Joanna Bieńkowska, "Entry on: God of War II by SIE Santa Monica Studio ", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/789. Entry version as of October 10, 2026.

SIE Santa Monica Studio

God of War II

United States of America (2007)

TAGS: Argo Argonauts Athena Atlas Atropos Calliope Cerberus Clotho Cronus / Kronos Cup of Invisibility Cyclops / Cyclopes Euryale Fates Golden Fleece Gorgon(s) Griffins / Gryphons Hades Helios Hermes Icarus Jason Lachesis Medusa Moirai Olympians Olympus Pegasus Perseus Phoenix (Bird) Poseidon Prometheus Rhodes Rhodians Satyr(s) Sparta Spartans Theseus Titanomachy Titans Typhon / Typhoeus / Typhaon Zeus

Logo of the *God of War* franchise owned by Santa Monica Studio. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 (accessed: December 29, 2021).

General information	
Title of the work	God of War II
Studio/Production Company	Sony Interactive Entertainment
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2007
First Edition Details	SIE Santa Monica Studio, *God of War II*. PlayStation II, directed by Cory Barlog and David Jaffe, San Mateo, California: Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2007.
Platform	PlayStation 2, PlayStation 3 [part of God of War Collection (2009) and God of War Saga (2012)], PlayStation Vita [God of War Collection (2014)]
Official Website	sms.playstation.com (accessed: June 17, 2019)
Available Onllne	Trailer available online (accessed: June 17, 2019)
Genre	Action and adventure video games*, Hack-and-slash*, Platform*

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Creators

The Santa Monica Studio team at the 2019 Game Developers Choice Awards. Retrieved from Wikipedia, licensed under CC BY 2.0 (accessed: December 30, 2021).

SIE Santa Monica Studio (Company)

SIE Santa Monica Studio (or Santa Monica Studio) is an American video game studio owned by Sony Interactive Entertainment, as part of SIE Worldwide Studios. It was established in 1999 in Santa Monica, California. Currently based in Playa Vista, Los Angeles.

Santa Monica Studio is widely known for the *God of War* series, its most popular title so far.

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Additional information

Adaptations	A novel covering the game's plot: Robert A. Vardeman, *God of War II*, New York: Del Rey Ballantine Books, 2013, 368 pp.
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	A prequel – *God of War* and a sequel – *God of War III*. Also, *God of War: Chains of Olympus*, sequel to *God of War*. Two other prequels, *God of War: Ascension* and *God of War: Ghost of Sparta* take place before *God of War*.
Summary	The story revolves around **Kratos**, a Spartan hero. The Olympian gods acknowledged his deeds presented in the first game of the series (see the entry for more info), and rewarded him with a seat on the Olympus. Since the day Kratos became the new god of war, he has been leading Sparta against other Greek poleis. The game begins with a cutscene that shows Kratos looking down on Rhodes, a new territory to claim. Athena disagrees with his methods, as he openly sides with one polis and that's why she tries to stop him from taking down another Greek city. He disobeys, telling her that he owes her nothing. As Kratos descends from Olympus, Athena morphs into a bird, presumably an eagle, and flies towards him. She takes away part of his godlike powers and then proceeds to the **Colossus of Rhodes** – to bring life into the statue and set it against Kratos. Kratos, slightly weakened, tries to find a way to destroy it. He keeps storming trough the warriors of Rhodes when Zeus' voice calls him and offers him the Blade of Olympus, previously used in **the war with the Titans** to destroy them once and for all. But there's a downside – the Blade of Olympus needs all of Kratos' divine power to awaken. Kratos lets the Blade consume all of his powers and then defeats the Colossus – but as it falls down, its heavy hand smashes Kratos, leaving him fatally wounded. The enemy soldiers laugh at him as he crawls towards the Blade – then, Zeus appears and kills him with the same blade that held his powers. With his last words, Kratos criticizes the

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existence of the gods who have no freedom of choice, indicating that he himself was trying to live his life ignoring the destiny that the Fates have planned for him. For defying Zeus, Kratos not only has to suffer his own death – but also the death of all Spartan warriors who accompanied him during this campaign.

THE RESURRECTION – Serving the Titans

As Kratos awakens in the **Underworld**, **Gaia appears before him**. She **offers revenge** for what Zeus did to him and his compatriots, but in return she demands the **destruction of the Sisters of Fat**e and an alteration of the tides of destiny – to the moment when Zeus was about to destroy all the Titans using the Blade of Olympus. If **Kratos were to rewrite destiny, the Titans would once again rule** the world of gods and mortals.

Tempted with the promise of revenge, Kratos agrees and gets to the same platform where Zeus killed him. There, he meets the last one of his Spartan warriors and sends him back to Sparta, to bear testimony of Zeus' deed.

Pegasus takes him to the slumbering **Titan Typhon**, and also to the place of **Prometheus' torture**. There, Kratos fights Typhon to recover his bane – a bow – to release Prometheus from his torment by letting him fall into the fire below him.

Proceeding next to the Isle of Creation, where the **Sisters of Fate** reside, Kratos has to fight another type of mythological beast – **gryphons**. As he sets foot on the ground, the player can admire the island's unique architecture, as it's held with chains by four golden stallions-monuments called Steeds of Time, a gift from **Cronos** to **change his own fate**. In order to reach the Sisters of Fate, Kratos has to make the Steeds alive, as the temple remains impenetrable from the sea – the stallions move forward, reconnecting the island's divided grounds and Kratos can go on with his quest.

His first **real enemy is Theseus**, guardian of the golden stallions. **King of Athens** appears to be old, his voice hoarse and his hair – grey. He presents himself in full glory though, wearing an ornamental golden armor and fighting with a spear. After defeating him, **Kratos speaks with Cronos** for the first time; the Titan bestows his favour upon him. Soon he acquires the Amulet of the Fates, which allows him to travel through time while everything around him slows down. When

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he meets the first of the Sisters – **Lahkesis**, she accuses him of **defying the laws of destiny** but Kratos remains true to his cause, claiming that he's exactly the being Olympian gods have made him.

Moving forward, Kratos meets his old enemy – the Barbarian King, the very cause of his curse. To defeat this man, the Spartan warrior had to **submit his soul to Ares** and – though he was successful – it remained the source of all his problems. It is not certain who helped the Barbarian King raise from the dead; possibly the Sisters to stop Kratos from advancing in his quest.

Next, on completing endless tests that the Sisters challenge him with, he eliminates the **Gorgon queen Euryale** to claim her head, rushes through the island to get the **golden fleece** from the dead body of **Jason** and finally – encounters **Perseus** in his quest to save his loved one, presumably **Andromeda**, from a sea monster. Perseus bears the reflective shield which was supposed to help him kill Medusa (here – killed previously by Kratos, what, in terms of ancient destiny, could and did greatly alter the hero's fate) and **Hades' Helm** that makes him invisible. In the end, all the miraculous arms fail to keep him alive.

Reaching the Fates

As the Temple of the Fates appears on the horizon, Kratos finds himself unable to cross a giant chasm stretching far and wide. In this moment, he notices a man crawling in his direction, shouting and claiming that it is his test to reach the Fates, not Kratos' – and he introduces himself as **Icarus**. Unable to fly over the chasm on his wings, he goes mad. Seeing this as an opportunity, Kratos tries to grab him – and to rip off his wings for his own use – but Icarus defends himself. Both fall into the chasm.

While struggling, Kratos manages to tear away Icarus' wings and use them to land safely below the Earth on the Titan Atlas (as he cannot fly, but only glide). But Atlas openly refuses to trust him, as it was Kratos who convinced Atlas to hold the world on his shoulders – a consequence of the Spartan warrior's deeds presented in the *God of War: Chains of Olympus* [see the entry for more info]. But after that, Kratos explains to him his plan – to use the same blade with which caused his death, the Blade of Olympus, to kill Zeus. Atlas tells the story of the war between the Olympians and the Titans, helps Kratos get back to the surface and lets him out near the Sisters' temple.

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As Kratos proceeds forward, he fights an unnamed warrior – which, after the final blow, turns out to be the faithful Spartan soldier that Kratos sent to Sparta after his resurrection. The Spartan reveals that all he wanted to achieve on the island was to restore his homeland's former glory and strength. Soon after this encounter, Kratos is attacked by Kraken, a great sea monster, but there's little to no strength left in him to continue his quest. While being about to surrender to the monster's heavy grip, he has a vision of his wife, animated by Gaia, encouraging him to continue – for all he has lost by the hands of the Olympian gods.

The new power within him lets him defeat the monster, and then, awake Phoenix and on his back reach the Sisters' temple. By entering their sacred place, Kratos doesn't look for their approval. Instead, he wants to go straight to the loom room, where all things are born and later – perish by the Sisters' will. Lahkesis tells him to retreat, as there's no greater power than destiny and it is not his fate to kill Zeus. Kratos refuses to give in.

During the fight, Lahkesis calls for Atropos' help. The second Sister grabs Kratos and sends him to his past – to the moment when he was about to be executed by Ares, but in the last moment grabbed a giant sword from Athena's monument and succeeded in killing the god of war [event of the first title in the *God of War* series – see the entry for more info]. As Kratos and Atropos fight, the sword is damaged, but in the end the Spartan warrior manages to win over the Sister. As he returns to the Sisters' throne room, Atropos is forever trapped in one of the Fates' mirrors, while Lahkesis tries once again to fight, but gets killed nevertheless.

Clotho, the last of the Sisters, resides in the loom room. Her body is gigantic and vile, barely fitting the three-floored site. She meets the same fate as her sisters.

As Kratos kills the last of his opponents, the loom room is fully accessible to him – now he can freely travel through time and space to alter the tides of destiny.

Altering The Fate

Kratos uses the loom of destiny and then rushes to the moment when Zeus killed him. He finds himself on Rhodes, in front of two people – himself, lying in a pool of blood and Zeus, surprised by his sudden

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appearance. At first the king of Olympus accuses him of siding with the Sisters, but Kratos bluntly answers that they are all dead.

The fight between Kratos and Zeus is long and exhausting. When Zeus is about to succumb, Athena rushes to his aid – and sacrifices herself so that Olympus, under Zeus' rule, is safe and stable. Kratos holds his ex-patron in his hands while Zeus escapes.

Their last talk reveals a new information – Zeus is Kratos' father. Athena speaks about the fate of Ouranos and Cronos, of Cronos and Zeus and then, of Zeus and Kratos. She claims that no son should destroy his own father and if Kratos continues his quest to kill the king of the gods, everyone will deny him. As she draws her last breath, the Spartan warrior has already made up his mind on that matter – if anyone denies him his vengeance, they will perish. And to do this, he will use the very blade that was used against him, the Blade of Olympus.

When Athena dies, Gaia reminds Kratos that he can control the fate. As he returns to the loom room, he goes back to the war between the Titans and the Olympians – and with the power of destiny, he teleports all of the Titans to his times: Olympus crumbles, with Ares and Athena dead and Zeus weakened.

Zeus arranges a meeting with four other gods – Poseidon, Hermes, Helios, and Hades. He orders them to put their petty grievances aside and focus on the real danger. But a sudden quake interrupts the meeting: the Titans begin climbing Mount Olympus. Gaia leads, carrying Kratos who wields the Blade of Olympus. He shouts: "Zeus! Your son has returned. I bring the destruction of Olympus!" – with which begins the next game, *God of War III*.

During the game, player can collect Gorgon Eyes and Phoenix Feathers to increase Kratos' statistics. These are not related to the in-game monsters.

Analysis

Since the first game's impressive success, in 2007, *God of War* has continued to deliver a new vision of Greek mythology. The developers reintroduce new characters and myths while sales do not fall behind. It is imperative to emphasise the greater number of mythological motifs, compared to the first game – the story becomes more detailed

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and complex.

Since 2007, the market of video games has kept flourishing; that's why it's important to acknowledge its powerful influence on young audiences.

God of War II, in the contrary to the previous installment, explores a new attitude towards destiny. In the classical Greek mythology destiny is determined either by the Sisters of Fate (according to Homer) or the Sisters and most importantly – Zeus (according to Hesiod). The series favors Hesiod's interpretation and profits from it directly to create a portrayal of omnipotent God-king, i.e. Zeus, a personification of all obsolete rules of the Greek patriarchal hierarchy.

In the first game, Kratos accepts his fate – even though he prevents the destruction of Athens and becomes the new god of war in lieu of Ares, he is to be forever haunted by the visions of his vile deeds. Yet facing death from the hands of Zeus in the beginning of the second game, he swears to destroy all Olympus, even if it is not his place to do so. Kratos denies his destiny and sets out on a quest to kill the Sisters of Fate and alter his life, as well as the Titans', to conquer Olympus and kill Zeus. My interpretation is that by changing the tides of the Great War between Titans and the Olympians the character of Kratos is also refusing to set things right in his personal life. He could prevent his family from dying from his own blades, have a stable position in the Spartan army and never serve Ares, yet he decides to continue the fight, perhaps knowing that living under Zeus' rule will never offer any real freedom or happiness.

The game does not offer any explanation as to why Kratos acts the way he does, except for highlighting his need for vengeance.

For more detailed info about the reception, see the entry of the first game.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Argo Argonauts Athena Atlas Atropos Calliope Cerberus Clotho Cronus / Kronos Cup of Invisibility Cyclops / Cyclopes Euryale Fates Golden Fleece Gorgon(s) Griffins / Gryphons Hades Helios Hermes Icarus Jason Lachesis Medusa Moirai Olympians Olympus Pegasus Perseus Phoenix (Bird) Poseidon Prometheus Rhodes Rhodians Satyr(s) Sparta Spartans Theseus Titanomachy Titans Typhon / Typhoeus / Typhaon Zeus

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Further Reading

Christesen, Paul and Dominic Machado, "Video Games and Classical Antiquity", *The Classical World* 104.1 (2010): 107–110.

Lowe, Dunstan, ""Playing with antiquity: Videogame receptions of the classical world" in D. Lowe and K. Shahabudin, eds., *Classics for all: Re-working antiquity in mass cultural media*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009, 62–88.

Addenda

Release Date:

March 13, 2007 in North America, April 27 in Europe, May 3 in Australia, October 25 in Japan.

Commercial Success:

The *God of War* series has sold over 21 million copies worldwide (2012, see here, accessed: June 17, 2019), i.e. without *God of War: Ascension* – *God of War II:* 4,2 million games sold worldwide.

Genre:

An action, adventure, hack and slash, story-driven video game.

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