SUBJECTIVE FUTURE PERFORMANCES
ANIME, GAMES AND NEW MEDIA

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Resumo

No Japão pós-Fukushima, a imagens de catástrofe que tem sido reproduzida repetidamente desde meados do século XX ainda permanece. No Japão, uma imagem de destruição prevalece no imaginário público. O mundo explosivo e colorido da animação japonesa, dos videojogos e dos novos media detém, hoje em dia, a promessa de uma melhor performance para utilizadores e consumidores. Importa observar como a audiência da animação nipônica, em especial do gênero de robô guerreiro, se diverte jogando, controlando e interagindo com máquinas. A interface do robô está migrando para o mundo real e, tal como nos é mostrado no filme *Transformers* (Michael Bay, 2007), pois o "futuro" significa "controlo". É claro que a ficção científica propõe sociedades máquina e as narrativas não são mais grandes protecções, mas ainda assim, utilizadores e jogadores de hoje desempenham um grande papel neste nosso ambiente de novos media, como é o nosso.

Palavras-Chave: Filme de Animê, Jogo de Vídeo, Usuário.

Abstract

In the post-Fukushima Japan, the catastrophe footage that has been playing on loops since mid-twentieth-century,still remains. An image of destruction in Japan remains in the public imaginary. The colored and explosive world of Japanese animation, videogames and new media holds the promise of a better performance for users and consumers today. It is important to observe how the audience of Japanese animation, especially the warrior robot genre, enjoys playing, controlling and interacting with machines. The interface of the robot is migrating to the real world and, as it appears on film such as *Transformers* (Michael Bay, 2007), for the "future" means "control". Of course, science fiction proposes machine societies and narratives are no longer grand umbrellas, yet users and players of today are playing a major role in this new media environment of ours.

Key-words: Animation film, Videogames, User

Resumen

En lo Japón pós-Fukushima, las ímagenes de catástrofe que tienen sido reproducidas repetidamente desde médio vigésimo siglo, ellas mismas permanecen todavía. Una imagen de destrucción en Japón continua en el imaginario público. Hoy el mundo coloreado y explosivo de animación japonesa, videojuegos y nuevos medios de comunicación sostienen la promesa de una mejor actuación para los usuarios y consumidores. Es importante observar cómo al público de animación japonesa, sobre todo del género de robot guerrero, le gusta de jugar, controlar y interactuar recíprocamente con las máquinas. El interfaz del robot está migrando al mundo real y, como él aparece en la película "Transformers" (de Michael Bay, 2007), porque "futuro" representa "control". Claro que la ciencia ficción propone las sociedades de máquinas y las narrativas no son más gran proteccion, todavía los usuarios y jugadores de hoy están jugando un papel mayor en este nuevo ambiente de medios de comunicación de nosotros.

Palabras-Chave: Película de Animación, Videojuegos, Usuario.

1 INTRODUCTION

Japanese animation reaches worldwide audiences. Global youth is interacting and watching these films, playing videogames and surfing Web sites related to Japanese animation. Today we are not just viewers, spectators. We are consumers for sure, but besides that we are part of a major galaxy of animation. Everybody knows how tense was Japan's Past. Without

destruction, no Phoenix would arise as it did. Japan is a technological superpower, an icon of Asia might.

In the years to come, some of the scientific projects, such as warrior robots, machine societies and self-guiding vehicles may become a reality. Not just science fiction or animation film stories, narrative worlds or media consumerism. One thing remains certain, the graphical designs and the mechanical robots seem to speak the same language. They represent "transformation" per se, a symptom of contemporary times. As for futuristic communication interfaces, the robot interface seems to be most daring. Children, teenagers and adults playing Japanese videogames tend to be aware of this interface, its mediation looks quite regular these days. Media and technology prepared the ground for upcoming events. And in the near future, Japanese animation is one of the major media formats, not merely a "cinematic-animetic" genre. How machines and characters behave in the animation, videogames and new media of our time, is quite an example of how the subject will behave in the future performances.

2 PAST TENSE

Images of impending events which recall a snapshot of the past keep loaded with tension. All that Japanese animation presents, particularly the warrior robot subgenre, is characterized by tension, a contraction and an expansion shaped by an explosion motif. Throughout many anime films, from *Akira* (Fig.1 - Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988) to *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Hideaki Anno, 1995) or *Evangelion 1.0 - You Are Not Alone* (Fig.2 - Hideaki Anno, 2007), as well as in anime videogames such as *The Bouncer* (2001) and *Final Fantasy X* (2001), explosion images are likely to be a part of the *mise-en-scène*. One could not conceive anime, whether passive or interactive, if it would provide a collection of images disregarding the nuclear blasts. The question is not a recollection of a World War Two event.

Many anime films disregard it, but most of the famous ones surpass historical nostalgia, existing as a mark for a Zero Year, since Japan would no longer be as it once was in mid-twentieth-century. Thus, the image of the Past remains tense much like the Future, which maintains an aura of quickness. Regarding catastrophe in itself, author Peter Sloterdijk says in

short that "(…) it is (…) the convincing inversion of a miracle (…)"[1] (2002: p.76). We could see how hard it is to understand whether the nuclear blasts ("the" catastrophe for the Japanese) were an entire misfortune or, somehow, a sort of "sign" after all. According to Sloterdijk, there is an "Asian Renaissance" (Idem, Ibid.) taking place at the moment. If we are to take such context into consideration, then Japanese animation images would not be conceivable as icons of the emergent Japanese graphic science if post-modern Japan had not surfaced upon the ashes of a bombed modern Japan. In this sense, Japanese animation seems to be a miracle produced by technique itself. Actually, there are many anime works featuring *holocaust images*, even if it happens mostly in a non-direct fashion, from *Akira* to *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, among works as *Memories* (Koji Morimoto, *et al.*, 1996) or *Robotech: The Macross Saga* (2006).

Ever since the first atom bomb was dropped over Hiroshima at 08:15 a.m., on August 6th 1945, preceding the second bombing on Nagasaki only by three days, Japanese visual culture hardly stands apart from a "big bang" image. Ultimately, it occurred more like a "big boom". The graphic violence within Japanese animation iconography is compelled to repeat a paradigmatic image of violence regarding the biggest mass destruction ever by graphically following a type of violence as a new form of imaging. Its beginning is triggered by the very first atomic bomb. Due to this reason, Japanese visual culture shows an image that is yet to come, one that is now based on a sharp-cutting style, something able to interrupt all other images by means of motifs of "what once was".

In sum, the entire nature of mutation and structural transformation of next-generation images has its genesis on the *holocaust image*. As we examine animation films such as *Transformers* (Nelson Shin, 1986) we realize that the core story relates to the holocaust. Amidst the binomic equation of the *holocaust images* and the *images holocaust*, a visual aesthetic is emerging, endowed by a form both retrospective and prospective. Whereas some images mainly regard the past, others focus on the future, thus being, respectively, representations of causes and effects. Their substance implies a contraction-expansion, as they seem to come out of an early primary compression demanding a secondary and obvious decompression. The entire imaginary

[1] The translation is mine.

featured in *The Anime Galaxy*[2], its characters, machines and environments continue faithfully blossoming across videogames in an oriental aesthetic. A virus of innovation is carried by the demography and unrealness of the anime worlds, such being the true code of *future performances*. In truth, it transports the post-modern decompression style hovering over history, leaving behind a latency state in favour of a more prominent one. Images as those of Japanese animation remain fertile in mutations. There is obviously a regime for technological news, which stands inseparable from Japanese animation.

Animation portrays announcement and revelation, performing as a showcase for performances still, but not for long, unreal. By now, anime is available all over the Internet, either in a rental format, online pay-per-view, content download or as *user-player* upgrades in gaming networks. Digital culture and animation are shaking hands. No separation is foreseen in a near future. Much of what two decades ago was mentioned as belonging to "cyberculture" is now presented as part of the big Japanese anime scene and its "J-pop" iconography. Regardless of what the image of the future might be, it surely seems to speak Japanese. Having said this, one may assume that virtualization and digital trend constitute a step towards a sort of "disappearance". Everything is definitely migrating towards broadband wireless networks, optical drives, handheld 3D game consoles, flat touch-screens and multiple-core processing computers. "Reality", as French thinkers would underline, seems to be vanishing. Thus is the case of Paul Virilio, who advances a new aesthetic: "an aesthetic of disappearance". Virilio assumes that “the pursuit of forms is only a pursuit of time, but if there are no stable forms, there are no forms at all” (1991: p.17). Same is to affirm that forms got into mutation. Shape-shifting has become not only an exception but a law. "Change", which is a very "googled" word nowadays, is actually describing contemporary Japanese images. Images of change are now a format. Let us take, for instance, the ending of an anime videogame such as *Final Fantasy X* (2001), in which Yuna admits: "everyone ... everyone has lost something precious. Everybody has lost homes, dreams and friends". It is precisely this sort of statement that justifies Japan’s producing footage of emancipation, sorrow, dreaming, sophistication, war and utopia. Once a country falls apart and its capital cities are de-atomized, the only way left is to go upwards. Going upstream becomes a law

[2] Herlander Elias, *The Anime Galaxy: Japanese Animation As New Media* is the title of my upcoming book, the publishing title for my Ph.D thesis, to be published in 2012 in Portugal.

of physics. Nothing can stop ascension. Cities can be wiped out, yet ideas die hard, because they are the foundations of galaxies to come.

3 MACHINE SOCIETY

On a sociological perspective, as Yoshio Sugimoto (1997) assures, Japanese society is decreasing in growth and becoming older. No immigration is taking place. Most of Japan's inhabitants are true Japanese, and *gaijin* ["outsiders"] are at least Asian. Japan as country faces a major crisis by 2040, since its population will have become considerably old. Although it is by no means a society as "child-less" as Hong-Kong's, it faces a major threat. Social robots will be needed to help the elders living their everyday life. Due to a proactive lifestyle of today's couples, births are decreasing every year. In Japan, unlike anywhere else, people believe that a hybrid society will eventually inhabit urban spaces much like androids do in Olympus, the mechatronic city featured in *Appleseed* (Shinji Aramaki, 2004). Dystopias of all types populate science fiction stories and films. In these stories, machines are mostly to invade and pursue humans in order to claim human territory for their own. These narratives are also identified in motion pictures like the *Terminator* Quadrilogy (1984-2009) and *I, Robot* (Alex Proyas, 2004).

The idea of a Japanese machine-proned world and a Western world busy with fiction industries prevails. In Ridley Scott's *Black Rain* (1989), the character of Masahiro Matsumoto, played by actor Ken Takakura, affirms: “music and movies are all your culture is good for… We make the machines”, as he answers to Nick Conklin, the character played by actor Michael Douglas. One should state that a joint-venture between society and industry provides the key-elements to establish a machine society. Robot warriors and anime play the same discourse, as Matthews states: “While robotics and anime have originated in very different ways, as both advance they are forming a unique and multi-faceted symbiosis” (2003-2004: p.1). Let us underline that this symbiosis happens on the new media as it did on older media. The question is that a type of "spectacle", in the debordian sense, is still unfolding. In Japan's case, "spectacle" is dominant. We are, then, to question whether to accept, as Debord puts it, that "The spectacle, as it is understood in its totality, is at same time outcome and project of the effective means of production. It is by no means a supplement for the real world, its decor added again. It's real

society's heart of unrealness"[3] (1991: p.10-11). Debord's view of "spectacle" places reality and performance in the same play, role-playing and real world side-by-side. No country, unlike Japan, stands as a core of "unrealness", a node for "spectacle", carnivals and uniform fetish, cute icons and *kawaii* ("cute") stationery.

In Marc Augé's famous essay on the subject of "no-places", the author asserts that such need for providing sense to present time, if not to the past, is a counterpart of a super-abundance of events which relates to a situation one should call "supermodernity"[4] in order to master its essential modality: the excess (Augé, 2007: p.28-29). Societies of super-abundance and sophistication, much like Japanese urban societies, are certainly "supermodern". Anime presents this logic of "supermodernity" and a form of graphic excess as well. Morley & Robins believe that Japan is the most western of all societies (2004: pp.147-173). However, the former medieval country where *karakuri* was ubiquitous among aristocrats is now a respected nation, an authority in every modern discipline. Innovation, robotics, new media, anime, manga and computer games are synonyms for the post-modern Japan. A new vocabulary is emerging, one we cannot afford to leave unmarked. Like Kojéve noticed in one of his diplomatic visits, there is a "japanization" process going on (Agamben, 2004: p.11). Authors Morley & Robins also apply the same language as they say some things are becoming "Japanised" (Ibid.: p.168-169).

4 NARRATIVE AND ANIMATION

A major characteristic of anime is the kind of narratives. If we refer to the robots subgenre, the *meka* (an abbreviation for "mecha", "mechanism", which denotes machines in general) we must not forget about either how stereotypes or clichés become a convention in the warrior-bot iconography. Thinkers as Jean-François Lyotard and other post-modernists depict in their positioning how grand narrative has fallen (1979). Nevertheless, one thing is clear: as Thomas LaMarre also believes, the "otakunization of the grand narrative" of salvation unfolds upon modern technological condition (2009: p.179). Having said this, one should perceive

[3] The translation is mine.
[4] Idem.

changes in the embracing major narrative as rooted in technological ground. This means that technology makes space for new narratives. Ultimately, we may analyze anime works as a consequence from current mainstream technology and its intertwined discourses. "Otaku-nized" narratives are demanding an audience of their own, comprised of both existing and would-be *otakus*.

Historically speaking, the first modern *otaku leitmotif* is triggered by Osamu Tezuka's creation: *Mighty Atom* (1980) [*Tetsuwan Atomu*], later called *Astro Boy*, the androgynous automaton surrogate of Dr.Tenma's deceased son. Since this moment, the rounded retro-future design has become a pool of inspiration for Japanese futurists, from the automobile maker Toyota to Honda Asimov roboticists, and from anime films like *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing: Operation 3* (Fig. 5 - BANDAI, 2000) to Sony AIBO electronic pets. Today, it is quite known that there is no such thing as mere Japanese cartoons. Anime has its own narrative, fragmentary and plastic, appealing to quick-edits, music-synch graphics and a package of conventions lasting for half a century. Shocking colored-hair characters with extravagant power-suits, shiny metal robots and glowing cities perfectly match the glossy lips and glassy eyes of anime characters. Concerning narrative topics as climax and comic moments, anime makes good use of *mie*, a climax form based on *Kabuki* Theatre, responsible for making big-eyed girls crossing their eyes as they face the audience. Gosling notices too that anime characters assume "(...) a series of stylized and exaggerated postures, which in spirit echoes the philosophy of the *kabuki* actor, who from an early age is trained in dance and other techniques to use the entire body as a medium of expression" (Gosling, 1996, §5: p.1). Even some comical sketches of warrior robots make use of this tendency to use the body as a medium to express oneself, something that has turned out to be a major trend in robot stories.

5 GRAPHICS AND MECHS

Fast-paced motion graphics and flickering footage disclose cell-shading characters and high-definition rendered environments. Anime consists no longer of flat imagery, but of 3D images resembling conventional cartoons. Actually, the graphical appearance of anime borrows

much of its structure, in terms of technology, from videogame production nowadays. FMVs (Full Motion Videos) sequences, cinematic clips, "machinima" sequences and anime videogames share identical visual languages due to the usage of digital technology. Journalist and researcher Timothy Hornyak mentions this "anime-esque appearance" (2006: p.121) as a prominent tendency. The figurative aspect (big-eyed characters), the re-figurative aspect (Information Technology) and the reconfigurative form (proposed by science fiction romances) finally flow onto the Japanese world of anime. In Gosling's perspective, "it is perhaps significant that Japan is the only country in the world seriously interested in bipedal robot research, and when you look at the walking, running and leaping robots of anime, you can perhaps understand why" (Ibid., §16: p.4). Children who have watched anime may quite probably wish to drive or build such robots.

In *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* (Fig.4 – Konami, 2008), a PlayStation 3 smash-hit videogame, leading-character Solid Snake has a friend scientist - Otacon - who confesses he became a scientist in order to design "mecha" at his own will. For Thomas LaMarre, such new phenomena must be labelled as "mechaphilia" (Ibid.: p.214) or "mecha-ification" (Idem, Ibidem: p.218). This phenomenon is noticeable even in non-anime games like *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Future Soldier* (Ubi Soft, 2010), in which Jean-Louis DeGay (US Army Natick Research Development and Engineering Center) states in its beginning that "The soldier of the future is an F-16 on legs".

Designing places for machines or at least welcoming them may be even called "robotopia". Anime films display sequences of transforming robots as volatile as the very same ones featured in such sequences. Also, the word "robotopia" strikes firstly as a concept and subject of discussion in Frederik L. Schodt's (1988) famous book: *Inside The Robot Kingdom: Japan, Mechatronics, And The Coming Robotopia*. Super robots are the apex of the Japanese concept of *meka* (Timothy Hornyak, Ibid.: p.58). Hornyak also points out that all robots that followed the footsteps of *Mighty Atom*, the legions of "mechs" that proliferated in anime and toy store shelves in the 1970s, grew increasingly detailed, realistic and mechanical" (Idem, Ibid). On the core of this fascination towards the pilotable robots stands a new form of subject, an individual fond of mobilization. Should we remind that "mobilization" is a military concept for the logistics of warfare assets, and we may thus think of this new subject as a military-proned type. I strongly believe that the fantasy of robots respond to something deeper: the desire to

control, the driving practice. In theory, Peter Sloterdijk claims the existence of an "Auto-Mobilized Subject", an individual requiring movement at his own will. Regarding contemporary modern society, Sloterdijk states that it

> "(…) really accomplished at least one of its utopian plans, that of the full automobilization, such situation in which each adult individual moves himself by driving his own machine that moves itself. Since in Modernity by no means can one conceive the subject without 'his' movement, the Self and his automobile are metaphysically correlated as body and soul of the same motion unit"[5] (Ibid.: p.36).

The question is that after Gō Nagai created *Mazinger Z* (1972-74), the automobile is no longer the real mean whose purpose is solely to transcend space. For the Japanese, the transforming war-bot represents the top gear of the "auto-mobilized subject". In the bottom line, the robot is the future mean of the driving individual, although the revolution has already been triggered, as Sloterdijk asserts. Another interpretation could be that of a *uterine relation*. Inside an automobile or a "transforming" robot, the subject remains shielded from outside, like a child-being nurtured inside an uterus. So, the outlined-armour works out as a *limit-surface*. *Appleseed* (Shinji Aramaki, 2004) and *Ghost In The Shell 2* (Fig.3 - Mamoru Oshii, 2004) disclose respectively images of driveable spider-bots and cyborg gestation. Ultimately, anime videogames like *Mega Man* (1987) are still promoting the ideal physical body of robotic suits. Machine protection is pursued as a goal. Even though it is a theme of the anime world, the fact is that machines remain as an issue, dematerialized in software and remaining as hardware objects. The main message is that robots are designed to shelter, host and shield man. Robotics is, in this case, a sort of cybernetic uterus. A machine-becoming is expected. This is why LaMarre highlights the prospect of a "mothering machine" (Ibid.: p.234). Perhaps we should subtitle it as "technology" itself. In the meantime, as Schodt remarks, Japan is so far a nation where ancient automata, anime characters, videogames and robots merge into "one giant romanticized entity" (Schodt, 1988:

[5] Idem.

p.23). Media and technology function as carriers for the content stories, like prototypes do for future machine users.

6 MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

It is true that photographic snapshots inspired pioneer Osamu Tezuka in the creation of modern manga. The cinematic experience standing in the core of the anime style already existed in manga comic books. By the late twentieth century, graphic technologies, but specially videogames altogether with the advent of the World Wide Web, helped expanding the anime world, from OVAs (Original Video Animation) to AMVs (Anime Music Videos). Already a decade into the twenty-first century, and the border among animation, videogames and special FX cinema is getting blurred. One major example is undoubtedly *James Cameron's Avatar*, both the movie (2009a) and the game (2009b).

Thanks to the usage of similar motion-capture gear and High-Def rendered footage, big-eyed protagonists and their slim exotic bodies came to life. One thing is sure: no matter how sophisticated or which type of images we are referring to, the brand at stake is still "Japan's" due to the now global Japanese "anime-esque" aesthetics. A nation like Japan means advancement and futurism, precision and tradition. Fredrik L. Schodt believes that "in a tightly knit society such as Japan, these media have an inestimable power to glamorize and influence attitudes to robots and technology in general" (Idem, Ibid.: p.25). Put another way, we could say that media, and in this case the animation media, help to highlight technology on a broader scale. Robots are merely a part of the big picture, a preview for Japan's high-tech.

On the other hand, both robots and HD fully-rendered 3D footage introduce a fertile ground. Machines and graphics seem to transform and disassemble themselves as a technology manifesto, a symptom of contemporary times. By watching Michael Bay's *Transformers* (2007), a viewer understands this. Other reviews are presented, like Morley & Robins make utterly clear: “Through these new technologies, the contradictory stereotypes of Japaneseness have assumed new forms; the new technologies have become associated with the sense of Japanese identity and ethnicity” (Morley & Robins, Ibid.: p.169). Thanks to these reasons, Japan is a mysterious place,

a romantic zone standing between the real and the imaginary. Before animation and electronic gaming, manga comic books were the greater model of catharsis, both individual and collective, mostly among adolescents [which turned out to have grown up along with the manga world] (Luyten, 1991: p.65). Even so, the image of the super robot prevails; it continues to represent the ultimate warrior and weapon (Timothy Hornyak, Ibid.: p.57).

A remark has to be made; anime is not just the "mecha" sub-genre, but the prominence of the super warrior-bot remains unquestioned. Nowadays, online media and videogames are responsible for the increased growth of what Sloterdijk entitles the "Asiosphere"[6] (in Peter Sloterdijk, Ibid). Even if emerging economies such as the Popular Republic of China, Southern Korea and India are branding Asian territory, Japan is undeniably the true synonym for cutting-edge technology and media. After one and a half century past the *Meiji* Restoration, which took place in 1868, Japan, even today, remains "the edge". So far, its modernization process has not stopped.

For people as LaMarre, "techno-orientalism" (Ibid.: p.89) is the best word to describe what is happening these days. As from the user-experience perspective, the best word to depict the current anime trend is proposed by Jenkins (2006) as being the "transmedia experience" (p.102). It is definitely "transmedia" as long as a user experiences a narrative fiction across several media. For instance, it is possible to watch and play *James Cameron's Avatar* as one would likely watch *The Matrix* (Whachovsky Brothers, 1999) and play *Enter The Matrix* (Shiny Entertainment, 2003). It is becoming a very common behavior to watch the motion picture *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* (Sakaguchi, et al., 2001), the anime *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children* (Nomura; Nozue, 2005) and to play *Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII* (Square Enix, 2008). The same happens with the release of *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker* (Konami, 2010).

Viewers and players have not been dedicated to single medium practices; only playing their roles. Above all they are users; digital media users, in the first place. According to LaMarre (Ibid.: p.145), the new "hype" does not concern uniquely consuming media, but altogether the process of archiving "data" [*neta*] about animation and its spin-offs. Perhaps we should accept Lev Manovich's perspective regarding the existence of a medium far superior to anything else, a

[6] Idem.

"metamedium" (2004: p.3) in the new media field. Inspired by Alan Kay's work in Xerox Park in the 70s, Manovich uses this term to refer to the computer. He applies such typology to classify media whose category requires users to manage databases and to deal with cross-referencing information clusters. Japanese sociologist Sugimoto knows that animation benefits indeed from the major characteristics identified in contemporary mass culture, which are "fluidity", "variability" and "transformability" (Ibid.: p.253). Beyond this, let us not forget that Jenkins suggests Japanese animation as a new media feature and that to Mark Poster "in the second media age reality becomes multiple"[7] (2000: p.43). A new context is available. As for Jenkins, "a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms" (Ibid.: p.95) and right now it is this wider "networking" and "data collecting" that turns viewers into users and users into players. Inside the anime world, we witness that animation is no more a cinematic sibling of the Hollywood event. Animation faced emancipation for real and established standards closer to the new media form. One may notice that such new media require new performances upgrading the user and the player into a sort of *data-pilot*. Regardless of what the post-Fukushima Japan's future may hold, the subject stands in the core of all concerns, and its performance, its subjective performance is evolving.

7 SUBJECTIVE FUTURE PERFORMANCES

One of the most fascinating videogame genres for the game audience is undoubtedly the FPS (First Person Shooter), in which players experience action in the field straight from the subjective position of the main character. What players find marvellous is the possibility of engaging the enemy from a personal point of view, as in touching objects, firing weapons, running and hiding from adversaries. At a first glance, games such as *Doom 3* (ID Software, 2004), *Crysis* (2007) and *Wolfenstein* (2009) display no link to the anime world, but, after a closer inspection, one realizes that anime games like *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* (2007) and *Final Fantasy XIII* (2010) also explore first person view modes in cinematics. A great

[7] Idem.

breakthrough was made by North-American Electronic Arts and Swedish DICE, a software house, as the videogame *Mirror's Edge* (Fig.7 – 2008) was released. The new feature on this FPS game was that its plot was disclosed on animation format, being the core of the game strictly about ambient mood instead of firefights. In most FPS games, a player may see the digital counter and cross-hair of new machine guns. It is also true that the subjective position of a fighter-pilot standing in the cockpit of a General Dynamics F-16 Falcon resembles the view mode of the machine gunner in the FPS game. Both the gunner and fighter-pilot stand behind a weapon, being on a subjective position and actually reading information on a heads-up display, a glass-like interface.

By watching *Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. 2* (Fig.6 - Ubi Soft, 2010), the resemblances are noticeable. Thus, we could understand how anime creators' obsession for driving and piloting robots is not the produce of chance. Anime viewers and anime game players aspire to control such robots in the real physical world. What is at stake is an entire new level of performances. To exert the new *subjective performances* of the future, the anime audience must become a "participant" in the show. According to Scott McCloud, in the "preceding" frame of the manga comic book, backgrounds and environments "(...) allowed the character/reader to experience a 'vivid, imaginary world' ─ again with that same sense of 'involvement' and 'participation'" (1996: p.46). Anime game players have inherited this need for "participation" from monochromatic Japanese comic books.

As we interface with the robot games on gaming consoles, we understand, like Thomas LaMarre, that an "informatization of the pilot-'mecha' interface" (Ibid.: p.234) is occurring. However, the *subjective performances* are under no circumstances the latest import from science fiction pages, new media or videogames. It just so happens that, by the post-war period of the twentieth century, North-American Cultural Anthropologist Ruth Benedict (2005) had pointed out the "hero-pilot" (Benedict, 2005: p.25) as a national Japanese character at the time. Benedict manages to discover that Japanese people during the war had '"engaged in subjectivity"' (Idem, Ibid: p.26). Three things seem nowadays more present in the transmedia and subjective world of anime: future performances demand role-playing, war blends with fantasy motifs and to participate in the new environments means to be "engaged in subjectivity", even today. In other

words, we are not tired of watching anime. We are tired of being limited to watching. It is time to get inside *The Anime Galaxy* once and for all.

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Videography

Anime And Live-Action Film

AKIRA. Directed by Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988. [DVD] (124 mins.), Eng.

APPLESEED. Directed by Shinji Aramaki, 2004. [DVD] (101 mins.), Eng.

BLACK RAIN. Directed by Ridley Scott, 1989.[DVD] (125 mins.), Port.

EVANGELION 1.0 - YOU ARE NOT ALONE. Directed by Hideaki Anno, 2007. [DVD] (98 mins.), Jpn.

FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN. Directed by Sakaguchi Hironobu, et al., 2001. [DVD] (106 mins.), Eng.

FINAL FANTASY VII: ADVENT CHILDREN. Directed by Nomura Tetsuya; Nozue Takeshi, 2005. [DVD] (101 mins.), Eng.

GHOST IN THE SHELL. Directed by Mamoru Oshii, 1996. [DVD] (83 mins.), Eng.

GHOST IN THE SHELL 2: INNOCENCE. Directed by Mamoru Oshii, 2004. [DVD] (100 mins.), Eng.

I, ROBOT. Directed by Alex Proyas, 2004. [DVD] (115 mins.), Eng.
JAMES CAMERON'S AVATAR. Directed by James Cameron, 2009. [BRD] (162 mins.), Extended Version [2011] Eng.
MACROSS PLUS. Directed by Shôji Kawamori & Shinichirô Watanabe et al, 1994. [DVD] (115 mins.), Eng.
MAZINGER Z. Produced by Toei Animation. Directed by Nagai Gō, 1972-74. [VHS] (30 mins.), Eng.
MEMORIES. Directed by Morimoto Koji, et al., 1996. [DVD] (113 mins.), Eng.
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM WING: OPERATION 3. Produced by BANDAI, 2000. [DVD] (30 mins.), Eng.
NEON GENESIS EVANGELION. Directed by Hideaki Anno, 1995. [DVD] (90 mins.), Eng.
TERMINATOR QUADRILOGY (AAVV, 1984-2009. [DVD], Eng.
TRANSFORMERS. Directed by Nelson Shin, 1986. [VHS] (84 mins.), Eng.
TRANSFORMERS. Directed by Michael Bay, 2007. [BRD] (144 mins.), Eng.

CAPTION:

BRD = Blue Ray Disc
DVD = Digital Versatile Disc
VHS = Video Home System

Videogames*

BOUNCER, THE. Produced by DreamFactory, Distributed by Square Electronic Arts L.L.C., 2001. System: PS2.
CRISIS CORE: FINAL FANTASY VII. Produced by Square Enix, Distributed by Square Enix, 2008. System: PSP.
CRYSIS. Produced by Crytek Studios, Distributed by EA Games, 2007. System: PC.
DOOM 3. Produced by ID, Distributed by Activision, 2004. System: PC.
ENTER THE MATRIX. Produced by Shiny Entertainment, Distributed by Atari, 2003. System: PC.

FINAL FANTASY X. Produced by Square Co, Distributed by Square Electronic Arts LLC, 2001. System: PS2.

FINAL FANTASY XIII. Produced by Square Co, Distributed by Square Enix USA, 2010. System: Xbox 360.

JAMES CAMERON'S AVATAR: THE GAME. Produced by Ubi Soft, Distributed by Ubi Soft, 2009b. System: PS3.

LOST PLANET: EXTREME CONDITION. Produced by Capcom, Distributed by Capcom, 2007. System: Xbox 360.

MEGA MAN. Produced by Capcom, Distributed by Capcom, 1987. System: NES.

METAL GEAR SOLID 4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS. Produced by Konami Japan, Distributed by Konami of America, 2008. System: PS3.

METAL GEAR SOLID: PEACE WALKER. Produced by Konami, Distributed by Konami, 2010. System: PSP.

MIRROR'S EDGE. Produced by DICE, Distributed by Electronic Arts, 2008. System: PS3.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: FUTURE SOLDIER. Produced by Ubi Soft, Distributed by Ubi Soft, 2010. System: PS3.

TOM CLANCY'S H.A.W.X. 2. Produced by Ubi Soft, Distributed by Ubi Soft, 2010. System: PS3.

WOLFENSTEIN. Produced by Raven, Distributed by Activision, 2009. System: PS3.

Caption

NES – Nintendo Entertainment System
PC – Personal Computer
PSP – Sony PlayStation Portable
PS2 – Sony PlayStation 2
PS3 – Sony PlayStation 3
360 – Microsoft Xbox 360

Pictures List

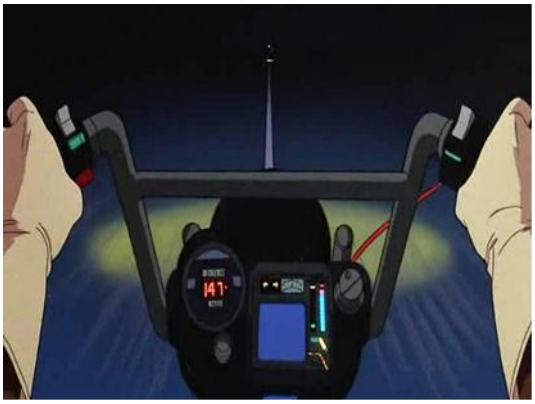

Fig.1: Akira (Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988)

Fig.2: Evangelion 1.0 - You Are Not Alone (Hideaki Anno, 2007)

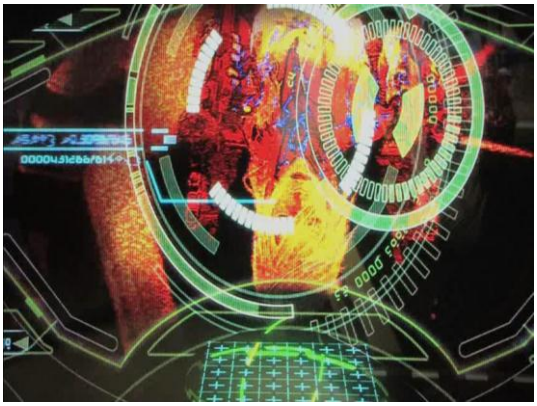

Fig.3: Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence (Mamoru Oshii, 2004)

Fig.4: Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2008: PS3)

Fig.5: Mobile Suit Gundam Wing: Operation 3 (BANDAI, 2000)

Fig.6: Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. 2 (Ubi Soft, Ubi Soft, 2010: PS3)

Fig.7: Mirror's Edge (DICE, Electronic Arts, 2008: PS3)

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