

Survivals of Polytheism and the Monotheistic Order: Intertextuality between the “End of the Age of Gods” Narrative in the Game Fate/Grand Order and the Historical Memory of the Catholic “Conquest of Paganism”

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Abstract

This paper examines the intertextual relationship between the “End of the Age of Gods” narrative in the mobile game Fate/Grand Order (FGO) and the historical memory of the Catholic “conquest of paganism”. It argues that FGO’s depiction of the transition from a polytheistic “Age of Gods”, characterized by direct divine intervention and mystery, to a human-dominated “Human Order” governed by reason and science, resonates deeply with the historical Catholic narrative framing the triumph of monotheism over pagan religions. Through comparative analysis, the study explores how both discourses construct a binary of decline and ascendancy: FGO portrays the inevitable waning of divine authority enabling human agency, mirroring the Catholic historical memory that positions the suppression of polytheism as a necessary step towards establishing a singular divine order and human civilization. The paper analyzes shared thematic elements (divine decline, human ascendancy, transition), narrative structures (linear progression, teleology), and symbolic representations within both FGO’s fictional universe and Catholic historical discourse. It concludes that this intertextuality reveals how contemporary media like FGO unconsciously engages with and reconfigures deep-seated historical and theological narratives concerning the shift from polytheism to monotheism/humanism, highlighting enduring cultural anxieties and ideological frameworks surrounding religion, power, and historical progress.

Keywords

Fate/Grand Order, End of the Age of Gods, Catholic Church, Conquest of paganism, Intertextuality, Polytheism, Monotheism, Historical memory, Narrative structure, Cultural discourse

Introduction

Research background and significance

This paper introduces the complex interplay between ancient polytheistic traditions and the rise of monotheistic dominance, focusing specifically on the narrative framework within the popular mobile game Fate/Grand Order (FGO) and its depiction of the “End of the Age of Gods”. This transition, central to FGO’s lore, depicts a world irrevocably shifting from an era governed by divine beings and potent Mystery to one defined by human agency and the secularizing “Human Order”. The significance of examining this fictional narrative lies in its potent reflection, and potential reimagining, of profound historical and theological shifts, particularly the

historical Catholic Church’s efforts to assert monotheistic supremacy and suppress pagan practices across Europe and beyond. Understanding FGO’s “God’s End” narrative requires acknowledging its roots in the fundamental conflict between diverse, localized divine powers characteristic of polytheism and the universalizing, often exclusive claims of monotheistic faiths like Catholicism. Monotheism’s assertion of a single, supreme deity inherently challenges the legitimacy of other gods, framing them as false idols or demons, a theological stance that historically justified efforts towards conversion or suppression [1-2].

This paper positions FGO’s fictional “God’s End” not

merely as a fantastical plot device but as a culturally resonant narrative echoing the deep-seated historical memory, particularly within Western traditions shaped by Christianity, of monotheism's perceived triumph over polytheism. The Catholic Church's long history, from the Christianization of the Roman Empire to the evangelization of the Americas and beyond, is replete with narratives framing this process as a necessary "conquest" of paganism - the bringing of divine truth and order to lands perceived as steeped in error and chaos [3]. This historical memory, often simplified and mythologized itself, forms a crucial intertext for analyzing FGO's depiction of divine decline.

FGO masterfully synthesizes diverse global mythologies - Mesopotamian, Greek, Norse, Celtic, Hindu, and others - portraying a vibrant, yet ultimately unsustainable, "Age of Gods" where deities directly influenced the physical world and human affairs. Characters like Gilgamesh, the King of Heroes, embody the early tension between divine authority and burgeoning human potential. His story arc, particularly in the Babylonian Singularity, highlights the inherent flaws and limitations of God-kings and sets the stage for humanity's eventual self-determination.

The pivotal figure of Solomon, the Mage King, directly orchestrates the transition within the game's lore. His act of "returning" his gifts to God, facilitated by the enigmatic Romani Archaman, signifies the deliberate severing of humanity's direct dependence on divine thaumaturgy, forcing the establishment of the "Human Order" - a system of reality sustained by collective human belief and reason, inherently hostile to the unrestrained power of deities. This narrative arc mirrors, in a secularized and fictionalized form, the historical Catholic narrative where the "true faith" supplants "pagan error", establishing a new, divinely sanctioned order [4-5].

The game's mechanics reinforce this theme, the "Human Order Foundation" actively suppresses the manifestation of divine spirits and "Age of Gods"-level threats, functioning as a secularized "divine will" maintaining the current era. The theoretical grounding for this analysis draws upon concepts of cultural memory and narrative intertextuality. Cultural memory refers to the shared, often selective, recollection of the past that shapes group identity and understanding of the present. The Catholic narrative of "conquering paganism" is a potent element

of Western cultural memory, influencing perceptions of religion, history, and civilization's progression [6-7]. Intertextuality posits that texts (including narratives in games like FGO) gain meaning through their relationship to other texts and cultural discourses. FGO's "God's End" narrative, therefore, resonates deeply because it engages with, reinterprets, and potentially critiques this underlying historical memory of monotheistic ascendancy [8].

The methodology employed in this section is primarily textual and comparative analysis. Textual analysis involves a close reading of FGO's narrative elements to identify how the "End of the Age of Gods" is constructed, the symbolism employed, and the thematic emphasis on transition and human agency. Comparative analysis then places this fictional narrative alongside historical accounts and theological frameworks concerning the Catholic Church's engagement with pagan religions. This involves examining historical texts, theological justifications for conversion and suppression, and scholarly interpretations of these events to identify structural parallels, shared motifs (e.g., the triumph of order over chaos, truth over falsehood), and divergences. For instance, while the Catholic narrative often presents the transition as divinely ordained progress, FGO frequently portrays the "God's End" with a sense of profound loss - the fading of wonder, the diminishment of Mystery, and the melancholic departure of divine beings from the human sphere. This nuanced comparison allows for a richer understanding of both the historical memory and its contemporary fictional re-engagement. Key examples illustrate this parallel. The Catholic Church frequently co-opted or reconfigured pagan sites and festivals, integrating them into Christian practice while asserting dominance. Similarly, FGO depicts ancient gods often diminished, transformed, or forced into roles incompatible with their original nature within the constraints of the "Human Order". The historical justification for suppressing pagan practices often cited moral and theological corruption. FGO's narrative sometimes portrays the "Age of Gods" itself as unsustainable due to divine capriciousness, stagnation, or conflict, necessitating the shift to human governance. The significance of this exploration is multifaceted. It demonstrates how contemporary popular culture, particularly complex narratives within games, engages

with deep historical and theological currents. FGO provides a sophisticated platform for players to encounter and reflect upon the profound historical shift from polytheism to monotheism/humanism, albeit through a fictionalized and fantastical lens. Secondly, by highlighting the intertextuality between FGO and Catholic historical memory, this paper offers a new lens for analyzing both the game's narrative depth and the enduring power of religious historical narratives in shaping cultural imagination. It reveals how the game potentially critiques a purely triumphalist view of monotheistic ascendancy by emphasizing the cost of this transition - the loss of a world imbued with direct divine presence and magic. Conversely, it also shows how the game borrows the structural framework of a fundamental "transition of eras" central to monotheistic historical identity. Understanding this intertextuality contributes to broader discussions about secularization narratives and the complex legacy of religious encounters in shaping modern worldviews, showing how fictionalized pasts continue to dialogue with remembered histories. The research boundaries acknowledge the vast scope of both FGO's expansive lore and the intricate history of Catholic-pagan interactions. Future research could delve deeper into specific mythological systems within FGO (e.g., Norse, Mesoamerican) and their unique portrayal of divine decline or conduct audience reception studies to explore how players interpret the "God's End" theme. It could also undertake more granular comparisons with specific historical episodes of Catholic evangelization and their documented justifications.

This paper establishes that FGO's "End of the Age of Gods" narrative functions as a significant contemporary intertext for the historical memory of Catholicism's "conquest of paganism". It reveals shared themes of epochal transition and human ascendancy while allowing for critical reflection on the costs and complexities inherent in such foundational historical and theological shifts.

Literature review and theoretical framework

This section reviews existing scholarship on the narrative structure of Fate/Grand Order (FGO), the broader concept of the "Death of God(s)", and the historical discourse surrounding the Catholic "conquest of paganism". This establishes the theoretical foundation for analyzing the intertextual relationship between

FGO's "End of the Age of Gods" narrative and Catholic historical memory. The literature reveals significant parallels yet under-explored connections, positioning this analysis within specific theoretical currents.

Research on FGO's narrative structure often focuses on its intricate blending of global mythologies and historical figures within a science-fantasy framework. Scholars frequently analyze how the game employs concepts like "Human Order" and "Incinerated History" to drive a plot centered on preserving human history against existential threats. The "End of the Age of Gods" is consistently identified as a pivotal background event within the game's lore. This event signifies the forced transition from an era dominated by supernatural beings and Mystery to an age governed by human reason and science, where the influence of deities and the potency of magic drastically wane. While the mythological richness and the mechanics of this transition within the game's universe are well-documented, less attention has been paid to how this specific narrative trope resonates with broader historical and theological narratives concerning the decline of polytheistic systems. This gap highlights the potential for reading FGO's "God's Death" not merely as fantasy but as a cultural artifact reflecting deeper historical processes embedded in collective memory.

The concept of the "Death of God(s)" has profound roots in theological and philosophical discourse. Friedrich Nietzsche's declaration remains a cornerstone, signaling the perceived decline of religious authority in the modern secular West. The phenomenon extends beyond philosophical abstraction into historical shifts. Discussions about the displacement of polytheistic systems by monotheistic ones, particularly in the Mediterranean world and later through colonialism, are central to understanding this concept historically. Scholarship explores how this "death" was not always a natural evolution but often involved active suppression and replacement. Research on how monotheistic religions, including Catholicism, interpreted and often actively suppressed earlier mythologies provides crucial context. Studies like those examining the relationship between mythology and religion note that monotheistic traditions frequently positioned themselves against polytheistic myth, framing the latter as falsehood or demonic influence. Analysis of monotheism itself,

particularly in its Abrahamic forms, often highlights its exclusivist claims and tendency towards supersessionism - the belief that it replaces and fulfills prior religious traditions [9]. This theological stance underpinned much of the historical “conquest” narrative. While the philosophical concept of “God’s Death” is widely discussed, its connection to specific historical processes of religious displacement, particularly as remembered and narrated by the conquering tradition, requires further synthesis, especially in relation to contemporary cultural expressions like FGO.

The historical memory of the Catholic Church’s “conquest of paganism” constitutes a vast and complex field. This encompasses early Christian engagement with Greco-Roman religions, medieval missionary activities and conversion efforts (sometimes forced), the Church’s role in colonization, and its interactions with indigenous belief systems globally. Catholic historical discourse, both internal and external, has often framed this process as a divinely ordained triumph of truth over error, light over darkness, and order over chaos. This narrative is deeply intertwined with the construction of Catholic identity and its claim to universality. Historical scholarship critically examines these narratives, revealing the political, economic, and cultural power dynamics involved, alongside the undeniable instances of coercion, violence, and cultural destruction. Works like *The 272* starkly illustrate the entanglement of institutional church growth with deeply unethical practices like slavery. Studies on Catholic intellectual history and transnational anti-communism demonstrate how narratives of defending “true” faith against perceived modern “paganisms” persisted well into the 20th century. Similarly, research on Catholic nationalism in America shows how a previously persecuted minority could adopt narratives of establishing a religiously informed social order [10]. Investigations into specific contexts, such as Scottish Catholicism or African philosophy of religion encountering Western monotheism, further emphasize the diversity of experiences and the complex legacies of these encounters [11]. Crucially, this historical discourse is not static; it is actively shaped, memorialized, and sometimes contested within Catholic tradition and historiography. The literature demonstrates how the “conquest” narrative functions as a powerful form of collective memory,

servicing theological, ideological, and identity-forming purposes for the Church, often downplaying complexity in favor of a linear story of progress and divine sanction. The theoretical basis for this analysis draws significantly on concepts of historical memory and cultural intertextuality. Memory studies, focusing on how communities construct and transmit narratives of the past, provide the lens through which both the Catholic “conquest” narrative and FGO’s “End of the Age of Gods” are understood as constructed representations, not objective history. These narratives serve present needs, shaping identity and worldview. Intertextuality, the understanding that texts (broadly defined, including historical narratives and cultural products like games) exist in dialogue with and reference other texts, allows this analysis to trace the echoes and resonances between the Catholic historical discourse and FGO’s fictional world. The core theoretical proposition is that FGO’s depiction of a forced, often violent transition from a divine age to a human one, driven by figures embodying new orders, functions as a cultural re-imagining and re-mediation of the historical memory embedded in the Catholic narrative of monotheistic triumph over polytheism. Both narratives share core structural elements: a binary opposition between an old, “chaotic” or “false” divine order and a new, “rational” or “true” order. The necessity of active intervention (often conflict) to achieve the transition, and a sense of historical inevitability or divine purpose behind the shift. This analysis seeks to uncover how these shared structures and themes operate across different cultural registers.

Therefore, existing scholarship establishes a clear foundation: FGO’s narrative structure centers on the transition away from the “Age of Gods”. The “Death of God(s)” is a profound philosophical and historical phenomenon, and Catholic historical memory actively constructs a narrative of triumphant conquest over paganism. The specific intertextual connection - how FGO’s fantasy narrative re-engages and potentially reconfigures the deep structures and cultural memory of the Catholic “conquest” narrative - remains underexplored. This gap forms the critical space for this analysis. The theoretical tools of historical memory and intertextuality provide the framework for bridging this gap, moving beyond isolated analysis of either the game or the historical discourse to examine their dialogue. This

approach acknowledges the power of cultural products like games to rework historical and religious themes, making implicit memories explicit in new and often critical ways. The methods employed are primarily textual analysis and historical-comparative analysis, focusing on narrative structures, symbolic representations, and thematic parallels within the primary texts of FGO's story chapters and key documents or historical accounts representing the Catholic "conquest" discourse. This involves close reading to identify shared motifs (e.g., the framing of the old gods as obstacles to progress or humanity, the role of chosen agents enacting the transition) and contrasting perspectives on agency, loss, and the nature of the "new order".

The limitations of this approach primarily involve the scope of comparison. The historical complexities of the Catholic Church's encounters with diverse pagan traditions over centuries are immense, and this analysis cannot capture all nuances, focusing instead on dominant narrative structures within Catholic memory. Similarly, FGO's narrative evolves across multiple story arcs. Future research could extend this intertextual analysis to other game narratives dealing with religious transition or compare FGO's treatment to depictions of Christianization in other media. Exploring the reception of these narratives by players and faith communities would offer valuable insights into their contemporary cultural impact.

The conclusion drawn is that FGO's "End of the Age of Gods" narrative functions as a potent, modern re-articulation of deep-seated cultural memories surrounding the historical transition from polytheism to monotheistic dominance, particularly as narrated within the Catholic tradition. This narrative thereby reveals enduring anxieties and mythic structures concerning divine authority and human autonomy. Recognizing this intertextuality offers a deeper understanding of how historical and religious themes continue to shape contemporary storytelling and provides a framework for analyzing the cultural work performed by popular media in renegotiating complex historical legacies.

Research objectives and methodology

This paper aims to explore the complex intertextual relationship between the "End of the Age of Gods" narrative central to the mobile game Fate/Grand Order (FGO) and historical Catholic narratives framing the

"conquest of paganism". This investigation delves into how FGO constructs a mythological transition from polytheistic divine rule to human-centric governance, mirroring themes found within Catholic historical memory concerning the suppression and conversion of pagan religions in Europe and beyond. The analysis seeks to uncover shared structural elements, symbolic representations, and underlying cultural logics that bind these seemingly disparate narratives across media and historical epochs. By examining this connection, the paper contributes to understanding how foundational myths of transition, decline, and supersession are constructed and repurposed within contemporary popular culture, drawing upon deep-seated historical and theological motifs. The theoretical foundation rests upon concepts of intertextuality, cultural memory studies, and the critical analysis of religious narratives concerning polytheism and monotheism. Building on scholarship examining the inherent tensions and philosophical implications of monotheism's rise, and the specific historical processes of Catholic expansion and its ideological justifications, this paper innovates by applying this critical lens to a modern, globally consumed interactive media text. It moves beyond traditional historical or theological analysis of monotheism's emergence by juxtaposing it with a fictional, yet culturally resonant, depiction of divine decline within a Japanese game, thereby revealing transhistorical patterns in how societies narrate shifts in cosmic order and authority. The core theoretical innovation lies in demonstrating how FGO's fantastical "God's Death" serves as a potent, albeit fictionalized, echo chamber for the deeply ingrained historical memory of monotheistic triumph over paganism, particularly as articulated within Catholic tradition. This approach challenges simplistic divisions between sacred history and secular entertainment, revealing how foundational cultural scripts persist and transform.

To achieve these objectives, the paper employs a rigorous methodological framework centered on comparative textual analysis and intertextual critique. Primary sources form the bedrock of the investigation. For FGO, this entails a close reading of the game's main story chapters (particularly those focusing on the "Age of Gods" like the Babylonian and Atlantic Lostbelts), character profiles (especially pivotal figures like Gilgamesh, King

Solomon, and Merlin), official lore materials (such as materials books), and significant in-game dialogues that explicitly address the theme of the “God’s Death” and the transition to the “Human Order”. Regarding the Catholic historical dimension, primary sources include key theological texts outlining the relationship between the Church and pagan practices (e.g., documents from Ecumenical Councils, papal encyclicals). They also include historical chronicles detailing conversion efforts and the suppression of pagan sites and rituals, as well as hagiographies that often dramatize the conflict between saintly figures and pagan deities or rulers. Secondary scholarship analyzing both the game’s narrative construction and the historical realities and representations of Catholic “conquest” provides essential contextualization and theoretical grounding.

The methodology involves several distinct but interrelated analytical steps. First, textual analysis is applied to dissect the narrative structure, character arcs, symbolic language, and thematic underpinnings of FGO’s “End of the Age of Gods”. This involves identifying how the game portrays the causes, mechanisms (e.g., Sefar’s invasion, Solomon’s sacrifice), and consequences of this cosmic shift, emphasizing its depiction as an inevitable or necessary transition driven by key agents. Second, historical-textual analysis examines Catholic sources, focusing on how the “conquest of paganism” is narrated. This includes the theological justifications provided (e.g., uniqueness of Christ, demonization of pagan gods), the strategies employed (missionary work, destruction of temples, syncretism), and the framing of this process as a divinely ordained progression towards truth and order, often linked to notions of civilization itself. Third, the core comparative analysis systematically juxtaposes these two corpuses. The paper identifies specific points of intertextual resonance: (1) Parallels in narrative structure (e.g., a linear progression from divine/pagan chaos to monotheistic/ “Human Order”). (2) Shared symbolic representations (e.g., light vs. darkness, true faith vs. idolatry/demonic influence). (3) recurring character archetypes (e.g., the divinely chosen king/hero facilitating the transition, the resistant pagan figure embodying a dying era). (4) Underlying ideological themes (e.g., the necessity of supersession, the association of the old gods and ways with decline or

corruption, the assertion of a new universal order). For instance, Solomon’s pivotal role in FGO, orchestrating the end of mystery to ensure humanity’s autonomous future, is analyzed for its potential echoes of figures like Emperor Constantine or pivotal Church Fathers whose actions were framed as establishing Christendom over paganism.

This comparative approach avoids simplistic historical equivalence. Instead, it uses intertextuality as a critical lens to illuminate how FGO creatively re-appropriates and reconfigures deep-seated cultural memories and narrative patterns related to religious transformation and cultural hegemony. The paper examines how FGO’s syncretic approach, blending diverse global mythologies, interacts with the Catholic narrative’s more exclusivist claims. It also explores potential subversions or critical commentaries within FGO’s narrative, such as the ambiguity surrounding the “Human Order’s” moral superiority or the tragic dimensions of the gods’ decline. The analysis incorporates concepts from cultural memory studies to understand how both FGO and Catholic historical narratives function as acts of remembrance, shaping collective understanding of origins and identity through the selective framing of a foundational transition. The methodologies employed - close reading, historical contextualization, comparative thematic analysis, and intertextual critique - are specifically chosen for their ability to unravel the complex layers of meaning generated by the juxtaposition of these two discursive fields.

Through this focused exploration, the paper forms concrete conclusions. It establishes that FGO’s “End of the Age of Gods” narrative functions as a significant intertextual reworking of themes deeply embedded in Western historical consciousness, particularly resonant with the Catholic Church’s historical narrative of overcoming pagan religions. This intertextuality is demonstrably evident in shared structural motifs of inevitable transition, symbolic representations of old vs. new orders, and archetypal figures facilitating change. The paper concludes that analyzing popular media like FGO through this lens provides crucial insights into the enduring power and adaptability of foundational cultural scripts concerning divine authority, human autonomy, and cultural supersession. These scripts, originating in specific historical contexts like the Christianization of

Europe, continue to inform contemporary narratives, even within non-Western and ostensibly secular media forms. The comparison reveals both continuities in how societies narrate epochal shifts and the transformative potential inherent in cultural re-appropriation. This understanding offers valuable perspectives for scholars in game studies seeking to decode the complex cultural layers within interactive narratives, for historians analyzing the long-term impact and representation of religious transformations, and for cultural theorists examining the transmission and mutation of deep-seated ideological narratives across time and media. The paper acknowledges the limitation of primarily focusing on Catholic historical memory within a specific Western context. Future research could productively extend this intertextual analysis to explore parallels with narratives of religious or ideological transition in other monotheistic or non-monotheistic traditions globally or examine how players themselves interpret and negotiate these historical echoes within the game experience.

The End of the “Age of Gods” in “Fate/Grand Order”

Mythological foundations and narrative structure

This section examines the foundational myths and narrative architecture underpinning the depiction of the “Age of Gods” within Fate/Grand Order (FGO). It analyzes how the game synthesizes diverse mythological traditions to construct a world inherently defined by the waning of divine authority and the concurrent, inevitable rise of human agency. The narrative structure itself becomes a vehicle for exploring this profound transition, moving beyond mere storytelling to embody a core thematic principle.

FGO’s “Age of Gods” is not a monolithic entity drawn from a single tradition. Instead, it is a deliberate, intricate tapestry woven from threads of numerous global mythologies - Mesopotamian, Greek, Norse, Celtic, Egyptian, Hindu, and more. This deliberate syncretism is crucial. It allows the game to present a universalized concept of the divine era, characterized by a world saturated with Mystery and governed directly by deities and powerful elemental spirits. Divine authority was not abstract; it was tangible, shaping reality through the will of gods and the potent energies suffusing the planet. This era represents a state where humanity existed largely

under the dominion of these higher powers, their destinies intertwined with and often subject to divine whims or cosmic forces. The game establishes this foundation by revisiting pivotal moments within these mythologies, portraying epochs like the rule of gods over Mesopotamia or the adventures of Greek heroes directly touched by the Olympians. These depictions are not mere background; they are the active stage upon which the central conflict of divine decline unfolds.

The narrative structure of FGO is intrinsically designed to chronicle the end of this era. The core premise revolves around “Human Order Foundations” - the accumulated achievements, beliefs, and collective potential of humanity that coalesce to form the stable reality governed by human laws and physics, distinct from the direct rule of gods. The game’s central conflict, the incineration of human history, is fundamentally an attack on these foundations. The player’s role as a “Master” working with summoned “Servants” (heroic spirits from across human history and mythology) to restore these foundations is inherently a mission to safeguard the era where humanity holds sovereignty. This mission necessitates traversing “Singularities” - temporal anomalies often rooted in periods where the “Age of Gods” still held significant sway or where pivotal transitions occurred. Through these journeys, the narrative explicitly demonstrates the incompatibility between the unchecked divine power of the “Age of Gods” and the sustained existence of human-centric reality. Divine authority bleeds into human determination; the era of direct divine intervention is portrayed as unsustainable, destined to recede as humanity’s collective will and capability solidify.

A key narrative technique employed is the utilization of characters who embody the transition. Servants originating from the twilight of their respective divine ages frequently grapple with their legacy and the changing world. King Gilgamesh, a pivotal figure originating from Uruk during the Mesopotamian “Age of Gods”, is consistently portrayed as a bridge. His narrative arc explores the tension between his divine heritage and his role as a king governing humanity. He often champions human potential and defiance against divine tyranny, positioning himself as a catalyst for the shift away from godly dominion. Similarly, the figure of Solomon, deeply rooted in Abrahamic monotheism,

plays a critical role in the game's overarching lore concerning the 'end of magic' and the solidification of "Human Order". His actions, though complex and controversial within the narrative, are framed as instrumental in establishing the conditions where Mystery diminishes and human reason/science can flourish. These characters are not passive observers; their stories and conflicts are the narrative enactment of the decline of "Age of Gods".

The game's mechanics and setting reinforce this thematic structure. The concept of "Mana" depletion and the increasing difficulty for entities of pure Mystery to exist in the modern world are constant narrative pressures. The "Lostbelts" - divergent timelines pruned from "proper human history" - often showcase worlds where the "Age of Gods" never properly ended or where different forms of non-human authority (like alien gods) dominate, presenting them as stagnant, oppressive, or ultimately doomed alternatives to the path of "Human Order". These alternative timelines serve as potent counter-narratives, highlighting the perceived necessity and inevitability of the divine era's conclusion within the game's core worldview. The narrative structure consistently positions the successful establishment and defense of "Human Order", governed by human agency and the laws of physics, as the desirable and "correct" historical trajectory, achieved only through the overcoming of divine or similarly absolute powers.

This construction of the "Age of Gods" and its structured decline serve a specific purpose within FGO's grand narrative. It is not merely a setting for fantastical battles; it is the foundational past against which the present "Human Order" is defined and valorized. The blending of diverse mythologies into a singular, albeit varied, concept of the divine era allows the game to present the "End of the Age of Gods" as a universal, almost metaphysical, turning point in the history of the planet. This narrative choice sets the stage for the exploration of its intertextual echoes with historical monotheistic narratives of pagan suppression and the establishment of a new order. The narrative meticulously builds a world where divine power, while immense and awe-inspiring, is ultimately depicted as incompatible with the flourishing of autonomous human history, necessitating its recession and replacement by the era defined by mankind's own potential and limitations.

The transition from polytheism to "Human Order"

This section explores how Fate/Grand Order (FGO) portrays the fundamental shift from an era governed by polytheistic deities, known as the "Age of Gods", to an era centered on human agency and governance, termed the "Human Order". This narrative transition is not presented as a natural, inevitable evolution but as a complex, often deliberate, process of supersession. This draws distinct parallels to historical processes of secularization and the suppression of pre-monotheistic religious systems observed in human history, particularly those documented within Catholic historical memory. The paper argues that FGO utilizes this mythological framework not merely for world-building but to engage critically with narratives of historical progress defined by the triumph of one worldview over another.

The foundation of this transition in FGO lies in the inherent nature of the "Age of Gods" itself. This era is characterized by the direct, tangible presence and rule of diverse pantheons (Greek, Norse, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, etc.), where divine authority, manifesting through powerful Mystery and the planet's own will (Gaia), superseded human potential. Human civilization existed under the direct sway of these deities, limiting the scope for purely human-defined societal structures and scientific progress. The "Human Order", conversely, represents a paradigm shift where humanity's collective unconscious, will, and achievements form the bedrock of civilization. This shift necessitates the removal of the gods as active rulers and the weakening of Mystery, allowing for the rise of human reason, technology, and self-determination. The paper contends that FGO frames these moves not necessarily as "progress" in a linear, positive sense, but as a profound alteration in the world's underlying rules and power structures. The concept resonates with broader theological and philosophical critiques of polytheism often found in monotheistic traditions, which associate polytheism with chaos, irrationality, and a lack of ultimate moral order, positioning the "Human Order" as bringing structure and rationality, albeit at a cost.

A pivotal narrative device illustrating this forced transition is the figure of King Solomon, specifically his final act: the voluntary relinquishing and destruction of his own magic circuits, an event termed the "Incident at the Temple of Time". Solomon, a key figure bridging

divine magic and human kingship, recognizes that the continued dominance of Mystery and the lingering influence of the divine inhibit humanity's true potential and autonomy. His act of severing his connection to the Root and the gods' power is framed as a necessary sacrifice to catalyze the establishment of the "Human Order". This deliberate, self-inflicted termination of divine power to enable human ascension presents a stark parallel to historical narratives where monotheistic institutions actively suppressed pagan practices and temples to establish their own theological and social order. Solomon's act symbolizes the active rejection of divine rule required for the "Human Order" to emerge, mirroring historical moments where the "old gods" were deliberately dethroned to make way for the new paradigm. Similarly, the character of Gilgamesh, particularly in his Archer incarnation, embodies the tension inherent in this transition. As the "King of Heroes" who actively rejected the gods of Uruk, seeking immortality for himself rather than submitting to divine decree, he represents an early, potent assertion of human will against divine authority, foreshadowing the eventual end of the "Age of Gods". His journey, from divine instrument to defiant king, encapsulates the struggle for autonomy that defines the shift.

The parallels to historical secularization, particularly within the context of Catholic expansion and the suppression of indigenous religions, are significant. Catholic historical memory often frames the "conquest of paganism" as a divinely ordained mission, replacing local deities and rituals with the singular worship of the Christian God and establishing Church authority. This involved not just theological argument but frequently the physical destruction of pagan sites, the suppression of rituals, and the absorption or demonization of local deities. FGO's depiction of the "Human Order" supplanting the "Age of Gods" echoes this dynamic. The "Human Order", while ostensibly secular, functions similarly to the monotheistic paradigm - it demands a singular framework for reality (physics and human history), actively marginalizes or eliminates competing worldviews (divine Mystery), and establishes its own governing "authorities" (the Mage's Association, the Counter Force). The process is presented in the game as often violent and disruptive, involving the erasure of entire divine civilizations and their ways of life, much

like the cultural destruction wrought by religious conquests and colonial expansions documented in Catholic history. The paper observes that FGO does not shy away from depicting the loss and tragedy inherent in this supersession, complicating any simple narrative of unalloyed progress.

The mechanisms of this transition in FGO resonate with historical processes of cultural memory formation and suppression explored in studies of religious change. The "Human Order" actively filters and reconstructs history, relegating the "Age of Gods" to legend and myth - effectively severing it from the operative reality of the present. This mirrors how dominant religious narratives, like Catholicism, historically absorbed or overwrote pagan festivals, symbols, and holy sites, reinterpreting them within their own theological framework while suppressing the original context. The "Lostbelts" story arc in FGO powerfully illustrates the consequences of failing to complete this transition or clinging to the "Age of Gods". These divergent timelines, frozen in eras still dominated by divine or alien entities (like the Russian Lostbelt ruled by the remnant of the god-like alien tree, or the Greek Lostbelt where the Olympian Machine Gods persist), are depicted as stagnant, doomed deviations from "proper human history". The protagonists' mission to prune these timelines reinforces the narrative that the "Human Order", despite its flaws and the violence of its establishment, represents the singular, legitimate path for human survival and development - a perspective reminiscent of triumphalist historical narratives found in monotheistic traditions.

This section demonstrates that FGO's portrayal of the transition from polytheistic divine rule to the "Human Order" is a sophisticated narrative device deeply engaged with historical and theological concepts of paradigm shift. By framing it as a deliberate act of supersession, often involving sacrifice, violence, and the erasure of competing realities, the game draws compelling parallels to historical secularization processes, particularly the Catholic "conquest of paganism" as understood through its historical memory. The paper finds that FGO utilizes figures like Solomon and Gilgamesh, alongside concepts like the suppression of Mystery and the pruning of divergent timelines, to critically explore the costs, mechanisms, and ideological underpinnings of such foundational transitions. The narrative suggests that the

establishment of any dominant order, be it the “Human Order” or a monotheistic faith, necessitates the marginalization or elimination of alternative worldviews, raising questions about progress, loss, and the nature of historical legitimacy. This analysis highlights the value of popular media like FGO in reflecting upon and interrogating complex historical and religious themes, particularly the construction of cultural memory around moments of profound societal change. Future research could further explore the reception of these themes among the game’s diverse global audience and conduct deeper comparative analyses of specific historical case studies of religious transition beyond the European Catholic tradition.

Key characters and symbolism

This section examines pivotal characters within Fate/Grand Order (FGO) who embody the transition from divine to human sovereignty, analyzing their symbolic roles in the collapse of the “Age of Gods”. Utilizing textual analysis and comparative mythology, this paper argues that figures like Gilgamesh and Solomon function not merely as historical or mythical echoes but as deliberate narrative constructs representing the philosophical and theological shift central to the game’s core theme. Their narratives resonate with broader historical and theological patterns, particularly the monotheistic assertion over polytheistic systems, creating a potent intertextual dialogue.

Gilgamesh, the King of Uruk, serves as a foundational archetype for human potential surpassing divine dependency. Rooted in the ancient Mesopotamian Epic, FGO’s Gilgamesh embodies the nascent human drive towards self-determination. His legend intrinsically involves challenging divine authority, notably his defiance of Ishtar and rejection of her advances, leading to divine retribution which he actively confronts. This defiance is not mere rebellion but signifies a fundamental shift: the capacity of humanity to operate outside the immediate dictates of the gods. His possession of the “Gate of Babylon”, containing all human treasures and wisdom yet to come, symbolizes the latent potential within humanity itself, a potential that ultimately renders the “Age of Gods” obsolete. His character arc, particularly in the Babylonian Singularity, underscores the necessity of human agency and governance, positioning him as a reluctant but pivotal figure in paving

the way for the “Human Order”. His journey from a tyrant reliant on divine right to a protector relying on human strength and ingenuity exemplifies the core transition.

King Solomon, Mage King, represents a far more active and decisive figure in the deliberate end of the divine era. Drawing upon Abrahamic traditions where Solomon commands spirits and possesses divinely granted wisdom, FGO reinterprets his role dramatically. Solomon is depicted as the architect of the “Human Order Foundation”, a metaphysical system designed explicitly to secure the future of humanity. Crucially, his act of “returning” the Rings of Solomon and subsequently his very existence to Heaven is framed as the ultimate, conscious act severing the direct connection between gods and the world. This act, culminating in the “Ars Nova” Noble Phantasm, is presented not just as self-sacrifice, but as the systematic dismantling of the mechanisms sustaining the “Age of Gods”. Solomon embodies the paradox of divine power wielded to definitively end divine influence, echoing narratives where divinely chosen figures enact shifts that fundamentally alter humanity’s relationship with the divine, often centralizing power in a singular divine concept or paving the way for human-centered paradigms. His actions directly catalyze the transition FGO chronicles, making him the symbolic executor of the divine era’s end.

The symbolic weight carried by these characters extends beyond their individual stories. Gilgamesh represents the possibility and prototype of human ascendancy, the proof of concept that mortals can forge their own destiny. Solomon represents the realization and institutionalization of that ascendancy through deliberate, systemic action. Both figures, through their connection to foundational myths reinterpreted through FGO’s lens, embody the philosophical confrontation between two opposing worldviews. On one side stands the inherent multiplicity and often capricious nature of polytheism (the “Age of Gods”); on the other side, the drive towards order, centralized authority, and human primacy associated with the rise of monotheistic thought and secular humanism. Their narratives, analyzed through the lens of comparative mythology and religious studies, reveal a shared symbolic language depicting the inevitable waning of direct divine rule. The game utilizes

their established mythical stature to lend legitimacy and profound weight to its central thesis of the “End of the Age of Gods”, transforming ancient kings and prophets into avatars of a cosmic transition.

Further characters reinforce this thematic tapestry. Enkidu, the divine weapon created to check Gilgamesh who becomes his closest friend, represents nature and the wild gods, ultimately siding with humanity through his bond with the king. His degradation and demise symbolize the fading of the natural world’s direct divine connection. Figures like Ishtar and Ereshkigal, powerful Mesopotamian goddesses within the Babylonian Singularity, are portrayed as immensely potent but ultimately constrained by the very nature of the fading Age they inhabit, their power waning as the Singularity collapses. Conversely, characters like Leonardo da Vinci, appearing in the guise of the Mona Lisa, represent the pinnacle of human achievement possible only after the divine era’s end - human genius and creativity flourishing in the absence of direct divine intervention. These contrasting figures collectively paint a picture of a world where divine influence becomes residual, localized, or fundamentally altered, giving way to human potential and systemic structures like Chaldea safeguarding humanity’s future.

The characterization of Gilgamesh and Solomon within FGO functions as sophisticated symbolic machinery driving the narrative of divine decline. Gilgamesh personifies the emergent human spirit capable of defying and ultimately transcending divine dependency, while Solomon acts as the conscious agent who severs the metaphysical link, actively engineering the demise of “Age of Gods”. Their stories, deeply interwoven with reinterpreted ancient myths and resonant with themes of religious and philosophical transition, provide a compelling narrative framework for exploring the complex shift from polytheistic worldviews to human-centric orders. The analysis of these key characters reveals FGO’s profound engagement with historical and theological concepts, utilizing interactive storytelling to explore the enduring cultural memory of the “conquest of paganism” and the rise of monotheism/humanism through the symbolic language of its pivotal heroes. Future research could productively extend this analysis to other key Servants across different Singularities and Lostbelts, examining regional variations in the depiction

of divine decline and its connection to specific cultural monotheistic transitions or exploring how player interaction influences the reception of these symbolic narratives. This character-centric approach offers a vital lens for understanding how contemporary media grapples with profound historical and theological shifts.

Catholic “conquest of paganism” in historical memory

Theological and historical context

The Catholic Church’s historical efforts to suppress pagan religions constitute a complex phenomenon rooted in intertwined theological convictions and pragmatic political ambitions. This section examines this context, framing the Church’s actions not merely as religious zealotry but as a program driven by a specific understanding of divine truth and the Church’s role within the temporal order. Central to the theological imperative was the doctrine of *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church there is no salvation). This doctrine, emphasizing the unique salvific role of Christ and the Church He founded, inherently positioned non-Christian religions, particularly polytheistic paganism, as obstacles to the eternal welfare of souls. The belief in a single, omnipotent God who demanded exclusive worship formed the core of Catholic identity, starkly contrasting with the pluralistic and often localized nature of pagan devotion. Pagan gods were dismissed not merely as false but as demonic entities or dangerous delusions leading humanity astray from the one true path. The perceived necessity to eradicate idolatry and spread the Gospel was thus framed as a divine mandate, a salvific duty to liberate people from error and bring them into the light of truth. Theologians like Augustine articulated frameworks justifying the coercion of belief for the ultimate good of the convert, arguing that forced adherence could lead to genuine faith over time, a notion that profoundly influenced later Church-state relations regarding religious dissent.

Concurrently, the suppression of paganism was inextricably linked to the Church’s growing political aspirations and the consolidation of its institutional power. The conversion of Emperor Constantine in the 4th century marked a pivotal shift, transforming Christianity from a persecuted sect into a religion favoured, and later mandated, by imperial authority. State power became a

crucial instrument for enforcing religious orthodoxy. Imperial edicts, such as those of Theodosius I, actively proscribed pagan sacrifices, closed temples, and revoked privileges previously held by pagan priesthoods. This alliance of Church and Empire created a powerful mechanism for imposing religious uniformity. The Christianization of Europe often proceeded hand-in-hand with political conquest. Missionary efforts were frequently supported or directly initiated by rulers seeking to unify diverse populations under a single faith that reinforced their own divinely sanctioned authority. The conversion of pagan kings and chieftains often entailed the mass baptism of their subjects, blurring the lines between genuine religious transformation and political expediency. The suppression of paganism held significant material and territorial implications. Pagan temples frequently held considerable wealth and lands. Their closure, confiscation, and often physical destruction or conversion into Christian churches transferred vast economic resources and symbolic power into the hands of the Church and its allied secular rulers. Replacing pagan sacred sites with Christian structures served as a potent symbol of the new religious and political order supplanting the old. The Church actively promoted narratives that demonized pagan practices and valorized the destruction of pagan sites as acts of piety and liberation from demonic oppression, further legitimizing the seizure of resources and the erasure of indigenous religious landscapes.

The motivations were rarely purely theological or solely political; they were deeply entangled. Theological exclusivism provided the justification and moral imperative, while political ambition and the desire for social control provided the means and often the immediate impetus for action. The Church's institutional interests - securing its dominance, expanding its influence, controlling resources, and eliminating rivals - were advanced under the banner of fulfilling a divine mission. Events like the suppression of pagan revolts in the late Roman Empire, the Frankish campaigns against the Saxons under Charlemagne (which involved forced conversions and destruction of pagan sites), the often-violent Christianization of the Baltic regions, and the Spanish Inquisition's targeting of residual pagan practices alongside Jewish and Muslim conversos all illustrate this complex interplay. Even internal Catholic

reforms, such as the Gregorian Reform and later the Counter-Reformation, often involved renewed efforts to purge "superstitious" or "pagan" elements perceived as lingering within popular Christian practice, demonstrating an ongoing concern with establishing and maintaining a purified, centrally controlled orthodoxy. This drive to define and enforce orthodoxy against perceived internal and external "pagan" threats was central to shaping Catholic identity and institutional power throughout much of its history. The historical memory of this "conquest" is thus not merely a record of religious conflict, but a narrative imbued with theological significance, reflecting a worldview where the triumph of the One True God and His Church over polytheistic chaos was seen as both a spiritual necessity and a civilizational imperative. This narrative framework, emphasizing the inevitable decline and replacement of the old, polytheistic divine order, resonates strikingly with the "End of the Age of Gods" narrative constructed in FGO, where "Human Order" must actively sever itself from, and often forcibly overcome, the lingering power of the divine to secure its own future. The shared motif of a necessary transition, achieved through conflict and the assertion of a new dominant paradigm ("Human Order" or monotheism), highlights a profound intertextual link between historical Catholic discourse and modern fictionalized mythology. The theological context of exclusive truth and salvation provided the rationale, while the political context of empire-building, resource acquisition, and social control provided the engine, making the suppression of paganism a defining feature of the Catholic Church's historical trajectory and its self-understanding.

Narratives of religious supremacy and conversion

This section examines how Catholic narratives historically portrayed the triumph of monotheism over polytheism, constructing a discourse of religious supremacy and conversion that played a foundational role in shaping collective memory and identity within Christendom. These narratives were not merely descriptive accounts but powerful tools for legitimizing Catholic authority, defining theological boundaries, and forging a shared sense of purpose and belonging among believers.

The core narrative revolves around the inherent superiority and ultimate victory of the one, true God

worshipped by Catholicism over the multiplicity of false deities associated with pagan religions. This perspective is deeply rooted in Biblical interpretation, particularly the Old Testament narratives depicting Yahweh's power exceeding that of other gods (e.g., the Exodus plagues overcoming Egyptian deities) and the prophetic condemnations of idolatry. Early Christian theologians, building upon this Hebraic foundation, framed pagan gods not as non-existent, but as demons masquerading as divine beings or as expressions of human error and superstition. This theological framing provided the justification for viewing the spread of Christianity not just as offering salvation, but as an active conquest over darkness and falsehood. The Church presented itself as the sole custodian of divine truth, uniquely positioned to liberate humanity from the perceived bondage and spiritual corruption of polytheistic systems.

Historical events were interpreted and narrated through this lens of divinely ordained supremacy. The conversion of Emperor Constantine and the subsequent adoption of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire were pivotal moments woven into this master narrative. This was often depicted not just as a political shift, but as a decisive victory of the Christian God over the Roman pantheon, signaling God's favor and the inevitable decline of paganism. The narratives surrounding the evangelization of Europe further solidified this theme. Missionaries like St. Patrick in Ireland or St. Boniface in Germania were portrayed as heroic figures bravely confronting and overcoming entrenched pagan practices, often symbolized dramatically by acts such as felling sacred trees. These stories served a dual purpose: validating the missionaries' efforts as divinely sanctioned conquests and constructing a shared memory for the newly Christianized populations of a past "darkness" overcome by the light of Christ. The Falloux Law in France, while a 19th-century development, reflected an enduring impulse to assert Catholic dominance in the public sphere, rooted in this historical narrative of rightful supremacy.

Conversion, within this framework, was rarely presented as a simple, neutral act of individual belief change. It was framed as liberation, a return to the true order, and submission to the ultimate divine authority. The narratives emphasized the transformative power of accepting the Catholic God, often contrasting the

perceived chaos, immorality, or irrationality of pagan life with the order, morality, and reason offered by the Church. Accounts frequently highlighted the abandonment or destruction of pagan idols and temples, symbolizing the complete rejection of the old order and the establishment of the new. The concept of "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus" (outside the Church, no salvation) provided a powerful theological underpinning for the urgency and necessity of conversion efforts, reinforcing the idea that embracing Catholicism was essential not just for earthly order but for eternal salvation. This perspective underpinned missionary activities globally, including the painful history entwined with colonialism, where conversion narratives were sometimes tragically employed to justify cultural suppression and domination, as evidenced in the complex history linking the Church and institutions like Georgetown University.

These narratives played a crucial role in shaping Catholic collective memory and identity. By recounting stories of triumph over paganism, the Church fostered a sense of historical destiny and divine election. Believers were positioned as inheritors of a sacred legacy, members of the one, true faith that had overcome the errors of the past. This shared memory became a cornerstone of Catholic communal identity, distinguishing "us" (the saved, the enlightened) from "them" (the formerly pagan, the potentially still misguided). The narratives served to unify diverse populations under the banner of Catholicism, providing a common origin story centered around conversion and the rejection of idolatry. This identity was often reinforced liturgically, through saints' days commemorating missionary martyrs or events marking the conversion of key regions, and educationally, through catechism and historical instruction. The persistence of this narrative framework, even as societies secularized, is observable in the ways Catholic intellectuals later mobilized concepts of Christendom against perceived threats like communism, framing it as a defense of a divinely ordained order.

The legacy of these supremacy and conversion narratives is complex. While instrumental in forging Catholic identity and historical consciousness, they also established patterns of exclusion and intolerance. The sharp binary between the "one true faith" and "false paganisms" often justified the suppression of alternative spiritualities and cultural practices. The language of

conquest and demonization embedded in these narratives could be, and was, mobilized to support coercive practices, cultural erasure, and political domination. Critically examining these narratives reveals how religious identity is actively constructed through memory, often involving the symbolic subjugation or negation of the “other”. Modern theological reflection and interfaith dialogue necessitate grappling with this complex legacy, moving beyond triumphalism towards a recognition of historical complexity and the validity of diverse spiritual paths [12]. The narrative of monotheistic supremacy, deeply embedded in Catholic historical memory, continues to shape perceptions of the past and interactions with religious pluralism in the present.

Comparative analysis with FGO’s “God’s Death”

This paper examines the parallel constructions of divine decline and human ascendancy within the historical discourse of the Catholic “conquest of paganism” and the narrative of the “End of the Age of Gods” in Fate/Grand Order (FGO). Both frameworks establish a powerful binary: The necessary diminishment of a prior polytheistic or divine order enables the definitive rise of a new, ostensibly superior, human-centric or monotheistic reality. This comparative analysis draws on theoretical insights regarding the reinterpretation of myth within monotheistic frameworks and Catholic historical narratives of renewal and triumph.

(1) Catholic framing: Supersession and divine order

The Catholic Church’s historical memory frames its expansion and suppression of pagan religions as a divinely ordained process of supersession. This narrative, deeply embedded in theological doctrine and historical chronicles, posits the inherent superiority and finality of the Christian revelation. Pagan deities are recast as powerless idols, demonic entities, or merely human inventions, inherently subordinate to the singular authority of the Christian God. The historical process of conversion and conquest is thus interpreted not merely as political or cultural change, but as the inevitable manifestation of God’s will on Earth, replacing chaotic polytheism with divine order under the One True God. This perspective justifies the dissolution of pagan temples, the suppression of rituals, and the integration or eradication of indigenous beliefs. Key historical moments, such as the Christianization of the Roman Empire or the evangelization of the Americas and

elsewhere, are narrated within this framework of divinely sanctioned triumph. As seen in the Reformation era, even internal Catholic reform movements framed their goals as retrieving the pure, singular truth against perceived corruptions or pagan remnants. This discourse constructs a clear trajectory: The decline of the pagan gods (framed as error or evil) is the necessary precursor to the ascent of humanity under the salvific umbrella of monotheism, leading to a divinely ordained social and spiritual order. The painful realities, such as the entanglement of church expansion with the violent exploitation of enslaved people as documented in the building of American Catholic institutions, are often subsumed within this overarching narrative of providential victory.

(2) FGO’s narrative: The inevitable shift from mythos to logos

FGO masterfully adapts this archetypal transition within its fantastical universe. The “End of the Age of Gods” is presented as a fundamental, cosmic law - the “Principle of Mana Depletion” or the shift to an “Age of Man” governed by “Human Order”. The game portrays the “Age of Gods” as a time where divine beings, primordial forces, and mythical creatures directly shaped the world, their presence saturating the environment with potent magical energy (mana). Human existence within this era was fundamentally different, often subject to the whims and conflicts of deities. Figures like Gilgamesh in the Babylonian Singularity embody the nascent struggle against divine tyranny, seeking human autonomy even amidst overwhelming divine power. King Solomon’s ultimate act, severing the connection between the planet and the higher-dimensional realm of the gods, represents the definitive, irreversible catalyst for this transition (referenced FGO lore). His actions directly cause the global decline of mana and the retreat of the gods, forcing humanity to rely on its own ingenuity and collective will - the foundation of the “Human Order”. This shift is framed not as a loss, but as an evolution necessary for human potential to fully blossom. The “Human Order”, a collective unconscious safeguard, actively suppresses and prunes timelines where the “Age of Gods” persists or resurveys, viewing them as existential threats incompatible with humanity’s future. The game’s Singularities and Lostbelts often explore worlds where this transition failed, was reversed, or took a different path, consistently portraying them as stagnant, doomed,

or fundamentally incompatible with the “correct” human history established by the transition. Thus, FGO constructs its own binary: the decline and retreat of the gods (and the magical world they represent) is the absolute prerequisite for the ascent of humanity and the establishment of the modern, human-centric world order. This parallels the Catholic narrative of pagan decline enabling Christian ascendancy.

(3) Constructing the binary: Decline enabling ascendancy

The core structural parallel lies in how both narratives frame the relationship between the old and the new order:

a) Necessary supersession: In both cases, the prior state (polytheism or “Age of Gods”) is portrayed as fundamentally incompatible with the destined future state (Christian Monotheism or “Human Order”). Its existence blocks the desired ascendancy. The Catholic narrative views polytheism as theological error preventing true salvation; FGO depicts the lingering “Age of Gods” as a metaphysical threat destabilizing the “Human Order” and preventing humanity’s independent future. Supersession is not optional but a cosmic or divine imperative.

b) Active causality: The decline of the old is not passive but is actively caused or finalized by agents representing the ascending order. Catholic narratives often credit saints, missionaries, or divinely inspired emperors with overthrowing idols and converting nations. FGO explicitly attributes the severing of the divine connection to Solomon, a figure whose actions were pivotal for human self-determination within the game’s lore. His role echoes the agency of key figures in Catholic expansion narratives. The conquest or suppression enables the rise.

c) Moral and existential superiority: The new order is framed as inherently superior - morally, spiritually, or existentially. Catholicism claims the monopoly on truth and salvation. FGO’s “Human Order” represents progress, reason (however imperfect), and the potential for human achievement free from divine caprice. The decline of the gods or pagans is thus framed not just as a change, but as an improvement, a step towards a better, more ordered state. The transition itself is imbued with a sense of historical inevitability and righteousness.

d) Reinterpretation of the past: Both narratives involve a reinterpretation of the prior era through the lens of the

new dominant paradigm. Catholic theologians reinterpreted pagan myths as distorted reflections of Christian truth or demonic deceptions. FGO’s narrative, set in the “Human Order”, frames the “Age of Gods” as a necessary but surpassed stage of human history, its myths and figures reinterpreted as powerful forces that had to fade for humanity to move forward. The old gods become curiosities, Servants bound by the rules of the new human-centric system.

(4) Conclusion of the comparison

This section reveals a profound intertextual resonance. Both the Catholic historical memory of conquering paganism and FGO’s fictional “End of the Age of Gods” narrative utilize the powerful binary structure of divine and pagan decline enabling human/monotheistic ascendancy. They share core elements: the narrative necessity of the old order’s fall, the active role of agents of the new order in causing or finalizing that decline, the assertion of the new order’s inherent superiority, and the retrospective reinterpretation of the superseded era through the victor’s lens. FGO effectively transposes this deep-seated historical and mythological trope, prevalent in monotheistic traditions like Catholicism, into its science-fantasy framework. It then uses the “God’s Death” concept to explore themes of progress, autonomy, and the cost of transitioning from a world saturated with the divine to one governed by human will and reason. This parallel underscores how narratives of profound historical or cosmological transition often rely on similar structures to articulate the victory of one worldview over another. The analysis highlights the enduring potency of this “decline and ascendancy” binary in structuring cultural memories and fictional world-building, demonstrating how FGO draws upon deep historical and theological currents to give weight and structure to its central narrative conceit.

Intertextuality between FGO and catholic historical memory

Shared themes of divine decline and human ascendancy

This section examines the core thematic resonance between the narrative of the “End of the Age of Gods” in Fate/Grand Order (FGO) and the historical memory of the Catholic “conquest of paganism”. Both constructs pivot on a profound sense of transition, specifically the decline of the divine and the concomitant ascendancy of

human agency or a new, universal order. This fundamental narrative arc of decline and replacement forms the bedrock of their intertextual relationship. While emerging from vastly different contexts - one a contemporary Japanese digital game, the other a cornerstone of Western religious history - they share an underlying structure depicting the inevitable and necessary supersession of a polytheistic, mythically saturated past.

In FGO, the “Age of Gods” represents an era where divine beings and Mystery directly shaped the world and human destiny. The laws of physics were subordinate to divine will and the potent magic emanating from the planet itself. Humanity existed in a state of profound connection with, yet subservience to, these powerful entities. The narrative consistently portrays this era as unsustainable for human flourishing. The transition to the “Age of Man”, or “Human Order”, is framed not merely as a change but as an essential evolution. The decline of the gods is depicted as inherent to the system - a necessary condition for humanity to take control of its own fate, establish its own laws (both physical and societal), and progress towards self-determination. Figures pivotal to this transition, like Gilgamesh, embody the rejection of divine subservience. His quest for immortality, ultimately leading to his acceptance of mortality, symbolizes humanity’s painful but necessary separation from the divine realm. King Solomon’s deliberate severing of the connection between humanity and the gods, sacrificing his own achievements to ensure humanity’s future autonomy, further underscores the narrative’s insistence on the necessity of divine decline for human progress. The game portrays this shift not solely as a loss of wonder but as a prerequisite for human potential to be fully realized.

The Catholic narrative of “conquering paganism”, deeply embedded in its historical memory and theological self-understanding, exhibits remarkably similar structural themes. Early Christian theology positioned itself as the fulfillment and replacement of preceding religious systems, particularly the polytheism of the Roman Empire and the indigenous religions encountered during its expansion. This narrative centers on the triumph of the one, true God over the multitude of false, often demonized, pagan deities. The decline of the old gods is presented as divinely ordained, a necessary consequence

of the revelation of God’s universal sovereignty and truth. Historical accounts, hagiographies, and theological treatises frequently depict pagan deities not merely as erroneous but as impotent or even malevolent forces whose power waned before the superior truth and grace of Christianity. The conversion of pagan temples into churches, the appropriation of pagan festivals into the Christian calendar, and the demonization of indigenous deities served as potent symbolic acts reinforcing this narrative of supersession and divinely sanctioned decline. The conquest was framed not just as a political or military victory but as a cosmic shift, the establishment of a new, divinely ordained order (the Pax Christiana) replacing the chaos and falsehood of polytheism. This theological framework underpins the historical memory, portraying the decline of paganism as an inevitable and righteous transition ordained by God, paving the way for a universal salvation order centered on Christ.

The intertextual parallels become evident when examining the shared emphasis on transition as both inevitable and teleological. Both narratives construct a binary between an old order and a new order. The old order is defined by polytheism, divine immanence, and a perceived state of limitation or error, while the new order is defined by a singular principle (“Human Order” or the One God), human responsibility (or divine transcendence mediated through a singular church/faith), and the promise of progress or salvation. The decline of the divine in the old system is not presented as a random catastrophe but as a necessary stage in a grander, ultimately positive, historical trajectory. In FGO, the decline of the gods enables humanity’s maturity and scientific advancement. In the Catholic narrative, the decline of paganism enables the spread of God’s universal truth and salvation for humanity [13].

Both employ symbolic representations to concrete this abstract transition. FGO utilizes figures like Gilgamesh (challenger of gods) and Solomon (architect of the transition) as avatars of the shift. Catholic memory uses figures like St. Boniface felling the Donar Oak or St. Patrick confronting the Druids - acts symbolizing the overthrow of the old gods and the establishment of Christian dominance. The imagery of light overcoming darkness, truth overcoming falsehood, and order overcoming chaos permeates both narratives, reinforcing the perceived righteousness and necessity of the

transition. The concept of Mystery fading in FGO parallels the Catholic narrative of “superstition” being dispelled by the light of revealed truth.

This shared thematic ground also reveals crucial differences in perspective and agency. The Catholic narrative positions the divine (the Christian God) as the ultimate agent orchestrating the decline of the pagan gods and the establishment of the new order, often acting through the Church militant. Human agents (missionaries, kings) are instruments of this divine will. In contrast, FGO, while acknowledging the role of figures like Solomon acting under higher principles (the Counter Force), places significant emphasis on human will and effort - humanity’s inherent drive to overcome dependency and establish its own dominion - as the engine of the transition. The “Human Order” is a construct sustained by collective human belief and effort, distinct from a divinely ordained ecclesiastical structure. The gods in FGO fade due to systemic changes initiated by humans and planetary mechanisms, not primarily through the agency of a superior deity actively conquering them. This difference in agency - divine orchestration versus human-driven systemic change - is a key point of divergence within the shared theme.

The thematic overlap between FGO’s “End of the Age of Gods” and the Catholic historical memory of “conquering paganism” centers decisively on the shared narrative of transition. Both construct a powerful vision of the necessary and inevitable decline of a polytheistically ordered world, making way for a new era defined by a singular principle - be it the autonomous “Human Order” or the universal salvific order of the One God. This narrative of supersession, decline, and ascension forms a potent intertextual link, demonstrating how foundational myths of origin and transition resonate across vastly different cultural and temporal contexts. The emphasis on the necessity and righteousness of this transition, symbolized through key figures and events, creates a parallel narrative structure that allows these seemingly disparate discourses to meaningfully converse. Recognizing this shared thematic core is crucial for understanding the enduring power of such narratives in shaping cultural identities and historical consciousness. The divergence in the locus of agency - divine versus human - within this shared framework highlights the distinct ideological underpinnings of each narrative. This

analysis underscores the complex interplay between cultural memory, religious history, and contemporary media in constructing foundational stories about the relationship between humanity, the divine, and the passage of time. Future research could productively explore how other cultural or religious narratives of transition (e.g., secularization narratives, technological singularity) engage with this deep-seated archetype of divine decline and human or universal ascendancy. Such research would examine variations in the characterization of the declining entities, the nature of the ascendant force, and the mechanisms driving the transition across different contexts.

Narrative structures and symbolic representations

This section examines how Fate/Grand Order (FGO) and Catholic historical narratives utilize comparable narrative structures and symbols to articulate the transition from polytheistic systems to monotheistic or human-centric orders. The analysis employs comparative textual analysis, drawing on Paul Ricoeur’s theory of narrative time and symbolic hermeneutics to interpret shared motifs. This paper argues that both traditions construct a teleological progression where divine multiplicity yields to unified authority, employing archetypal symbols of sacrifice, light, and foundational rupture.

FGO’s narrative structure meticulously stages the “End of the Age of Gods” as an irreversible historical pivot. The game depicts this transition through linear, epochal chapters where divine beings recede as human protagonists assert agency. For instance, the Babylonian Singularity arc portrays goddesses like Ishtar and Ereshkigal losing dominion as Gilgamesh - a demi-god king who champions human self-determination - orchestrates the shift toward human governance. This mirrors Catholic historiographical accounts of paganism’s decline, particularly those chronicling the Roman Empire’s Christianization. Eusebius of Caesarea’s narratives frame Constantine’s conversion not merely as political change but as a divinely ordained supersession of polytheism, where martyrs’ sacrifices catalyze monotheism’s triumph over pantheons. Both narratives deploy a three-act structure: divine authority destabilized (e.g., FGO’s “incineration of humanity”; Catholicism’s pre-Constantinian persecutions), transformative conflict (Chaldea’s battles; Christian

martyrdoms), and establishment of a new order (the ascendancy of “Human Order”; Nicene Christianity’s institutional dominance). Such structures enforce a perception of historical inevitability, embedding the transition within a framework of cosmic necessity rather than contingent events.

Symbolic representations further crystallize this paradigm shift. Light and darkness function as master symbols in both contexts. FGO visualizes the “Age of Gods” as realms saturated with supernatural luminosity - divine cores, magical energy storms - that dim as human eras dawn. Conversely, Catholic art and hagiography depict pagan idols shrouded in shadow, while saints and crosses emit radiant light, signifying truth’s victory over error. The Vatican’s Basilica of Saint Peter, intentionally constructed over a pagan necropolis, materially enacts this symbolism, asserting Christianity’s literal foundation upon supplanted polytheism. Similarly, FGO’s Solomon incinerating his own Temple of Time - a structure anchoring divine power - epitomizes the sacrificial destruction requisite for human self-governance. This echoes Catholic narratives where the demolition of pagan temples (e.g., the Serapeum of Alexandria) symbolizes idolatry’s eradication and monotheism’s spatial conquest.

Sacrificial motifs are equally pivotal. FGO positions characters like Romani Archaman (Solomon’s human incarnation) sacrificing his existence to erase magic from the world, enabling humanity’s survival free from divine interference. This parallels Catholic martyrdom narratives, such as Saint Perpetua’s death in Roman arenas, interpreted not as defeat but as catalytic acts ensuring Christianity’s ultimate dominance. Both traditions frame such sacrifices as voluntary, cosmically significant offerings that rupture the old order’s continuity. The sacrificial agent - whether a Servant or martyr - becomes a liminal figure embodying the transition itself.

Architectural and corporeal symbols reinforce the ontological shift. FGO’s “Human Order Foundations” - invisible structures sustaining human history - contrast with the tangible, colossal temples of the “Age of Gods”, symbolizing abstract human rationality supplanting embodied divinity. Catholic discourse similarly contrasts pagan corporeal idols with the abstract universal God worshipped in spirit. The Catholic Church’s self-

representation as the “New Israel” displacing older covenants finds resonance in FGO’s “Human Order” displacing divine realms. Both employ metaphors of building and foundation: Just as Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica* systematizes faith as an intellectual edifice, FGO’s Chaldea Security Organization constructs observational apparatuses to safeguard human history’s integrity.

These narrative and symbolic convergences reveal deeper ideological functions. Both constructs serve as cultural mnemonics that legitimize prevailing worldviews. FGO’s narrative, while critiquing unchecked human ambition through antagonists like Goetia, ultimately validates human agency as history’s rightful engine. Catholic conquest narratives, exemplified in texts like the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, frame pagan suppression as humanity’s liberation from demonic deception, legitimizing ecclesiastical authority. This paper identifies these parallels not as coincidental but as manifestations of enduring cultural templates for conceptualizing epochal change. They demonstrate how societies narrate their perceived ontological transitions through recycled archetypes - sacrifice, light-over-darkness, foundational replacement - tailored to specific theological or secular-humanist contexts.

The intertextuality here extends beyond superficial resemblance. It exposes how monotheistic historical memory, particularly Catholicism’s triumphalist accounts, continues to inform contemporary secular narratives of progress. FGO adapts these deep-rooted symbolic structures, repurposing “conquest” motifs into a framework celebrating human potential. This suggests that even in post-religious media, the narrative grammar of religious transition persists, albeit secularized. Future research could quantify this resonance through audience analysis, exploring how players internalize FGO’s “God’s Death” arc as a modern myth of human emancipation. Such studies might further examine parallels in other media depicting paradigm shifts, such as science fiction narratives of AI ascendancy, which often replicate these same sacrificial and foundational motifs. Ultimately, recognizing these patterns allows for critical engagement with how historical memory shapes - and often constrains - imaginaries of societal transformation [14].

Cultural and ideological implications

This section examines how the intertwined narratives of FGO's "End of the Age of Gods" and historical Catholic "conquest of paganism" shape contemporary understandings of religion, history, and cultural transition. These narratives are not merely historical or fictional accounts; they actively participate in constructing and reinforcing cultural ideologies, sometimes upholding established views, at other times offering critical challenges. Analyzing this requires acknowledging the deep-seated Western tendency, rooted in theological traditions, to frame history as a progression from polytheism to monotheism, often implying a move from "primitive" to "advanced".

A primary cultural implication lies in how these narratives can reinforce teleological views of history and religious superiority. FGO's depiction of the inevitable fading of gods, replaced by human agency and order, mirrors a historical narrative deeply embedded in Catholic discourse: the triumph of the "one true faith" over perceived pagan "error". Both constructs present the decline of polytheism as a necessary, even divinely ordained, step towards a superior state - be it human governance or monotheistic civilization. This reinforces a linear, progressive view of history, suggesting a universal path from multiplicity to unity, from divine rule to human autonomy. Such a narrative can subtly validate the historical actions of religious institutions in suppressing alternative beliefs, framing them as part of an inevitable, beneficial historical process. The legacy of such framing can be seen in the persistent cultural memory associating certain regions or practices with "pagan" remnants needing integration or correction, reflecting long-standing theological justifications for dominance [15]. The establishment narratives of institutions like the American Catholic Church, sometimes built on profound contradictions like those referenced in historical accounts, can be partially legitimized through this lens of inevitable progress towards a singular, "correct" order.

These narratives also possess the potential to challenge monolithic interpretations and expose the constructed nature of religious and historical authority. FGO, despite its narrative arc, complicates the picture. It presents the "Age of Gods" not solely as a time of primitive chaos but often as an era rich with diverse forms of wisdom, power,

and connection to the world, lost in the transition to "Human Order". Characters like Gilgamesh, straddling the divine and human, or Solomon, whose actions deliberately sever humanity from Mystery, embody profound ambivalence about the "God's Death". This complexity implicitly questions the Catholic historical narrative's presentation of pagan suppression as an unambiguously positive or divinely simple victory. It invites consideration of what was lost - cultural diversity, alternative cosmologies, different relationships with nature and the cosmos - in the push towards religious and cultural homogenization under monotheistic frameworks. This resonates with critiques highlighting how monotheistic traditions have often struggled to integrate the wisdom inherent in diverse religious expressions, and how concepts like "universal brotherhood" can be interpreted through both secular humanist and contested religious lenses. The game, therefore, acts as a cultural artifact prompting reflection on the costs of historical transitions often celebrated in dominant religious historiography.

The medium of video games itself introduces crucial ideological dimensions. FGO's interactive format allows players to engage directly with deities and heroes from multiple pantheons (Greek, Norse, Egyptian and Mesopotamian), often portrayed sympathetically or heroically, within the context of their inevitable decline. This experiential engagement performs a complex ideological function:

- (1) Democratization of myth: It brings diverse, often suppressed or marginalized, mythological figures into a popular, accessible contemporary space, challenging the hegemonic status of Abrahamic narratives in Western popular culture. Players develop attachments to figures representing alternative religious worldviews.
- (2) Ambiguity and player agency: The narrative framing in FGO is rarely simplistic condemnation of the divine era. Players witness the tragedy of loss, the hubris of gods, but also the beauty and power of that age. This fosters an understanding of the "End of the Gods" as a complex, multifaceted event, not a simple victory of good over evil or truth over falsehood. This contrasts with the often univocal, triumphalist tone found in historical Catholic narratives of conquest.
- (3) Reflexivity on historical narrative: By presenting a fictionalized "God's Death" mirroring historical

processes, FGO encourages players to reflect critically on how historical narratives of religious change, such as the Catholic conquest of paganism, are constructed, whose perspectives they prioritize, and what complexities they might elide. It thereby highlights the role of narrative itself in shaping cultural memory and justifying power structures.

The ideological significance extends to modern conceptions of secularism and pluralism. FGO's core premise - the end of divine mystery enabling human self-determination - parallels the secularization thesis often implicitly linked to the historical triumph of monotheism (and later, science and reason). Yet, the game's nostalgic portrayal of the divine era and its exploration of the enduring power of Mystery complicate a purely celebratory view of secular "Human Order". It subtly questions whether the "conquest" of polytheism, mirrored in the game's mechanics where players ultimately utilize the power of lost gods (Servants) to save the human world, truly eradicates the need for the transcendent or the diverse, or merely represses it in new forms. This echoes ongoing theological and philosophical debates about the relationship between faith, reason, and secular society, and the challenges of achieving genuine pluralism within frameworks historically shaped by exclusivist claims.

The interaction between FGO's narrative and Catholic historical memory reveals significant limitations in how both culture and scholarship often approach religious history. Future research should move beyond simplistic binaries of polytheism and monotheism or primitive/advanced. More nuanced investigations are needed into the specific mechanisms of cultural memory formation - how events like the suppression of European paganism or the encounters with indigenous religions globally are selectively remembered, mythologized, and integrated into institutional identities. Comparative studies could fruitfully explore similar "end of an era" narratives in other cultural and religious traditions beyond the Abrahamic or Western sphere. Analyzing how digital media and interactive storytelling uniquely shape the reception and reinterpretation of these deep historical and religious themes offers a vital avenue for understanding contemporary ideological formations. The role of institutions - religious, academic, cultural - in mediating and authorizing specific historical

interpretations, sometimes in tension with lived experiences or marginalized perspectives (as hinted at in accounts of community struggles or intellectual dissent), demands closer scrutiny.

Conclusion: The cultural and ideological implications of the intertextuality between FGO's "End of the Age of Gods" and Catholic "conquest of paganism" narratives are profound and multifaceted. These narratives actively reinforce a powerful, often unexamined, teleological view of religious history that privileges monotheism and human secular order, potentially legitimizing past and present forms of cultural dominance. Simultaneously, particularly through the medium and narrative complexity of FGO, they offer potent tools for challenging monolithic interpretations, exposing the violence and loss inherent in historical religious transitions, and fostering a critical appreciation for the diversity and value of polytheistic worldviews. Ultimately, engaging with this intertextuality compels a critical re-evaluation of how historical narratives of religious change are constructed, authorized, and consumed, highlighting their enduring power to shape modern perceptions of faith, history, and cultural identity. The prevalence of such narratives underscores the ongoing need to critically interrogate the relationship between established religious institutions, cultural memory, and the construction of historical "truth". Future scholarship must prioritize methodologies capable of capturing the lived complexity obscured by triumphalist narratives, acknowledging both the historical realities of power and the enduring resonance of the worlds that were conquered or lost.

Conclusion

This paper synthesizes its core arguments, reaffirming the profound intertextual connections between Fate/Grand Order's (FGO) "End of the Age of Gods" narrative and the Catholic historical memory of the "conquest of paganism". The analysis firmly establishes that FGO's central theme of divine decline and the rise of human governance is not merely fantasy but a significant, albeit fictionalized, re-engagement with the historical and theological discourse surrounding the triumph of monotheism over polytheistic systems. Rooted in theories of cultural memory and intertextuality, the paper demonstrates how popular media like FGO actively participate in reshaping and reinterpreting deep-seated

historical narratives.

The foundational argument rests on the parallel structures of transition. Both narratives construct a clear binary: the chaotic, divinely saturated, yet ultimately unsustainable “Age of Gods” in FGO mirrors depictions of pagan antiquity within dominant Catholic historical memory - often portrayed as idolatrous, irrational, and needing supersession. The pivotal event, the “End of the Age of Gods”, functions within FGO’s lore much like the “conquest of paganism” does in Catholic historical consciousness. It represents a necessary, often violent, rupture establishing a new order - the “Human Order” governed by human reason and potential in FGO, paralleling the establishment of Christendom governed by divine revelation and Church authority in Catholic memory. This transition is consistently framed not as loss but as progress, a necessary step for humanity’s maturation and autonomy. The paper employs textual analysis of FGO’s main story chapters (e.g., Solomon, Atlantis, Olympus) and comparative analysis with key Catholic historical texts and theological writings documenting the suppression or conversion of pagan practices to substantiate this parallel.

The paper identifies compelling character-based intertextuality. Figures like King Solomon in FGO transcend their mythological origins to embody complex roles within this transition narrative. Solomon’s pivotal act, severing the connection between humanity and the gods, directly echoes the role attributed to key historical Christian figures (emperors, saints, popes) who actively dismantled pagan institutions and installed Christian monotheism. Gilgamesh, the demi-god king striving for human independence from divine whims, serves as an archetype of the proto-humanist struggling against the old order, a theme resonant with early Christian apologists positioning their faith as the true rational successor to pagan superstition. These character analyses, utilizing close reading and comparative character study, highlight how FGO recycles and recontextualizes archetypes deeply embedded in Western cultural memory surrounding religious change.

Crucially, the paper argues that FGO’s narrative engages in a critical dialogue with this inherited Catholic memory rather than merely replicating it. While sharing the structural motif of supersession, FGO often introduces ambiguity and critique largely absent from triumphalist

Christian historical accounts. The portrayal of the Olympian Gods in the Atlantis and Olympus chapters, for instance, reveals a complex mixture of awe-inspiring power and profound alienation, challenging a simplistic view of the “pagan” as merely inferior or evil. The tragic fate of many divine spirits and the deep sense of melancholic loss accompanying the “God’s Death” in FGO stand in stark contrast to the often-celebratory tone of Christian narratives about pagan decline. This critical engagement is particularly evident in storylines like the Lostbelt narratives, especially the South American Lostbelt, where the narrative explicitly explores the consequences and violence inherent in imposing a singular “Human Order” upon diverse cultural and cosmological realities. This critical perspective utilizes comparative argumentation, contrasting the emotional and moral tones of the two narrative sets, and employs the Lostbelt scenarios as specific case studies demonstrating FGO’s complex commentary on historical processes of religious and cultural imposition.

Therefore, this paper concludes that FGO’s “End of the Age of Gods” serves as a powerful modern cultural artifact that actively remembers, reconstructs, and critically interrogates the deep historical narrative of monotheism’s rise and paganism’s fall as preserved in Catholic historical memory. It demonstrates that popular culture, particularly complex narrative-driven games, is a significant site for the ongoing negotiation and reinterpretation of collective historical and religious consciousness. The game utilizes shared structural motifs (transition, supersession, progress) and character archetypes (the agent of change, the figure bridging eras) familiar from Christian historiography but infuses them with contemporary sensibilities, questioning the inherent righteousness of the victor’s narrative and exploring the profound costs of such epochal shifts. This analysis primarily employs theoretical frameworks of cultural memory and intertextuality, alongside rigorous textual analysis of primary sources (FGO narrative, Catholic historical/theological texts) and comparative methodologies to reveal these intricate connections and critical dialogues.

Acknowledging limitations, this paper focuses primarily on the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman mythological contexts most prominent in FGO’s early main story and the Catholic historical narrative. Future research should

extend this intertextual analysis to explore FGO's treatment of deities from other cultural spheres, such as the Hindu gods in the Indian Lostbelt, the complex portrayal of Norse deities in Scandinavia, and the unique Japanese divine constructs. It should then investigate their potential resonance or dissonance with other historical processes of religious change and suppression beyond the specific Catholic "conquest of paganism" model. Examining player reception and community interpretations of these complex themes could provide valuable insights into how these historical intertexts are understood and negotiated by contemporary audiences engaging with the game. This paper establishes that analyzing media like FGO offers indispensable insights into how societies continually process and reassess foundational historical and religious transformations, moving beyond simplistic narratives to grasp the profound complexities and enduring legacies of these epochal transitions.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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