordic mythology. This research concludes that the character adaptations performed by video games are not completely equated with the appearance, narrative, and abilities of the original mythology. This is consistent with Hutcheon's adaptation theory in the Interacting - Telling or Showing section. Thus, the adapter does not completely take it from mythology but only interprets it as a character in a video game that interacts with the player.

Keywords   : Adaptation, Mythology, Video Games, Character.

INTRODUCTION

According to Hutcheon (2006), the adapted text is not something to be reproduced, but rather something to be interpreted and recreated often in a new medium. From some of the explanations above regarding the definition of adaptation from various sources, this research uses the theory of adaptation from Hutcheon. Hutcheon explains about adaptation from various aspects of adaptation itself, for example, myths that are adapted into games that are included in interacting – telling or showing.

A common example of myth is a story of the Gods, a religious account of the beginning of the world, the creation, fundamental events, the exemplary deeds of the Gods as a result of which the world, nature, and culture were created together with all parts thereof and given their order. A myth expresses and confirms society's religious values and norms. It provides a pattern of behavior to be imitated, testifies to the efficacy of ritual with its practical ends, and establishes the sanctity of cult. In colloquial use, the

word myth can also be used as a collectively held belief that has no basis in fact, or any false story (Lauri Honko, 1984:49).

One of the industries that is very flexible in terms of performance and ideas is video game industry. Developers in this industry can fit anything into a video game as long as it does not conflict with the norms of daily life. One of the most popular ideas in the gaming industry is mythology. Many games adapt mythology to be the main plot in the game and there are tons of video games that use mythological creatures as a base idea to create characters. Various monsters, demons, Gods, and Goddesses have always been an attractive element to the game world.

Bernal-Merino (2006) explains that video game is a game played by electronically manipulating images displayed on a television screen. That statement is an understanding of game in the new era which is closely defining game as a software. In this type of entertainment, game is played with electronic devices in which there is a moving image. It has also developed since the moment of its creation. In the early time, people can play a game software by plugging a device with electricity and use a game console. However, it is only about time that todays' game is more practical and easier to play anywhere and anytime.

People do not have to stay in a certain place to enjoy this kind of entertainment. It has become one of must have app in all kinds of mobile phone, which explains how it becomes more accessible. Some mobile phones can play most arcade games. In the technological race to gain more clients, mobile phone engineers are starting to show that mobile phones can also be a convenient gaming device.

One of the data from this research is:

Figure 1: Game interface as the datum

In the northern reaches of Nost Gal, there is a legend : Where a warrior dies on the battlefield, the Goddes of war Freya will come down from heaven, kiss the spirit of the fallen, and lead it to the Temple of Heroes,where former warriors can have a new life. Freya herself is an outstanding warrior. She can both attack and deffend with her sword and shield, and at a critical moment in a battle she can transform into a halberd and smash the enemy formation. Times flew by as Freya stood guard in coldness and snow as a valkyrie. She had been to everywhere in Northern Vale over the years, reconciling conflicts and resolving difficulties for people. She gave everything she had to the Northern Vale.

Her passive is generating a sacred orb surrounding her eye and throwing 2 basic attacks. Her first skill is jump to a designated area and pull enemies to the center. Her second skill is enhancing her attack speed of the first 3 basics attacks. Her ultimate skill is entering Valkyrie state

Freya looks like a warrior woman. She carries a sword in her right hand and a shield in her left hand. Her head that was protected by a war helmet was added with feather decoration on the sides as well as the protective clothes she wears. When she brings out her ultimate, Freya takes out her valkyrie's wings. Then her sword and shield will unite to slaughter the enemies around her with just two hits.

Freya is a Goddes from Nordic mythology. Lindow. (2001) describes her vehicle which is a carriage but not pulled by horses or other typical mythical creatures like unicorn. Rather, it was pulled by cats, though the description did not mention further the feature of the animal. Another description is by Larrington (1999) in which he says "...and when Thrym goes in for a kiss beneath "Freyja's" veil, he finds "her" eyes to be terrifying, and he jumps down the hall. ...". It can be seen that Freya has a special feature attached to the eyes which can make Thrym very shocked that he "jumps down the hall".

If the appearance of Freya in this game is compared with the original mythology, there is no similarity. As it was elaborated, her character in the original mythology is depicted as a rider on cat and has a veil. Whereas in this game, she is depicted as a knight carrying a sword and shield.

From the narrative and mechanic, Lindow (2001) mentioned that Freyja is the daughter of Njord, either by his sister when he lived among the Vanir or by Skadi. When Snorri says in Gylfaginning that Njord had two children, apparently by Skadi, he first introduces Frey and Freyja, saying that they were both good-looking and powerful. Freyja is the most excellent of the goddesses. She has that homestead in heaven which is called

Folkvang, and wherever she rides to battle she has half the dead, and Odin half. "Njord and Frey, have no such connection. Indeed, the word Snorri used for the dead whom Freyja shares equally with Odin refers to those who die in battle. This association with the battle-dead may also underlie Freyja's connection with the eternal battle of the Hjadningavig, which has obvious parallelism to the endless battles of the einherjar." This statement is by following Freya's narrative in this game. Freya brought the souls of those who died on the battlefield and headed to Valhalla. The mechanics are different. Freya in this game took to the battlefield and joined, swinging the sword. Yet in the original mythology, Freya only took fallen souls.

Concerning those previous cases related to the example of the datum, the researcher raised the problem of several mythologies that were adapted into characters by *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang* which were divided into mechanics, narratives, and physical appearance. This has been mentioned in the title of this study, which mentions the adaptation of mythological characters on the mechanics and narratives of the heroes in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research, after weighing some aspects from the previous chapters, belongs to qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) stated a researcher is led to a position where he could see the surrounding since the role of the researcher is as observer. In establishing a qualitative research, the researcher has to be ready in facing any possible interpretative findings. Anything found along the way of finding the data and analyzing them is to be treated as material to be processed. As Denzin and Lincoln mentions (2000), *"this means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make a sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them."*

The definition of the term will cover the field of research. Researcher will classify subjects and objects of the research, which can be included as society, ideas, phenomena, etc. The way the person under study understands and interprets the social reality is one of the central motives of qualitative research (Santosa, 2014).

Given the focus, data, setting, and objectives, the research focuses on several characters in *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang* which are adapted from several myths and thus it is classified into qualitative research. Furthermore, the focus of this study is only on the mechanics, narrative and physical appearance of several characters in the data.

Hutcheon's functioning adaptation theory and other mythological references will guide researchers to sort out several characters that can be used as data. Then, adjusted to the mythology in various sources that will function as a theory to analyze this subject.

The researcher provides a richer and more in depth understanding of the adaptation in *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang*. Qualitative research is a textual description, this research used qualitative textual analysis because the data which were taken are text or words.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the research objectives, in this section the researcher will describe the findings taken from the data collected. To identify whether these findings are included in the data or not, it is based on books, articles, and journals that discuss mythology.

The main research of this literature lies in this chapter. After the researcher collected and analyzed the data, the next step was then elaborated all the findings that have been found during the research on the mythology of several regions in the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang. The discussion will be described as clearly and in as much detail as possible. Therefore, the data must be displayed individually, section by section according to the classification.

God and Goddess

Table 4: God and Goddess Data

NO	NAME	NARRATIVE	MECHANICS	APPEARANCE
1	Freya	In the Northern reaches of Nost Gal, there is a legend : Where a warrior dies on the battlefield, the Goddes of war Freya will come down from heaven, kiss the spirit of the fallen, and lead it to the Temple of Heroes, where former warriors can have a new life. Freya herself is an outstanding warrior. She can both attack and deffend with her sword and shield, and at a critical	**Passive:** Freya generates a sacred orb surrounding her eye two basic attacks. **First skill:** Freya jumps to a designated area and pulling enemies to the center. **Second skill:** Freya enhances her attack speed of the first three basics attack.	

		moment in battle she can transform into a halberd and smash the enemy formation.	**Ultimate:** Freya enters Valkyrie state.	
2	Gatotkacha	Gatotkaca "Iron Steel" was the son of Bima and Arimbi from Arcapada universe. Since his childhood, he's been a champion of Gods, fighting vicious enemies of his homeland. Once lost and beaten near death, Gatotkaca rose as a mighty warrior from Pandava clan who possessed the supernatural power he got from the ultimate training inside the cauldron of heaven, Candradimuka. With his Antakusuma armor and Brajamusti-Brajadenta twin gauntlet, he can fly across the skies like lightning and hunt down his enemies, the furious Ashuras. Gatotkaca, the Knight of Priggadani is a symbol of bravery and devotion. *Based on 'Garudayana' comic series created by Yuniarto, inspired by Indonesian traditional shadow puppets.	**Passive:** Gatotkaca convert his lost blood to defense. **First skill:** Gatotkaca shatters the ground in front of him. **Second skill:** Gatotkaca charges and loudly shouts towards a designated direction, taunting enemies to attack him. **Ultimate:** Gatotkaca jumps to the designated area, knocking nearby enemies into the air and dealing damage.	

Freya looks like a woman warrior. She carries a sword in her right hand and a shield in her left hand. Her head that was protected by a war helmet was added with feather decoration on the sides. As well as the protective clothes she wears. When she brings out her ultimate, Freya takes out her valkyrie's wings. Then her sword and shield will unite to slaughter the enemies around her with just two hits.

Gatotkaca is described as an adult man with a thin beard. He wears a black vest and pants. On his waist was tied blue, red, and gold scarf. He wears a black and gold crown. On the chest, there is a gold star accessory. He also has a bowl-like point on his back. He carried a blazing green-eyed monster head gun with long fangs. The weapon is used to hit his enemy and produce a very powerful blow.

Researchers have shown all the findings of mythological characters in Mobile Legends: Bang. The findings were classified based on race. This is because the elements of mythology consist of several races of characters in mythology, namely gods and goddesses and their creations.

Figure 2. Freya

Freya is a goddess from Nordic mythology. Lindow. (2001) says "...And when she travels, she drives her cats and sits in a carriage. ...". Another explanation about the character is by Larrington (1999) "...and when Thrymr goes in for a kiss beneath "Freyja's" veil, he finds "her" eyes to be terrifying, and he jumps down the hall. ...". So, if the appearance of Freya in this game is compared to the original mythology, there is no similarity. The most obvious reason is because the original mythology mentioned her as a rider on cat and has a veil. Whereas in this game, she is depicted as a knight carrying a sword and shield.

From the narrative and mechanic, Lindow (2001) also mentions that "Freyja is the daughter of Njord" but the mother is not clearly decided. He mentioned that Njord has her either with his sister when he lived among the Vanir or by Skadi. Later on, more proof leads to the fact that Freyja is the daughter of Njord and Skadi since Snorri says that "Njord had two children, apparently by Skadi", in which he first introduces Frey and Freyja, saying that they were both good-looking and powerful. Freyja is the most excellent of the goddesses. She has that homestead in heaven which is called Folkvang, and wherever she rides to battle she has half the dead, and Odin half. "Njord and Frey,

have no such connection. Indeed, the word Snorri used for the dead whom Freyja shares equally with Odin refers to those who die in battle. This association with the battle-dead may also underlie Freyja's connection with the eternal battle of the Hjadningavig, which has obvious parallels to the endless battles of the einherjar." This statement is in accordance with Freya's narrative in this game. Freya brought the souls of those who died on the battlefield and headed to Valhalla. In the mechanics are different. Freya in this game took part in the battlefield and joined, swinging the sword. Yet in the original mythology, Freya only took fallen souls.

Freya's passive skill is power of einherjar. In Norse mythology, the einherjar is a word taken from old Norse literally means "army of one", "those who fight alone". It refers to warriors who died on the battlefield and whose spirits were carried by Valkyrie to Valhalla (Rudolf, 1993).

Freya has a fighting spirit like a knight who slaughtered her enemies by herself. Her first skill is Leap of faith. It symbolizes her existence as a goddess of war who uses his sword to break the enemy's unity with one jump. Her second skill is Spirit combo. Spirit combo is a skill of Freya combined with other skills, uniting all forces into warriors fighting alone. Her ultimate skill is Valkyrie descent. Freya is a nation of Valkyries carrying the spirits of warriors who have fallen to Valhalla. Freya's Ultimate represents a Valkyrie who has wings and combines his sword and shield into an axe.

The adaptation of Freya's appearance is not the same as the original. according to the myth, she was dressed in a graceful hooded and riding a cat. On the contrary, in this game, Freya's figure is shown with a limp armor and a sword and shield. In the adaptation of the narrative, Freya in mythology is described as having a twin brother named Frey and a son from Njord. While in the game Freya's lineage is not explained but it explains Freya's task of bringing the spirit of a fallen knight on the battlefield and bringing it to Valhalla or the Temple of Heroes. It is directly likened to the original mythology. Meanwhile, in terms of mechanics, Freya's ability to fight in the game is evident. She has the soul of a brave female knight who aims to die on the battlefield. It was a bit of a change from Freya's duty of leading the war and bringing the souls of the fallen to Valhalla.

Figure 3. Gatotkacha

The other hero character in the game is Gatotkaca. Gatotkaca is described as an adult man with a thin beard. Saptodewo 2015 describes Gatotkaca's physical appearance. He says that the male hero has big eyes, small nose with beard and mustache, strong arms and strong features. He has this special Javanese hair style called *sangul kadal nenek* and wears Javanese traditional royal armor with a kind of Garuda wing at the back. It is also described that he wears bracelets, traditional necklace, and Javanese royal head band. Everything attached to his body is Javanese traditional royal costume and he wears it with complete accessory.

Gatotkacha is one of the puppet figures from Java. In terms of appearance, it is in accordance with the description of the original mythological source. He has a mustache, beard, and so on. From the narrative, Rafika and Dendi (2018) mentions, in the attributes Gatotkacha wears, there were symbols that explain his position in the kingdom, which is Pringgadani Kingdom. He was a young King, a successor of his mother, Dewi Arimbi. The narration also explains the reason behind the complete attributes as part of his outfit.

From the original mythological information, Gatotkacha is the son of Bima and Arimbi. It fits with narrative in this game that says the same thing. From the mechanics, Saptodewo 2016 further says, the Gods made a kind of porridge filled with spells and blessings of magical power. The blessings resulted to extraordinary features Gatotkacha had like strong muscles as it they were made of wire, hard bones as if they were made of steel, extraordinary blood as if it could stick together like glue. He also had the ability to fly with lightning speed and sit on the cloud in the sky.

The statement is in accordance with Gatotkaca's ultimate in this game. He jumps to the designated area, knocking nearby enemies into the air and dealing easily with magical damage. The Steel bones in passive Gatotkaca are in accordance with the Javanese proverb that says "iron bone wire muscles". Therefore, it is passive Gatotkaca according to the abilities it has in mythology. His first skill in the game is blasting iron

fist. With this skill, he could spit out a crack in the ground. The ability of Gatotkacha in the Myth which has very hard limbs is in accordance with the skills in the game. His second skill is Unbreakable. Gatotkacha moves forward to his enemy and slows down the enemy's movement. When he attacks, the enemy's blood will decrease. He has an unbreakable body. His ultimate skill is Avatar of guardian. Gatotkacha can jump on the enemies and give magic damage and Knock-up effects to his enemies within his area of attack.

Gatotkaca's adaptation of the original mythology into the game is completely the same. Saptodewo's statement (2016) is perfectly visualized to the character of Gatotkacha character in the game, including having a beard, mustache, and wearing royal clothes. The narrative adaptation of Gatotkacha is also likened to the original mythology. He is the son of Bima and Arimbi, who is also mentioned as part of a clan called the Five Pandavas. His magical features described in the old mythology is are performed similarly in the game as well. Likewise, in the game he is presented as having the same ability as the second skill which advances and forces the enemy to attack him, but the enemy will be hit by a counterattack. He can also fly and hit the ground in exactly the same way as the ability Gatotkacha had in the original mythology. The adaptation of Gatotkacha is taken entirely the same by the developer.

CONCLUSION

In *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang,* there are thirty characters adapted from mythology in several regions. The researcher took the physical appearance, narrative and mechanics of each adapted character. In conclusion, ninety data found were then compared with the original mythology from various sources.

Of the thirty characters in Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, they are divided into four, namely; Goddesses, humans, elves and giants. Humans, elves and giants were united into creatures. Meanwhile, the dominance of characters adapted from mythology are the ten elf races. The elves are told from Nordic mythology. The reason behind it is because Nordic mythology is the most popular, although it is still younger than Greek mythology. It was popular though films, game, and many other entertainments that are adapted from Nordic. Then Mobile Legends: Bang Bang takes more characters from Nordic mythology than other mythologies.

The adaptations taken by Mobile Legends: Bang Bang that are most similar to the original mythology is Gatotkacha from the God and Goddess character, compared

with the character of Gatotkacha in one of the puppet figures from Java. It can be seen from its appearance in the game which is closely resembling the description of the original mythological source. He has a mustache, beard, and royal outfit with complete attribute. From the original mythological information, Gatotkacha is the son of Bima and Arimbi. It fits with narrative in this game which says the same thing. His ultimate is the jumps to the designated area, knocking nearby enemies into the air and dealing Magic Damage. It is also in accordance with the original mythology.

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