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Playing a Literature: a Literary Anthropological Study of Online Games

Online games is a type of literature from the the point of view of literary anthropology. How does online games affect literature ? In the time of Internet, literature stretched itself from real world to online space, which has changed the formation of literary texts and the way people put literature into practice. As a typical phenomenon which is worth studying, there are three points need to be discussed when studying online games from a literary anthropological point of view: 1) how do game players having literature when playing online games? 2) what makes the texts produced by online games different from the other ones? Generally speaking, there are two first-level texts behind every online game which separately functions in telling the story and controlling game players' operation; meanwhile, series of sub-level texts are made while game players are playing. On the one hand, these sub-level texts grow from the first-level ones; on the other hand, they would not be formed without game players' peculiar body movements, such as tapping the keyboard, clicking the mouse, controlling the game handle and ganging up (to play the game in a team via voice chatting), etc. In consequence, real world intertwines with online space, making a human-machine interaction system and forming a special experience of literature in the time of Internet. Based upon literary anthropology, the following research studies online games as literature and deeply investigates game players as the authors of the texts, aiming to explain how literature is produced and how the identity of game players are constructed and realized.