

GOD OF WAR

ANALYSIS



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PROCESS OF LEARNING AND TUTORIAL SIGNS

The first minute

From the beginning, **we can see Kratos in a low-angle shot** with a little camera shake. All of this render the scene more realistic. This camera choice creates a sense of power emerging from *Kratos*.



By choosing a new game in the menu, **the player is directly launched in-game**.

The game directly introduces the player with **a simple QTE**. Here, the **player** has the **time to understand** and do it. Later, the game will launch other QTE and the player will not have as time as here.

Thanks to the previous action and with great camera moves, **the game shows the power of the character** who cut and move a very large tree only with his axe.

Early in-game



After the cinematic, the player is **guided by a kid** and **by tips** on the bottom of the screen.

(Same tips as the first QTE to not lose the player)

Tips like this are for **recurrent actions**.



Then, we have **another type of tips** for **actions which depend on the context**. It can be an indication or an input to press to do an action on the current object.



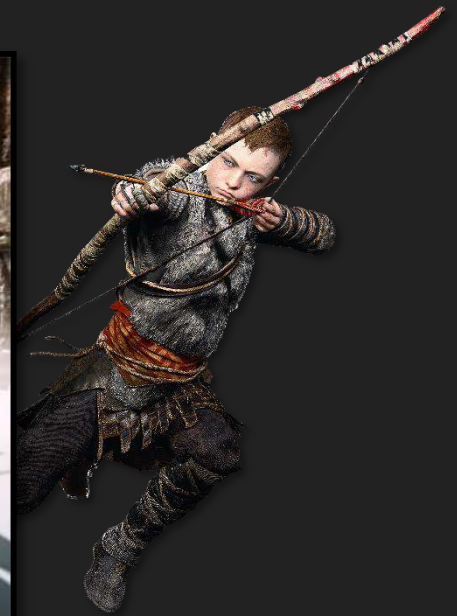
Also, **goals** are explained with a **label in the top-left corner** of the screen.

It describes the quest and indicates that this information is **now in the log book**.

Learn during fights

The game let the player learn generic mechanics during like move and rotate camera or some mechanics like throw his *Kratos*' axe before begin fights. Only after 15 min, the player will discover the entire fight gameplay.

During early fights, the player has to learn inputs thanks to a label in the top-right corner of the screen. It's the same label as previous but it's not at the same position.



Why?

Because when we fight, the character is in the bottom-left corner, and the player is focused on the action (on the right part of the screen). Thanks to this, the player can see enemies, actions, and read tips at the same time.

Conclusion

To conclude on this, we can see that tips are all written in white and have a black semi-transparent background (for some). This choice let the choice of colours for the gameplay part.

LIGHTS AND COLOURS TO DRIVE THE PLAYER

Lights

Let's take a look about visuals mechanisms to help the player.

God of War is taking place in a **cold colours** and environment. Snow, rocks, mountains are objects with a cold feeling. **To help the player**, the game will use **hot colours** like fire, torches that the player will unconsciously follow.



This process is used from the beginning by using light to show the path.

Also, the game has to be careful with the system.

In the first video, a torch let the player **hesitates to turn right** (where **there is nothing**) or to turn left. **The light is from the right**, so we can think, there is something here.

We can say that is not the perfect system.



To increase the clarity to read the game, we have another system: **the colours**.

Colours

Moreover, **the art** will be a **part of** this **intention**.

The opposite of the **immobility/movement** are a must to show the objective through **the kid** **in a cold and static environment**.

As the opposite of the **clarity/obscurity** to distinct gameplay **objects/path** from the **simple decor**.



In this picture, red zone is obscure to draw the path for the player

To increase player ease to find goals and paths, the game will use signs and feedbacks with some other colours.

Conclusion

The art is serving the clarity of the Level Design. The player will find his path without the need to constantly open his map.



SIGNS AND FEEDBACKS

Collectable signs and feedbacks

Basics signs have been established on **collectable objects** which are displayed with a **vertical ray** (white for object / green for life ...etc).



Each **chest** seems to be highlighted with **different colours than the environment**. It can also have some FX to make a greater difference.

When a chest is open or when something is picked up, there are some feedbacks.

Finally, we can notice one thing. The **“ice blue” colour is recurrent** and is **used to “link” objects to gameplay**.



Gameplay signs and feedbacks

Axe sign

The core feature of the game is the axe. It can be thrown and come back in *Kratos*' hands according to the player choices. We have a nice feedback when we see the axe coming back to *Kratos*.



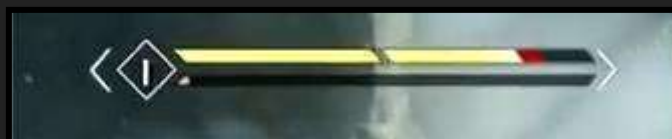
The “ice blue” colour is used to establish the link between the concerned object and *Kratos*' axe.

Each object which are with this colour have an interaction with the axe. It can be **destroyable objects** or **enemies who can counter the axe hit**.

Life

The fight phase is filled by **a lot of feedbacks** when **Kratos hits, counters, kills or is hit by enemies**.

Each **enemy** has a **life bar** which indicates the **current life** of it.



When Kratos hits an enemy, the enemy **life decreases**. And the value of this is shown with the **red bar** (white bar for bosses) feedback.



Kratos has also his life bar where his current life is indicated. **When the character is hit**, there are **no feedback as enemies' bar**, maybe to not discourage the player during the fight.

Feedbacks: Character vs enemies



The player has the possibility to **counter attacks** with his shield. If he does it **at the right time**, he will have a **feedback (a visual wave on the screen)** and will have the possibility to counter attack the enemy.

In addition to that, each time *Kratos* **give a powerful hit**, the **screen is frozen** for 0.1 sec (with a little movement effect with the camera) **to feel the power** of the main character. When enemies give hit (except for bosses), there isn't this effect.

Moreover, when **Kratos hit enemies**, some do a barrel roll with **FXs** to **show the power** of the main character. Also, we have other effects like **blood effects** (on the first boss for example) which indicates clearly that **Kratos' hits are efficient**.



Finally, when **enemies die**, they **fall on the floor** with **a lot of FXs** (more than a simple hit).

In **any cases**, there are **FXs, blur or shake camera** to increase the **brutality** of hits.

Rewards

By **collecting objects** or by killing an enemy, the player has always **a feedback on the right part of the screen**. It can be experience, objects, currency, or other.



In some **special cases**, there are **cinematics as additional feedbacks**.

For example, when you beat the first boss, a cinematic (as all God of War games) is launched, where we see the brutality of the ruthless *Kratos*.

Crosshair

The **crosshair** is only **displayed when the player is aiming**.

The **visual change according to the corresponding character**. If we are using the kid, the crosshair is different than if we are aiming with the axe. And moreover, **the visual corresponds with what we are aiming**.

For example, the visual is different if it's the air, a wall, or a gameplay object.



We are aiming a wall



We are aiming a gameplay object

Common signs and feedbacks



There are some other **basic signs** to **help the player to move forward in the game**.

We can take example of the **chain** which has “**Unlit**” texture (the object hasn’t interaction with the light).

There are also some other indications, for example, **the orange** corresponds to **the violence**. For example, **orange FXs** are shown **in fight** (as Feedbacks) or some other orange textures on bosses like the first boss.

It shows to the player danger and brutality.

Sound effects

Each previous feedback example is **supported of sound effects to highlight actions**. When *Kratos* gives a hit, he shouts until the axe collides (or not) and enemy. If there are collisions, a sound of impact is played.

This example is true for all types of feedbacks (like collectables, interactives objects or enemies).

Conclusion

The game is filled by a lot and a lot of little/big **signs and feedbacks**. Together, they **help the player** and for the most of them, they **serve intentions** and the **feeling of being powerful** with *Kratos*.

INTENTIONS

The **intentions** of the game are like all previous opus: Give the **feeling to control powerful character**. Make **epic fights** and be the God of War. Furthermore, **Kratos is stronger** and have a larger body **than in the previous opus**.

Intentions through the Camera

First of all, the **camera is unique**. From the menu to the gameplay, there is **only one camera**. There is no brutal transitions, there is only camera movements which **give an immersion** way to introduce the player in the game.

Cinematic view

During a lot of **cinematics**, the **camera** turns into **the first person**. It's record like as if we were another person. Why? To **give an immersive experience** to the player.



In-game view

During **exploration or fight phase**, the most of the time, the **camera** is in **third person** and the character is on the bottom-left corner of the screen. This choice has been taken **to increase the feeling of the immersion**. We **see the entire actions** during fight (between *Kratos* and enemies) and we also **have a global view in exploration** for riddles or to only contemplate the environment.



Special views

The game adjust camera according to the player needs. Let's take some examples.



If the player is aiming, the camera moves towards *Kratos* to increase the feeling as close as possible from the action.

If the player is doing a climbing action or another of the same kind, **the camera adapts itself** to give the best view for the player.



Intentions through sound

In cinematics

The music is changing according to the scene and what the game wants to highlight.

To **prepare a boss fight**, the music will be **rhythmic**; to show an **important scene**, the music will be **epic or melodious**.

Furthermore, the sound adapts to what the player is seeing. For example, if we are watching **the kid**, **the music is melodious**, if we are watching **Kratos** the **music becomes epic**.

In gameplay

☛ **The music and one shots sound match with the situation.** When the player is in **exploration**, there isn't any music. **Only the ambient** is here.

But when we **enter in fight**, the **music appears to give an indication** of the situation to the player.

Conclusion

The camera is a real **all-in-one camera**, which depends on the situations. In any case, the **immersion is the main intention**. It's like a movie which never changes scene.



ENEMIES

Basic enemies

The player can chain hits

First of all, when *Kratos* begins to **hit a basic enemy**. It “**stun**” and **interrupt the actions of this enemy**. It’s like a “hack’n’slash” game, where the **player feels the power of the character**. (cf *Devil may cry* and games like this). If the **character** is not interrupted by another enemy, he **can easily complete his combo**.

Chain hits is a **fun feature** that gives a **reward** to the player **from feedbacks**.

That’s we can think that each enemy has a different behavior to challenge the player. Let’s see that.

Some interesting behaviors



Enemies can interact with the player’s actions. Let’s take an example where the **enemy** **dodge** the launch of **the axe**.



- During the fight, if there are too many enemies on *Kratos*, **IA**s wait their turn by just moving on another place (I think it's according to the chosen difficulty).

Thanks to this, the **player feels to be against all**. It's an interesting tweakable to balance the game.



Bosses

Bosses have **life bar on the bottom of the screen** and it's the only way for the player to know that's the current enemy is the boss. (except with cinematics which make it obvious)

Each boss has a **different pattern, capacity and behaviour**. They can be a pure fightable entity. To illustrate this, the first boss is weak against normal hits as the second. On one hand *Kratos* needs to dodge hits for the first boss and has no other choice. And on the other hand, the player can dodge or counter attacks of the second bosses.

We can see that they are some possibilities for each boss in the game.

Conclusion

God of War has a **large pool of enemies** with **different behaviors**. In any cases, the **player feels to fight a lot of enemies** or **one epic enemy**. All again is based on **intentions** and **user experience**!



GENERAL CONCLUSION

To conclude, God of War 4 is a **bit different than previous opus**. Developers have **more looking for a narrative and immersive way to introduce the player in the experience** (including the unique camera system). By starting to fight only from 15 minutes, the goal was to facilitate the process to learn mechanics.



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