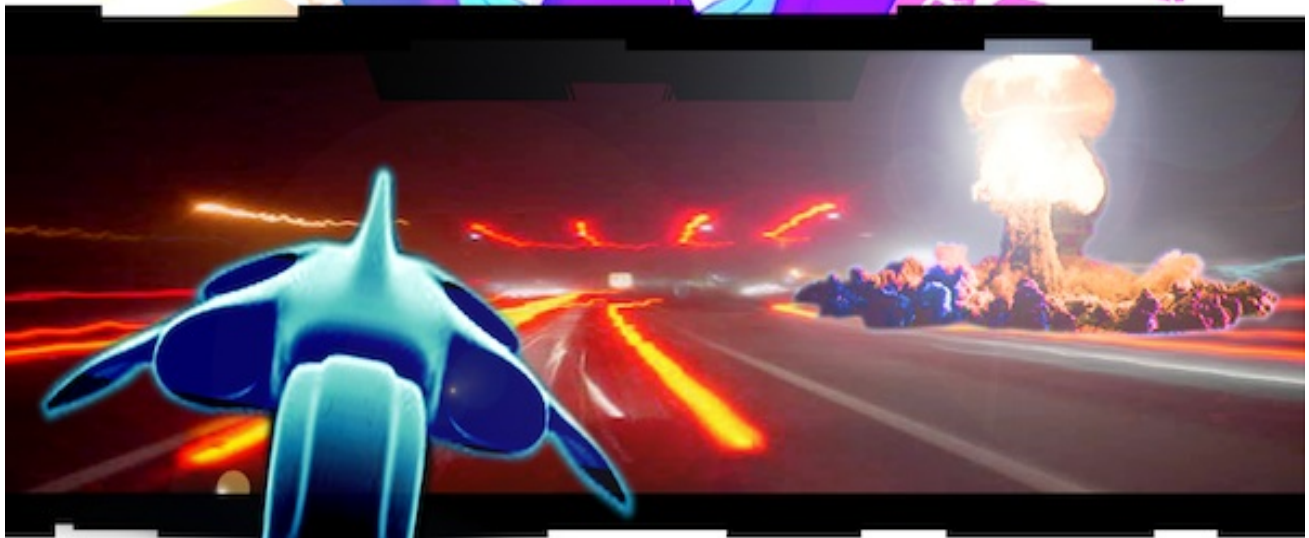


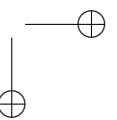
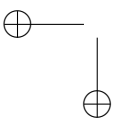
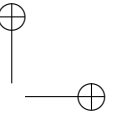
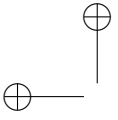
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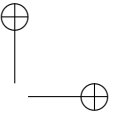
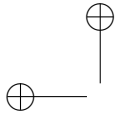
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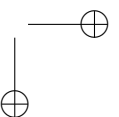
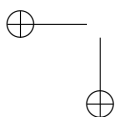


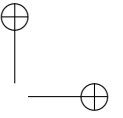
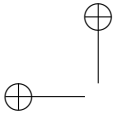
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# The Anime Galaxy

Japanese Animation As New Media

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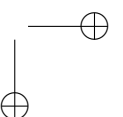
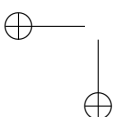


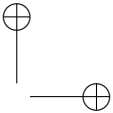
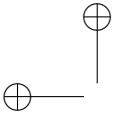


Livros LabCom  
[www.livroslabcom.ubi.pt](http://www.livroslabcom.ubi.pt)  
Série: Estudos em Comunicação  
Direcção: António Fidalgo  
Design da Capa: Herlander Elias  
Paginação: Filomena Matos  
Covilhã, UBI, LabCom, Livros LabCom 2012

ISBN: 978-989-654-090-6

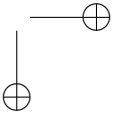
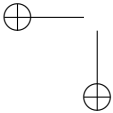
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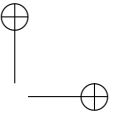
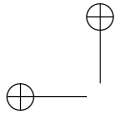




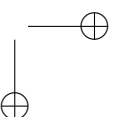
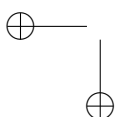
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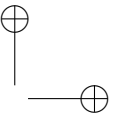
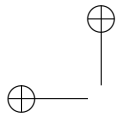
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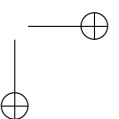
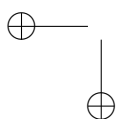


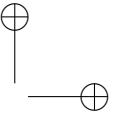
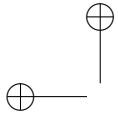
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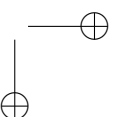
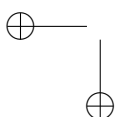


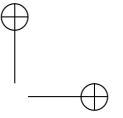
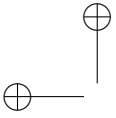
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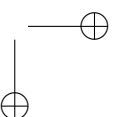
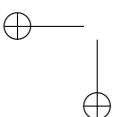


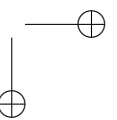
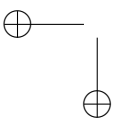
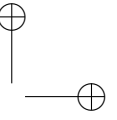
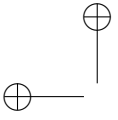
“While robotics and anime have originated in very different ways, as both advance they are forming a unique and multi-faceted symbiosis”.

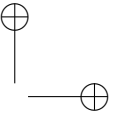
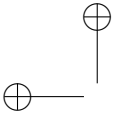
Matthews (2003-2004)

“The ‘Western’ is no longer our exclusive domain, except in the region of its origins. It now represents a condition of universal aspiration”.

Koolhaas & Mau (1995)





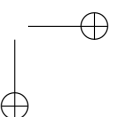
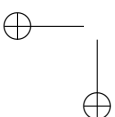


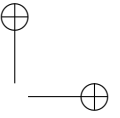
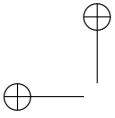
## ABSTRACT & KEYWORDS

The ubiquitous nature of digital technology has had globalization and contents sharing promoted by common interest as an aftermath. Nowadays, it seems hard to think about the Internet without a global world, being the “computer” itself by now synonymous of “Web”. However, such was not the case during the last two decades. Within this background, both graphic cultures and cybercultures have been sharing synergies. The World Wide Web has become a centre for sharing, participation, usage and consumption of contents related to their users’ preferences. The same occurs in comics – formerly less available – and in Japanese animation films, both having been wirecast on the Web and, as a result, spread to new audiences. Besides, the current technological frame provides new features that keep changing the production, as well as the consumption of artworks – especially those of animation – as a major part of consumers that possess cell phones, computers and Web access knows at least some videogames and improves their software technical skills.

On a popular level, culture turns out to be a constant innovative environment. Japan is the country that exports anime, an unquestionable industrial might. Across new media, such as portable media platforms, videogames, digital films or the commercials available on-line, the audience participates and consumes Japanese culture. Animation artworks bring consumers to know their predecessor: the comic, which remains a blooming medium. From advertising to videoclips, throughout new digital formats, the audience comes across new forms of narrative presentation that balance between the literary and the cinematic types.

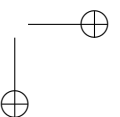
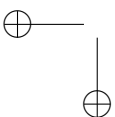
One detects a pattern emerging from a set of themes in both the anime image and the videogame, being the latter a format designed for extending animation and being symbiotic with the special effects moving picture. Spaces

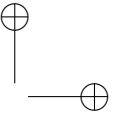
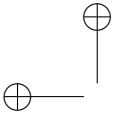




introduced in such images are always in transformation, much like Japan has been over the last century and half. After pre-modernity, feudalism and Japan's participation in World War Two, its main signature is still "technology". 'The Anime Galaxy' is the explained portrait of animation regarded as a new medium of communication; a radiography of a global image which seems to be fast, beautiful, sinister and uncanny – all of which being the outcome of a proficient culture industry established by people who believe in robots that, in future reality, are to prevail as the logical extension for a smart computer. Due to this reason, playing robots in a fantasized manner is a mere preparation for the upcoming "robotopia".

**Keywords:** Animation, Anime, New Media, Internet, Digital Culture, Japan, Technology, Communication, Network, Videogame, Cinema, Video-clip, Advertising.



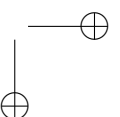
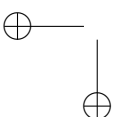


# INTRODUCTION

*The Anime Galaxy: Japanese Animation As New Media* is a report on *anime*, Japanese animation film, which appears in the 60s decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a fact that not all Japanese animation consists in anime, in the same way that not all of it is popular and worth selling. We are referring to *anime* as a genre in the sense that it is not about live-action cinema or cartoons. However it benefits from these two moving-image genres. Officially, *anime* is known as "janimation" or "Japanese animation"; and it stands for more than just a simple cinematic genre, that of animation. Thanks to evolving graphic technologies that support the *anime* film, animation becomes a new communication by-product without even disconnecting itself from its origins, which in their turn are related to *manga* comics. By retrieving live-action cinema influences, *anime* quickly becomes the same as "Asian culture" and "Japanese culture, in particular" (due to obvious reasons, since *anime* is Japanese). Nevertheless, Japan is far more than what it is portrayed in animations.

*Anime* comprehends many different subgenres, ranging from comedy to science fiction, horror [*kaidan*], detective stories and pornographic perversion [*hentai*] (Poitras, 2001: p. 50). The entire research contained in this study is based on "mecha" (*meka* in Japanese [Poitras, 2001: p. 46]), which is considered to be the most technological subgenre of *anime*, whether in shape or content. And it makes use of narratives focused on an ever-more technological world (robots, Artificial Intelligence, computers, new media, among other themes). This genre evolves from the remotely-controlled robot (like *Tetsujin 28-Go*) onto the piloted robot genre (Poitras, 2001: p. 19).

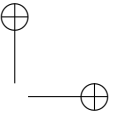
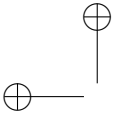
Having the purpose of making clear the importance of animation as a medium of communication, this entire research is organized bearing the goal of becoming a solid media theory, in which the two main objects of study are



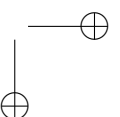
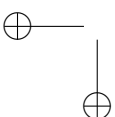
anime and videogames. In order to better understand many of the correlated questions, comic books, live-action cinema, TV shows, both TV and Web commercial clips, and even videoclips (official and amateur) were contemplated too. In some cases it gets somewhat complex to separate the animation space from the game space, given that animation establishes an audiovisual language that the 'videographic environment' of the game improves by adding up interactivity. "Movieness" and "cinemation" are two concepts introduced by Monet (2007: p. 194 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007) that display such hybridness between cinema and animation. In videogames, those "cinematic elements" (Poitras, 2001: p. 59) meet prolongation and emphasize the anime aesthetic. Both media – animation and videogame – manage to make use of a similar aesthetic, not to mention that they're also two vehicles for Japanese culture export. Before the eyesight of the Japanese, both of them belong to the same sphere: 'The Anime Galaxy', which is ubiquitous in their society, considering the child, parents and young men, all things related to manga and anime are useful entertainment for the youngest. Let's not forget that the father works until late night and the child's education depends on the mother in full time (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 168).

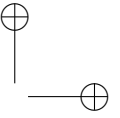
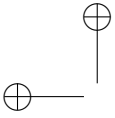
The start of 'The Anime Galaxy' is marked by the release of early comics being published in the post-war period. Manga comics in their definitely modern version, also close to what we see being published nowadays, is created by Osamu Tezuka in 1947, and it is entitled *New Treasure Island* [*Shin Takarajima*]. It owns its success to the implementation of the "pictorial system of representation" (Eiji, 2008: p. 122 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). As the Mushi Productions studios are found by Tezuka, in 1962, he begins working on animation film. (Poitras, 2001: p. 17-18). It is in that 20th century period which starts in Japanese territory, being its peak the broadcast of *Astro Boy* in Tokyo's Fuji TV on January 1st, 1963. In *Japanorama* (Peter Boyd MacLean, 2002), Jonathan Ross affirms that during the 1960s Tezuka designs the aforementioned series, by the way the first to be broadcast overseas and that changed animation film for good. It matters how this series brought anime to the limit, which then became a purpose, a convention (LaMarre, 2009: p. 35).

Japan dives in a crisis with no precedent as World War Two ends up. By facing defeat in war, Japan repositions itself in the international scene, and between the decades of 40s and 50s, massive changes take place. The 70s

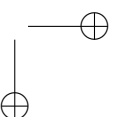
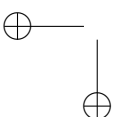


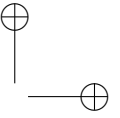
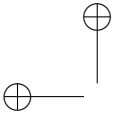
underlined Japan's globalization, the 80s the economic success and the 90s were the time for recession (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 72). Right after the war, the Japanese experience the nuclear pain and only in the 50s manga comic books begin to be accepted. Until the 80s, when anime meets exports onto other countries, manga blossoms in Japan. We also know that the image of the atomic mushroom and the flash preceding its shockwave are part of the Japanese traumatic imaginary, and they do appear on almost every anime. As a matter of fact, one also speaks of the hypothesis of manga and anime in creating a "counter-memory" and a "counter-history" (LaMarre, 2009: p. xiv in Lunning [Ed.], 2009) exactly because they work like means to display alternative histories, different records of truly happened in 20th century's Japan. Beyond that, there is an inclination to make videography in which machines are main theme, and this is no recent phenomenon. Because in the country at stake, objects, mechanisms and natural creatures may be seen as having a life of their own, according to *Shinto* religion (Benedict, 2005) of course, it seems normal to the Japanese that machines, above all the anthropomorphic ones, are worshiped. There are references to "ghosts", spirits inhabiting machines (Orbaugh, 2008: p. 154 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). A major part of anime is definitely reserved to overpowered anthropomorphic robots. The robot as a technological symbol and anime as a communication vehicle are featured altogether in "mecha" animation genre. The robot characters and the protective exoskeletons already existed as a narrative core in manga comics, and it is since that very moment, which is played by Tezuka and its manga "short-story" comics about robots (a format highlighted by Sugimoto, 2003: p. 249), that the young "mecha" pilot the character remains as an ideal image and agencement (Lunning, 2007: p. 269 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). Due to Tezuka's contribution, one witnesses the expansion of 'The Anime Galaxy', with famous stories played by the androgynous robot-child having become a hero. Osamu Tezuka lived over the World War Two period while he was still young and the devastation of major Japanese cities caused by atom bombs made him to have another perspective on technology. Hence in his stories and images he introduces the message that it [the technology] may help man in its progress, and that technoscience does not have to cause cataclysms. It is right after this circumstance that animation is regarded as being much more than just a text (LaMarre, 2009: p. ix). Moreover, what becomes the great brand of anime is "thinking about technology is inseparable from thinking





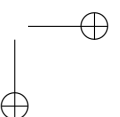
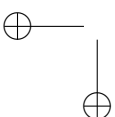
through technology" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. xxx), which radically distinguishes animation made in Japan from the one made by Walt Disney, although this company had caused a major influence, in aesthetic terms, to Japanese creations. Many of the most outstanding authors of anime know, in fact, that the curvilinear shape and big-eyed characters they design (Poitras, 2001: p. 59) are an import of *Bambi* and *Mickey Mouse*. A galaxy of artworks is born, inspired by Max Fleischer's *Betty Boop* (Poitras, 2001: p. 60) two-colored fascination (Poitras, 2001: p. 58) and by Paul Terry's *Mighty Mouse*. The most prominent Japanese character will be Tezuka's *Mighty Atom* [*Tetsuwan Atomu*], whose leading character is a hopeful and moral-based robot-child, endowed with his specific five lashes and geometrical, asymmetrical and plastic haircut. Actually, this artwork is influenced by the humor of *Popeye: The Sailor* (Dave Fleischer, 1933) and the playful *Mickey Mouse* (Disney, 1950). Nevertheless, the great distinction between *Mighty Atom* and the American creations has substantially to do with the attitude before technology. Ever since *Mighty Atom* that the anime industry extends the videography of machines, by generating this way an image of Japanese culture equivalent to mightiest technical progress, which demonstrates, on Japan's side, the "overcome of modernity" [*kindai no chökoku*] (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxxv). In anime, the *hyūmanizumu* (Schodt, 2007: p. 131), that is to say, the humanism, is aesthetically exploited, something which occurred already in manga. Human relationships, mankind's evolution, the relevance of religion and the need for technological evolution are much examined issues. Man establishes the narrative core, being followed the molds of renaissance humanism. Even today the narrative epicenter of animation is dedicated to the "new limits of the human" (Lunning, 2008: p. x in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). When anime has as its unique protagonists the robots, the narratives themselves are focused on humanism, hence one may argue that this is, inexorably one face of such new Asian-type 'Graphic Renaissance'. Eugenio Trías referred that "The Renaissance had laid its hand upon an excessively abstract and excessively exact concept of space. Abstract as an intelligible and mental space, the context of numeric-ideas" (2005: p. 155, translation is ours). Departing from this context of "numeric-ideas", Asia's 'Graphic Renaissance' has its edge in Japan, the country which exports still image, moving-image and interactive image graphic cultures. In the centre of such 'Graphic Renaissance' lies anime as the primary vehicle to stand out the importance of mankind and the "proper





place" of man in the world, his intervention role in the world to improve life. Computer graphics allowed underlining the evolution of man and his relation to technology. After all, the biggest technology is the "numeric-ideas" language, without which we would not have mathematics, computing, networks and videogames. LaMarre (2009) says "It is interesting to note, in light of these analogies between anime layers and computer windows, that limited cel animation emerged and became dominant in Japan roughly at the same time as discourses on information society (mid-1960s to mid-1970s), and anime came to global attention with the rise of information networks in the 1990s" (p. 137). *Dōga* (Schodt, 2007: p. 62), the classic moving-images, were already having impact near the audience in ancient times, but anime will extend that and remain endowed with *mannerizumu*, (Schodt, 2007: p. 60), that is to say several "maneirisms" (Winge: p. 57 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), featured in anime characters as they display Japanese culture; its ways of acting and talking, thinking and behaving publicly, without disregarding the matter of the image of both man and the machines.

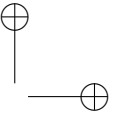
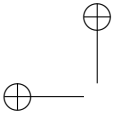
20th century's second half is marked by the growth of the *Animēshon*, the anime industry (in Schodt, 2002), which presents animations as mass-produced commodities (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxviii). At first sight, anime seems childish and lacking of meaning, when in reality it is much more aimed at adults, despite the consumption by young people. Besides, its core narrative is not just dedicated to violence or student challenges launched among rivals [*raibaru*]. Unlike the stereotype, Japanese cartoons do not portray fights and child screams alone. If this were to be the case, anime would not be based on science fiction manga. There is one part of anime designed for children and it has simple narratives, though anime as an industry exports the "mecha" genre as its top gear of animation film. The country living fascinated with computers and electronics, known for its cuisine and historical figures like the *samurai*, the *shogun* and the *ninja*, is also the country speaking of culture like it still is an empire, yet it stands as a rather different empire – an 'empire of graphics'. We chose this expression to point out that the anime culture keeps conceiving the export of its cultural icons as something extremely. Japan is a country that has the need for showing to the world what it is doing, just as it is explained in the work of Ruth Benedict (2005). Thus, the "empire of graphics" is referring to the need for Japanese people to communicate to the world how their flourishing graphic industry is. Even in the manga images Japanese culture is



exposed with lure, as if it still did not have the chance to stand above the industrial transformation. The embodiment of this transformation is very much present in anime; something we do find in artworks like *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing Double Pack Vol. 1 [Kido Senshi Gandamu]* (2006) and *Transformers* (Nelson Shin, 1986). The same style exists in videogames like *Macross Ace Frontier* (2008) and even in the collection toy series of *Zoids*.

Watching anime as a cultural phenomenon demands one to understand the history of Japan. After the defeat in World War Two, the Japanese have changed their attitude. An enemy country to the West turning itself friendly all of a sudden is a fact that had consequences in the design of a machine's industry, consumer goods, media and entertainment, something altered then by comics, since more narratives with peaceful topics were being published. Yet, the presence of technology figures in the stories kept increasing until, already in the age of the strongly industrialized Japan of the 80s, anime starts being distributed as a new product; a cultural phenomenon hard to contain within Japan's borders. Animation becomes the dominant logic (LaMarre, 2009: p. 36), so that, between the 80s and 90s, it faces emancipation from cinema. And the 90s were the moment of the massive global distribution (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. xxi). This phenomenon stands so much embedded in a commercial and industrial logic as in a multimedia one. Its images flow from hardware to hardware and migrate off platforms, crossing genres and carrying multiple messages always with an audiovisual language that is originally theirs; ever since information society came up that anime images seem to easily dock on the digital world. What we mean to say with this is to highlight how anime images keep being innovative and presumably a communication product worth analyzing within the context of Communication Sciences. Nevertheless, the prophetic character of Japanese narratives in disclosing the birth of new beings, well, the entire 'imaginary demography', named by LaMarre as "speciesism" (in Bolton, 2008: p. xiii in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), seems to have not changed so far. In the real world, anime has impact even over other industries, because the consumers expect Japanese goods to be more sophisticated than any other.

In Japan, futuristic machines are featuring animation film due to the previous existence in almost every entertainment. Both real industry – which is to be represented by enterprises like Mitsubishi's Sociotech, Hitachi's Humanication or Matsushita's Human Electronics – and the fiction industry share the same taste for new robotic creatures. Japan promotes itself in an aggressively

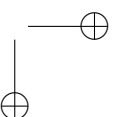
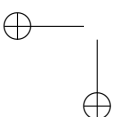


modern fashion in anime images, because these images praise the country as the future of the West and a paradigm for effective techno cultures.

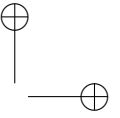
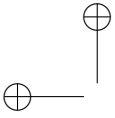
Post-war Japan responded to the world by developing in economics and technology simultaneously. The West thought to be awkward that a former World War Two adversary nation would suddenly have become docile and even friendly (Benedict, 2005: p. x), since the defeat in war had turned inverse circumstances unexpected. Japan met no respect as a military power, as it was seen otherwise, like a humiliated country. In this sense, "It would have to earn back its respect in the community of nations by being uniquely peaceful" (Benedict, 2005: p. xi). Because the constitution of a defeated Japan was drawn by American jurists, it did make the use of war as illicit thing. The solution to adopt would obligatory have to be in a martial form and a respectable one in resemblance with what happened in the 19th century's *Meiji* reform. However, it has always been a competitive country and there was no way of hiding from that. The cultural transformation that it did face in post-war period implied an investment in "achievement-oriented meritocratic competition" (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 125) in order to become an evolved country.

Let's not forget that the competitiveness inherent to Japanese culture is in no possible way exclusively belonging to the age of consumer electronics and car exports, as the phenomenon dates from early 17th century's disputes with the West. In truth, Japan's identity construction really encompasses such competitive attitude.

It is necessary to understand a little of "Japanese *psyche*" (Benzon, 2007: p. 284 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) in order to comprehend the choices Japan has made, as a nation, in the international scene from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to present time. There was no unique notion of one being "Japanese" before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in the first place (Marilyn Ivy in Miyao, 2007: p. 89 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) and secondly, Japanese people are educated in a respectful and orderly fashion. It is a belief, within Japanese society, that each person must respect his place; that there is a "proper place", "a position of his own" as mentioned by Benedict (2005: p. 56). From the national point of view, even during World War Two, Japan continues to think that every other nation should be positioning below itself in an international hierarchy context. Thus it is assumed that each country also shall occupy a place of its own. Japan deserves a proper position, the supreme place. This is how the Japanese people think. Even in what comes to family, family claims are a priority against



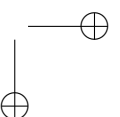
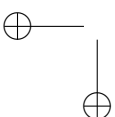
those of the individual (Benedict, 2005: p. 55). A Japanese person's mentality is obsessed with self-discipline, usually is named as *shuyo* (Benedict, 2005: p. 233). In a background in which family, hierarchy, the "proper place" and self-discipline are unsurpassable, there is not much freedom. Japanese family needs children so that young men honor their family tradition and homage is paid to their parents beyond their death. Hierarchy bonds and duties extend, reaching out of home towards society. Since Japan was for a long time a feudal, caste-based society, loyalty was due, not only to family core, but in relation to a feudal lord. Before society, "the proper place" was ranging in social hierarchy depending on whether the individual as male or female, given that a woman had a lower *status quo* in comparison to a man. All these elements of Japanese *psyche* are portrayed in anime stories, in imperious image carriers of a tension existing between the ancient feudal empire and the post-modern technological oasis. Even today the notion that Japanese identity necessarily respects each thing and person's "proper place" still prevails. Benedict says that "Japan's motto is; Everything in its place" (2005: p. 87) and, in fact, the Japanese "Self" pays respect to places and positions, priorities and rules, because even before the war the Japanese constantly acted as if "the eyes of the world were upon them". If it is possible to speak of a "personality" or a "national identity", then we shall point out that Japanese *psyche* deals doubly with both the "sword" and the "chrysanthemum", which are part of the same "scene" (Benedict, 2005: p. 2). The author invokes this metaphor in order to highlight the ambiguity of Japanese culture; its concerns related to the aesthetic and the rigid, the natural and the machine, male and female, ancient and modern. For Benedict, the major difference between Japan and the West is that the vessels and the weaponry of World War Two were but symbols of an exhaustible and competitive spirit. Those would be the symbols in the same manner a sword meant virtue for a *samurai* warrior. Upon the ashes of 20th century metropolitan deatomization, today an irreverent Japan is rising, a creator of neocultures, where comic books is a privileged communication medium (Jonathan Ross in Peter Boyd MacLean, 2002). In the scope of communication, anime substitutes increasingly more the still two-colored manga pages that new media insist on animating. It is a part of anime stories that "giganticism" remains featured along with other themes, such as those of "flying fortress" or the "warrior robot", among many others. From the scenographic point of view, anime narratives on machines are extensively focusing

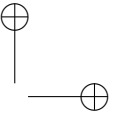
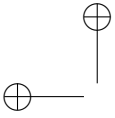


“dystopias” (Hans Bertens, 2005: p. 11) and “post-human civilizations”. To resume, machines are not a new theme, not even in contemporary videography, because the ancient and known automata – the *karakuri* – is already contemplated in ancient Japan’s rites.

One must point out that Japan’s cultural archetypes are neither anthropomorphic nor humanist, for Japan is a polytheist nation, which imported Budism among many other religious cultures, such as Christianity. *Shinto* religion is the reason why in Japan robots or any object at all, are regarded as life carriers. For the Japanese, there’s a prevailing idea that all living things turn into *kami*, spirit. This way of dealing with existence as if all things had a life of their own matters for ourselves to understand why “ghosts” might exist (Orbaugh, 2008: p. 154 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), ghosts in the machines, just as the title of the anime film “Ghost in The Shell” suggests. Animism is culturally dominant in Japan, the country where swords and chrysanthemum possess a specific spirit also. It is Schodt who compels us to best understand this cultural archetype of Animism, which is said to be “The belief that anything in the natural world – not just living things – can have a conscious life or souls. It exists in Buddhism but is especially strong in ‘Shinto’, (...) a form of nature worship and belief that inanimate objects can be sacred” (1988: p. 196). The possible sacralization of an inanimate object drives us onto another panorama, that of *kawaii* culture, which consists in the “cute icon”, composed by “dear” and “childish” characters. Any anime artwork promotes this culture, which, though, due to its logical relation with *Shinto*, naturally preceded both manga and anime. Every time the masses turn into a ritual their devotion before the aforementioned icon, it is the *kawaii* culture that gets strengthened. What changed with the appearance of anime artworks was that such culture became an associated one. The “animetic” was established because the popular characters being sold in stores, in sculptural or graphic format, possess something from anime (LaMarre, 2009: p. 36). Thus, the collectible, decorative, sculpture and design figures, that the big audience is looking for, are now connivent with animal, robotic and human characters of animation film.

Because the Japanese strongly endorsed their “technological determinism” (LaMarre, 2009: p. 49), possibly justified by the social and cultural patterns that we have already identified, and they have rebuilt a nation for technology production. Social consequences regarding those options are now to be faced. Sugimoto (2003) asserts that the age profile of Japanese popula-

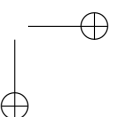
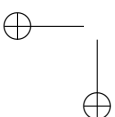


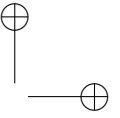
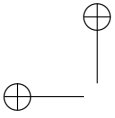


tion is rapidly changing due to the decline of birth rate and the increasing life expectation. The differences in age groups provoke crisis in the job market and in the sector of social welfare (p. 80). The Japanese most likely face the greatest threat ever, on a social level, in this aging of an accelerated society that once migrated from country zones onto overpopulated urban areas. There is an aged society in Japan that places in young people the skills to design robots to respond to the “aging society problem” [*k<sup>o</sup>-oreika-shakai no mondai* (Schodt 2002)]. It is with social care robots that brands like Honda, Nissan and Mitsubishi are building up that the major active part of the population awaits for release onto information society tasks. Besides, the Japanese are a 99% ethnic pure society. The non interference of exterior ethnic groups was a contribution for the aging of the original population. The low birth rate among Japanese couples does not enable social renewal. Singer (2009) reports that Japan opted for technical ways, making robots capable of practicing nursery and taking care of the elderly (p. 242-243). Despite the way robots star anime films as protective heroes, many times as weapons or armors involving their pilots, according to the Japanese view, the immediately real robot is the social robot; and this is the one that is urgently making sense to create. Roboticians of Japan believe machines may perform elder care. In “the land of the rising sun”, anthropomorphic machines shall suppress needs of human resources and replace the aged population. Kitano Mazayuki approaches this exact problem, in the article “Japão Volta-se Para os Robôs Para Apoiar a População Mais Idosa” [“Japan Turns Itself to Robots For Elder Care Support] (2007: p. 5), by reporting the Japanese are aging at a pace unmatched by birth rate, disregarding immigration as an answer. Again, technique could be the provided solution. Just as Hornyak explains, thus is today’s Japan situation:

“(...) robots for use at home are also being deployed in a surprising proving ground: the elderly. Japan’s rapidly aging society is facing a major crisis. The low birthrate, unsurpassed longevity and deep-seated aversion to immigration mean the population is expected to shrink by 20 percent by 2050; about a third will consist in people over sixty-five. The impact on the healthcare system will be staggering, made worse by the shortage of younger workers to support and care for their elders” (2006: p. 90).

One has to underline that, as such resource migration occurs; the older

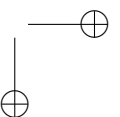
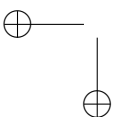


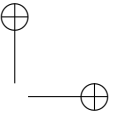
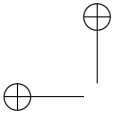


Japanese people will be taken care by machines built by the younger people, given that Japan's birth rate has been non-sufficient in covering up both the aging and the death toll. Kenji Kamiyama directs an anime film on this issue, the *Ghost in The Shell: Solid State Society* (2007), where the story's main characters are "aged" [*kefu*], that happen to live attached to machines and then suffer a "hacking" attack. Right in the end of the film, their consciousnesses generate something much bigger as they remain all interlinked to a medical server. Despite being a science fiction anime, Kamiyama's film shows the dangers concerning a "neo-mechatronic society", much as Shinji Aramaki did in *Appleseed* (2004). For the Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade And Industry, Japan is about to become a "(...) 'Neo Mechatronics Society' within a decade, with robots fully integrated to everything, from taking out trash to forestry management" (in Hornyak, 2006: p. 10-11). From present time Japanese reality domestic robotics images are coming up and turning out into physically tangible agents. The robotic characters have crossed the border to the real world. What Japan is displaying in terms of robots does not exclusively belong to animation and videogames anymore. Debord (1991) already said that "As the need remains socially dreamed, the dream becomes necessary" (p. 16, translation is ours). Having robots helping and protecting the Japanese is a social need for them. Anime is that necessary dream, mirroring and shaping the Japanese cultural identity.

## Objectives

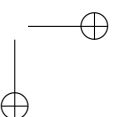
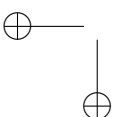
'The Anime Galaxy: Japanese Animation As New Media' is a study based simultaneously in theoretical arguments and empyric data (gathered through viewer experience and experiments) on anime, whose investigation demanded ourselves to think thoroughly on some questions, such as "Is it anime only a cinematic 'genre'?" ; "Does it pose any straight relation to new media?" and "Which relation exists encompassing animation, robots and communication media?", for instance. These are only the primary questions that the arguments of the present thesis consider addressing an answer. Technology is the common element in animation, whether in content (narrative) or shape (production). In this monography the problem which one is supposed to solve is to know if anime really is symptomatic of the new media evolution, and if, be-

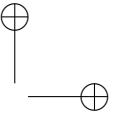
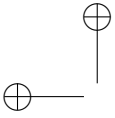




ing so, it does introduce new features, formats, codes and languages pertinent enough to require research, as well as relevant theoretical arguments in the extent of Communication Sciences. The remarkable progress of anime amidst popular culture has happened at a pace similar to that of technologies themselves, which are increasingly mediatic and more and more technical communication media. As a matter of fact it is hard to separate technologies from anime and from communication because anime assimilates and benefits from the new media languages and new technologies, namely the graphic ones. It remains impossible to avoid studying anime within the new media framework that contemporaneity knows. It's all about a type of moving-image that the Academy must not leave yet to study. A comprehension of this kind of videography remains urgent, whose producer is essentially Japan (even if it is not the only one, though). It is established, therefore as a research objective, to explain what exactly this Japanese animation format represents within the field of Communication Sciences.

By approaching anime as an object of study we verify and testify the need to reffer the importance of robotics in this Japanese videography genre for the robots, whether they are manned or unmanned; they are showing up in anime with a purpose we shall explain in the following instances. Another point that matters since the early stage of research for this thesis is the comprehension of Japan using anime images to export its mass culture, like it did previously with manga (the original two-colored comics). One is interested to know how Japan makes use of anime to uphold the objective of turning its culture an international one by endorsing its advanced culture industry. Ultimately, if we are to consider that Japan displays anime images, knowing the latter are more than image genres, above all because they're a media format (LaMarre, 2009), then the technologies invoked and used for designing anime are no fruit of casual choice, but a deliberate criteria for anime production. This is why we name this videography, the anime videography, as 'a videography of machines', hence the thesis subtitle being 'Japanese Animation as New Media'.



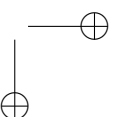
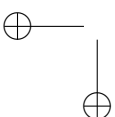


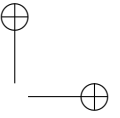
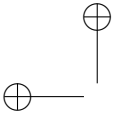
## Research Methodologies

Due to the massive audiovisual component of materials necessary for analysis in this thesis, it became imperative, throughout its execution, which the maximum amount of element had to be gathered in order to achieve the detection of pattern themes, styles, graphics and common languages in anime. This way, the research triggering this thesis implied a full viewing experience of each and every live-action film (average length of 2 hours), anime film (average length of 2 hours) and anime series (average length of 20 hours). Besides watching straight anime-related artworks, it was necessary to watch other videography types, such as documentary film (average length from 40 minutes to 2 hours), TV and Web advertising commercials (nearly from 15 to 30 seconds). All these materials constitute passive videography elements, i.e., they demand examination, study, designing hypothesis, yet they're not interactive; they demand from us just the viewing role. Beyond this kind of videography it was still necessary, for the right course of this investigation, to try out interactive videography artworks (in which the average experiment length ranged from 15 to 30 hours in each videogame). This was one of the exhaustive points concerning elements gathered to formulate the theories presented here, for videogames imply a "player" exhaustively participating in the experience type which is made possible for him. Without this type of experimentation, that is very time-occupying, some of the ideas featured in this thesis would not be developed or be comprehensible, since anime meets prolongation in videogames. Takahiro Hayakawa's (2008) argument asserts precisely this.

Research elements gathering such as essays, book-format fiction (novels, graphic novels), in audiovisual format (filmography and videography) and also artworks in an interactive/multimedia format led to the usage of 70% of such study material at once. Remaining 30% of essayistic elements and passive and interactive videographic artworks as well, were saved for up-to-date videography becoming continuously available and updated. One of the difficulties met at research stage of this thesis was mostly time, because new films, TV shows and animation are being released, and books also are being published all the time. This made harder the update process for me as a viewer and a reader. Presenting this research on anime required a great effort of keeping up with the theme, and as videogames are necessary for unders-

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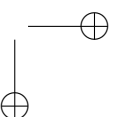
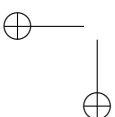


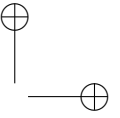
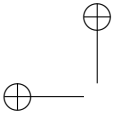
tanding anime, the reviewing material in this thesis was always much vast. On the other hand, the arguments stated in this thesis refer to a very updated videography.

The watching method chosen for viewing the artworks was a sequential one. Artwork after artwork, hypothesis were designed and patterns detected, concerning cinematic or television type artworks, and interactive ones as well, though the latter demanded superior time for its analysis. And simultaneously with videography experiments one chose to link elements identified in images with arguments from authors of essays, press articles and documentary films. Crossed-information improved research materials and the statements featured here. Therefore we have the reading phase of author's texts, the viewing experience of director's videography and the experiment of designers' videogames as the triangle of necessary materials for this research on anime as media. Because of the enormous amount of published videography, whether it be passive or interactive, it was required since the early moment of investigation to establish as a criterion the privileged view of remarkable directors' artworks, and the gameplay of the most relevant videogames in this type of industry. In addition to this methodology, research and the constant reunion of advertising commercials were the following step. The spots displayed on TV and on the Web, whose audiovisual language matches the fiction universe of anime.

## **Materials**

The materials used in this investigation, aside from conventional bibliography of articles and essays, belong in their majority to the graphic kind. This means comic book editions, films and anime series, on top of which videogames are added, are objects of study that become important thanks to aesthetics and visual technique, even if sound elements have a privileged highlight. Constant gameplay and video-image watching made possible for us to understand and identify the pattern themes in anime, much as it allowed us to outline correlated issues. Author's concepts and statements were chosen for this bibliography. It was our goal to make them clear to help the reader to better comprehend the anime universe. More recently, digital and interactive comics turned also into a matrix-element of anime's graphic culture. And thus we have chosen to examine it and test it as research material. In the sense to



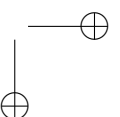
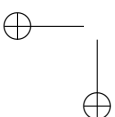


encompass every anime manifestation, we have assumed the concern of examining both original and “home-made” videoclips, that is to say amateur, as the AMVs (“Anime Music Videos”). Once said that, research materials consist of comics (including Western and manga comics), anime films, videogames, live-action cinema and TV animation series. As a study material, anime series, usually entitled as OVAs (Original Video Animations) [Poitras, 2001: p. 14], and documentary films about Japanese culture (like Wim Wender’s *Tokyo-Ga* [1985]) and advertising commercials were contemplated too.

## Most Relevant Artworks

By the time the first great animation film series *Astro Boy* (1963) hit the broadcast TV in the 80s, it caused a flood of admirers all over the world. Based on Osamu Tezuka’s artwork (2002-2004), this is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of the pre-digital era. In the same epoch, that of “post-modern” period [*kindai no chökoku*] (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxxv), Hayao Miyazaki became famous outside Japan with *Future Boy Conan* (1978), an anime series for television. This fiction placed the story in a “post-holocaust” world (Kevin Williams, 2003: p. 2). Right after the 90s, artworks as *Zone of The Enders* (Tetsuya Watanabe, 2001) played an important role by reassuring anime in the international scene, and calling again for robotics as a narrative core. The same thing had already happened with live-action *Power Rangers* (2005) TV series, inside and outside Japan. *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Hideaki Anno, 1995) is inclined over the same theme too, but he exposes the villains “Angels” as biomechanical creatures.

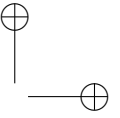
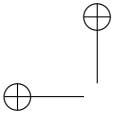
*Pokémon: The First Movie* (Kunihiko Yuyama, 1998) as an animation film caused astonishment by making leading characters out of “pocket monsters”, figures used as a last resort in the protagonists’ battles. Just as *Pokémon*, the anime series *Ghost in The Shell* (Kenji Kamiyama, 2002) had a television version. Nevertheless, the artworks *Ghost in The Shell* (1996) and *Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence* (2004), both directed by Mamoru Oshii, raised the quality level of anime. Anime as it is nowadays known owes its volatile visual language to the manga comics of *Ghost in The Shell* (Masamune Shirow, 1995) and *Akira* (Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988). Anime’s iconic films relying on their homonymous manga versions turned out to be far more relevant because



of their science fiction "cyberpunk aesthetic" (Napier, 2001: p. 11). Other artworks as *Spirited Away* (2003) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), both directed by Hayao Miyazaki, were more watched by adult than by infant or juvenile audiences in the West, which is not normal (Miyazaki in *Japanorama* [Peter Boyd MacLean, 2002]). In Japan, the primary audience of anime is the one of young adults and the one of children, as adults are placed secondly, (Poitras, 2001: p. 8) despite being already a major part of the audience. Fantastic stories about love, tragic deaths, beautiful nature, uncanny machines or the respect for the elders, are merely some of the issues Miyazaki focuses on his artworks.

Somewhat as a transition between classical anime and the one rendered in 3D in computers, artworks such as the remarkable *Voices of a Distant Star* [*Hoshi No Koe*] (Makoto Shinkai, 2002) made the audience feel mesmerized due to its narrative about nostalgia and its onyric, romantic and science fiction footage. *Wonderful Days* (Sunmin Park & Kim Mun-Saeng, 2003), also known as *Sky Blue*, is considered to be a most welcomed animation by the North-American audience. Not only it deepens the same "visual poem" style as *Voices of a Distant Star*, but it appeals to the mixture of two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements as well. It also calls for an ecological awareness, pushing the viewer to recall the holocaust every time he thinks of extra-terrestrial lifeforms. Following the same aesthetic there is *Metropolis* (2001), the fabulous artwork in which Rintaro remakes Fritz Lang's classic motion picture with anime language.

The most expected animation film for the animation audience is *Astro Boy* (David Bowers, 2009). The flying robot-child invented by Tezuka is an icon in Japan, and androgynous super-boy crossing skies like an airplane, a projectile. *Cockpit: Kamikaze Stories* (Osamu Dezaki, 1993) marked the fighter-pilot themed animation film, centered the story on 20th century's world wars, it showed the pilot as a hero. *The Sky Crawlers* (Sony, 2009) turned that environment into a sophisticated one, introducing ancient aircraft tuned like spaceships. The technological element, of objects and vehicles stands predominant in this kind of animation, which presents everyday living of various pilots of spaceships resembling ancient warplanes. Dogfights are registered as if each battle was to be the last one. Even in videogames like *The Sky Crawlers – Innocent Aces* (2010), the game player is assigned with the task of flying and turning into the best fighter-pilot ever. For instance, *The Place Promised*

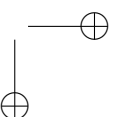
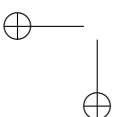


in *Our Early Days* (Makoto Shinkai, 2004) introduces a futuristic and nostalgic realm where a hero-pilot fallen in love performs his ultimate and dramatic trip aboard a prototype aircraft altogether with his girlfriend in the cockpit. In her post-war study, Ruth Benedict (2005) claimed that the “hero-pilot” (p. 25) was relevant in Japanese culture itself. Far from the skies, the racing-pilot in *Speed Racer [Mach Go Go Go]* (Tatsuo Yoshida, 1967) manifests the same galvanizing energy (Poitras, 2001: p. 46). However, it is artworks like *Macross 7* (1994) that provide space to the pilot and a hybrid identity to the aircraft. Flying across the skies in a train rather than on an airship is what we find in the story of *The Galaxy Express 999 [Ginga Tetsudo]* (Rintaro, 1982) and in its sequel *Adieu Galaxy Express 999* (Rintaro, 1981). Nostalgia elements are equally found in Masaru Mori’s *Barefoot Gen* (1983) and in *Grave of The Fireflies* (Isaho Takahata, 1988). As for Mori’s anime, the nuclear devastation makes the previous Japanese society extinct, later remembered with yearning. The same thing occurs in Takahata’s animation film. The time of fireflies is by now a mere mirage in the “post-nuclear” age (Kevin Williams, 2003). Owner of the well-known Studio Ghibli, the great Japanese animation master, Hayao Miyazaki, claims to be directing “manga films” [*manga eiga*] (LaMarre, 2009: p. 35) instead of anime. In any case, being Miyazaki a prominent director in the anime universe he manages to extraordinarily exploit nostalgia in animation, and fantasy in *Ponyo on The Cliff by The Sea* (2008) too.

Two substantial points are embraced in Japanese animation: technology (futuristic, modern) and drama (past, holocaust). Awkward monstrosities emerge in animations of the same generation as *Vexille* (Fumihiko Sori, 2007). Despite the quality of these 3D animation films, all the things possibly representable in animation film, much more simple artworks as *Bleach The Movie – Memories of Nobody* (2006, Manga Ent.) keep having audiences interested in watching young men in sword-fighting. Surprises come from animation films as *Batman: Gotham Knight* (Yoshiaki Kawajiri *et al.*, 2008), from the kind of interpretation anime creators make upon the universe of a super-hero nurtured by westerners. It happens otherwise too, the *The Chronicles of Riddick: Dark Fury* (Peter Chung, 2004) and *Dead Space: Downfall* (Chuck Patton, 2008) are released as complimentary anime stories for existing narratives (respectively reported the film and videogame).

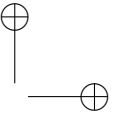
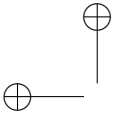
Although the available videography is of endless quantities, and uniquely

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noticed because there are already published too much versions with subtitles in English, the most relevant anime artworks are still a relatively small part when compared to the videogame domain, where important games keep having sequels. The most important animation films display a style resembling the one of the *Dark Minds* (Pat Lee, 1998) manga comics, since its aesthetic owes much to new media and to Photoshop software. *Dark Minds* is a detective story, graphically styled with blinding glows, something only possible to do with digital tools. A great advance characterizes Japanese comics. On this aspect, we are to remind how it began in black-and-white, as we shall see in the first part of this thesis, where the transition from the literary phase onto the cinematic one is observed. Today it is a fact that anime's hypercolored images, which share similarities with anime videogames, seem to be unrelated to early manga. Animation assimilates, develops and improves conventions from print-book manga.

After the 2D-3D transition, the artworks following *Appleseed* (Shinji Aramaki, 2004) mattered to consolidate the new aspect of anime (Poitras, 2001: p. 29). By standing away from the two-dimensional image, the new image type in anime introduces more fantastic, exuberant and detailed 3D images than the preceding generation of animation. In these images, even if the viewer is able to watch "this side" of the image, the computer is responsible for generating the 3D image in all its range. The result is a perfect image, regardless of the position occupied by objects, design sets or characters while they're moving. Aramaki triggered a revolution in anime along with this version of *Appleseed*, since there was already an older version in 2D, Katayama's (1998) version. Again, robotics turns out to be the main theme, mostly after this moment in which mechanisms became possible to represent on the screen and resembling something real: "manga-anime-realism" [*manga-animeteki rearizumu*] (Azuma Hiroki: in Walker, 2009: p. 10 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). From this moment on, artworks such as *Macross plus: The Movie* (Noboru Ishiguro & Shôji Kawamori, 1994) are no more making sense because they presented drawings of mechanisms, rather than 3D images of them. One must speak of *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* (2001), which was most relevant in regenerating the anime "genre", despite it looks more like a virtual version of a live-action filme. In this *Final Fantasy*, every mechanism, weapon, vehicle, airship and device is represented with unmatched quality. The same technology was



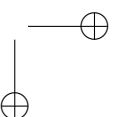
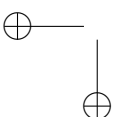
used by the producers of the anime film inspired by *Matrix* (1999-2004), the known *The Animatrix* (Mahiro Maeda, *et al.*, 2003) anime.

One must disregard so far that cartoons widely appreciated by the audience, like *Iron Giant* (Brad Bird, 1999) and *Transformers* (Nelson Shin, 1986), helped the purpose of expanding the domain of machines before graphic technologies matured, that is to say, prior to 2004.

When it comes to conventional cinematography there's a series of films pushing forward the graphic progress of anime, anticipating in a certain way what we see in Aramaki's *Appleseed*. In the universe of *Terminator 2 – Judgment Day* (James Cameron, 1991) the detail of machines coming from the future is high, and its nuclear holocaust-related script broadly reconcilable with the pattern themes of anime. *Terminator (4) – Salvation* (McG, 2009), the most recent instalment to the series carries on the same topics again yet enabling improved graphic representations. Michael Bay's two artworks, both *Transformers* (2007) and *Transformers – Revenge of The Fallen* (2009), are released in the moment when nearly everything can be represented on the screen, including almost impossible transformations between robot and vehicle stages.

Still as a reference from the "image of the future" (Polak, 1973) we have *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982), considered 20th century's best science fiction motion picture, whose images function as a groundwork for the majority of the anime in the 90s. Metropolitan landscapes in Scott's film are continued in *Ghost in The Shell* and *Akira*. Within the framework of more important films there was no way to expect that a cinematic artwork would become a trilogy, and even less that it would broaden anime's style in live-action film, as it happened with *Matrix* (1999-2004). Inspired on *Ghost in The Shell* (Poitras, 2001: p. 70; Jenkins, 2006; Eiji (2008: p. 118 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008) anime cartoons, the Wachovsky Brothers created a fiction world similar to a photorealistic film of an anime artwork (Bolton *et al.*, 2007: p. ix in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007), for they had recurred to the same image editing style, sound and direction procedures. Many were the films after *The Matrix* that tried to clone its aesthetic though they have disregarded establishing a connection to anime. Such is not, however, the case of *The Returner* (Takashi Yamazaki, 2002), a science fiction novel recurring to anime language to assign prominence to characters. In the end of this film a "transformer" character appears before the protagonists, setting the ground for viewers to experience

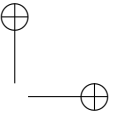
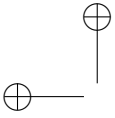
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artworks as those of Michael Bay. The visual language applied by *The Matrix* met a continuation in *The Returner*; nevertheless the speeding combats aesthetic and explosiver imagery had a relevant intermediate point, the classical but no less violent, *Dragonball* (1990) anime. In James Wong's version, *Dragonball Evolution* (2009) live-action film elements blend with anime elements, despite the failure in exploiting animation film's potential. That was precisely what *The Matrix* did, especially after the second episode of the trilogy, and in an even straighter manner, as in a tribute form, in *The Animatrix*. We should point also that in the 'post-Matrix' age the anime musical film *Interstella 5555: The Story of The Secret Star System* (Kasuhisa Takenouchi, 2003) was meant to show the world that even music could link up to anime, in the popular culture genre, a task not demanding just science fiction.

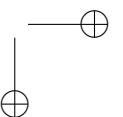
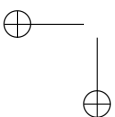
In another perspective, it is a fact that science fiction has managed to find in next-generation images a long-awaited territory, as is the case of videogames, and to which cinema has responded in a limited manner, despite the cutting-edge footage. Another relevant point concerns what the greatest videogame designers think, write and accomplish in their artworks, as if these would be cinema (let's say interactive). One of those directors is Hideo Kojima, considered to be a great visionary, from Konami, a worldwide acclaimed videogame industry. There aren't many videogames produced by Kojima, though within a single series, the *Metal Gear Solid* (1987-2008) one, their extent is by now very considerable. The two artworks which were most central as objects of study for this investigation were *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of Patriots* (2008) and *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* (2006). While the first videogame solves some narrative riddles that remained unanswered over the [then] four episodes of the series, the second one represents the fiction universe of the videogame under a new communication format: digital interactive comics. Since *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of Patriots* modifies the videogame panorama by enabling a dense fiction world on robotics (Singer, 2009: p. 89), geopolitics and a complex *mise-en-scène* with captivating game situations, *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* means an interesting new media approach, because it transforms still images comics into interactive and audiovisual items. And in both artworks the core message of "Japanimation" (Matthews, 2003-2004) remains, concerning robotics with a symbiotic relationship with computer-generated images.

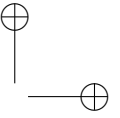
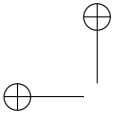
Team Ico's software house proposals, like *Ico* (2002) and *Shadow of The*



*Colossus* (2005) managed to add up many news to the anime videogames domain. In *Ico*, the entire landscape is a fortress where silence is heavy and a catastrophe seems to have taken place. When it comes to *Shadow of The Colossus*, the main character is allowed to wander across endless terrain properties and ride a horse while holding a sword in his hand; seeking sleeping giants [*kaiju*] whose vital energy shall be absorbed right after their defeat. Beyond the narrative aspects of these two videogames, which are memorable, the scale of the design set and the adversaries we come across with over the action are pioneer features in the videogames world. Elements such as gigantism, mechanicism and the fortresses are pattern issues imported from anime that, in these videogames, attempted augmentation.

Set afar from the most poethic aspect of Team Ico's videogames' images, we have *Armored Core 2* (2002), more conventional artworks aspiring to place players behind the wheels of "mech" robots. Amidst the scenarios of devastation, the robot battles fascinating young men have in *Armored Core* one of the most well-known stylistic expressions in direct tune with robotics and anime. Different perspectives, as in *Enter The Matrix* (2003), in this case following the world of *The Matrix* film, have added something new to the videogames' world: playing a game about a film which happens to be about anime. Moreover, *Enter The Matrix* permits one to play parts of the *The Matrix* trilogy story, that are not featured in the films, setting up another story (Henry Jenkins, 2006). Traditionally, "shoot'em up" games like *Ikaruga* (2002) were known for letting us play as spaceship pilots in air battles, though this kind of games had their limits when it comes to depict animated robots. One year only before *Ikaruga*, and Square Soft's *Final Fantasy X* (2001) was being released, and ever since that anime-styled videogames turned to be an interactive continuation of anime's conventions; obviously in *Final Fantasy X* (2010) a fact that prevails until nowadays. One even registers the colored images of the *Okami* (2006) videogame – where the protagonist is a dog – as similar to an ancient Japanese visual art. Due to all of this, it is a fact that videogames augment the Japanese animation universe, applying codes formats taken from preceding media (print book, comics, animation film and live-action film).





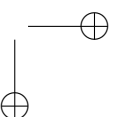
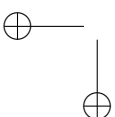
## Research Hypothesis

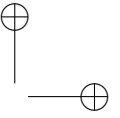
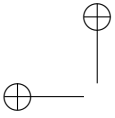
Studying anime and videogames in interplay may seem at first sight somehow incompatible, but the truth is that 'both' share many things in terms of content and shape. "Why should one study anime?" is the question raised. Consequently the answer would be "because anime stands as the most advanced animation genre, the single one directly related to robotics and new media". As it shall be shown throughout the thesis, both robotics and animation films, much as new media and popular graphic cultures, possess several matching points that investigation authors managed to notice too. Two key points are required in order to best comprehend that 'The Anime Galaxy' are summed up in the understanding the robot as the future of the computer, and secondly how digital image is considered as the apex of popular graphic culture. In this sense, studying anime as a technology, as a communication medium, remains important so that in it one may recognize a new communication formula departing from literary-graphic formats and cinematic-video.

## Expected Results

With this research we are proposing to explain that Japanese animation is a communication medium, one should point out, as a new and global form. Images addressing the notion of robotic futurism and new media are displayed among the anime graphic universe. *Kawaii* culture and its globally popular characters, videogames seen as universally acknowledged entities and digital graphic novels have empowered a whole network culture, a participative (Aquila, 2007: p. 35 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007), customized and 'demassified' for fans. Using new communication media means to join a world of information and entertainment, by managing contents through 'subjective media interfaces'. Paradigms have an influence over the user-information interaction depart from anime. The more sophisticated the media depicted in animation and the more popular it will get.

As mentioned above, it still remains an objective of this research to prove the existence of a symbiotic relationship between anime and videogames. In accordance with the accomplished research, it stands as utterly important to show that other by-products such as digital manga, advertising commercials





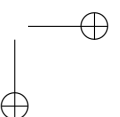
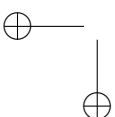
and videoclips derive from Japanese animation. One applies inclusively the theoretical background addresses Japan's historical record so one may have enough elements allowing an easy understanding of the anime phenomenon. In this way a set of authors, themes and pertinent questions were assembled and updated to enlighten the reader about the investigated issues. Another indispensable premise is grounded on anime as a communication medium and not as being a cartoon "genre" instead, unlike what one might think at first sight. Authors as LaMarre speak of "animations" (2009: p. xiv) to evoke plurality and they do not refer to animation as an univocal concept. That being said based on research one expects to present the correlations universe existing between anime and the derived media constellation. Most up-to-date media are regulated by "mobility", "customization", "participation", "game", "network" and "subjectivity" features. New media like videogames and digital manga display these features. Even in animations, machines and media, those happen to be a narrative object, demanding control, piloting and interacting. Having the audience accustomed in managing media files and archiving several formats and authors data, whether they are official or amateur, belonging to this whole public culture of the future, relying on sharing, free view and online posting, is a fact. By placing the problem of animation in the range of Communication Sciences, one expects the various dimensions of the 'Anime Galaxy' – aesthetic and technical, industrial and history, narrative and media – to be examined; that the questions meet answers and disclose academical pertinence.

## Theoretical Background

### Authors and Concepts

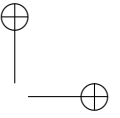
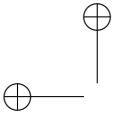
Several groups of authors and ideas revealed in this section will be explained over the entire thesis. The main arguments imply comics themes, animation film (media), industry, robotics (technology), history, society and science fiction. This thesis' theoretical framework is improved right after the references to comics, since this is the starting point for anime. Theory statements from Communication Sciences, history and philosophy, much as anthropology and more technical fields of image as well, are determinant here to allow us to organize the discourse here introduced. Before choosing to speak of anime,

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its history, aesthetic, technique and the respective audiences, it is right to remark that the entire anime universe as in manga comics its origin. The beginning is marked by Osamu Tezuka, for by the time this author creates *Mighty Atom* [*Tetsuwan Atomu*] and publishes its stories for the first time in 1951, a vast range of people start following manga, triggering the following 'Anime Galaxy'. Nearly 193 black-and-white episodes of *Mighty Atom* were conceived by Tezuka bearing the purpose of being displayed in Fuji Television. This broadcast ended in 1966, but in 1980, a new version of *Astro Boy*, henceforth in a colored fashion, was introduced in Japanese television. For this version about fifty episodes were specifically designed. This was the very first anime exported all over the world, something that for the time being was a remarkable deed. Should we place comics within the introductory assertions of this thesis and we'll be granted with an idea regarding Tezuka's legacy in manga graphic culture. It was not only because of *Astro Boy* that Osamu Tezuka became acknowledged, but due to countless creations, such as *Buddha* (2006) and *Phoenix* (2003-2007). The peak of manga is represented in these artworks, something drawn by Tezuka himself until his death in 1989 (Poitras, 2001: p. 25).

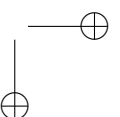
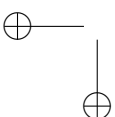
Dedicated manga works that present deeper research are just a few yet they're quite popular. A very well-known text, Matt Thorn's (2005), *A History of Manga, Part 1* reveals a brief history of Japanese comics from an academical perspective. Luyten (1991), in her turn, analyses manga in an exhaustible and historical manner, and not as precise as it is accomplished by Fredrik L. Schodt (2002), one of the most popular authors in terms of essays on manga and anime, for whom comics synthesizes Japanese traditional art in a physical format imported from the West (p. 21). Japan is described by Frederik Schodt in the text *Manga! Manga! – The World of Japanese Comics*, as the first nation to legitimize the manga book and testing its potential on large scale (1983: p. 32). It is Jonathan Ross's assertion, in *Asian Invasion* (Rod Edge, 2006 [1-3]) TV show, that the Japanese elect the manga format as a primary communication medium. In Scott McCloud's books we become aware that comics are media. This is one of the authors defending that manga's success is an after effect of its technology in "Understanding Manga" (1996: p. 45). According to the author the foundation of manga is the narrative technique which is capable of stimulating involvement. Additionally, manga has the graphic representation of vehicles in motion and truly original characters

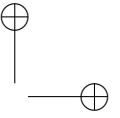
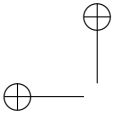


as a major characteristic. It is McCloud's belief that these images "making the reader feel like a participant" (1996: p. 45). Nevertheless, if manga of this day and age owes pretty much in content and shape to Tezuka's way of telling stories, it remains a fact also that a great contribute was given to the renewal of manga graphic culture as Katsuhiro Otomo (2000) publishes chapters of *Akira*, and as Masamune Shirow (1995), releases *Ghost in The Shell*, being both titles of Japanese publishing house Kodansha. If Otomo responds with images of holocaust and mutation, Shirow does it with cybernetics, futurism and cyborgs. From the editorial point of view, the increasing acceptance and popularity of manga indicates that it represents "The future business model of music, movies, and media of every kind" (Daniel H. Pink, §9: 2007).

Regarding the aesthetic and technical dimension of animation, there are artworks representative of "the golden age", among which there are *Candy Candy* (Shun-ichi Yukimuro, 1979) and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1980). Despite being true that these artworks do not clear the path for upcoming themes such as robotics, they carry the design gesture first established by Tezuka. According to Poitras, from this moment on a subculture blossomed around anime and its entertainment by-products (2001: p. 7). Right now, animation's most prevailing element, and which is transversal to videogames, is the "cinematic element" (Hideo Kojima cit. in Hanson, 2004: p. 59). As this element comes from animation film to the videogames regime it permits us to underline that something brand new is happening in animation film. Well, it is possible to acknowledge in anime some structures and conventions precisely because a repetitive operation is taking place. Susan Napier (2001) weaves an analysis on anime which leads her to conclude that the fan of this type of animation is a new kind of viewer (p. 242). Jonathan Ross assumes in *Asian Invasion* (Rod Edge, 2006 [1 of 3]), that in Japan one must notice animation film since it stands as one of the most relevant sectors of Japanese culture. Napier (2006) continues this discussion in *The World of Anime Fandom* (p. 47-63 in Lunning [Ed.] [2006]). Antonia Levi (1996) affirms that anime means "escapism" raised to a superior art status.

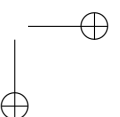
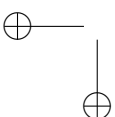
In order to be clear, the anime image is a "layered image" (LaMarre, 2009: p. 17), usually named "multiplanar image" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 129). In this way, multiplicity belongs to the shape of animation as similarly to "metamorphosis" (Paul Wells cit. in Napier 2001, p. 36). When one speaks of "pattern themes", one is exactly speaking of repeating structures, i.e., not of what each

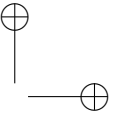
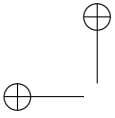




animation film reffers, but of what all animation film displays in its whole. Barthes (1982) sustained that "A sign is what repeats itself. Without repetition there is no sign, because there would not be possible to recognize it and it is 'recognition' that constitutes the sign" (p. 255, translation is ours). As far as the most common themes in animation artworks, examined in this investigation, are concerned, it is possible to define the "mecha" [*meka*] sub-genre (Poitras, 2001: p. 35) and the "places under transformation" as the main poles. Nonetheless, it is the "mecha" genre that draws more investment from designers and essaists (Napier, 2001: p. 11; Levi, 1996: p. 161; Hornyak, 2005: p. 58; Singer, 2009: p. 89). For the record, any household appliance or robot is considered to be "mecha". However, robots are the protagonists in anime science fiction narratives. Despite the fact of Schodt pointing out super-sized robots as an image cast out of Japanese collective unconscious (cit. in Luyten, 1991: p. 188), their meaning is much more vast, given that represent a new man-machine, man-vehicle or man-media interaction model. "Mecha" robots mean a new kind of "mobilization", simultaneously vehicular and military, and stand as the future of "driveable" vehicles (Schodt, 2002: p. 245) or "transforming" (Matthews, 2003-2004: p. 12).

In the basis of the call for designing mechanisms futuristic spaces of the Japanese, there is an enduring catastrophe image. Should we choose to understand at once the holocaust question, then we have to make our arrangements to the arguments of philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, for this author states that "'repetition' is a decisive expression for what 'recollection' was for the Greeks. Just as they taught that all knowledge is a recollection, so will modern philosophy teach that the whole of life is a repetition" (1964: p. 33). Japanese animation stands not afar from this very notion of repetition, because its format stands deeply interconnected to repetition. The concepts of "recollection" and "repetition" introduced and explained by Søren Kierkegaard in the text *Repetition – An Essay in Experimental Psychology* are precious for us to understand anime's apocalyptic images. A more contemporary author, Peter Sloterdijk (2002), makes use of the expression "'pedagogism' of the catastrophe" (p. 78, translation is ours) to highlight that the message of the catastrophe has a purpose. Far from the scope of the cataclysmic event, another constellation authors proposes useful concepts for one to think upon anime images. Fred Polak (1973) is one of those authors, not merely mentioning the issue of "utopia" (p. 142) as he still depicts "the image of the future"



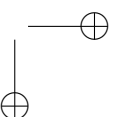
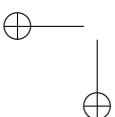


in a ground-breaking artwork. We are essentially applying the “metatopia” (1989) concept, thanks to Umberto Eco, to examine foremostly places under going modernization as presented in anime. A “Blade-Runnered” (Gibson, 2003) world is spotted after modernization occurred, meaning a degradation of the natural environment. Thus, “Blade-Runnered” places are the dystopian ones where no better place does exist, only high-technology and low-life quality. Surely the most interesting theme and visually the most interesting to watch is that of “metatopia”, since it consists in showing, through science fiction models, future epochs straightly extending present time, something exploited in *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982). In artworks such as *Akira* (Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988) the message functions according to the “metatopia” model, enabling snapshots of the future or introducing something which did not happened yet as forecasts.

Besides the future, the past too occupies a wide space in anime’s imaginary, not only in apocalyptic images, but in pre-modern Japan’s images as well. Before the *Meiji* Reform, the then feudal, ancient, closed and non-modernized Japan was inhabited by figures as the *daimyo*, the *shogun* and the *samurai*. Characters as the *ninja* (martial arts fighters) and the *karakuri* (wooden automata) have always occupied light spot in Japanese culture. Artworks in which motives of feudal Japan appear as a scenography or as main characters are countless. Within the framework of artworks chosen to examine in this thesis, themes of *hentai* (Levi, 1996: p. 160) were not contemplated (though this stands as one of the most commercially successful anime sub-genres). Among the topics which somehow are not repeated in anime, despite being implicit or at least mentioned, we have the *Kabuki* Theatre (Levi, 1996: p. 160) for men and the *Joruri* Puppet Theatre, for instance.

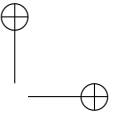
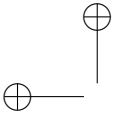
Media are also a field of study – “media studies” – allowing the understanding of animation as something more, as a medium of communication, which is central in this thesis. Henry Jenkins, Thomas LaMarre (2009) and Christopher Bolton *et al* (2007) review *anime as media*. Thanks to McLuhan (1977a; 1977b) we acknowledge that the Gutenberg’s heritage left to Western society causes fragmentation, expertise and nationalism. McLuhan’s most known work, *Understanding Media*, is the text where the author says the image consumption era is gone, given that the iconic age is already upon us (1994: p. 103). The dominant icon is something perceptible in animations, under the shape of mascots, decorative objects, toys, robots and other vehicles, being

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true that the merchandising goods derived from animation exponentially acuse such type of icons. Who is purchasing them are the fans, not necessarily children, but young adults and adults instead. Sugimoto (2003) endorses that "a global generation personifies global culture" (p. 74). As for anime, we have a case of "global culture". This is the reason why we name it 'The Anime Galaxy', and why nowadays it is enabled by a generation keeping up with products release and attending to artworks exhibition. Let's not forget that Debord once accused the "spectacle" as cause of corrupting society, making it become a "society of spectacle". Nevertheless, if spectacle plays the role of being "an instrument for social unification" (1991), then society functions when social relationships are mediated by images, indeed. This is the case of global Japan and anime's also; no other country chooses animation film and comics as the primary media forms, and not to mention an identical country that decided to export those images partly mediating the population's social relationships. Still on top of that there is the emergency of a new audience right from the context of these images, the *otaku*.

Being a fact that anime is a new medium, and a global one, turned this type of animation a hallmark in the field of animated images. In the Mark Neale's documentary film *No Maps For These Territories* (2003), Wiliam Gibson applies the concept of "post-geographic" medium to explain the Internet's "trans-national" scale in the epoch of global economies. Anime is unavoidably a "post-geographic" phenomenon and media type. That is proved by knowing that infantile toys and sympathethic *kawaii* characters are considered by Winge to be "transnational objects" (p. 60 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). "Internationality" is to Hiroshi Yoshioka (2008) the most underscored characteristic in Japanese animation. Since the new media are global too, as the data networks and multimedia handheld platforms, where manga, anime and videogames file sharing happens, it is obvious that anime exists within global culture, inhabiting a 'new media' territory really crossing national boundaries (Napier, 2001: p. 23-24). However, one should highlight that this trend is not a new one, because Schodt (1983: p. 32) already had noticed in the historical essay *Manga! Manga! – The World of Japanese Comics*, the trend that manga is a work in progress for anyone interested in media and information transmitted differently. In a text of 2002, Frederik Schodt (2002) points out that currently manga comic books are a kind of "meta-media" (p. 20); a more sophisticated and powerful communication medium. When Henry Jenk-

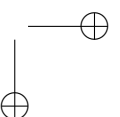
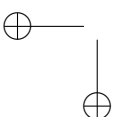


ins (2006) describes a participation culture, a “convergence culture” and the “transmedia” narrative phenomenon of new media, what is at stake is how to establish the “public culture of the future” (p. 24). And Jenkins cannot stop himself to address anime as being a part of this tendency. In 1989, Gilles Lipovetsky spoke of a “clip culture” (p. 280), regarding the fashion context, of course, though it implied the way images are consumed in excerpts, fragments, something that is typically post-modern. In Thouny’s opinion what we have before ourselves is a “transmedial world” (2009: p. 125 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009), where two new media streams are distinguished: the narratological (literary and cinematic) and the ludological one (videogames).

In other points of view, such as Bolton’s *et al.* (2007), media interplays with science fiction (p. vii in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). On a text of the same year, 2007, Daniel H. Pink notices that young people pay more attention to mobile phones screens rather than to print pages (p. 1, §4). In *Mobile Phones, Japanese Youth, And The Re-Placement of Social Contact* (2004), Cultural Anthropologist Mizuko Ito presents also statements in order to show the situation of Japanese young people replacing social interaction for mobile phones and other handheld or mobile communication means.

Still in post-war period, Herbert Marcuse writes that, if for the established society there would be a favorite communication medium but that of fiction towards social criteria (2006: p. 251), then we would be before something new. Concerning the future of cinema in the digital age, we are told by Matt Hanson in *The End of Celluloid: Film Futures in The Digital Age* (2004), that “an advanced moving-image” (p. 174) is what exists now. We know Herbert Marcuse (2006) pointed that domain of “advanced images” (p. 63). And in animation, these advanced images serve the purpose of displaying the pilot-robot interface, so that one day a complete “informatization of the pilot-mecha interface” (LaMarre, 2009: p. 234) may be carried on. This makes sense because one envisions the robot as hardware, a likely future for the computer. Thus all that is computerizes stand as the future of media. Therefore, what the new media of communication are anticipating is the scenario in which robots are “information media”, especially humanoid robots. Like Hiroshi Ishiguro makes us know, their primary function is to interact with us in our future (in Hornyak, 2006: p. 136).

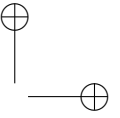
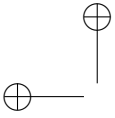
It is possible for us to subdivide Japan’s history, which occupies a relevant role in this thesis, in three distinct moments: pre-modern, modern and



contemporary. Until the political and economical reform of 1868, Japan is composed by three major islands, despite it is not organized as one unique nation of Japanese. In the premodern world only feudal lords can purchase the *karakuri* automata (Singer, 2009: p. 45), which are created by “Japanese Renaissance Man”, as noticed by Hornyak (2006: p. 25). Inaugurated in Japan by *Meiji* Reform, Modernity thus encompasses the second half of 19th century and big part of the 20th century until 1970. At this time in History, Japanese animation stands on its peak and its global promotion starts up. From this moment on, the world becomes acquainted with the images disclosing the nuclear detonation in an “uncanny” manner. *Barefoot Gen* is the most detailed animation portraying the catastrophe. Knowing from Eugenio Trías (2005) that the uncanniness is the outcome of repetition producing a magic effect, a sensation of *déjà vu* (p. 45), we are led to conclude that replaying apocalypse images performs as something disconcerting. It is due to this that Napier sees Japan as an apocalyptic national identity (2001: p. 193) and Benzon points an “apocalyptic culture” (2007: p. 284 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). What we are told by Tito Cunha is that death is the most extreme absence experience and one of the most intractable silences (2005: p. 54). The atomic mushroom image during the Cold War translates itself a shocking future. At that time one thought of the future as a negative one due to the menacing nuclear weapons. “Future Shock” is the designation that Alvin Toffler (1970: p. 8) assigns to the technophobia phenomenon, the fear of changing (Singer, 2009: p. 89).

As the Western world progresses, the Asian world follows the same track, though in a higher pace of development. Thus, the notion of “Asian Renaissance” advanced by Sloterdijk (2002: p. 61) gets meaning, especially when one knows the decade of 70 overlaps the production of animation films getting international in the 80s. Under Benu’s perspective one witnesses an “Asianization of the West” (in Wong, 2006: p. 27 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Yet, among this type of phenomena, we’re particularly interested in the “japanization” one that Kojève (cit. in Agamben, 2004) and Morley & Robins (2004) mention. In Barthes there are references about a “Japan-becoming” (1984) and, in Miyao (2007: p. 88 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) it is said that the world was “Japanified”.

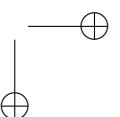
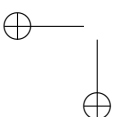
On the scope of historical record, Naoki Sakai argues that the idea of a “post” is a “post-factum”, that is to say, it is “post” in the extent of existing an hopeless, posthumous situation (in Walker, 2009: p. 5 in Lunning [Ed.],

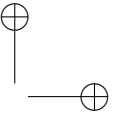
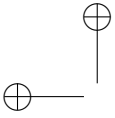


2009). *The End of History And The Last Man* (1992) is the essay in which Francis Fukuyama declares "the end of history" and defines what he takes for "the last man". Historiography itself, the recording of human actions and deeds reached and ended, according to Fukuyama (2002). For this author we stand in "post-history" times. Once history has reached its ending, one accepts its designs to have been accomplished. Agamben (2004) underlines "post-history" and Sloterdijk (2002: p. 86) the "post-historical panic culture". We verify that "post-history" stays tuned to "post-modernity", the time being between 1970 and 1995 in which "post-modern" thought is noticed (Hirokoi, 2007b: p. 178 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). Lyotard (1979) describes the "post-modern condition" as the moment for the "meta-narrative" - the narrative reuniting all individuals in a global way -, starts its decline, being replaced by much smaller narratives. This fragmentation of narratives is noticeable in anime, for it too is a product of post-modernity's typical fragmentation. Morley & Robins say that Japan is the most post-modern of all societies (2004: p. 160) and Mizuno declares the extinction of the great narratives in the post-modern world (2007: p. 180 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). It matters to especially seize this preponderance of the "postumous" in the analysis being necessary on anime. We believe the present day fame of Japanese animation film has a nexus within the 'post-Matrix' context; same is to say "post-cyberpunk" (Tatsumi, 2009: p. 216 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Cyberpunks worship machines and aspire to jack in to cybernetic machines. In the anime *Ghost in The Shell*, Mamoru Oshii discloses the next stage, that of "post-cyborg" evolution (Orbaugh, 2008: p. 164 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), the moment in which the mechanical and/or electronic society coexist in the same urban space. Bolton (2008) suggests the "post-human" phase (p. xi in Lunning [Ed.], 2008) like Taylor does (2008) when he claims that "we are already post-human" (p. 3 in *Idem, Ibidem*). Both authors discuss the limits of "post-humanity" in the work *Limits of The Human*, in the Mechademia (Vol.3) series published by Frenchy Lunning (2008).

Still in this historical record review context, Thomas LaMarre makes us know we are living in the "post-mechanical age", because of the increasing reference to "post-mechanical entities": cyborgs, sentient computers and intelligent robots (p. xi in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). In a certain manner, the fall of the mechanical, the modern and of fossil economy is marked by the emergency of electronics, the post-modern and the new global economy. Post-war

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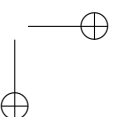
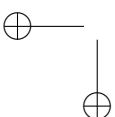


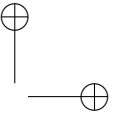
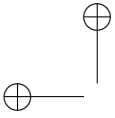


period stands as the moment to rethink economy on a historical scale. It was the year of 1973, when an energy crisis struck Japan. Since that time, researchers as Sugimoto (2003) proclaim the end of the industrial age, that is, a "post-industrial" Japan (p. 76). By the end of the 20th century, the release of the Internet and new media, among many other novelties, had changed the performance conditions of industry in general. Anne Allison names the service industries condition as "post-fordism" (in Brent Allison, 2009: p. 322 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009) to refer the sector of increasing means, technologies and new media-related professions.

The society of our time is defined by its devotion towards "post-nuclear" or "post-holocaust" spaces as it is the "videoclip" in Kevin Williams' (2003: p. 2) point of view. Current generation, being post-industrial, inherits the "post-technological" and "massified culture" pointed by Herbert Marcuse (2006: p. 63). Many scenarios about this society were anticipated by science fiction, even the Japanese one. In accordance to Bolton *et al.* (2007) it is William Gibson who particularly understood the ramifications of scientific fiction of the endless fashion mixture along with personal technologies featured in the *shinjinrui* image – the new Japanese young culture of today's "new humans" (p. ix in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). The society surviving the bombings and radiation aftermath feels, since post-war, close to something new. The Japanese were the first ones to witness the post-human. Sloterdijk even stresses that today true alternative people are already the offspring of catastrophe (2002: p. 71), and somehow as Allison (2006) also defends the existence of a "post-industrial youth" all over the world which believes in a fantasy, by the way an addictive one, convincing participants of that very same fantasy – the players – to keep playing and expanding their game frontiers (p. 19 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006).

It seems to us, contemporary ones, that present day Japan established itself based on technology and an aggressive modernization, but until *Meiji* Reform, Japan was still a set of territories, and not a country as we today conceive it, and at the time *Shinto* Religion was practiced by the majority of population (Benedict, 2005: p. 30; Sugimoto, 2003: p. 255). Japan's great stage of modernization reaches its peak during World War Two, and it had partly been sustained by the of the Japanese believing in their "proper place", in "the position that was due", of observation of the modern world; believing in their superiority (Benedict, 2005: p. 81). According to Fred Polak's (1973) theory

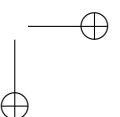
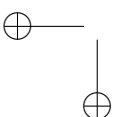




of "an image of the future", founder of contemporary futurologism; we may understand the futuristic proposals of anime images. If in these images technology is occupying a distinguished position, it just so happens because Japan designed for itself a super-image of the future, one in which it "proper place" in historical hierarchy is that of holder of technological supremacy.

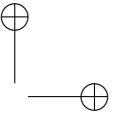
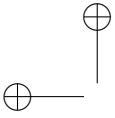
In the *Ghost in The Shell: Solid State Society* animation film, Kenji Kamiyama (2007), alerts us for the upcoming dangers of a machine-like society, interlinked by networks and computers, a "solid state society" resembling digital storage devices. Japan exploits this image of the future – that of a "mechatronic society" (Schodt, 1988; Hornyak, 2006: p. 10) – as it improves today the "science of the imagination" (Marcuse, 2006: p. 253). The after effect of such anime's fantasy industry ends up in the wide acceptance of the spectacular images, not only as social mediators, but they represent pseudo-sacred as well (Debord, 1991: p. 19). LaMarre names this whole animation film machine as an "animetic machine" (2009: p. xxvi).

The primary characters of the "animetic machine", which LaMarre speaks of, are the robots. Frederik L. Schodt (1988) is the one informing us that Japan is known as "the robot kingdom" [*robotto okoku*], both in real and fictive terms as well, given that a third of robots all over the world is made in Japan (Singer, 2009: p. 242). The perfection level of robotic characters already reaches such a degree that these turn out to be "uncanny" creatures, like they have a hidden nature (Freud, 2003: p. 124). Nakamura says a "mechanical uncanny" prevails even in science fiction literature, as a synonym for "artificial" (2007: p. 5 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Freud's "uncanny" addresses us also to an animistic conception of the universe, a time when the cosmos was supposedly inhabited by spirits. It is in this perspective that Anne Allison makes use of the expression "commodity animism" (in Brent Allison, 2009: p. 321 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009) to conceive a world of novelties which seem to have life like they always had. Even Christopher Bolton's *et al.* (2007) book title mentions "robot ghosts" and "cybernetic dreams". An interactive relationship between the "mecha" robot and the infant/young man is conceived by Japan. Frenchy Lunning analyses such relation in *Between The Child And The Mecha*, p. 268-283 in Lunning [Ed.], (2007). In this topic of the "uncanny", "an uncanny aesthetic" (Monet, 2007: p. 212 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007) is dominant. And the "uncanniness" may reach a higher level in case the robot effectively seems to be "too much human". The phenomenon of awkwardness



is named by Masahiro Mori as the “uncanny valley”) (in Singer, 2009: p. 301), for he separates humans and machines according to imperfection, and makes them closer whenever robots seem too much human, just like the ones built by Hiroshi Ishiguro. What roboticists have refined is simply the concept of the robot as a “social machine” (Hornyak, 2006: p. 21), something that includes the *karakuri* automaton in ancient Japan. For the anime viewer, the animation film’s characters work as a portrait of a world in which the “Japanese” blended with the “android”, hence Tatsumi speaks of “Japanoids” (2008: p. 194 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008).

“Culture industry” (Theodor Adorno & Max Horkheimer, originally in 1944) is fact in ‘The Anime Galaxy’. The widespread of animation film since the 80s demonstrates the growth of “Asian Capitalism” (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 24), so that the image of progress belongs no more exclusively to the West. McLuhan is one of the authors noticing the then on-going “de-Westernization” (1994: p. 92) in his media studies. There’s an “Asianmania” (Sloterdijk, 2002: p. 59) in contemporaneity sustained by the auspicious economy of Asia. Gilles Poitras (2001) underlines that the 80s prosperous economy helped so much the disclosure of funding for anime as it helped raising an animation film-based goods market (p. 53). This economical development is highlighted by Daniel H. Pink (2007), who identifies in the business format provided by global manga the most relevant product of the industrial complex. Still it is in animation film that radically lies the face of Japanese capitalism. It is defined by Anne Allison as “Pokémon capitalism” (in Brent Allison: p. 323 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Unlike “standard” capitalism, Japanese capitalism demands technology and culture export, as we are informed by Jonathan Ross in *Japanorama* (Peter Boyd MacLean, 2002-2007), being such a genre of capitalism connivent with the “advanced consumers societies” (Thomas LaMarre, 2009: p. ix in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). The so-called “advanced culture industry” (2006, p. 13) announced by Herbert Marcuse fully exists in Japan, the country where anime is not something existing only inside screens, crossing the border to this side of here, onto the real, much as culture export crosses the geographic frontier of the East. Along with an “advanced culture industry” the “image-capital” is transacted, the mass production of a “spectacular society”. Debord adverts that “the spectacle is the ‘capital’ heightened to such an accumulation degree that it becomes image” (1991: p. 23). Sympathetic and childish, plastic and sinister characters of *kawaii* culture are quite

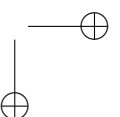
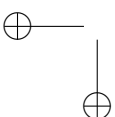


known as a “cool” culture. As a matter of fact it is a merchandising system, an example of the “*Pokémon Capitalism*” producing just capital images. The purpose of these images and feminine *kawaii* objects is to reconnect consumers to their childhood; they’re a material escape from the adult world (Winge: p. 59 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). When it comes to this theme of the beautiful and its uncanniness, Eugenio Trías (2005) is who best criticizes the pretty and the uncanny, while Guy Debord (1991) applies an extremely versatile concept, that of the “object-images” allowing to understand the “advanced consumerism” in ‘The Anime Galaxy’

### Topics

Generally speaking, the major topic of is the media. Ranging from the analysis to print formats all the way to both visual and multimedia formats, animation film achieves an adulthood point, retrieving the narrative and cinematic genres, the photographic and ludological aesthetic. Animation would never be a globally acknowledged medium without the successful and dominant manga books. In contemporary ‘media-environment’ the animation film viewer is a player and a data archiver as well, an information gatherer; in short, a ‘limit-viewer’. His condition is fueled by the need for control. It is this way, as ‘an audience of control’, that the *otaku* gets popular, living seduced by media, cyberspace and robots. His whole information universe should be at his reach, much like who is commanding a videogame character or driving a “mecha” robot. Images best simulating the sense of ‘participation, subjectivity and transport’ are the ones attracting the audience of animation film and its correlated products. When one mentions that anime videogames perform a ‘prolongament’, one is defending the animated world is augmented by these games. The core paradigm is still filmmaking, being the cinematic what feeds the ‘videogame-film symbiosis’. Because similar technologies are being used, videogames and animation films turn out to be identical; as LaMarre knows, the resemblance between animation film and media increase the search for “animated media” (2009). At first sight, speed and aggressiveness are the greatest attributes of ‘The Anime Galaxy’, despite the sequences seem to be but ‘multiform graphic cut-out’. It is also amazing that the characters and machines we are seeing are enabling a ‘toy-image’ which implies the contiguity of anime characters onto the real world. The opposite exists as well, shaped as

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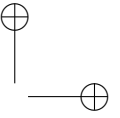
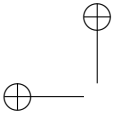


'image-toys', 'graphic-toys' causing the release of animation films. Several animation film consequences and by-products emerge out of the context of advertising and "videoclips". One attends to an endless reconfiguration spreading all over this entire Japanese 'empire of graphics', in terms of visuals and sounds.

The themes of animation focus specially the 'machines place', the future's mechatronic society or tomorrow's bionic metropolis. The once natural and human environment is surrogated by a 'cyborg habitat' that configures post-humanity: narratives on the 'country of machines', the nation of robots and futuristic spaces establishing the 'post-human civilization'. Not always animation films narratives do present a portrait of "a better world". Dystopia And Totalitarianism are two of the topics exploited simultaneously. On one hand, one faces a society fascinated by small household robots, whereas on the other one notices a society frightened with the 'limit-splendor' of Hiroshi Ishiguro's "replicant" robots.

Regardless of the question raised involving animation filme, the relevance of the three historical moments is unquestionable. Pre-modernity, Modernity and Contemporaneity divide Japan's historical register in three stages, all of them embedded in technology. The *samurai* sword marks Pre-modernity. This was the soldier who reported to its master, the *shogun*, and he did belong to a class apart. Remaining population, mostly country people, worshiped *Shinto* Religion and each individual's name didn't mattered at all. Any person was known because of his own profession. Yet the *samurai* warriors had a name. This Pre-modern world is finished primarily by the *Meiji* Reform, the moment in which enclosed Japan opens itself forcibly to the West as Commodore Matthew Perry arrives at Tokyo Bay, in 1853 with two black ships loaded with technology and medical supplies (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxxiv). Once they get in Japan, North-Americans start up its modernization process, and in 1868 the feudal regime falls apart. Trade routes are reopened and the Emperor has real power over the territory. Thus ends the world of Pre-modern Japan, being religion the only survivor to modernity, to the project lasting until the 80s, the time when Japan meets economic success. Despite the 90s being a post-deceiving Japanese moment, – by late 80s the nation is struck by a deep economical crisis –, 21<sup>st</sup> century is still a time of Asian progress, not just Japanese but Korean and Chinese altogether.

The future no more seems shocking and it assumes a demand; it represents



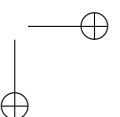
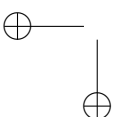
the quest for a better life, constantly motivated. Though the scars from World War Two do not vanish, and intellectual people as Fukuyama claims post-history, because it has failed. Now we are witnessing the Asian renaissance and a worldwide spread of Japanese culture; thanks to the fact of Japan being known for its *sushi*, consumer electronic goods, motorcycles and automobiles, and of course, animation film and videogames. An ‘Anime Galaxy’ grew and matured over half a century, establishing global images, playful characters and robotics. Anime’s versatile format has been worth its usage to carry *sui generis* messages, for the same thing happens with manga, which is as useful to transmit biblical narratives (Carlos Pessoa, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008: p. 10) as it is to present Shakespeare’s theatre plays. The author of this Japanese media (manga or anime) export is the already mentioned Osamu Tezuka, father of *Mighty Atom*, the robot-child known by the world as *Astro Boy*. Supported by politic domain, the *kokusaika*, Japanese culture export becomes a clear fact. Narratives, futuristic images and collectible toys are turning an advanced culture industry into a realm of cute icons. The humblest electronic pet, the shiniest playful object, sets the path for a new trend, that of the robot as information media, the upcoming computer as being autonomous, intelligent and able to interact with people. If Sloterdijk depicts the Asian Renaissance as in opposition to the first Mediterranean Renaissance, one should, in our perspective, be observant to today’s ‘Eastern Media Renaissance’.

### Common Approaches

Major artworks on manga and anime are specific studies examining cultural, technical, aesthetic, sociological and anthropological, economical or narrative aspects. University of Minnesota famous series of essays edited by Frenchy Lunning, entitled *Mechademia*, publishes every year a theme volume since 2006. The style of its approach is not ordinary, being in fact the unique cross-disciplinary and multi-author approach focused on reviewing Japanese animation film as cultural, popular and media studies. *War/Time*, *Mechademia* Series (Vol.3) is one of the most ground-breaking of Lunning’s editions.

One more general analysis, where the goal is to speak of all anime films and to expose its more superficial language, belongs to Philip Brophy (2005) in *100 Anime*. Steven Brown (Ed.) (2006) in *Cinema Anime* observes animation film as a cinematography genre, much as Antonia Levi (1996) performs

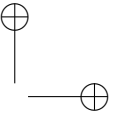
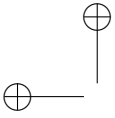
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in *Samurai From Outer Space: Understanding Japanese Animation*. The last one dedicates particularly much space to anime's most relevant artworks. In *Watching Anime, Reading Manga: 25 Years of Essays And Reviews*, Fred Pat-ten (2004) establishes the connection between comics and animation film, a very close approach to the one conducted by us here in this investigation about 'The Anime Galaxy: Japanese Animation As New Media'.

Because of the book *Anime Essentials: Every Thing a Fan Need To Know* (2001), a straight, inclusive, historical essay, author Gilles Poitras is quoted by all researchers. Poitras speaks of comics, presenting a glossary and images, without disregarding to refer names of authors, series and even concepts that matters to remember. In our opinion, this is a perfect work to start as an introduction to the anime world. It also manages to speak of technique, aesthetics, style and language. As for graphic culture, Murakami's (2005) text is pertinent, though not as much as Schodt's (2007) *The Astro Boy Essays: Osamu Tezuka, Mighty Atom And The Manga/Anime Revolution*, since this one is focused on manga and anime as indicated by the title itself. Other works by the same author (2002 e 2008) on anime and manga are still considered to be the most popular.

Sonia Bibe Luyten makes a work exclusively about comics, in *Mangá: O Poder Dos Quadrinhos Japoneses [Manga: The Power of Japanese Comics]* (1991), which lacks of further explanations and it is not showing the relationship between comics and the media industry. Generally speaking, Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics – The Invisible Art* (1994), stands as the first book one should purchase to understand any comic book whatsoever, should it be Belgian, North-American or Japanese, though animation film is not referred. Frenchy Lunning (2006) accomplishes that in *Emerging Worlds of Anime And Manga*, Mechademia Series (Vol.1), by gathering associations to both media. The only one performing an extensive inspection on several comic books types is Scott McCloud (1994, 1996 e 2000). McCloud's discourse is sistematic and his approach is the most interesting because his essays are displayed in a comic book format, where the author himself stars as a participating character addressing the reader. Specifically on manga, McCloud published the text "Understanding Manga" (April, 1996), whose title not only establishes a link to a preceding work of his (*Understanding Comics*), as it manages even to address Marshall McLuhan's work (*Understading Media* [1994]). Inspired on Marshall McLuhan, McCloud transforms his texts

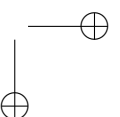
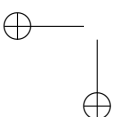


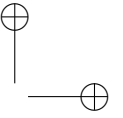
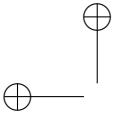
of comics' analysis into media themselves – a most useful perspective for this investigation of ours.

Most important works in which animation film is approached in the perspective of media studies are those of Thomas LaMarre and Susan Napier. LaMarre (2009) officially writes a media theory on anime in the essay *The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation*, following the analysis style started by Napier in the double work *Anime: From Akira to Princess Mononoke* (2001) and *Anime: From Akira to Howl's Moving Castle* (2005). Napier (2001) signs a special relevance to animation, aesthetic and history, but she manages to speak of new communication media. It is the author's belief that "anime, manga, video games (...) are all examples of this new power that, for a variety of reasons, has begun to wield an enormous influence in the world's consumption of popular culture" (p. 53 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006).

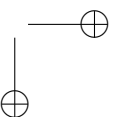
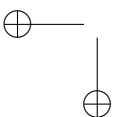
Many are the texts in which robots are the main focus. Schodt, Poitras and Matthews chose similar approach. Mizuko Ito (2004) and Kitano Maza-yuki (September 22nd, 2007, p. 5) refer respectively the problem of social interaction surrogated by media and robots solving the rapidly aging society problem. Who manages to point out the symbiotic relationship between anime and robotics is Matthews (2003-2004, 2001), still suggesting the robot as the future of the computer. An identical text is signed by Hornyak (2006) in *Loving The Machine: The Art And Science of Japanese Robots*, in which robots, industrial machines and cinematic science fiction are examined. Specialist Christopher Bolton *et al.* (Ed.) (2007) authors *Robot Ghosts And Wired Dreams: Japanese Science Fiction From Origins to Anime* essay, centered on Japanese science fiction, above all the literary kind. By assembling the futurist text, the writing on automata and animation film, Bolton publishes a fascinating essay on anime's cybernetic stream.

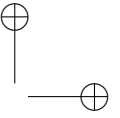
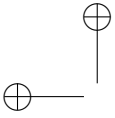
Withing the sociological line, although Napier and Poitras say something in such style, it is Sugimoto who performs in *An Introduction to Japanese Society* (2003) an essay to understand, practical and empyrical data-based study. Sugimoto's book, thanks to being recent, already considers comics and animation film as mainstream media. However, in *The Chrysanthemum and The Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*, the book written by Ruth Benedict (2005) in post-war period, presents a detailed portrait of the history, politics, ethics and way of live of the Japanese, on a anthropological and cultural perspective. Japan's cultural identity is entirely disassembled in Benedict's





text. The work's title itself suggests the ambiguity of Japan's image, as the "chrysanthemum" and the "[samurai] sword" are mentioned, whose symbolism stands important. Nevertheless, this is not a work on the emergence of manga or anime.



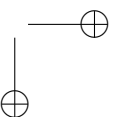
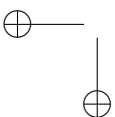


## Chapter 1

# FROM LITERARY TO CINEMATIC

In our regard, it is of the utmost importance to present the course which precedes, defines and consolidates the type of Japanese animation, usually called anime, right on this first chapter of 'The Anime Galaxy'. One of the most recent essays on the subject was written by Thomas LaMarre (2009). In it the question of filmmaking and animation film relationship and its emancipation is developed by the author. LaMarre says there is an "animetic machine" (*Ibidem*: p. xxvi) that benefits from the release of new communication media. On the other hand, envisioning the enlightenment of the reader about the course encompassing the "manga films" phase (the cinematic period) and the graphic phase ("the literary period"), one has to explain how the transition from the print formats onto both animation film and interactive formats.

In *manga* the narrow distance between audience and comics exists because the latter is considered to be cheap entertainment (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 26). Its level of popularity comes from that reason. The print format characteristics are also relevant. Above all, comics are published in magazines (the chapter model), only later assembled in greater amounts and published in the book format (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 66). Following what they say, respectively Scott McCloud (2000) and Gilles Poitras (*ult.op. cit.*), we are led to believe a change from a "print culture" to "an audiovisual culture" occurs. Animation is mature and enabling audiovisually the aesthetic conventions of comics,



which takes place with no major obstacle, since in manga narrative was as pictorial as literary (Napier: p. 105 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Nonetheless, one should not think the print format of "comic stories", like Luyten (*op. cit.*) refers, would suit best light narratives or those of a more poor language. For example, one may find Japan's history published as comic artworks over 48 volumes [*Manga nihon no rekishi*]. Still today, some of the most visited places by tourists, and where locals go often to as well, are places such as the single Public Library dedicated to the manga genre, in Hiroshima; the Manga Public Museum, in Kyoto, and the Gundam National Museum, in Tokyo. It is a part of the touristic guide of Japan to elect comics and its characters to help promoting local commerce and its "new" global animation film industry. We should not forget that by the time post-modernism is noticeable, in 1970, words such as those of Guy Debord (*op. cit.*) cause a significant impact. What the author said still remains as an acceptable description in this day and age of the so-called "society of spectacle". It is underscored by the author that objective reality stands on both sides, as much in spectacle as in reality itself (the world of production and the world of spectacle). The popularity of fiction characters, idols [*aidoru*] (Bolton *et al.*, 2007: p. xvi in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007)] and popular movies' actors undergoes a strident exaggeration in Japan. Industry's mass-produced goods are excitedly consumed by the audience. One imagines fictitious worlds later adapted to novels (narrative), audiovisually represented to deliberately be part of consumer's lives. It is Debord who detects an exchange: the fact of reality emerging in spectacle and the spectacle in reality. "The (...) mutual alienation is the essence and the means of livelihood of existing society" (*op. cit.*: p. 12, translation is ours). Hence this means that reality is by large in contrast with spectacle and vice-versa, but both are mutually defined. This is to say, Japan's uniformed reality is a condition favoring the worship of spectacle (comics, novels, movies, TV shows, interactive gaming). This whole spectacle's frenzy is identified in manga, which "starts taking-off in Japan in the decade of 60" (Wong: p. 24 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006).

Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989) is the creator of modern manga, by carrying out the technique and aesthetic imported from film narratives, making drawings to look like filmic sequences (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 18). Toku actually declares that the most notable among all creators is Tezuka, often assigned with the title of father of modern Japanese manga (p. 22 in Lunning [Ed.],

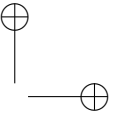
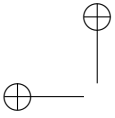
2007). We know that manga is the favorite communication format for the Japanese – in terms of media – since the decade of 60. Sugimoto (*op. cit.*) defends that manga continues to be one of the four major phenomena of popular culture in Japan (p. 246). Books and manga magazines represent 40% of the overall material published in Japan, a pattern not seen in any other industrialized country (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 248). In accordance to Toku (*op. cit.*) there is a higher reason for the existing course of interdependent and sequential successes from manga to anime, because Tezuka modified the manga concept by creating a new expression style influenced by narrative film (there's still the fact of many anime creators aspiring to become film directors [Poitras, *op. cit.*]). Tezuka took the manga square-shaped format and conceptually extended it by creating narrative comics: "story manga" (Toku: p. 22 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). It was Tezuka's belief that when we film things panoramically we are doing a "film spectacle" (in Eiji: p. 117 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Even in still images the spectacular language remains, demanding a cinematic extension.

In Anne-Cooper Chen's perspective, manga accomplishes the task, to Japan's internal population, of making the reader leave his tension accumulated in the school-work controlled environments (in Wong: p. 28 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). When it comes to Japan's outside domain, manga manages to surpass Japanese territory's insular borders and it poses itself as a global culture along with a significant extension in film (Miyao: p. 89 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) and in videogames. Regarding animation film, anime, the word comes originally from *animus*, a Latin word meaning "vital breath" (LaMarre, 2009: p. 84). Beyond the etymological reference, one has to remark that anime is a word used to generally refer Japan's animation film of all sorts. Whoever lives in the country knows anime means "animation". Nevertheless, anime is wrongly mentioned as being a "genre", when in fact is an art form "encompassing" every genre found in film, literature, epic stories, novels, comedy and science fiction (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 7). In its trail a peculiar audience appears: the *otaku* audience (on a closer translation) it means "house of honor", though it addresses us to a "hardcore" fan [*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 9]), a devotee of anime iconography, mythology, artworks and technologies. Thanks to a considerable amount of fans there is an increasing animation success and the outcome is a super-modern fiction galaxy. It remains a fact that anime "exorcizes" for a while the US-Japan relationship (Pellitteri: p. 280 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009),

it depicts enemy invaders in an allegory to the US (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 276 in *Idem, Ibidem*). However, the thing being assimilated and returned in a re-empowered manner by animation film is not a "cyberpunk" image of the future, i.e., a sophisticated and wild one, but rather a "post-cyberpunk" image (Tatsumi: p. 216 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). And, in the mid-1990s, animation film is irreversibly coupled to an image of a cybernetic future. As 'The Anime Galaxy' finds its own mark in a very exalted style, it blossoms as a 'graphic hyperbole'. This is how the Japanese animation starring phase in 60s (the pre-computer one) is also surpassed; also known as Disney's "golden age" which, in that phase, invents the Multiplan camera and photography system (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxv). In an adaptable way, the anime of the 90s digitizes the old "layered image" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 17) in the name of a global style.

Should we chose to watch anime films as *Astro Boy*, *Gundam*, *Ghost in The Shell*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Tekken* or *Final Fantasy*, and we'll get inside narratives designed by Japanese culture industry. Each and every fiction universe has its characters, epochs, stories and moments, events and staging, messages and subtexts. The entire anime film balances between artistic experiment and mass culture industry (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. xiv). To this equation the robotic *Gundam samurai* characters (Yoshiyuki Tomino, 1979), the energy of *The Vision of Escaflowne* (Kazuiki Akane, 2000) or the "jazzy" science fiction of *Cowboy Bebop: Ballad of Fallen Angels* (Shinichiro Watanabe, 1998); the mighty screams of *Dragonball's* confrontations (1990) or the group feeling in *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children* (Tetsuya Nomura & Takeshi Nozue, 2005) are summoned. There's the suggestion that animation film is a superior form is advanced by Mamoru Oshii, whom believes that animation film surpasses cinema as a "recording reality" (*Idem, Ibidem*, 2009: p. 35). Authors and directors like Oshii, Aramaki, Kamiyama, Otomo and Miyazaki, Tezuka and Watanabe, have designed a set of representations pushing forward anime's culture industry as a new 'iconic landscape'. This time it is not casting out the image of Japan as a super-power culture, though as a culture-power instead. Animation films are conveying the message of a "back to the past" turned into a "ticket to the future". Protagonists, adversaries, places and narratives are welcoming quite an unusual beast-like form, something easily improved – and at a large scale – by videogames.

Being aware that in LaMarre's perspective the production and welcoming conditions generate interest for animation and "animated media" (*Ibi-*



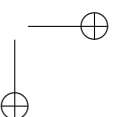
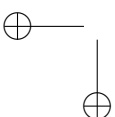
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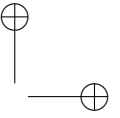
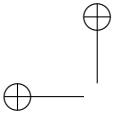
p. xxii), one comprehends the motive behind videogames great improvement. At the center of the question is the fact of the symbiosis between game and animation being crucial in videogames, as the "animation" element is strongly endorsed to permit the "game" element to be more intuitive and attractive for the player. Bearing the goal of classifying the best videogames in the *Final Fantasy* anime series, IGN.com (2009) Web site journalists affirm that if there's a videogame series which completely personifies the fascination of this kind of games that is *Final Fantasy*. The people responsible for the Web site say that "This legendary series, which is now more than twenty years old, has become a universally recognizable entity, spawning spin-off action games, movies and more. With a heavy emphasis on character-driven stories and elaborate battle systems, it is easy to see why 'Final Fantasy' has such a devoted following" (2009, §1). The "universally recognizable entity" in question is its branding image, suggesting that in the anime aesthetic of the *Final Fantasy* series there are "patterns of serialization" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 96), derived from mass production and massive narrative designed for players. We have to highlight that is above all in videogames that a bigger dimension of control is exerted. *Par excellence*, gamers are the 'audience of control'.

In the age of digital technology, information networks and multimedia, high-definition and 3-D images, a dimension of control is expanding onto digital manga, a recent by-product of 'The Anime Galaxy'. Another new media product, the *Metal Gear Solid Digital Graphic Novel* raises the comic format to higher level, a convergence of both the "comics" and the "animation" media. Moreover, one notices a dominance of images capable of feeding the need for control in the audience based on a representation of the subject (subjectivity), vehicles (transport), which ends up on a strong feeling of standing on a drawing-animation world (participation). Stepping in a game such as *Final Fantasy* is equivalent to reading a manga comic book deprived of interactivity. Inside the anime games' universe or anime's cinematic artworks, it is noticeable that anime language is central. This type of animation film attracts users, readers and viewers. "Anime appear as a nodal point in information-rich wired environments with multiple media interfaces (...)" (LaMarre, *op. cit.*: p. xvi). This means the increasing growth of anime videogames, manga books and animation films work as attractor poles amidst the 'media-environments'.

From the information point of view, anime is an attractive content for the

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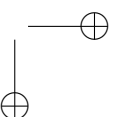
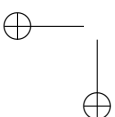


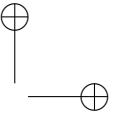
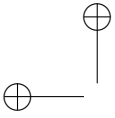
new media. It is that what makes of it a "universally recognizable entity", for anime as a far superior potential when compared to literary, cinematic media and it is at the same level as the new media. Washburn justifies

"The relatively recent development of videogames in particular, especially those games with complex narratives that create alternative worlds and simulated histories, provide new formats for telling stories through a synthesis of older media, both textual and cinematic, within a framework created by the conventions and practices of gameplay" (p. 151 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009).

Besides anime establishing itself as a "nodal point" amidst the information environments, and having universally recognizable games, it still enables new storytelling formats, overcoming film as the excellence in recording reality. This way we refer the existence of a development between the literary and the cinematic, since Washburn already underlines that older media are synthesized. Let's not forget that manga was already used to as a new format for storytelling. On this topic, Daniel H. Pink announces that Europe "(...)" has caught the bug, too. In the United Kingdom, the Catholic Church is using manga to recruit new priests. One British publisher, in an effort to hippify a national franchise, has begun issuing manga versions of Shakespeare's plays, including a Romeo and Juliet that re-imagines the Montagues and Capulets as rival yakuza families in Tokyo" (*op. cit.*, §3). Transforming artworks alien to the manga and anime world into Shakespeare plays is representative of the "multimedia" nature of Japanese comics and anime.

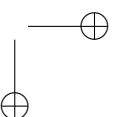
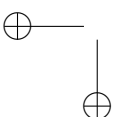
Narratives are enhanced in the new media. Philip B. Megs says in *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (1954) that "McLuhan urges an expanded definition of literacy" (in McLuhan: 2001: p. xi). The expanding 'media-environment' according to McLuhan demanded another type of analysis, considering the scope of reach of its narratives. By focusing on the new media narratives, LaMarre (*op. cit.*) makes clear that fans no longer need for "grandiose fictions" or "big narrative worlds", since they show the preference for building up small customized narrative worlds by assembling and disassembling characters (p. 261). The already mentioned *Final Fantasy* videogame series, namely its tenth chapter (*Final Fantasy X*), displays a non-linear narrative fantasy, changing from player to player in accordance to the

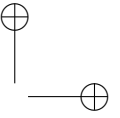
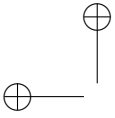




options chosen along the game. Such interactive videography icon has to be internally coherent as “narrative”, so that the player may understand, “read” the game (Washburn, *op. cit.*: p. 151 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). The advent of games designed for online gameplay (massive only environment) and/or co-operative manner (with just a single friend) allowed anime universes to play or “read” on a planetary scale, from then on. Nevertheless, a concept of “expanded literacy” is urgent, because narratives are not only-so displayed in print culture’s classical formats (book, journal and magazine), as it rises inclusively in the new media like the videogames. Therefore, the idea that anime functions as a “nodal point” has a nexus. In Azuma’s opinion consumers are interested in animation film because they enjoy information, narratives and databases nowadays. They’re fond of extracting and recombining elements, and they forfeit the narratological world bearing the ludological one (cit. in LaMarre, *op. cit.*: p. 272-273). In short, the ludic and multimedia environment, of information and narrative, turns out to be interesting because it is recombined and managed according to each fan’s preferences. On top of this there is still the fact of games as *Final Fantasy X* being read as a “cinematic narrative” or even as a literary text (Washburn, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 154 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Videogames like this one are an optimized continuation of animation film’s super-modern universe. About the audience, whose lifestyle is typically *otaku*, it invests on collecting manga comic books, watching animation films and in purchasing electronic games. Unfortunately, the audiences have been growing old along with anime (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 16). The market’s response is the distribution of increasingly hybrid contents, a symbiosis as in the videogame-film format. The sophistication degree of images has allowed the mediacasting of commercials constantly reconfiguring characters (advertising) and authoring animation film-based videoclips. After 21<sup>st</sup> century’s first decade, the 00 years, more convincing comics and animation film spin-offs are released; some by-products are officially released by agencies (TV commercials), while others are released by the audience (AMVs) and by comics enterprises (digital manga) as well. In this moment, animation film most relevant by-product is the videogame, since it invokes narrative and the “cinematic element”. Between the literary and the cinematic, anime’s easily acknowledgeable universes support the contiguity of “literacy” (Megs [1954] in McLuhan, 2001) and “spectacle” (Debord, *op. cit.*) concepts, establishing itself as a “new communication medium” (Napier, 2001).

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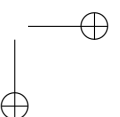
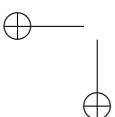
## 1.1 MANGA COMICS

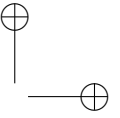
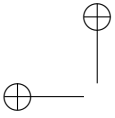
### 1.1.1 Origin

*Manga* is the designation for Japanese comics preceding the advent of anime. Thus, before approaching the history of anime film, it is convenient to proceed to a thorough explanation of the origin of manga. For Matt Thorn, a Cultural Anthropologist of Manga Faculty at Kyoto Seika University, the word "manga" becomes popular right after it is used by the artist Hokusai, a master of the "woodblock print"<sup>1</sup> art. However, Thorn claims Hokusai was not the one who coined the word; he believes its origin remains uncertain, one knows only that its usage dates approximately 1815. If we take into account the word's etymology we get to know that "manga" is a word composed by two Chinese characters. In this regard, Matt Thorn enlightens us: "The word is composed of two Chinese characters – the first meaning 'in spite of oneself' or 'lax' and the second meaning 'picture' – and has been used to describe various comical images for at least two centuries" (2005: p. 1, §1). This is to say this word comes from the intention – when it comes to the Japanese people – of providing a designation to comic images, originally from China. This is not an awkward fact, as Japan possesses many cultural aspects whose origin is traced back to China, and in spite of that, they are already considered an integrant part of Japanese culture.

To best know Japan's history grants us the chance of understanding the rise of manga, since it has no naturally spontaneous and sudden generation, being its advent the effect of a long process. Prior to 20th century, namely in the 7th century, Japanese culture lacked of written language, so there was resorting to communication by images, because Japanese language has a pictographic origin. It is from this century onward that Japan begins to absorb Chinese culture and civilization. On this matter, Anthropologist Ruth Benedict affirms that "In the seventh century she (Japan) took the ideographs of China and used them to write her own totally different language" (*op. cit.*: p. 57). After this event, *kanji* writing Chinese ideograms (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 67) are adapted to the needs of the Japanese, which eventually ends up as today's Japanese writing. In effect, it becomes common in Japan to tell stories resorting to writing and drawings as well. In Sino-Japanese oriental image, the difference

<sup>1</sup>Wood block carving technique for colored paper imprints.



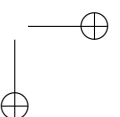
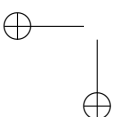


between painting (image) and calligraphy (text) is hard to distinguish. Both image and text were never dissociated for the Japanese. To Sonia Bibe Luyten,

“(...) the Japanese got used to visualize things more often than us Westerners. The closure between characters abstraction and the characters themselves is most sensitive, flowing from an old habit of joining both” (*op. cit.*: p. 39, translation is ours).

Over the Middle Age, Japan’s powerful visual culture expands itself through narrative scrolls or handscrolls [*emaki*] (LaMarre, 2009: p. 13), above all in the 12th century. In Thorn’s view, these scrolls are early examples of Medieval Japan’s “sequential art form”, combining images and text to tell stories or describing happenings (*op. cit.*: p. 2, §1). The concept of bringing text and image altogether starts to be deliberately exploited in these scrolls, which were folded for further transport and examination. In the late 18th century, the increasingly bigger urban class of merchants had developed an unstoppable consumer culture, in which the communication medium of the epoch preceding manga – the scroll – has fit in harmoniously. Between the 16th and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan gets used to a certain type of interactivity, for it was usual to handle images printed on the already mentioned sculpted and painted wood blocks, the art form named as *Ukiyo-e* (“woodblock prints” [Napier, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 21]). That art form — an interactive one at the time — was a “(...) a longstanding tradition in Japan. Japanese artists, particularly the woodblock printers of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries whose influence on anime is as clear as the picture on the screen, specialized in deceiving their viewers into believing they had seen more than they had” (Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 21). The woodblock print technology allowed the imprint of *kibyôshi* stories in various *gôkan* volumes (Thorn, *op. cit.*: p. 2, §2), with illustrations where dialogs and voice-overs were hand-painted.

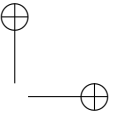
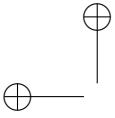
In early 19th century, the “woodblock print”, as well as its respective craftsmanship, still preserves its audience. Although, in the middle of this century, governmental censorship and the print speed provided by “movable type” (Gutenberg’s Typography) make possible for *kibyôshi* and the *gôkan* to become extinct. The perfection of the new Western typographic imprint will technically surpass the image imprint by resorting to wood blocks, scrolls and the *gôkan* volumes. Unlike what is normally said when a straight continuity



between Japanese pre-modern visual culture and the advent of manga is established, manga's true predecessors appear in the end of 19th century with both European and North-American cartoons. The multiple panels of comic drawings included in the political satire columns of North-American newspapers will effectively exert a strong influence over early 20th century manga. This is Thorn's (*op. cit.*) argument, but Schodt (2002) manages to even more succinctly by referring that in synthesis, modern Japanese manga is an entertaining, long artistic tradition and it absorbed a physical format imported from the West (p. 21).

Concerning 20th century's historical period, one could say that it undoubtedly is a decisive century for the emergence of manga as it is known today. As a comic art form published in black & white it is a creation of Osamu Tezuka in post-war Japan. This publishing format was by then used by other artists, yet Tezuka is the one who adds new elements, starting from the "graphic novel" style (closer to the current model). After the war, Tezuka collaborates with several newspapers and in 1947 he publishes *New Treasure Island*, which becomes the very first successful modern manga (Bolton, *et al.*, 2006: p. 174 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). In opposition to Tezuka's remaining books, this one is centered on one theme alone, it makes a graphic manifestation of it, something that allows to evade the censorship at the time and, thus, to conquer terrain. *Kimba: The White Lion [Jungle Taitei]* (1950-54) is the following artwork. This one tells the adventures of little "Kimba", a lion pre-destined to become "king of the jungle". With twelve volumes published over three decades *Phoenix [Hi no Tori]* (1954-1988) is to be the longest artwork signed down by Tezuka. This manga is focused on the mythical "Phoenix", a bird reborn from the ashes, while relying on an adult style. A turning point occurs as Tezuka chooses the manga book as a "graphic novel" format. Ever since then, manga is aimed at all audiences, and not just children or adolescents.

In 1954, the year marked by the installment of the television medium, only 866 television sets in the whole country. Among the communication media considered to be interesting, manga was the cheapest and the most accessible one. The icon making possible the mobilization of the audience towards the consumption of manga was *Mighty Atom*, even if it was not created for such purpose at all. Tezuka creates the robot-child character in Takadanobaba laboratory in the decade of 50, in 1951 to be more accurate, while only in the following year the publishing took place. As time went by, *Atom* got

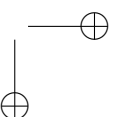
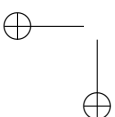


internationally acknowledged as a "manga culture Ambassador" in the West, personifying the narrative, cathartic, benevolent and aesthetic side of Japanese fiction.

One of the reasons pushing manga to success is the dissatisfaction on the Japanese people side, generated by defeat, humiliation and generalized misery that were an aftermath of World War Two. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki represent Zero Year for Japan, unfortunately a new beginning marked by a nuclear blast. Sloterdijk is the one affirming: "Every epoch has its own style of being dissatisfied with the world. Every dissatisfaction against the world, which becomes aware of it, brings the germ of a new culture with itself" (*op. cit.*: p. 67). Well, this dissatisfaction is obvious in Japanese culture, which right after World War Two needs to entertain the unhappy masses with a new kind of images. These are the images that, between 1950 and 1960, start raising in Japan a (graphic) culture of its own. In this extent, we are told by Schodt (2002) that:

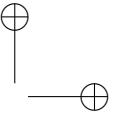
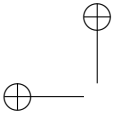
"Defeat in World War II caused a national loss of confidence that clearly extended to Japan's self-image. Western ideals of beauty were not only accepted but pursued (...). Nowhere was this tendency more provoked than in 'manga'" (2002: p. 61).

With this, we're told by Schodt that manga denote such loss of national confidence. In World War Two Japan's identity was harmed. Thus, a certain type of rebirth is urgent. For instance, Luyten (*op. cit.*) claims that "One of the main causes for that rebirth was that the once defeated Japanese people wanted to erase the trails of effectiveness of other ideals as more as possible. Post-war manga have not exploited the war theme, as it happened in other countries (...)" (p. 36, translation is ours). From dissatisfaction, sadness, a self-aware manga graphic culture emerges, as we deduce from Sloterdijk's arguments. Since then, manga turned into an neoculture extending to print books, authors, publishing houses and proper narrative stereotypes that make it a new communication product, without ever stop being typically Japanese. Dissatisfaction is noticeable in Japanese comics, as every graphic representation features a narrative of anger towards the Western world. But the Japanese peacefully disclose their "technological vengeance" for culture – as manga is one of the many culture products being exported – rather than opting for an



anti-West position. Gosling (1996) points out that “Japan bounced back from defeat and embraced the superior technology of their enemy as a way to match and surpass them” (p. 3, §14). When it comes to Benedict she will research Japanese culture in post-war just to conclude at the time being: “The Japanese at the present moment are chiefly conscious of defending their good name in defeat and they feel they can do this by being friendly” (*op. cit.*: p. 170). Culture and technology are the instances of investment for a Japan interested in the world to be aware of its identity differently, which end up resulting in the country being still today connoted with technological development and regarded as the Orient’s techno-scientific edge. By assimilating western patterns, Japan underwent through modernization and did it at a pace implying its obligatory pursuit. The germ of a new culture so well highlighted by Sloterdijk comes from the aspiration of raising a world where no apocalypse was caused by technology, and that it worked as an “Illuminist” form to improve mankind’s living, instead.

The word “Illuminism” is used as in the sense of “Enlightenment”, “revelation”, and not in the sense of one “sharing the concerns of the doctrine of the Illuminati” (translation is ours). Japan’s posture, a country supporting technoscience, is “illuminist”, meaning it “(...) illustrates, makes clear, develops an issue” (Machado, 1991b: p. 379, translation is ours). It is true that the “Enlightenment” concerned the “(...) opinions, views of the enlightened ones” (*Idem, Ibidem*), but Japan faced science in an “illuminist” manner because it was defending *Satori* (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 240), the “Enlightenment” (“the spiritual movement of 18th century’s second half, known as ‘The Century of The Lights’” [Machado, *Idem*]). Besides one must underscore that post-war Japan’s renaissance is about believing that knowledge is power, and henceforth enlightening is necessary rather than darkening. Just like Enlightenment, which as a philosophical movement is cast out of the declining Renaissance, Japan also starts believing in a positive reform concerning how it is positioning before the world, this matches Fred Polak’s argument (*op. cit.*) that the Enlightenment represents “a period of new faith, new world-outlook, and vigorous renewal of activity in all areas of culture” (p. 96). As Japan assumes a new way of looking at the world, it thus becomes a different country, set for modernization, technoscience and technoculture. About the Enlightenment, Polak claims that the new world of Enlightenment accepts the law of nature to be “the other world”, and that the new type of human being skilled to sys-



tematically research the world is the scientist. Put in another way, the scientist is "the other man", the one believing in Enlightenment's maxim *Sapere aude* ("dare to think"). Polak explains:

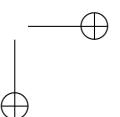
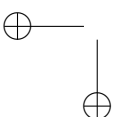
"Having made the discovery that the universe is essentially rational, man sees that *Homo sapiens*, himself, and all his social institutions, must be equally rational. Therefore human behavior and culture can be subjected to the same systematic analysis as the natural world" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 97).

The endorsement Japan performs on science is, according to such point of view, in tune with what Polak claims about the scientist, knowledge and the study of the world.

If the scientist is the "other man" and the law of nature is "the other world", then it is technoscience itself which imposes itself as the illuminist domain *per se*, that can or may make things clearer in the natural world. Thus, the weapons found by Japanese culture for responding to post-war humiliation shall logically be those of technoscience. Much as Benedict too underlines, "The Japanese believed that technical disciplines could be used to enable man to make his spirit supreme" (*op. cit.*: p. 26). This attitude of the Japanese before the war is magnified in the post-period as national design. Through technology, man may "transform" all things; after all, man seems to seize control of his own destiny (Polak, *op. cit.*: p. 142).

### 1.1.2 Visual Style

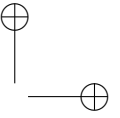
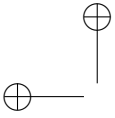
In *Asian Invasion* (*op. cit.*), Jonathan Ross's TV show, he begins by saying that "(...) the Japanese seem to have abandoned the novel and chose the comic book". And in fact, the comic book is the primary communication format in Japan, above all among the younger layers of society, despite crossing every social class. The same manga popularity phenomenon is identified by Frederik Schodt, for he says that Japan is the first nation to assign legitimacy to the comic book format and to test its potential on such a large scale (1983: p. 32). The visual style of manga makes it an unmistakable comic genre. The two-colored and weekly publishing formats were resulting in formats closer to the conventional book format, in this case digitally painted by means of



software such as Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop. The reading order itself is differently in this artworks, happening from right to left (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 69). When we grab a copy, we westerners find the cover in the place of the back-cover and vice-versa. Despite this, manga has become more popular and connoted in a special way due to elements such as the fact of being a graphic novel, a story told with images. In this kind of graphic novel, images are multiplied by the *decoupage* technique, and how they're hand-drawn within each framework shortens the distance between reader and story. The relationship between the manga reader and the artwork is an intimate one; reader and graphic novel share the same space, since manga images are images of participation, subjectivity and transport. The historic period within which manga surfaces from conditions its aesthetic, narratives and format.

Regarding the "graphic novel" concept (Wong: p. 39 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006), clearly defining manga, let's notice that manga is not "cartoon" alone, that is "cartoonish stories". Conceptually speaking, the graphic novel actually makes sense for being ultimately published in the book form and not just chapters instead. It is the role of the comic book to provide "embodiment" to the graphic novel in its overall assemble of segments. Comic books become common for manga is definitely a narrative-based type of comic. As it centers itself in narrative, manga displays a visual style emerging out of the technique chosen to tell the story. To speak of manga is to speak of "story manga", narrative comics (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 249). Technically, comic strips are manga predecessors, but it just happens that manga surpassed that stage on behalf of a closer-relation to the reader. Scott McCloud is the one explaining that "Japanese books, or 'Manga', are first published in 'enormous anthologies' and later collected into 'books', and are primarily in 'black and white'" (1996: p. 44). However, regardless of format options or the effective publishing strategies for manga, the audience is consuming this product because of enjoying Japanese graphic novel's visual style, known in Japan as *gekiga* (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 249; Schodt, 2007: p. 60; Wong: p. 39 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006), and which defines manga until this day and age.

From the genres point of view, manga also is divided in peculiar subgenres as the "amateur manga" [*dōjinshi*], although its primary form is the one known as *komikku* (a word adapted from the English "comic"). In spite of enabling narrative as its main content, disregarding anatomy concerns manifest in artworks of American establishments like Marvel and DC Comics –



one points the way super-hero bodies are being represented –, manga is simultaneously relying on a graphic and literary basis. As a matter of fact, a great tension exists between the North-American and the Japanese graphic industries (there's even less opposition against the European one). In effect, some North-American comic's brands were forced to export products to Japan, in a commercial and cultural response to the increasing supremacy of manga industry in the US.

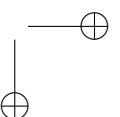
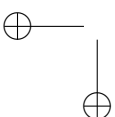
Manga's idiosyncrasies are primarily reflected on images describing motion, introducing multiple frameworks and a reader's subjective perspective of participating in the story, achieved by means of *decoupage*. This technique, firstly applied by Tezuka, therefore revolutionizing manga in Japan, was able to provide a new experience of enjoying comics to the reader. This comic artist was inspired by Disney's animation films during the post-war period (a fact that made him known as the "Japanese Walt Disney" [Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 19]), without concealing a strong interest for the North-American black and white animation film character *Betty Boop*. The past a relevant matter for Tezuka, but manga at his time was not attractive, since it was upholding less adequate conventions. It is said by Tezuka, concerning manga before him, that "until that moment, most manga was hand-drawn on a two-dimensional perspective, and according to the style of a theatre play. I became aware [affirms Tezuka] that there was no way of producing potential or psychological description by using this approach".

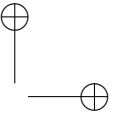
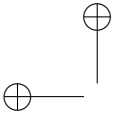
Still he adds:

"(...) so I began to introduce cinematic techniques into my composition. The models for this were the German and French movies I saw in my days as a student. I manipulated close-ups and angles, of course, and tried using many panel or even many pages in order to capture faithfully movements and facial expressions that previously would have been taken care with a single panel" (cit. in Thorn, *op. cit.*: p. 3, §2).

We get to know what drove Tezuka to make manga on a *decoupage* basis, and what is so important about this technique, thanks to this statement. Exploiting the emotional state of characters, and to tell a novel story by means of images resembling cinema shots, are two major innovations. As an outcome,

*Livros LabCom*





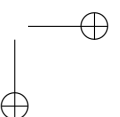
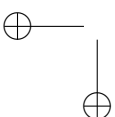
the way Tezuka used to draw comics became a convention for the manga industry following him until present day. Tezuka is surely the one responsible for the Japanese graphic novels reform. Another typical manga features coined by Tezuka are the exaggeratedly romantic and huge eyes of his *gekigas*' characters (Toku: p. 25 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007).

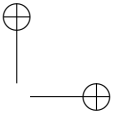
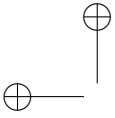
Fascinated by filmmaking and photography as both communication media, Tezuka imposes an innovative visual style. The "square-shaped forms" defining its storytelling in graphic novels sets the audience for the cinematic anime aesthetic.

On the editing process and how narrative protagonists' emotions were exploited, Scott McCloud makes clear that "similarly, the use of 'multiple images – or 'montage – helps illustrate inner conflicts. Montage 'de-emphasizes' the physical positions of characters in a scene, because the conflicts portrayed aren't physical in nature. They're 'emotional'" (1996: p. 47). And it is through this deemphasizing process and the multiplying images that the reader experiences a reading in which the story is disassembled, frame after frame, deliberately to show the character's feelings, which happen to have Japanese "mark" within their design type as manga's graphic reform settings thus defined by Tezuka. However, as Luyten (*op. cit.*) depicts, since post-war the physical appearance of manga characters underwent changes over time:

"Heroes and heroines in the modern manga hardly make us remember the Japanese people. Japan's westernization right after World War Two modified the aesthetic preference in the character's design. Now they're disproportionately tall and slim with round eyes, features, which are not found in funny stories that preserve the character's design in accordance with Japanese aesthetical patterns" (p. 74, translation is ours).

Thus, we get to know that comic stories did not discard the conventional Japanese aesthetic when it comes to character design. Nonetheless, the cultural imports performed by Japan since World War Two have altered the audience's and the artists' preferences for Western beauty patterns, so that is right now manga characters are displaying an exacerbated westernization, due to the slim bodies, long and colored hairstyle, an ubiquitous, shining touching glance. Endowed with charming looks and an emotional glance, manga's



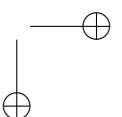
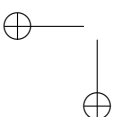


female characters are to be the major protagonists. Like Ruth Benedict (*op. cit.*) explains about the woman's role in Japanese society, only man was given a superior status, being human placed in her "proper place"; this is to say, hierarchically below. According to Luyten there are two historical reasons: in the first place, during the post-war period, the woman occupied a central role in the family core as the children's tutor (in most families the father got ill because of the radiation in bombed places); and secondly, the emancipation of woman in modern Japanese society. And thus it is explained the core role the woman is signed in manga, while the manly role of family man is transferred to robots, for example (Luyten, *op. cit.*; LaMarre, 2009). It remains undeniable that female characters playing manga stories are redefined as a female representation archetype for all Japanese graphic novels, thanks to the aesthetic carried out by legendary Tezuka (Schodt, 2002).

### 1.1.3 The Manga Reader

Reading manga is to read novels on a graphic format, narratives designed straight for the comic's model. The manga format defines the model-reader, appealing simultaneously to children and adults (Napier, 2007: p. 105 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Many are the adults reading manga, because the format has increased and consolidated its audience (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 249), which maintains a different relation with real space, mainly in Japan's urban areas. Covering up for the lack of safe public space, the inner space of comics is provided, and the emotional relationship, intimacy closing the gap between reader and characters as well.

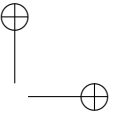
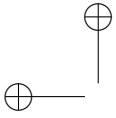
Contemporary manga is a mass product book-format. However, there was a time in which really was pretty different, if we consider the medieval "narrative scrolls", the artworks specifically designed for social elites. It is the kind of themes focused on narratives, transforming manga consumption into an addiction, which the audience of manga finds passionate. Characters with cybernetic machinery altered physiognomy, stories deprived of "happy ending", experience dramas of characters' living (average citizens) and vertiginous action sequences are quite common in the manga medium. The machines playing the stories and human characters share identical inner conflicts, as they do about the same physical aspect exaggeration. The fact of female characters showing a hyperbole of physiognomical designs is a feature that makes manga a closer



medium to the readers, in this case the male ones (Poitras, 2001). The inclination for “augmentation” (super-size, extrapolation), shapes the characters into icons the masses find attractive due to their appearance (let’s not forget that manga is a popular culture belonging).

Manga’s impact is format-related. Multiple image frameworks, dramatic narratives and long adventures in which the leading characters’ emotional states are exhaustibly decomposed in detailed images, have forced the format to extend due to the demand for more pages. Huge amounts of images, many frames, detailed graphics and interesting narratives caused an extension in Japanese comics’ chapters, books and volumes. The weekly format (Wong: p. 24 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006) becomes a success after 1950, making possible the *shōnen manga* male market to emerge (Poitras, *op. cit.*). On behalf of the aesthetic and narrative detail, the format became biweekly-based, being currently monthly. From the side of the audience, this implied a constant attendance of the manga series. In opposition to other media where the young consumer stops consuming the same media as soon as he reaches maturity, the manga audience kept growing along with the medium. Here the ingenious point is noticeable: “(...) the children who were raised on the manga of Tezuka and his followers, unlike their predecessors, didn’t stop reading manga when they got to middle school. Or, high school. Or college” (Thorn, *op. cit.*: p. 4, §2). This phenomenon has had the effect of a manga continuation, one generation of readers after another. Despite the advent of new media, manga proliferates meeting no obstacles. If we consider the attitude of the audiences, as Japan’s, for instance, we verify that the girls reading manga aren’t just a minority, when in the West it is otherwise, where the female audiences of comics are the minority consumer. Whether it is male or female, the manga reader has the attitude of rapid consumption when it comes to manga objects. The disposable form assumed by manga is what makes it an easy-reading medium for readers on their way to school or working places, perfect for use in public transportation systems [especially on the train] of major urban centers (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 249). The time available is thus spent on consuming graphic fiction, whose low-price in Japan sustains daily its fast consumption, much like its immediate disposal after reading. The West’s analogous format is the massive print newspaper daily or weekly consumed, which ends up as the ephemeral news published are no longer fresh.

The serial format of manga has been useful for increasing the consumption



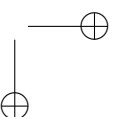
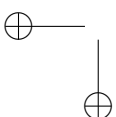
rate of this type of editions, given that certain stories keep having sequels, prequels, trilogies and many other consequences in other media with slight changes. As illogical as it may seem manga is a serial [*nensei*] communication product, and it is further divided in subgenres like those of girls magazines, as the *shōjo manga* (Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 9; Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 26), for example. Although the audience is both female and male in Japan, one does not notice, however, a consumption rate equal in both genders when it comes to the same manga type. One of the secrets behind that market share may be the fact of comics allowing stories to be told on a “cinematic style” (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 59). Manga is raised to higher ubiquitous standards due to cinematic aesthetic images being easily readable.

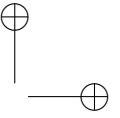
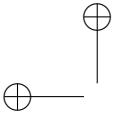
The audience that today evolves and stays in tune with published manga artworks is an audience that, even before the decade of 50, was already facing it with special attention, for manga was the dominant preference when it comes to communication and entertainment products for the audience. Since the 30s, Japanese artists showed their autonomy towards Western productions, despite the latter having been partly the sources of inspiration for a peculiar visual and definitely Japanese style.

Even if there are other media and media-formats available, manga remains as a purchase choice for the majority of the audience, regardless of the social class where a reader belongs to. Let's not forget that Japan is a dialogue-based society (Benedict, *op. cit.*), this makes manga a more available and democratic medium. On this extent, Napier endorses the following:

"The wide range of manga ensures that virtually everyone reads them, from children to middle-aged salaried workers. Indeed, some estimates go so far as to suggest that 40 percent of material published in Japan is in manga form" (2001: p. 20).

Again the reference goes to “manga form”, i.e., the shape or aesthetic of manga, something the audience worships and thrillingly decodes, and because of that it is the perfect communication format. Although, one could raise the question: “Currently what drives the audience to read manga?” And the response is that the reader, therefore the typical Japanese young man, is somebody deprived of public space for a complete living. For him there is not much time available for entertainment, a fact that, along with the lack



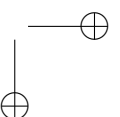
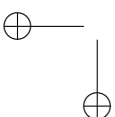


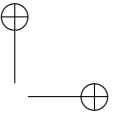
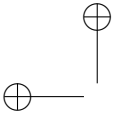
of space, favors the consumption of manga. Inhabiting overpopulated cities, where the streets are increasingly dangerous places, the manga reader develops an unavoidably mobile behavior, whether it is on the way to the working place or school. Because of this, the manga medium is the communication object the audience often carries more with itself.

There's a lasting urban living condition – with some changes, of course, – since post-war period, 20th century's decade of 40. During this period, like Benedict asserts, children played in groups in the street until they achieved school age. Street play was something to avoid only in the higher social classes, in the pre-school period. Over the last decades, Benedict's argument that "mothers like to have their children play where it is safe" (*op. cit.*: p. 272) remained truthful. Nevertheless, audiences have been adapting to the life styles suggested by manga media and manga entertainment forms, whose reader is peaceful, in case we take into account that Japan's pattern-reader is an adolescent evolving along with the manga medium. We accept the argument that in Japan adolescence is not a period of anger against paternal authority (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 300). Beyond this, there is a complementary argument from Sonia Bibe Luyten (*op. cit.*):

“(...) people may find beyond a sort of miniature model of their own lives the ingredients to experience their fantasies – they're abundant and offer a silent safety spot – (...), should they rather prefer to repress or internalize their feelings” (p. 48, translation is ours).

Manga's reader relation to manga depends on the audience shy posture and its life style, which makes a ritual out of story consumption. Intimacy with manga takes place in the accelerated Japanese living, as the Japanese spend much time in public transportation systems. In everyday life come-and-go, an intimate relationship is settled between character and reader. “Cultural intimacy” (Boym, 2001: p. 42) is one possible expression we may apply to define the phenomenon. The relationship of intimacy between consumer and cultural object explains the obsessive purchase of books, films and anime series. For Japanese readers it is normal to consume entire series of fiction products, like anybody else buying graphically represented narrative fiction packs, because it is endowed with a life inexistent in the real world. It's a necessary reality





the reality of manga. Yet it is a fiction model capable of increasing addiction, complicity and reader's participation towards graphic novels. Bonding to image sequences (which are the "square-shaped stories") has a historical origin, since that in the Japanese pictograms composing Japanese writing an inclination to the serial, continuity, was already there.

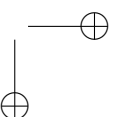
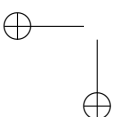
## 1.2 ANIME FILM

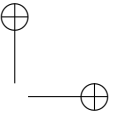
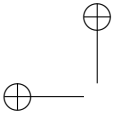
### 1.2.1 The History of Anime

Anime stands for the Japanese animation film type carrying on the manga comics aesthetic by making the most of its cinematic language. One cannot say anime was foreseen in manga, but it is certain that anime follows the language of manga and it does not seem to be forced. It is also true that anime, as an animation film, is not representative of all animation films produced in Japan. And despite casting Japanese culture too, it does not fit exactly truth that all the latter sums up is introduced in anime narratives. The relevance of anime has much to do with its popular language and the format it imprints on fictions relying on motion, participation and subjectivity; features that were already present in comics but deprived of movement. The transition from paper to video-image, or cinematographic register, enhanced the already then cinematic potential of manga. Manga is inclusively known as "Japanimation", an expression meaning "Japanese animation", addressing us to the anime film. Beyond this, anime responds to a set of behavior patterns and conventions of Japanese society, mostly the urban one. Levi (*op. cit.*) states that anime is an escapism raised to a superior art status. On the target-audience of the creation, the author says:

"(...) a society where personal behavior is severely constrained both by physical crowding and strict social conventions, anime is designed to provide a wide range of fantasy worlds where audiences can live out dreams (...) that will never otherwise find expression" (p. 30).

Levi and Sugimoto (*op. cit.*) share the belief the anime audience finds itself mirrored in this kind of animation film, and that through it they find



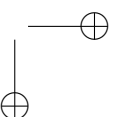
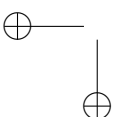


release and fascination in order to compensate social rules imposition and the restrains of inhabiting an overpopulated urban space. Though, Levi's arguments are not depleting anime's definition. In the current time, the latter updates the image of a post-modern, futuristic and sophisticated Japan in the world. With anime, Japan casts part of its identity onto the world. On the other hand, its images are not something one finds only outside Japan, for as Napier (2001) sustains:

"Images from anime (...) are omnipresent throughout Japan. Japan is a country that is traditionally more pictocentric than the cultures of the West, as is exemplified in its use of characters or ideograms, and anime and manga fit easily into contemporary culture of the visual" (p. 7).

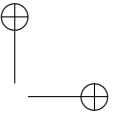
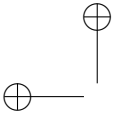
This way, one understands that anime appears naturally and legitimately in a country historically prepared for images. Japan's pictocentric culture favors the compliance with such film genre, which perfectly fits, along with its specificities, an entire visual culture relying on ideograms. The story of anime is a story of acceptance and internationalization. Its implicit success overseas became possible as the anime image had already reached its omnipresence in Japan.

The advent of anime dates back to 1963, thanks to the *Astro Boy* film, which lasted until 1968. Nonetheless, this genre was not yet established at the time as a culture. "Anime was not a culture yet in the 60s", just as Hiroshi Yoshioka endorses (*op. cit.*). The *Astro Boy* series runs firstly on Japanese Fuji TV channel. The happening at stake becomes an attractor event causing the manga industry to convert comics to animation. Such was the time in which anime stood apart from the Japanese media spectrum, becoming a favorite core medium for the younger crowds. After *Astro Boy*, Tezuka signed down another great artwork: *Kimba: The White Lion* (1965), later copied by Disney and entitled *The Lion King* (Disney, 1994). If we chose to divide the brief, yet already extensive, anime history in two phases only, artworks such as *Future Boy Conan*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Candy, Candy* (Shun-ichi Yukimuro, 1979) will fit the first one. Conan's dystopia, the colorful and quiet world of Sawyer, and the shiny big-eyed characters of *Candy, Candy* was an important hallmark in the history of the anime film. All characters

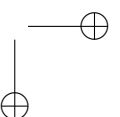
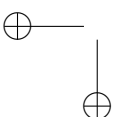


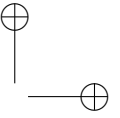
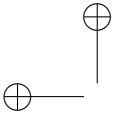
were two-dimensionally drawn, narratives were concerning all kinds of real world topics, being written and drawn about and for the average citizen, in this first phase. Until the 80s, this was the kind of anime being produced.

The rest of the world gets to know anime after the decade of 80, being the United States of America the place where the global age of anime began. We are told in *Asian Invasion (op. cit.)* by Jonathan Ross, that “Akira introduced anime in the vocabulary of the West”. Artworks such as Akira (in accordance with Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 24) and *Ghost in The Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1996) have launched the anime genre worldwide due to the cyberpunk science fiction themes, the technological environment exploited in the narrative and graphic special effects. In half a century, anime achieved another status and impact among the audience, despite being “criticized due to its violence and sexual eschatology”, during the 90s” (Hiroshi Yoshioka, *op. cit.*). When it comes to the second phase of anime, one could say it is marked by artworks whose narratives underline the environment of technology, whether it is as a theme or as way of telling stories based on three-dimensional graphics. For LaMarre it matters how anime thinks about technology (2009: p. xi). Series like *Full Metal Panic!* (Kôichi Chigira, 2005), *Noir* (Kouichi Mashimo, 2003), *Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex* or *Zone of The Enders* were determinant in the preceding decade to promote and consolidate anime all over the world. Surprisingly, despite taking into account the progress of graphic representation, anime still saves some space in its narratives to restore old myths of Japan and attract new audiences. It is noticeable that “mecha” is the anime genre having more impact among the audience (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 89), thanks to the popularity achieved by some anime films and anime series near the audience. Hyper-colored machines, anthropomorphic robots, gigantic androids, future cities, the menacing cataclysms and the role of science in man’s life are merely a few of the most common topics. Many are the effects of five decades of anime. The success of the “mecha” genre is due to the historical predisposition of Japan to worship images of machines, in the first place. Being a devotee to *Shinto* religion in Japan means one is a pantheist; believing that each and every creature, object and thing in nature may eventually assume a life of its own, since that by the time life ends on Earth, all remaining thing will be transformed into *kami*, spirit. Secondly, Japan’s industrializing procedure achieved such a proportion that, culturally speaking, the ideas of Shinto religion allowed machines to be regarded as something that eventually would



have a life of their own (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 167). Mid-century's early industrial robots were nicknamed by their roboticists, in the same trend people or work colleagues are (Schodt, 2002). Today, anthropomorphic machines displayed in anime are a species the Japanese do not find awkward. Even before modernity, Japan had back then rituals for the *karakuri* wood automata to be present in popular ceremonies. Anime carries with itself this cultural framework – the characters, narratives, stories, scenarios, topics, codes – and does it in order to have all the time children or adolescents as the center of fictions. Within Japanese territory, there's the belief that retribution is the virtue; the Japanese name such excessive devotion, of one doing what is the rightest, as *On*. Ruth Benedict also asserts that the “*On* is always used in this sense of endless devotion” (*op. cit.*: p. 101). It is this Japanese notion of *On*, the limitless worship of a cultural icon, that makes anime to be available in stores, TV commercials, magazines, statuary shops, exhibitions, restaurants or even in airport terminals. The audience which grew up with anime followed the advent, development and maturity of the videogame industry. The same young crowd is fond of both types of media, the animation film and the videogame, while pursuing the *On*. That way, on the Japanese market alone, the major anime brands like Studio Ghibli, Manga Entertainment, Gainax, Kyoto Animation and Toei Animation have their specific audience, although their films are spreading internationally. Such young people audience meets to the great brands of the videogame market, as Square/Enix, SNK Playmore, Taito, Nintendo, SEGA and Sony Computer Entertainment – Japan Studio. As we analyze animation films and videogames, we identify both aesthetic and graphic technologies being used increasingly resemble each other. From an industry's point of view, these media (in terms of market and not as being media) are challenging each other, every time an animation artwork is released, or a videogame is published, it must surpass the preceding one. And on this matter, Japanese *psyche* is a traditional one, for doing what it has to do, i.e., to overcome the past. Along with the new media being released – online gaming, handheld platforms, haptic surfaces and wireless networks, next-generation videogames and high-definition, among other news –, anime faces a new world of possibilities. Anime's graphic industry continues its path of development in a society in which the technological imperative is each time more determinant. One of the new market fields is the one of collectible action figures inspired in anime artworks, unrelated to anime before, now it embodies it over the last years,

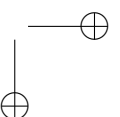
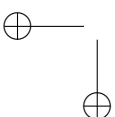




especially on a global scale. Anime videogames are also a recent event, much as other multimedia products as interactive comics, only possible amidst this 'Anime Galaxy' because previously there was manga. Japan continues to be the country where the *On* is evident on the popular culture level, and still the place where all sorts of funny looking figures are adored, ultimately being simultaneously fiction products and hallmarks in their "pop" culture. It was in the 80s that Japan's technological supremacy became clearer, yet the country believing that everything has its proper place, where masses get historical every time a *kawaii* new item is announced, is also, and because of that to, a country of culture. Besides, examining anime is to examine culture, and not just images of technology, media products. We are told by Jonathan Ross in the episode "Future in Japan" of *Japanorama (op. cit.)*, that "Around the world people listen to music in Japanese stereo systems and head for work on Japanese automobiles, although Japan has successfully exported its culture too along with technology", being the latter an unsurpassable fact. Because of this we may face anime as a shape co-existing with others of divulging and exploit Japanese culture and identity. Contemporary people attends to a both technology and culture export. Out of both summed up a technological culture results. Like Hiroshi Yoshioka had the chance to refer "Anime changed an established culture" (*op. cit.*), this thanks to the very aesthetic and technique of anime itself.

### 1.2.2 Technique and Aesthetic

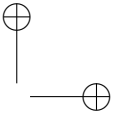
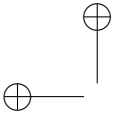
The technical and aesthetic domain of anime converges to make an entirely typical and unmistakable media type out of anime. Investigators of the anime field share the opinion that this technical and aesthetic symbiosis is important. Hiroshi Yoshioka defends that he "does not conceive a frontier between media and aesthetic" (*ult.op. cit.*). As viewers we are led to think anime presents fictions carrying ideology, hence the prevailing "nation-island" identity that it is Japan. It's a part of anime aesthetic to translate the Japanese technological might onto an audiovisual regime, altogether with the hysterical nature of its *psyche*. An ambiguous and exotic culture demonstrates its identity through technology with its own content. At first glance, anime seems to be weird from the westerners' perspective, since one sees an "Other"; a "Japaneseness" (Wong: p. 36 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006) no longer being cultural but techno-



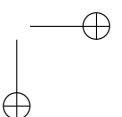
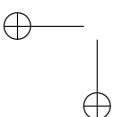
cultural. *Zen* revelation, *Kabuki*, Theatre, *ninja* saboteurs, the *geisha* underworld, *sushi* cuisine globalized and *hentai*'s perversion erotic or pornographic anime – are featured in images. Yet it is the "mecha" genre which best introduces the anime of a Japan, which happens to be a synonym for technology. The anime aesthetic relies on technology display, in fact much similar to prototypes presentation. The exotic apparatus of images permits one to identify them as belonging to a hypertrophic civilization, an exaggerated version of the West that appears to be alien. Dehumanized martial culture, *samurai* war machine, or the *kamikaze* (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 24) and *ninjutsu* (Mizuno: p. 120 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) characters are constant in anime aesthetic. Nevertheless, anime cannot be reduced to genre issues as long as there are transversal topics like the "apocalypse", "the secret of life", "rituals" or "mysticism". The major topic is the "apocalypse" one, because it is the one that more often is exploited. It is indeed the topic showing more attached to other topics, such as those of "technology" and "robotics".

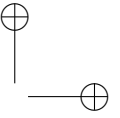
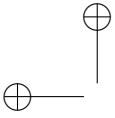
The basis-aesthetic of anime is undoubtedly marked by big-eyed characters similar to dolls; their slim bodies, in tune to the effective fashion regimes, and the dramatic stagings are typical of older Japanese narratives. It is clearly identified in anime a retrieval of mysticism's ancient narratives (*On*, *Shinto*, animism), a promotion of family core, irreverence, the obsession towards uniforms and an increasingly evident presence of technology (LaMarre, 2009). There is an explanation why the Japanese in anime stories place children behind the wheel of machines. The Orient is convinced that post-war children are the future, thus the Japanese fictions aesthetic has predominant infant-juvenile elements; such as excess of color and children endowed with above-the-average intelligence quotients. As for the West one believes more in twisted vision of a super-hero being a protective soldier, in agreement with a military aesthetic in which the primary character wipes out ever villain with omnipotence and omniscience, ultimately the narrative ends always well. When it comes to Japanese fiction there is another style, mostly because it could end badly (a legacy of Tezuka's manga). The dramatic side of characters is the favorite one for the Japanese to exploit. Besides, protagonists are most of the time fallible human and machines which lack of perfection, merely being a little omnipresent since they are closer whenever anybody needs help.

Despite the fact of anime copying early Disney animation films aesthetic, their version of western characters is quite peculiar. Take for instance the fa-



mous "McLuhan of comics", Scott McCloud, which says in *Understanding Comics – The Invisible Art* (1994), the reason why manga characters are big-eyed, having oversaturated colored hair and rectilinear nose, is a cultural translation of the image of western individuals. The author claims Japanese artists design their characters in that way, as for the "normal" thing is to have Orientals showing dark and straight hair, smaller eyes and short and rounded nose. Should we accept the justification given by, then the best form to establish communication with the West is by drawing characters accordingly to the image Orientals have from westerners. This argument, concerning manga design, is equally worth applying to the anime domain, since the basis-aesthetic stands the same. All things considered, both western and oriental cultures are mutually designing each other in a comical way, blurring the domains of true alterity, because the Other, belonging to the other culture, is even physically different. It is not by chance at all that one currently observes Japanese whose aspects is increasingly overlaid with a "westernization" concerning their physical looks (in terms of haircuts, dress codes and make-up). Fashion designer Keita Maruyama explains in "Fashion in Japan", an episode from *Japanorama* (*op. cit.*), that "Japanese people have a strong complex against the West. For example, girls (...) want to look like (...) foreigners. However, as they force that look upon Japanese face features, they're creating something completely new". It is also on this extent that anime characters seem new to us, for they are part of an aesthetic image we do not find familiar. The complexes of the Japanese towards the West are justifying their need to look too much "westernized", as Maruyama refers. On the other way, it is a fact that Japan keeps absorbing western concepts to get familiar with the global discourse of communication, yet on a closer inspection some differences are noticed. During the post-period, for instance, westerners use comics do endorse their criticism, making fun of the way Japanese looked. The same thing occurred in Japan over that time given that the Japanese drew westerners in a distorted manner. The big eyes, the blond hair and the slim bodies are an over-sized critique across graphics. Though, it was not because of a bad reason that this element prevailed in manga and anime aesthetic. It was because Tezuka designed charismatic and romantically looking characters that anime characters are still being drawn in tune with the convention he established (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 60). One may say also, starting from another point of view, that the anime aesthetic implies presenting characters whose physical



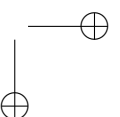
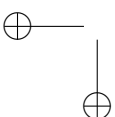


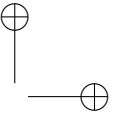
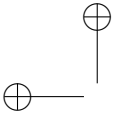
looks aren't Japanese. Through Napier's (2001) words we get to know the aesthetic characteristics of the "anime style":

"This style ranges from the broadly grotesque drawings of characters with shrunken torsos and oversize heads of some anime comedy to the elongated figures with huge eyes and endless flowing hair that populate many romance and adventure stories. And while many of them are blond or light brunette, many have more bizarre hair colorings such as pink, green, or blue" (p. 25).

And out of Napier's words some patterns are exquisite: anime characters look like many things except homogeneous, standardized and common figures as the Japanese citizen; exaggeration prevails in the shape of smallness, gigantism and grotesque, and color is used to make characters noticed, one shall say. In agreement with this logic we stand before a straightforward aesthetic. Anime characters are designed so the audience may notice them. Thus they are not excel for their vulgarity (a true demand for Japanese as deduced from Maruyama's argument), which gets to be in contrast with the disciplined and uniformed world of Japanese school (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 280).

Strictly aesthetic and cultural issues aside, there's the question of the technique and art of making animation film. A key-point in anime is its speed, accelerated movements of characters, quick-cuts in-between shots, the use of strident sounds and the representation of traditional oblique motion lines behind the characters, which, according to Takahiro Hayakawa (*op. cit.*) were meant to cause movement, a system suitable for generating unique, singular movements. This is the author for whom "animation is not the art of moving pictures, but pictures moving". Hence the programming, staging and editing are the most technical part of animation. Nonetheless, the most technical domain is corresponding to the second phase of anime history – the one of computer-generated images – and not the first one. The technical improvement of anime takes place in the first phase and reaches its peak on the second one. This is why we should consider the technical features of anime in the 70s. At this time, anime undergoes a reformatting process for later adapt to television, which produced a set of easily-noticeable patterns in anime, since it first runs on television and only later in cinema. Thus it was enabling narrative structures of its own, something Trish Ledoux & Doug Rainey depict as





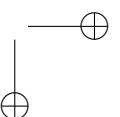
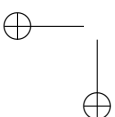
they report to the anime of this time as having "overflow with tracking shots, long-view establishing shots, fancy pans, unusual point-of-view 'camera angles' and extreme close-ups" (cit in. Napier, 2001: p. 10).

As for news, it is essentially narratological the technique which permits anime to be different when compared to usual animation formats; stories are told step-by-step as those made by who prepares a fiction script for film or television. As explained by Scott McCloud, such technique already existed in manga:

"The 'real secret' of Manga's success is a matter of 'technology' – the technology of 'storytelling'! Manga creators use a toolbox of 'narrative techniques' that can enhance the power of any story. And nearly 'all' of these techniques focus on one goal: to 'stimulate involvement'" (1996: p. 45).

For McCloud, the basis of manga is related to the "narrative technique", whose application focuses the goal of "stimulating involvement". These very "narrative techniques" are used in anime to achieve this stage of "involvement", although the genre benefits even more from these techniques, for the anime film is but an animation film, never ceasing to be a cinematographic object. And it is the "cinematic style", or "filmic" (Eiji: p. 123 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008) [style] which defines manga that happens to undergo an enlargement in anime. A narrative technique transversal to both genres and appealing to the way stories are told in cinema. Hiroshi Yoshioka points out: "Comics and anime share media technique, contents, format, information technology (...) and digital language" (*op. cit.*). Beyond the involvement that comics' narrative techniques aspire to achieve, and that anime best consolidates, one may say that there is a technical involvement before further thoughts. In fact, Marshall McLuhan (1994) says: "Each new medium emerging continues the preceding one".

Like it is said by McCloud, the technology of storytelling is in fact of the utmost relevance. That technology expanded in anime. More than just bearing the purpose of telling stories, the current technology displays Japan's technological identity, on which David Morley and Kevin Robins affirm: "Through these new technologies, the contradictory stereotypes of Japaneseness have assumed new forms; the new technologies have become associated with the



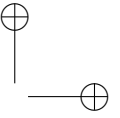
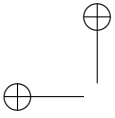
sense of Japanese identity and ethnicity” (*op. cit.*: p. 169). Across aesthetic, and the technology present in anime, this technological character turns to be more clear, once that Japanese identity became synonymous of technology, mean for everybody, as Schodt asserts (1988: p. 28).

Regarding the type of experience one has when one watches an anime artwork it is as being close to a novelty designed to carry a huge amount of information, assembled upon a narrative basis, and thought to make the viewer feeling as if he stands "inside the story". Hiroshi Yoshioka believes anime “organizes experience in a different form, a video-language” (*op. cit.*). Relying on this "video-language", the viewer emerges in the narrative as easily as the anime genre has permitted manga to adapt to cinema. Adaptation, flexibility of its "video-language" designed to think and link up to media, stand at the core of anime’s graphic technology. We are told by Jonathan Ross, in *Asian Invasion*, that in Japan “(. . .) we still have to look at perhaps one of the most important areas: animation” (*op. cit.*). Namely because in this country it is a dominant communication medium, a format later adapted to various kinds of contents, and it does not have to be about "mecha" fiction or anime strictly speaking. Part of anime’s success and fame is equally related to its irresistible aspect, something that, in Levi’s (*op. cit.*) perspective, could be summed up to the following characteristics: "the 'high-tech' looks, creative fantasy worlds; the genuine tension of bad things happening to good people; the multidimensional characters; robots, mechanized suits and other 'mecha', and 'sexy' and powerful women” (p. 20).

These are obvious features in contemporary anime, being the “video-language” which Yoshioka speaks of a manga importation. Anime series designed for television, like *Astro Boy* and *Kimba: The White Lion* helped defining the core-aesthetic for all the anime release ever since then. For Napier (2001), anime is popular culture form rising upon most ancient high-culture traditions and, additionally, she says

“Not only does the medium show influences from such Japanese traditional arts as 'Kabuki' and the woodblock print (originally popular culture phenomena themselves), but it also makes use of worldwide artistic traditions of twentieth-century cinema and photography” (p. 4).

It is thanks to this usage of both 20th century’s photography and cinema



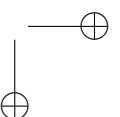
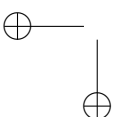
traditions that anime is consolidated as a video-language, where peculiar narrative techniques and aesthetic converge. In accordance with Luyten (*op. cit.*) the explanation lies in manga:

“The inclination to the visual form of communication as an effect of writing was quoted more than fifty years ago by Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein, which understood the connection between ideograms and what he called as the “cinematic nature” of Japanese culture” (p. 40-41, translation is ours).

The author starts from Sergei Eisenstein’s argument to defend also how Japanese culture was already enabling a “cinematic nature”, like this “nature” was featured back then in early ideograms. This is to say the cinematic image editing process accomplishes a “montage” (in-between the photographs or film shots) identical to what happens in the combinatory expression art through Japanese pictographic ideograms. As we follow this reasoning we conclude something as interesting as pertinent, that Japanese visual culture is connivent with western visual logic. It is a fact that ideograms, Japan’s pictographic characters, precede anime. However, this just underscores the further revolutionary stage of manga, where such “cinematic nature” pointed by Eisenstein was already latent. A Japanese comic’s graphic reform happens because Osamu Tezuka designed artworks like *New Treasure Island*, which were able to transport cinema’s quick-cut editing aesthetic (thanks to overall shots, quick-cuts, subjective point of view, long and dramatic scenes) to comics. Without the first ‘graphic reform’ there would be no second-generation anime continuing, as Napier (2001) thinks of, “anime thus both celebrates difference and transcends it, creating a new kind of artistic space” (p. 34).

### 1.2.3 Anime Viewers

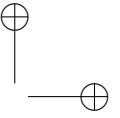
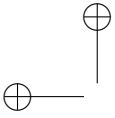
In order to comprehend the communication phenomenon that is anime, one has to examine its audience. Anime is produced by animation film studios, envisioning young viewers, yet above all it is produced artists enjoying anime; creators that are viewers in the first place. An audience like this, made out of young, veteran viewers and producers, is an audience sharing the same type of profile. The *otaku* (Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 162) are most likely established as



the model-viewer, the ones to which the anime being produced and the anime integrated in massive commercial operations, is aimed for (Virilio, 2010: p. 87). By considering its globalization, then we'll have also to take into account the wide spread of the leading anime devotee character: *otaku*, the fan. To remind how the *On* concept mattered in Japanese culture allows us to notice in anime culture the endless worship of the *otaku* fanatic. Amidst the anime circle, i.e., in its very culture, one witnesses the birth of new ways of being a viewer in an emerging fashion, as an effect of the new technologies being released. The question of the anime *otaku* is a matter of technology (LaMarre, 2009: p. 109).

When it comes to the audience profile, one verifies that the audience consumes anime because it used to consume manga previously and it still does. The audience does not prefer anime rather than manga. On the contrary, keeps tracking both media. The strongly promoted "mecha" genre, a science fiction one, whose primary topic is robotics, charts over the last three decades an increasing curve of popularity of anime. It is works as *Mobile Suit Gundam Wind* (2000) and *Robotech: The Macross Saga* (2006) that mesmerize the audience. A segment of the audience grew up along with anime and its icons in Japan until the 80s, while another segment of met the artworks under a 'global-viewer' condition, after the large scale export of artworks such as *Akira*. However, the new media that break out in global technical culture changed the viewer condition. Now the viewer is able to download anime films from the Web; he may watch them in handheld media platforms, and more importantly, one may obtain, collect and examine old artworks, once that the register being copied is something one controls. During the decade of 90, this was the audience growing up with Nintendo and Sony videogame consoles, aspiring to control even further images, characters, icons and scenarios of the anime world. Practically, what we discussing here is the possibility of a 'limit-viewer', a spectator no longer able to be that way, for he achieved the end line for image contemplation practice.

On the audience side, one form surpasses the viewer condition in anime, the one that consists in trying to watch other anime genres without being the "mecha" genre. Despite being "mecha" the audience's favorite anime genre, Matthews (2003-2004) argues: "(...) from fantasy to cyberpunk, romance to pornographic, anime caters to every niche market" (p. 8). And the motive why several anime niche markets exist is related to the need for expansion,

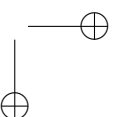
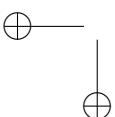


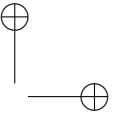
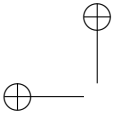
something most prominent in Asian cultures such as those of Japan, South Korean and China.

In the historical study on futurology performed by Fred Polak (*op. cit.*), the author claims that “every man leads a double life” (p. 1) since thinking about the future and living in the present time are distinct things, being implicit a duplicity phenomenon. Viewers, but mostly the “mecha” genre fans, face this type of anime as their “second life”. Knowing that in Japan, regardless of the age group or social class, the population consumes anime on a regular basis, we may picture how vast is the notion of audience. Director Hayao Miyazaki himself suggests in “Youth”, a *Japanorama* (*op. cit.*) episode, as he declares: “I did not expect children to fully understand ‘Princess Mononoke’. And they did it, which surprised me. In fact the adult critics were the ones who felt confused”. For the anime culture, the viewer does not have to be neither young nor elder, all he as to do is to enjoy watching anime films.

Further beyond the questions of gender issues, the audience’s age group or each viewers’ preferences in anime, it seems undeniable that anime films are “cartoons”, and in that way it is watched by many children across the world; this happens under the passive viewer condition, watching anime in the TV series format. Due to its free form and for allowing parents to entertain a child, it is an added-value for this kind of animation film. However, that does not explain all the reasons which drive the audience to watch anime. For Luyten (*op. cit.*), precisely because is overpopulated, “Children have less space left to play in comparison to the ones living in other countries, and for them the trend is to stay indoors reading comics (when they’re not watching TV or playing videogames)” (p. 20). Due to this the Japanese are the ‘format-audience’ of ‘The Anime Galaxy’, given that their profile is a consequence of their life style.

The anime viewer is not just another strictly Japanese character. If we remind that anime began the global process starting right from the North-American market that must suffice. In result of that, the following Levi’s affirmation makes perfect sense: “The new generations of both Japan and America are sharing their youth, and in the long run, their future” (*op. cit.*: p. 1). After all, the anime’s graphic culture export in late 20th century made some audiences, like the younger one, to consume anime despite living in different continents. The future, Levi is speaking of is the future of technology and culture, its anime’s entertainment codes that make it a “transnational



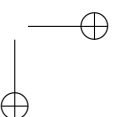
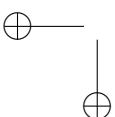


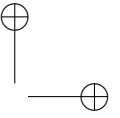
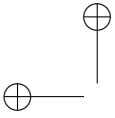
communication" (Boym, *op. cit.*: p. 349) medium, therefore global. In 1946, Ruth Benedict had come to realize that in Japan's pattern-driven society one was living a "robot-like discipline" (*op. cit.*: p. 2). More recently, Morley and Robins (*op. cit.*) depict the Japanese as this:

“(...) a kind of cybernetic mode of being for the future. This creates the image of Japanese as inhuman. Within the political and cultural unconscious of the West, Japan has come to exist as the figure of empty and dehumanized technological power. It represents the alienated and dystopian image of capitalist progress” (p. 170).

This "cybernetic" mode of existence, set for the future – because the Japanese do not look like humans – is typical in a society that lives a double life; as Polak refers, every man has a double life for living in the present time while conceiving the future. The anime viewers are alike, especially in Japan, where each person has a place in society according to its personal characteristics. It matters for the Japanese that each person occupies its own, “Taking one's proper station according to generation, sex, and age within a group (...). Proper station means not only differences of generation but differences of age” (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 51). The question is that viewers position themselves in society foreknowing their "proper place": being devotees of anime, practicing the *On*. And while sometimes anime viewers are looking at the future (worshipping "mecha" robots), on other times they're invoking the past (nuclear blasts), nurturing a "panic culture". Horror, silence, the atomic mushroom shock deeply penetrated anime narrative, and they can't stand apart a kind of panic; a panic that historically never disappeared. On the contrary, panic virally housed itself in the images. Sloterdijk (*op. cit.*) is one of authors questioning the "panic culture", the legitimacy of the need for catastrophe on the human side, hence he says:

“(...) today's alternative individuals are already the children of the catastrophe. What separates them from previous generations and recommends them as the first candidates to apply for a panic culture is their expertness attitude towards the potential of the catastrophe, which surrounds them” (p. 71, translation is ours).



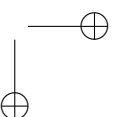
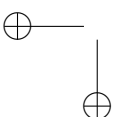


Panic culture relying on a catastrophe retained in images – in anime's case – makes alternative people audiences to face history as a warning. When Sloterdijk is sustaining that contemporary alternative individuals are by now "children of the catastrophe", he is certainly considering the historic background of post-war period, which on the range of anime is extremely relevant. For Sloterdijk, alternative individuals are historically set for the image of catastrophe because they were born after it. The problem posed is that the apocalypse theme does not disappear from the images (in this case the anime images), and stands by, in a pregnant, convulsion state.

Hardcore anime fans, the *otaku*, are the post-modern people for Morley e Robins. The most complex and violent fictions, aimed at the more mature audience, get this label. It is true that such fascination existed previously towards manga comics (Virilio, 2010: p. 87). The way the *otaku* read manga is equally obsessive. Most of *otaku* are young men living obsessed with anime, graphic technologies, robotics and computers. They're defined by Morley and Robins as "these mutants are now better adapted to survive in the future" (*op. cit.*: p. 170). The *otaku* is the 'limit-viewer', the best-prepared audience for the cybernetic lifestyle of the future. The expansion of machines and Japanese formality translated to technoscience show the Japanese individual as a devotee to the inhuman. Being an *otaku* means to find compensation in entertainment for the absence of social life; it implies to stand apart from the encoded gesture of the group and its rules (Goldberg: p. 6 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Anime's media noise and audiovisual hyperbole depart from the silent moment of the Year Zero marked by the first out of two nuclear bombings. About the silence, Tito Cardoso e Cunha states that:

"Today, more than ever, in a world crossed by multiple technological mediation networks, only silence could really mean absence. (...) Death is surely the experience, for those witnessing it, of the most extreme absence, exactly because it is also the experience of the most irreducible silence" (*op. cit.*: p. 54).

In response to the terrifying image of silence, of "nothing" triggered by nuclear devices, the *otaku* cover it up with an increasing bigger presence of robots in anime, that don't represent death as silence, but the death of the human, instead; in other words, the rise of the machine. The *Star Wars* (George

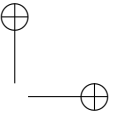
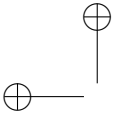


Lucas, 1977-2005) film trilogy became in Japan a fantasy 'image-track' for big audiences, especially for the *otaku*. Popular narratives where anthropomorphic machines and humans inhabit the same spaces, and in which the audience is invited to participate in chasing scenes, commanding futuristic vehicles, are just a few points the *otaku* find attractive. Although there are *otaku* appreciating non-Japanese science fiction, the influence anime exerts on the world is much bigger. Relying on its research, Levi (*op. cit.*) draws an even more interesting conclusion: "'Anime' has already spread across most Asia. Future social historians may well conclude that the creation of the American 'otaku' was the most significant event of the post-Cold War period" (p. 2). In Levi's argument, the American *otaku* is more than a character; it is understood as a historic event, an unspeakable one from the increasing anime graphic culture. Accepting Japan's technological supremacy and getting to its graphic cultures makes the Japanese Culture look less awkward than what David Morley & Kevin Robins intend to make us believe. After the American *otaku*, the awkward thing is to remain outside anime culture. In Japan, a violence-free future is conceived, despite the images nurturing an appetite for violence. Such thing is an *aporia*. According to James Matthews (2003-2004), "This interest in destruction [manifested by anime audience and inclusively by the *otaku*], especially of society or objects signifying society, coupled with a strong pacifism can only manifest itself truly in one medium-anime. This could explain the popularity of warrior-robot anime (...)" (p. 14).

Anime is the chosen medium and "warrior-robot" [also known as 'warbot'] is the genre where it is noticed the unsurpassable *otaku* needs to feed its desire for images of shootings, fights and detonations. However, what matters to report here is that the *otaku* are representative of an audience living on the edge, behaving as a new type of viewer. In order to help us best understand the anime audience it is decisive to see it as an audience behaving differently, once it practices a new viewer model: the media viewer, the media-products fan. Susan Napier (2001) depicts fans as this:

"(...) engaged in a relatively new form of spectatorship, that of the committed media fan. The fan's interaction with the cultural object is deeply engaged, transcending issues of national boundaries, content, style, or ideology (...)" (p. 242).

As both geographic and ideological restrictions are overcome the anime

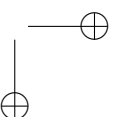
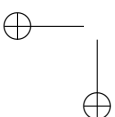


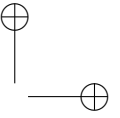
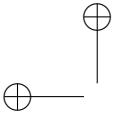
audience practices a new form of commitment in the cultural and media-type anime product. The way anime interacts with the audience is at the same level as the interaction practiced by the media user in relation to the medium, the hardware and communicating language. Something new takes place here. The *On* devotion unfolds as a media-type phenomenon, and not as a cultural or religious phenomenon alone. The fan-audience pursues the 'global novel' dimension. Anime inherits the serial editions logic from manga. Manga chapters turned into anthologies and colored books afterwards. Still in anime, the great films partly represent the available media spectrum, given that anime stands above all in series format market. Originally, anime series are aimed for television, reaching new platforms as DVD editions, OVAs ["Original Video Animations"], Webcast and media files download for further view in hand-held media. In this context, the anime viewer is a media user too, media fan deeply committed to anime, as explained by Napier. This shows the interest of this audience for a 'global novel' type, in which artworks, artists and audience exchange ideas and information recurring to media for consolidate a new form of being a viewer. Participating in 'The Anime Galaxy' is something belonging to this new commitment to media, the anime product. As for fiction narratives for the masses, where all viewers feel they have an active participation role, one notices anime has managed to enlarge the integral nature of the fiction previously seized by Disney. Anime made possible to go from one national culture or mass culture to subcultures or micromasses (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxxiv).

Especially in Japan, but considering also the globalization perspective, anime means change. Product and audience make a contribution to cultural changing in the anime genre, that in turn ceases to be a genre to become a communication phenomenon; both in terms of hardware (new media) and consumption (active and participating viewer).

The changes at stake are caused by the fact of Disney films (including the Pixar brand) not having technology as a player. In the case of anime it happens otherwise: humanoid or android creatures are stars of the stories, and it is this scenario of high-end graphic and computerized complexity which deserves highlights. There is a healthy rivalry going on among the studios (including media enterprises and toy-manufacturers) producing anime as, for instance, those of Gainax, Studio Ghibli, Manga Entertainment and Bandai Co.; intending to monopolize the anime market near the major audience. Hall-

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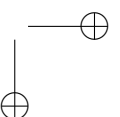
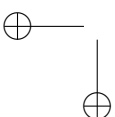


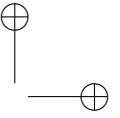
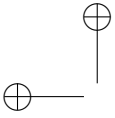
marks of anime history like *Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence, Sin – The Movie* (Yasunori Urata, 1999) or *Cowboy Bebop* (Shinichiro Watanabe, 2001) are held responsible for promoting anime worldwide already in the new media age. This animation form found on the Web a continuation space that transformed the *otaku* into more up-dated fans, making contents available through the "file sharing" system, though making *otaku* people out of casual anime consumers. The effective anime contemporary aesthetic is still luring people to videogames, as the ones appreciating the *Final Fantasy* (1997-2008) series, the manga audience enjoying Ashley Wood's conceptual art and the audience of *Ponyo on The Cliff by The Sea*, the anime film. As anime fans look for participation, they continue to manifest the *komikkusu* (Schodt, 2002) logic. However, between anime and new media the demand for participation proliferates because the interaction with "playful pictures" [*giga*] dates back to the period of manga first release. As new media come up, anime rise as a medium urging participation and attention. In the digital territory, images [*ga*] are ready to play. Such images, which had turned into "graphic novels" in manga, have then found in digital manga, multimedia anime and Japanese videogames the ideal expression platform, the virtual one. Here is the reason why in the anime universe images are set for a participating viewer; a spectator that interacts with subjective images and experiences being transported to a fantasy world.

### 1.3 DIGITAL MANGA

#### 1.3.1 Participation, Subjectivity And Transport

The anime viewer is a contemporary of a new manga type: digital manga. In the day and age of World Wide Web and computer graphics operated by any user, digital manga sets a new trend and new format as well. Technically speaking, anime fans are revisiting – digitally retouched and enhanced for computer screens – manga, to the point of coming to be seen as a cultural product re-made by new media. Manga emerges before the post-war period, and its impact prevails since that time, the conjuncture during which the computer is invented. Only later the personal computer and graphic interfaces become available. Let's underscore that the manga print format is originally illustrative and typographic, while computerized graphic universe



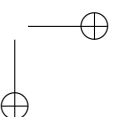
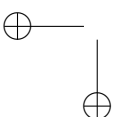


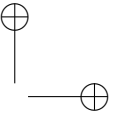
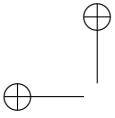
has an information-driven, digital origin. Out of both universes a new domain pops up, the one of digital manga, that absorbs features like immersion, illustration, typography, and participation, subjectivity and transport as well.

It is claimed by Schodt (1983), in the work *Manga! Manga! – The World of Japanese Comics*, that manga is an evolving experience, a work in progress, and that “For whoever being interested in comics, new media, new forms of transmitting information and in literacy, Japan constitutes a fascinating case study” (p. 32). On this interest about new forms of transmitting information, manga stands out for; it is precisely that which distinguishes it from other media. In digital manga, the differentiation point lies in the fact of this new format being strongly influenced by anime, and not just by traditional manga. In the manga of Tezuka, like *Buddha* (*op. cit.*), including anime films as *Akira* or *Memories* (Koji Korimoto *et al.*, 1996), ‘images of participation’ are being carried, which transform the reader or the viewer into a participant. Concerning North-American comics, Scott McCloud endorses that “(...) the usage of motion lines (...) seems to ‘illustrate’ the action” (1996: p. 45). McCloud does not believe the “motion lines” are directly translated as a feeling of participation. Still, he affirms they illustrate the action and they’re also named as “speed lines” (as noticed too by LaMarre: p. 132 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). It is this what one verifies in the example of Tezuka and Otomo, since it is where the movement and the graphic representation of this very movement is more underscored, which happens to work as an attempt to cross several media. Put another way, with these “motion lines” manga makes an allusion to the anime film; similarly, anime makes an allusion for an increased participation, as existing, for instance, in interactive manga and videogames.

Frederik L. Schodt finds an explanation for the required participation in manga, in the work *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga* (2002), where he says, “A manga (...) is one of the few things young people are not obliged to do by their teachers, since it is an expression genre they actively wish to participate” (p. 41). Here is the motive why manga aesthetically and culturally prepares the audience for the new media. Digital manga’s audience won’t give up the free consumption of computer-generated animation films, videogames and digital comics. Schodt is clear as he refers manga as an expression genre in which young people aspire to actively participate in. It means the manga communication medium has an acceptable expansion on the new media context, where participation is substantial for its user. The par-

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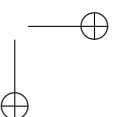
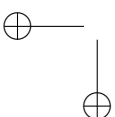


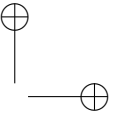
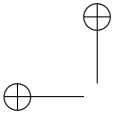


ticipation feeling is as the more intense for the digital manga audience as the more subjective their images are. In agreement with McCloud, "motion lines" allow action to be display, and they're relevant for turning the images into subjective images, positioning the manga reader inside images that attempt to transcend their limit: being static. In anime, these lines remain to enhance the speed concept and the position of the viewer: the individual watching images. It is in this extent that a special type of subjectivity, the "performative subjectivity" (Malpas, 2005: p. 74), that is typically post-modern, evolves. A special characteristic of Japanese people, in accordance to Benedict, consisted in how the Japanese "acting in character", whether in time of war or peace (*op. cit.*: p. 5). Playing characters was something imperative during the war, but the Japanese people have always been fond of representation, performative arts and drama, much as uniforms and protocol practices. "Acting in character" [*chara* (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 23)] was one of the facets of the Japanese in the war, remaining ever since. In digital manga, "motion lines" are meant to make the reader "get in" the image', to make him keep up with their rhythm, underlining the will to "act in character". Most of manga and anime that spreads across new media exploits the subjective perspective to make the audience feel like getting into the shot; a 'performative subject' is consolidated. Scott McCloud (1996) explains:

"(...) when a camera moves 'with' a 'moving object' it produces quite a 'different image'. Although the 'object' may remain in 'clear focus', the background is 'streaked' and 'blurry'. This was the effect that Manga artists began 'adapting' for their comics a few decades ago" (p. 45).

Applying "motion lines" results in an increased feeling of participation; streaked and blurred backgrounds, in opposition with crystal-clear foregrounds derive from the effects designed by early manga artists. During post-war period, the conjuncture of manga establishment, Ruth Benedict had explained that the Japanese have assumed – after the defeat – that, "(...) during the war they had 'engaged in subjectivity'", since that, as they acknowledged too, holding their positions with bamboo spears was a fantasy (*op. cit.*: p. 26). "Acting in character", thrilled with subjectivity, with their worldview, the Japanese were back then prone to the subjective. Levi alleges that unlike the

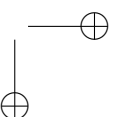
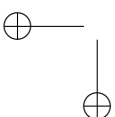




West, Japanese artistic and theatrical traditions were never envisioning realism as a destiny. This way, there was always a tendency towards subjectivity and in Levi's words:

"Instead, both in art and drama, the Japanese have emphasized techniques that capture the essence of the subject in a way that assumes some participation by the audience. 'Anime' sets the stage, but the viewer's imagination must fill in the gaps" (*op. cit.*: p. 21).

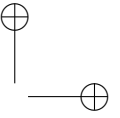
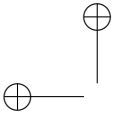
These subjective point of view emphasizing techniques are exploited in digital manga, by means of blurs, "motion lines", *decoupage*, cinematic style, and more recently, Photoshop enhanced-painting introducing gradient, sun light and photorealistic lighting effects. Besides these techniques we have another one, which is underlined by Schodt and above all by McCloud, the "technology of storytelling". Thanks to dramatic arts, anime imports this need for capturing the essence of the subjective; the opposite of the objective world, i.e., the "embodied vision" (Vivian Sobchack, REF. ORIGINAL *apud* Bolton: p. 138 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007), the participation of the viewer. Because anime is released before digital manga, it will be held responsible for the visual language of the new manga. The new product claims increased reader participation, and just as anime, it manages to set the stage in which the audience is responsible for filling in the blanks. The "transport" concept is, thus, a consequence of "Subjectivity" and "Participation"; a consequence of a subject that "acts in character", watching subjectivity images which endorse participation and narrative decode. In this context, Orbaugh (p. 159 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008) refers a "post-human subjectivity". Once the reader faces transportation into the digital manga universe he develops a relationship of intimacy towards characters and graphically represented narratives, a phenomenon previously verified. As Scott McCloud (1996) said once, manga [the original one], already had this feature of being able to transport the reader: "The power to 'transport us' into the 'mind' of 'another' and through their eyes into 'another world'" (p. 48). This "Another", appearing represented in manga, is improved in digital manga. Its secret lies respectively in its optimized, colored and fine-tuned aspect, which happens to have redefined comics by enhancing manga's previous format into something more captivating in the age of anime. As the



Japanese take a lot of time during the day in public transportation systems they develop, thus, an intimate relationship with manga characters, hence it is explained the obsessive consumption of print-colored book digital manga, in digital form suitable for further viewing experience in computer-screens or handheld media platforms. The manga that transports the reader manages to be transported also along with that very reader to anywhere else in this age of new portable media.

### 1.3.2 Digital Graphic Novel: The Manga And Anime Convergence

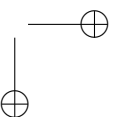
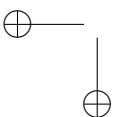
The “digital graphic novel” is the apotheosis of digital manga, the converging format of manga and anime. As a new, multimedia, product, the “digital graphic novel” represents the blending between the "participation", "subjectivity" and "transport" concepts. This digital manga edition format with embedded, animated sequences is based on an art concept with pages set in its own stage. The hybrid manga and anime stage was designed for experiencing Sony PlayStation Portable, a handheld videogames console. It means that this console’s user was able to interact with digital manga. *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel*, which was designed by game company Konami’s legendary visionary Hideo Kojima, is the digital comics version relying on Ashley Wood’s art concept. Wood is the artist who created the prototype illustrations for the *Metal Gear Solid* game in its PlayStation One version, still in 1998. Due to the successful illustrations addressing us to manga graphic culture, the *Metal Gear Solid* videogame series achieved a significant impact near the most *otaku* crowds. In *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel*, the console users were able to read, research, play part of the story, and foremost, watch digital manga whose animation sequences were coupled with a soundtrack. Voice-overs, dialogues and sonic special effects perfectly synchronized with images, made *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* an anime-converging product. On the user side, this hybrid product allowed one to read, stop, rewind and fast-forward the reading in an electronic format, as in playing a film. One of the possibilities was how the user could zoom in the image and see it in layers, like anybody retouching a Photoshop image, without disregarding the likely find of mysterious information. All information gathered was permitting one to elaborate a database about the overall novel

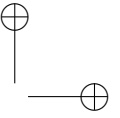
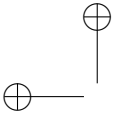


of *Metal Gear Solid* when it comes to topics, characters, intrigues and places. The “digital graphic novel” format was adding even more news, such as transforming the reader into a player, the user into a viewer, and it accomplished that by transporting the audience to an audiovisual manga, closer to the anime format.

In *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* we can highlight its format as belonging to a bigger “convergence culture” (Jenkins, op. cit.). After all, this artwork is capable of pushing forward the manga and anime convergence, so it is not only-so about digital manga, as the user’s participation is endorsed. “Participation culture” is “convergence culture”-related, once that is mandatory to interact. It has to be subject himself to handle and assemble it in “clips”, media excerpts which are side-by-side with him all day-long every time he uses mobile media platforms. Lipovetsky believes in the existence of a “clip culture” (op. cit: p. 280, translation is ours). And as a matter of fact, the concept of having fragmentation and audiovisual excerpt consolidates as media, or communication instruments, is radicalized in *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel*. Ever since Konami released this product its copycats were rendered worthless. The primacy of this artwork is due to the way it changed the reading format to an interaction format, based on a comic’s page and then making it identical to a game. Secondly, the only reason why this is a digitally-enhanced “graphic novel” is due to contents migration onto new hardware. From the moment digital manga established that one may illustrate first on paper and then digitize an illustration to the computer; or that one can design straightly on computer by means of optic pen, painting, retouching and reformatting, that manga as we knew has changed. Digitized comics available on a memory, accessible on a handheld console like anybody exploring a music disc or an electronic game, is something new. So let it be considered then the graphics-sound synchronization in addition, which turns the experience into a ‘multimedia event’; out of this media convergence an ‘experience’s’ convergence’ is exalted, enforcing the audience to become simultaneously different types of audience at-once. Regarding the hardware, *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* means a breakthrough not just due to how perfectly it makes manga and anime converge, but due to how it extends Tezuka’s pioneering “cinematic style”, as well. The manga’s illustration techniques he established meet in Hideo Kojima’s *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* an extension of the multimedia kind. In Tezuka’s comics the images

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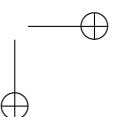
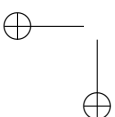


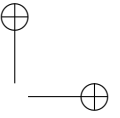
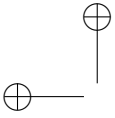


are depicting sounds, they're zoomed in, multiplied, focused on characters, they represent rhythm and segment the action in innumerable frameworks. This is registered in an illustrative manner, which is to say, in paper, book-format, soundlessly and in black-and-white fashion. On the version presented of *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* dialog balloons with voice-overs were added, the character's breathing sounds (subjective element), images disassembling themselves into layers ("the multiplanar image"), different frameworks simultaneously set on motion featuring characters speaking inside, for instance. Expressions as "Bang!", "Kaput" and "Vroomm", which are onomatopoeias by the way, contained sound clips that were activated as they hit the screen. Characters appeared as they were cut-up, remaining independent, moving themselves. There is not any static thing in *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel*. Digital-format manga designed by Kojima had in dynamic image its primary condition.

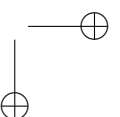
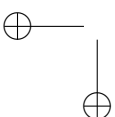
It is convenient not to forget that Kojima makes out of new media what Tezuka would do if the latter were available, since its great passion was photographic framing, the cinematographic style and dynamic image. In Tezuka's comics a dissatisfaction raised concerning the book medium, a limited medium (Poitras, *op. cit.*; Schodt, 2002). At that epoch, manga expanded itself in series because a narrative was not able of splitting into as much frameworks as the ones needed. The result was an exponential increase of two-colored manga volumes, a consequence of the page number inflation. Currently, thanks to the advent of the digital domain, manga images are now adapting to new communication platforms. In the meantime, the once plastic and private-reading type manga begins now migrating to a multimedia and public-reading type, mostly due to its share form in the new media, something Daniel H. Pink makes clear: "Young people are turning their attention away from the printed page and toward the tiny screens on their mobile phones" (*op. cit.*: p. 1, §4). The thing standing in-between the typographic version of manga and the version of handheld media — where there is convergence —, is the common product access on the street, or anywhere else. The mobility of image, of hardware and audiences have converged altogether with the *otaku* lifestyle

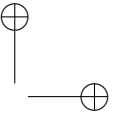
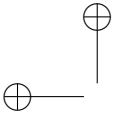
This way of reading digital manga in products enabled with anime sequences is still futuristic. A new interaction with the medium prevails, resembling interacting with games. On this futurism of the individual, Polak points out: "Once he [the individual] became conscious of creating images





of the future, he became a participant in the process of creating this future” (*op. cit.*: p. 6). And again we’re heading for the "participation" concept, just as in Jenkins’ text “participation culture” (*op. cit.*) is approached. The first attempt to make comics and dynamic image sequences converge dates back to *Comix Zone* (1995). However there was no relation whatsoever between this videogame and manga. Playing *Comix Zone* was about controlling the character Sketch Turner along an action-adventure through the colored pages of comics. It was more a game than a comic, despite pioneering the demand of player participation in the comics realm. Three years later, the first attempt to link manga and anime on the computer happens with *Takeru: Letter of The Law* (1998), an interactive manga designed by Buichi Terasawa, who was fond of digital graphic technologies besides making manga. *Takeru* is the first manga artwork of this kind to be released straight to the personal computer market. Thus, there’s a “culture convergence”, which in agreement with Jenkins (*op. cit.*), is reporting to the process, rather than to the end (p. 16). Says the author, the media are "converging". One of the attractions is surely the fact of the audience of these new media being fonder of controlling images, instead of reading them. In the "image of the future", Polak had the opportunity to say that man enjoys particularly "a controlled image change" (*op. cit.*: p. 15). That is noticeable in “digital graphic novels”: the *otaku* audience prefers media where they have the chance of changing image in a controlled form. Media confluence causes the audience to behave as a player, given that: "(...) for gamers, the experience is one of immediacy: the character becomes a vehicle for their direct experience of the game world” (Jenkins, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 121). Game-like interaction is justified since the best way to provide an intense experience to the audience is by making it immediate; similar to what players find in the videogame world. “Digital graphic novels” in Japan are known too, as *techno-gekigas*, graphic novels for digital media platforms. The format-audience finds in artworks as *Metal Gear Solid: Digital Graphic Novel* a starting point for a "participative culture” and a contribution for a “public culture of the future” (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 24).



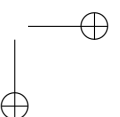
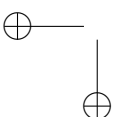


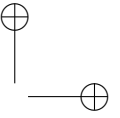
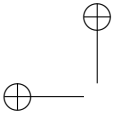
## 1.4 ANIME VIDEOGAMES

### 1.4.1 Prolongament

In post-war period, back when there weren't anime videogames, the Paper Theatre [*Kami-shibai*] was a most popular entertainment form. Stories were drafted and hand-made figures would be later cut out of cardboard. At the end of plays the seemingly hand-crafted looking characters were carefully moved on top of cardboard boxes. Sound effects and narration were actually included; this because they were suitable for children. Japanese videogames follow this cultural legacy of the people, which dates back to post-war time, displaying still the theatrical, comical and ludic apparatus. Games have changed in Japan since that moment. Nobody else plays only traditional games. The *otaku* audience rather wants to play videogames than traditional games, not to mention Japan masters the electronic gaming industry. The single phenomenon of traditional games that keeps being popular is *patchinko* (Sugimoto, 2003: p. 249), a game where metal balls are dropped inside a glass-covered vertical display. The Japanese appreciate the random way balls pick their way down, around metal pins, sliding from top to the bottom of the machine display. In the end one can exchange balls for money. *Tokyo-Ga* is the documentary film directed by Wenders (*op. cit.*) where the obsession driven for *patchinko* is presented.

Videogame versions of anime or videogames following anime aesthetic are a phenomenon with three decades alone. Many videogames copy elements of manga and anime aesthetics, but it is not because of that one may consider them as anime videogames. Videogames classified in that category continue the anime aesthetic integrally, pursuing already existing fiction worlds and known characters, i.e., adapting anime artworks to the videogame format. The need to introduce innovations constantly to an audience of global *otakus* demands the creation of new universes designed from scratch to fit the videogame medium. On the fact of whether or not the anime-videogame transition is planned by Japanese companies, which is a pertinent question, Takahiro Hayakawa (*op. cit.*) answers: "No, it is not planned. It is a continuation, not forced ". One thing is certain, if anime videogames were adapting Japanese animation film masterpieces since the decade of 80; from the 90s on the amount anime videogames available for new consoles have skyrocketed.





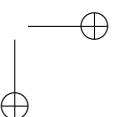
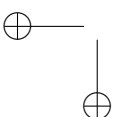
After 2000, the three console hardware industry giants – Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft –, have decided to launch new consoles, then named "next-generation consoles", and progress was meaningful. The same manufacturers released consoles enabling high-resolution since 2008, an event causing an improvement of the graphic capabilities useful for anime games design.

Lev Manovich said that "We still have not left the era of the screen" (2001, p. 115). It makes perfect sense this argument, given that mobile media and all the other similar digital ones require from their users constant interaction by means of screens. "The age of the screen, which did not end so far, needs participatory audiences, with a type of behavior endorsed by emerging network technologies (Wi-Fi, Fiber Optics, BlueTooth). Anime videogames were altered by these very network technologies. The famous *Final Fantasy* series, which had been released to different game consoles, had a specific episode uniquely designed for network play, *Final Fantasy XI Online* (2006), following what happened before with *Phantasy Star Online* (2001).

Within anime videogames category, some of them establish a more direct connection to manga culture; these are games trying to inclusively please comic fans that are videogame players as well. *Takeru: Letter of The Law* was relevant, yet it didn't manage to create a coherent game style. Exploring spaces and not watching that much dynamic anime clips wasn't enough. Practically speaking, it didn't surpass the videogame medium conventions. Three great videogame genres may be defined as elected for the anime style: the "shoot'em up's", "beat'em up's" and Role-Playing Games. In parallel, we have the *kawaii* characters presence, a transversal factor crossing the three anime game types, much as the dramatic and epical music, orchestrally outlined.

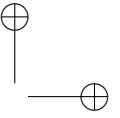
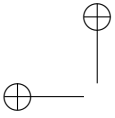
About robotics, many are the anime videogames available. *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* (2007) is a fascinating game in which the whole action unfolds on a frozen planet. Odd creatures chase an Asian-face hero, one beating the raids as long as he is driving a "mech", his "vital suit" (Tatsumi: p. 192 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). In other cases, just as *Final Fantasy*, the prevailing thing is such "reconfiguration" topic. Adversaries always manage to modify themselves, and same thing happens in *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* and in *Armored Core 2* (2000) too. Anthropomorphic mechanisms learn how to shapeshift according to scenario conditions. Whether it is in the higher dimension of space (*Ikaruga*), or the micrological dimension one

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(*Blast Factor: Advanced Research* [2007]), the player is commanding an airship. Both cases imply saving mankind, a typically anime challenge. *Metroid Prime 3: Corruption* (2007) opts for similar strategy but places the player in a first person perspective. Through the "Prime" robot's helmet the player sees the game, and again the need for participating in anime is explored. The anime aesthetic supports weapons styling in a huge amount of games. *The Ninja Warriors* (1989), *Bushido Blade* (1997) and *Final Fantasy X* are just a few games we should underscore. Old Japanese weapons use is emphasized in this trio of games. *The Ninja Warriors'* cyborgs handle the *samurai* warrior's curved sword and *shuriken* stars to attack enemies. *Bushido Blade* is more recent and shows the same weaponry, putting the narrative disclosure in ancient Japan. *Final Fantasy X* has all of this on a hybrid style of its own. In the tenth episode of this "final fantasy" series the leading characters team heroes use a gigantic sword, colored hair and asymmetric designed clothes. As for the scenarios, they're pretty idyllic. On a remote tropical archipelago all weapons are necessary to beat adversaries. Snow and Lightning are falling for each other; they're the bold and combative protagonists of an adventure where all things being anime are there.

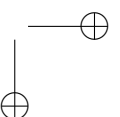
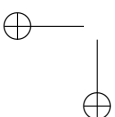
We also have videogames focusing more on *kawaii* culture, namely the childish, sympathetic and infantile looking characters; nonetheless, the ones appearing in most anime artworks in a generally harmless behavior. Among the most innovative games that implement the anime aesthetic there is *Pikmin* (2001), a pioneer game released for the Nintendo GameCube console, which allowed one to guide miniscule and desperate astronauts all the way to find their spaceship debris in a forest. The game objective was to control these beings, the *kawaii* mascots with the purpose of repairing their spaceship. Having said this, the creatures would resume their way to their home planet. In the scope of the more abstract fantasy there are three videogames importing again the logic of the *kawaii* characters. The first one is *Puzzle Bobble Pocket* (2004), a puzzle game where the protagonists are the dinosaurs of the classical platform game *Bubble Bobble* (1986) from Taito. Shooting soap bubbles these *kawaii* characters of the Jurassic age were eliminating their square-shaped adversaries and smiling whenever they moved from one level to the other. Carrying the signatures of the same developers, two determinant Japanese games were released in the decade of 90: the classics *New Zealand Story* (1988) and *Rainbow Islands* (1991). In the first one, the sympathetic



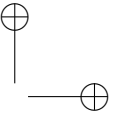
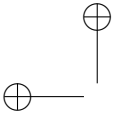
chick powered by a bow and arrow was defending himself from flying cats, dragons, turtles and tiny demons. *New Zealand Story's* sequel, *Rainbow Islands*, followed a similar logic and introduced a boy (Bubby) that climbed up the skies thanks to his rainbow launching capability. After doing this, the protagonist choose to get on the top of them thus escaping the bees attack. In case he would reach the end and he would defeat the villain Krabo. A character that for the Japanese continues to be successful in games, and as a matter of fact is a nice icon, a mascot, is *Bomberman* (2006) released by Hudson Soft, the hero identical to a television set that saves his planet from the invading robot army. Achieving success is something "bomberman" manages to do by arming bombs in a maze of obstacles. A much more smiling, and still considered to be a legendary figure, a cult one, is "Sonic", from *Sonic: The Hedgehog* (1991), the videogame, which became famous for rescuing friends from the evil Dr. Robotnik; and it even deserved an anime adaptation, by the way.

In *Tamagotchi [tamagotti]* (1997), from Bandai, Co., the player seizes control over a creature existing on the screen. However, the videogame that was able to create something really new was *Me And My Katamari* (2006), a game of logics in which the player guides "the prince of all things". Once descending upon Earth, the protagonist pushes down the road a ball of debris that absorbs all things standing in its trajectory: in real size, from garden benches, people, trees and street lamps, to pets. In the end, the rolling debris of real-world objects may became new places, as an island, for example. The *kawaii* fantasy and comedy looks of this third-person action game permits one to classify it as "an original game". *Me and My Katamari* was known also for the music, the "disco" music dancing prince looks. Moreover, an important aspect in anime videogames is the music. Not every videogame is recurring to "trance" like *Armored Core* does. When it comes to music, anime videogames present extremely unique soundtracks, and these consolidate the anime environment (Poitras, op. cit.: p. 88). Musicians as Michiru Oshima and Kow Otani composed respectively for *Ico* and *Shadow of The Colossus* original sound environments that raise the videogame category. *Ico's* abandoned fortresses, the labyrinths of the castle lost amidst the fog and the range of the mysterious space are enriched by Oshima's soundtrack. The mission objective for *Ico*, the primary character, is to escape from a place without leaving behind Yorda, a princess exhaling light, despite the shadowy forces

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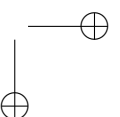
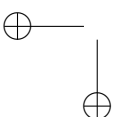


on his tail. Otani created the music for *Shadow of The Colossus*, *Ico*'s prequel (though it was released after), in which a cursed young man is abandoned by knights of an unknown tribe on a remote zone. In order to find out how to save a sleeping young girl on the top of a stone, the young man has to cross a wide area made out of deserts, plateau, lakes and towers to defeat sixteen giants. By the time the latter are all wiped out, the boy finally assimilates their life-force. As soon as all colossi are beaten, the boy sets on a mutation. Because he has accumulated the giants negative energy he turns into a tenebrous titan too: he rescues the princess out of her suspension status only to be seized and confined to stone sarcophagus. During the exploring phase, while he rides alone in that universe, the hero makes useful the reflection light cast by his shadow to act as a compass to find the giants' spots. The boy is master of a poetic, free and romanticized world, a sort of "enclosed paradise". As Kow Otani makes the soundtrack, he manages to promote in *Shadow of The Colossus* anime videogames to a new level, that of the epic and dramatic anime videogame. Such effect is achieved relying on the "expressive environments" concept and in the absence of dialogs, something that pushes the soundtrack further. It is a common thing to release anime videogames' soundtracks because of their quality (*Idem, Ibidem*). On a more ludic and especially designed for the more infantile-juvenile audience, there is *Patapon* (2008), a PlayStation Portable videogame where the player interacts with the game through the music. As he hits the button combinations right, the "patapon's" – the tribal characters' army –, moves forward, steps back, defends or attacks forces in hostile territory. Depending on how successful is the player in doing it, so he'll be awarded with new recruits in the "patapon's" army, where archers, fearless soldiers and new weapons meet their purpose in the next levels. The game follows a cartoon-like graphic design, where the player contemplates the army horizontally marching and heading for action as it sings and exalts, playing trumpets and unleashing war screams. About the interface *Patapon* innovates but it is no pioneer, and it excels for resorting to child voice-overs for special effects, in the same fashion as it happens in *Locoroco* (2006), by the way. In the latter, the player commands elastic and round characters in a two-dimensional game inhabited by *kawaii* creatures. Here a relevant role is played out by the music, endorsing the player immersion. Very much colored levels, vectoral graphics (simple shapes), an anime message concerning environment protection and funny music enabling children voices were *Locoroco*'s



key-points. Fitting in a more entertaining style, less childish and melancholic, we have *Rez* (2001), an anime videogame entirely dedicated to the looks of cyberspace. All the way through shoot-out sequences the player must control a character inside the computer realm with the purpose of generating a music, and thus, being able to move forward across the digital landscapes of the disembodied and dematerialized world of *Rez*. In this logic, Bolton suggests a “disembodied regime” (in Anderson, 2009: p. 81 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). On the “shoot’em up” genre where the action is experienced in a third-person perspective, this game adds new things, providing intermittent action sequences; as adversaries came up they would match a pulsating dance music beat, whose result was a psychedelic action. Always travelling a tunnel-shaped digital universe in trouble, the player has to struggle to reach the center known as “Eden”. Until the end, and depending on the number of foes and his speed on the screen, *Rez* becomes an experience full of luminous and eclectic graphics, visually tuned into cyberpunk anime.

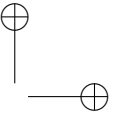
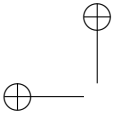
Still regarding “shoot’em ups”, abundant in Japan by the way, one notices that in them robots occupy prominent spots. The convergence zone for topics in anime videogames is the one including cyborgs, airships, robotics and weapons, and because of this, the best possible match for this type of machines with the anime genre is the “mecha” genre. In war videogames the machines videography – that of “mecha” – resorts to characters such as the cyborgs. We are able to find such characters in *Breakdown* (2004), in its army of special beings we have to shoot down; and in *Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex*, the game following the homonymous anime story. With no cyborgs whatsoever, games like *Ikaruga* and *R-Type Delta* (1999) represent the best games of airships. Both of the latter “shoot’em up’s” had deluxe set designs and placed the player-controlled airship highly above the ground. In *Ikaruga*, massive air-battle stations depleted their ammunition upon our airship, though the action was not disclosing in a linear form. Its “cinematic style” was relying on sudden changes in camera views. For the player the air battles works as a controlled shoot-out. An identical aesthetic was used in *R-Type Delta*, a “shoot’em up” in which the player does not entirely control the camera movements, like in *Ikaruga*, but the action is seen horizontally. Amidst the daily atmospheres of *Ikaruga* sophisticated airships and weaponry are standing out, while in *R-Type Delta* the science fiction soundtrack improves game expe-



rience, making amusing the nocturnal confrontations with flying robots above acropolises.

The most simple format for players to come across with anime have always been "shoot'em ups", the older ones, in late 80s, for the player could opt to play with one character among several available. Each one had special characteristics, a juvenile look and its own mood, and all of this had consequences in the vehicle piloted by that character, i.e., the player. In *U.N. Squadron*, the game starts precisely with character selection. Each vehicle has specificities, which eventually would result in successful missions for the player. Other titles, like *Zone of The Enders*, are focused on the universe of robotics, the "mecha" genre, and they lead the player to play the role of pilot – one named Leo Stenbuck –, that according to the story is drawn to a space conflict. For that motive he is obliged to resort to the Jehuty anthropomorphic robot firepower in order to save both Mars and Jupiter's settlers from enemy strikes. Still in another couple of anime games as in *Metal Gear Solid 2: The Twin Snakes* (2004) and *Ace Combat 4: Distant Thunder [Shattered Skies]* (2001), the war being fought is a modern one. *Metal Gear Solid 2: The Twin Snakes* shows us protagonist "Solid Snake" penetrating in stealth mode on a deck of an oil-tanker docked in New York area. Geared up with more recent weapons, "Snake's" enemies also drive "mechs". Within this logic, especially above the ground, the world of air battles in *Ace Combat 4: Distant Thunder [Shattered Skies]* takes the player to fly across atmospheres full of jet fighters, stealth aircrafts, while facing bullet strings and missile clouds. Most up-to-date avionics technology is present in the weaponry, which, in turn, proves to be quite useful to shoot enemies down. Some of those hostile figures are undetectable, have a massive size or look *kawaii*. After a hard mission is accomplished the player is forced to shoot aircrafts resembling toy-birds. *Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception* (2006) an episode of this flight simulator series, remarkably shows the story partly in manga images along with voice-overs and sound effects. A gamer would heroically act by piloting his warplane in the geo-strategic context. Depending on how successful or disastrous missions were consequences would be drawn.

The "choices-fights-effects" triangle is found in many "shoot'em up's"; just as anime characters are present, expressing themselves as cartoons every time the situation justifies it. *The Sky Crawlers – Innocent Aces*, the game continues the anime film carrying the same name and makes use of *Ace Combat's*

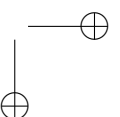
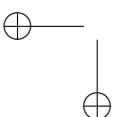


technology to permit the player experiencing the animation universe. Same thing happens in *Gundam Battle Royale* (2006), a game placing the action in the "Universal century" 0079 envisioning getting in mammoth robot fights. In this case, the split-screen with the pilot and the operator anime makes the game to oscillate between animation film and game, where no dramatic style, epical music or sophisticated characters handling light-sabers are missing. No matter how improved "shoot'em up's" based on anime themes are, their audience is still the one pursuing classics such as Konami's *Gradius Collection – Gradius Gaiden* (2006).

As one analyses anime games like "beat'em up's", about fights or action, we come across with quite distinct outlines, as the poetic aspect of pictures, the latter's technical sophistication and the type characters chosen. *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble* (2006) endorses a quick image and the character's sudden movements, raising the fight game to the interactive combat animation type. In this title the influence from "the clip culture" mentioned by Lipovetsky is obvious; namely in the way graphics and sounds blend up, something that reflects the technical proximity with the videoclip. Besides playing these games, the audience may access extra contents (ranging from images, music tracks and video clips), bonuses available in specific Web sites. Other games displaying the same "clip" influence are those of the *Devil May Cry* (2001-08) game series, that manage to absorb simultaneously the "cinematographic" and the anime aesthetic and the syncopated editing of the videoclip, providing "gothic rock' ambience additionally. The white-haired demonic hero, Dante, wears red or black raincoat, supersized weapons and displays an enigmatic smile. Some of the anime videogames biggest successes are character-related, mostly due to the more childish (*Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble*, *U.N. Squadron* [1991]), adolescent (*Final Fantasy VII* [1997]) or adult ones (*Shenmue* [2000-01]). As for *Final Fantasy VII*, the player controls all the way across the divided city of "Midgar", a team assembled by characters possessing specific features in an action-adventure seen in a third-person perspective. The "Avalanche" resistance has to beat the Shin-Ra Electric Company. Funny situations, trips, dialogs profusion and music made this adventure an amusing game assuming anime outlines; marked here and there by idyllic piano scores.

There's a different language in *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble*, one closer to the "rock" genre. The combats with adversaries happen so fast that the characters' movements seem electrified. The character which the player has

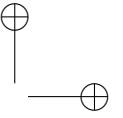
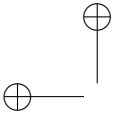
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the opportunity to control possesses superpowers on a scale turning the image on the screens as dynamic as him. "Cel-shading" graphics transform the fight game into an animation film, given that the characters are outlined in a black stroke. Being more than a classic fight game, *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble* is also an anime game that is centered on a hero beating up enemies with cinematic effects, hence becoming a 'graphics battle'.

In another videogame type as it is *Shenmue*, its creator, Yu Suzuki, had designed an open environment, where all things existing in town could be explored. The implemented system called "F.R.E.E." (Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment), permit as much in *Shenmue* (2000) as in *Shenmue 2* (2001) to walk through places, interact with any character whatsoever and inspect objects with no restrains. In accordance with the story, the death of Iwa Hazuki (father) takes Ryo Hazuki (son) – the player-controlled character –, to investigate the crime and look after a lost object, a mirror. The cities of Yokosuka and Dobuita, and a harbor too, are explored in the first game. It was such a complete game that it proposed multiple game styles, ranging from fight, adventure, espionage to puzzle. As for the second game, the story begins in Aberdeen's harbor in Hong Kong, and Hazuki proceeds his quest in order to unravel the mysterious death of his father, in which Lan Di is implied. The sequel is known as "a cinematic adventure". The hero, resembling the looks of actor Tom Cruise (in an Asian version, of course) pays visits to Wai Chai, Kowloon and Guilin in the search for answers. The *Shenmue* series was a paramount regarding videogames gameplay inside the videogame itself. Suzuki's AM2, the developer company, put arcade games parlors in the cities visited by Hazuki. Thus it was possible to get in, insert coins in these machines and play classic games like *After Burner II* (1985), *Hang On* (1985), *Space Harrier* (1985) or *Out Run* (1986).

In the Japanese culture, or exploiting Japanese motives, there are a few videogames, more "traditional" ones in the sense that they're focused on narratives, myths or historical elements of Japan. Martial arts are a common topic. Certain videogames are recurring to this topic but they reposition it in contemporary times. Nevertheless, the most common thing is to have anime videogames exploiting Japanese iconography and blending both old and modern elements. In *Onimusha 1: Warlords* (2001), the action-adventure is centered on combats taking place particularly during feudal Japan, outside modern urban areas, where armor-suited warriors were dethroning warlords, the

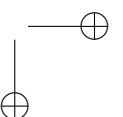
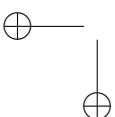


*shoguns*. A similar thing occurs in *Bushido Blade*, a videogame in which the player commands a *samurai* warrior, a master of the *bushido* art, someone capable of accomplishing a mission during the day or the night, regardless of the number of enemies to be faced. For instance, in *Dynasty Warriors Gundam* (2007), we have a hybrid made out of two preceding games: one is *Dynasty Warriors* (1989) and the other is *Gundam* (1993). From the fusion of Chinese armies fighting other armies, the theme of *Dynasty Warriors Vol. 2* (2006), with a roboticized universe, the theme of *Gundam*, a videogame about anthropomorphic robot armies fighting each other in open fields, is the outcome. Here the robot is the primary character, looking modern rather than old. Considering that Japanese culture is strongly based on the martial arts tradition, it seems natural that such fact is mirrored back in anime videogames. Games as *The Last Ninja* (1988), *The Last Ninja 2* (1990), *The Saboteur* (1984) and *Mortal Kombat* (1993) are not directly attached to anime, though they exploit vengeance, espionage and murder narratives; putting masters of the *ninjutsu* art – the *ninjas* – set to sneak in uncharted territory without being noticed. This game's audiovisual language corresponds to anime's language, still if it lacks such type of labels back when they were released.

*Tekken: Dark Resurrection* (2006) was considered to be one of the most 3D fighting games available for PlayStation Portable, allowing one to play in history mode to know more about the life of the chosen character through manga footage. Each and every character's end of story and outcome were unique. The anime aesthetic of fighter characters similar to super-sized *kawaii* figures like Panda bears or tree-men, turned out to be a convention in the *Tekken* "beat'em up" games series.

About war and devastation there are much videogames continuing the narrative stream of the existing pattern themes of anime. *Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker* (2010) take the player to meet a new theatre of war in South America (Costa Rica), in 1974, where nuclear menace emerges once again with a new prototype robot, named "Peace Walker", being introduced. The *Metal Gear Solid* game series have become pure anime videogames, one episode after another, as the international politics-based narrative (Cold War), strategic action and spying operations are still substantial. One has to highlight the "mech" robots featured in every game of the series. The game unfolds integrally between the atomic mayhem panorama and small and (almost) invisible stealth action operations performed by the protagonist Solid Snake,

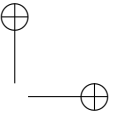
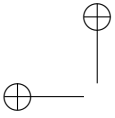
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especially in this scenario, in which a strong invading army occupies a demilitarized nation. Still in the scope of warrior robots and massive destruction, let's not forget *Armored Core*, a game designed from scratch, with no match of any kind to anime artworks, but one that was positioned as a game of warfare robotics, following the same instance as *Dynasty Warriors Gundam* did, enabling multiple units combat. *Shogo: Mobile Armor Division* (1998) and *Gundam Musou* (2007) are the latter more aimed for players willing to play only for the pleasure of driving a "mech".

Historically speaking, the second anime pioneering game is in fact *Akira* (1994), the first videogame adapted straight from an anime artwork. The dialog moments between characters look like manga pictures, actually. The latter were displaying not only a few colors and gameplay existed just in interactive parts. Dynamic images were seen when one would control "Tetsuo" in the platform-based action game parts. We surely have one of the best anime-to-game adaptations in the game *Ghost in The Shell* (1997), since it is much easier to drive robots, and because they're similar to the ones starring in anime film; and besides there is a high-quality soundtrack and countless anime sequences, including a brand new introduction sequence. Relatively to new videogames being released that turn anime playful, the greatest example is *Astro Boy: The Videogame* (2009), the Japanese animation film icon itself adapted to the videogame icon. After the 2009 version of Bowers' *Astro Boy* the videogame came up sharing the animation aesthetic with the respective film. Even for gamers that do not know anime, the videogame is enticing, due to its easy and practical gameplay. *Astro Boy – The Videogame* (2009) was released for the PlayStation Portable console and aimed to the more infantile audience, being an action of game because of this. If the player exploits "Astro"'s skills, then he should be able to make the character fly with his feet-jets, dodging obstacles, use search light eyes and withstand enemy strikes due to its armored exterior. The robot-child wearing asymmetric haircut and a few eyelashes, plays out in the videogame a playful anime that simple supports the anime-console game transition, where acrobatics and combats and shots are essential.

Two themes of videogames that also fascinate the anime audience too, are the "monsters" and the "zombie" themes. The "non-living" spectacularity remains enormous in Japan, make it one of the most horror and suspense videogames obsessed countries. One notices it in videogames like *Devil May*

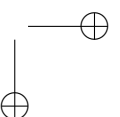
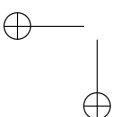


*Cry* (2001) and *Onimusha 3: Demon Siege* (2004). The first one transports the player to gothic universes inhabited by dark and evil beings, in cathedrals, palaces and dungeons, places where inanimate statues seem sinister. *Onimusha 3: Demon Siege* recreates, in distinct moments, ancient Japan and present day city of Paris to change the kind of experience for the player. Besides the usual Asian-type leading character, *Onimusha 3: Demon Siege* includes an anime version of actor Jean Reno. Much as this very action game title suggests, the player deals with hordes of "non-living" monsters trying to raid several cities at once.

For instance, in *Battle Arena Toshinden* (1997), the fights are simple and 3D graphics don't truly assimilate the anime language. The leap quality in this genre is taken by *Street Fighter Alpha 3 Max* (2006), Capcom's famous 2D anime fighting game that makes possible to fight with different options for speed. In tune with games as *Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble*, *Street Fighter Alpha 3 Max* accelerates de fighting anime games. However, it is *Naruto Ultimate Ninja Heroes* (2007) which best continues to display the anime-videogame transition. Here, players may assemble three characters-centered teams and exploit the wide scenarios in every direction. Japanese characters pop-up, marking the anime characters interjections in *Naruto Ultimate Ninja Heroes* whenever out of the black-outlined character's movements injuries would result. The game in question continues the anime combat universe preceding it. The phenomenon repeats itself in *Bleach – The Movie – Memories of Nobody* (2006), the animation triggering the "beat'em up" game series *Bleach: Heat The Soul* (2005-2009) and *Bleach: Soul Carnival* (2008). Both *Naruto Ultimate Ninja Heroes* as the *Bleach: Heat The Soul* game series make use of the same shape of characters, recurring to black outline strokes, 3D graphics, voice over dialogs and panels with manga characters. The most well-succeed anime videogame in this aesthetic was *Jet Set Radio* (2000), an animation game where the player had to control a young in-line roller skater, wearing headphones on and shades crossing the city with objective of graffitiing walls and collect more ink spray cans than his rivals.

Despite the tradition of making videogames inspired on comics had began with *Comix Zone*, the game in turn did not focused on anime aesthetic. For this reason, SEGA's *Space Channel 5* (1999) remains one of the most original games on anime so far. The player had to lead the pretty "Ulala", a 25th century reporter of the space news channel "5" and the news are the young female

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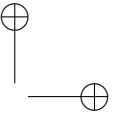
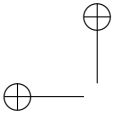


protagonist challenged the “Morolian” enemies by dancing while wearing her miniskirt against them; it would suffice to shake the pink-colored hair, ump with the “go-go” boots and mesmerize the audience with her com set device and jetpack. *Space Channel 5* is one of those games where the primary character plays best *kawaii* culture. Irem Soft’s *Hammerin Hero* (2009) reveals a character choice also unusual, since the hero is “Genzo Temura”, an anime doll of a woodsmith who uses a hammer to fight injustice and outlaws. The manga balloon-based dialog register turns this game into a fun to play anime game about fights, as it action unfolds from the left side to the right one. In opposition, *Armored Core Formula Front Extreme Battle* (2006) is not merely about the hero, but rather the figure of an “architect”, the anime character class able to change the way war is fought. In the futuristic world of *Armored Core*, the “Formula Front” is the ultimate option left for whoever compete showing off customized robots across the most desolate scenarios, as already happened in *Armored Core Portable* (2009).

In its turn, the RPG genre fits the control capabilities of the teams of characters striking, defending or exploring environments in a more interpolated manner, thus the player experiences differently out of the interaction with various characters. In effect, teamwork is substantial to surpass puzzling difficulties and to beat up adversities in combats, something which does not happen in most anime videogames of other genres (except airship videogames like *Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War* (2006), where the player may intercept aircraft with the help of team-mates in the multiplayer mode).

In *The Bouncer* (2001), for example, the player can fight enemies with the assistance of an ally group of people, while *Phantasy Star Online* lets human players to control in the network the game characters.

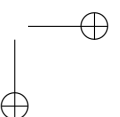
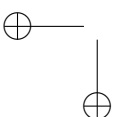
The RPG format is chosen as a means of continuing anime, as it was originally suitable for adventure gaming, meaning that the stories were big in terms of text size displayed with voice-overs. Besides, narratives consisted in gathering or establishing an opposition made out of various characters across themes of fantastic, mythical or idyllic reality. A paradigmatic case is that of *Star Ocean: Second Evolution* (2009) that much as *Tales of Eternia* (2005) and *Tales of The World: Radiant Mythology* (2006) enabled almost endless stories. In the latter, *Tales of The World: Radiant Mythology*, a Mutsumi Inomata & Kosuki Fujishima’s game, the RPG is favored by the open environment, the *kawaii* characters, the musical ambiance and the narrative. Each

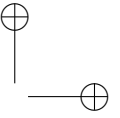
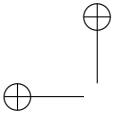


character's face and body stands in 3D and it is through these that the narrated story appealing to something "greater" is known. Marvelous Interactive's *Valhalla Knights* (2007), uses the same aesthetic and technical formula, although it adapts more its narrative core to the legendary dragon world. There is a wide range of videogames of this kind in which the differences are minimal, for that a three-dimensional aesthetic stands out, as it occurs in *Kingdom of Paradise* (2005), directed by Nobuhiko Tenkawa & Kiyooki Matsumoto. Yet, *Key of Heaven* (2006), a game where characters even practice *taichi*, and *Dragoneer's Aria* (2007) are following to the same aesthetic stream, putting in addition piano, harp and violin music, just as *Brave Story – New Traveler* (2007), a game showing a huge dragon in against the light and at the same an epic music plays in the background. Nevertheless, the one considered to be the apex of the RPG genre is *Final Fantasy VII*, the game enabling dozens of hours in gameplay, marked by innumerous puzzles, anime sequences and romanticized and dramatic ambiances. After the seventh episode of the *Final Fantasy* series was released, the early 32 bits one, Disney and Square Soft have decided at the time to make an RPG in which a player would have the opportunity to play with Disney characters in an anime game entitled *Kingdom Hearts* (2002). *Rogue Galaxy* (2007), in its turn, endorses the *Star Wars* imaginary, following also the hybrid Disney-Anime aesthetic. High-quality cinematic graphics and narrative, when coupled with group experience, make this game one of the most complete anime RPG titles.

On the side of the conventional RPG, those elaborated with isometric perspective graphics, providing a fake three-dimensional sensation, the amount of games available is massive. We may highlight, in this instance, Opus' *Half Minute Hero* (2006), where rock music and "motion lines" are something we do find around epic characters. *Riviera: The Promised Land* (2007), an Atlus USA release, tells anime stories and underscores a *kawaii* cat figure. According to its narrative in the game, there is a battle going on between humans and gods, which is unfolding while a grandiose and epic music plays in the background, over flourishing graphics décor. The player is actively involved with big, cartoonish doll-type characters. In Sony Japan's *PoPoLoCrois* (2005), we find the same elements but in this case the game is preceded by a short anime film. In it we get to know the protagonist Pietro, who awakes after a ten year sleep. The snow we see in the game has a metaphorical sense, suggesting a sort of "emotional cold", solitude. RPGs as *Spectral Souls: Resurrection of*

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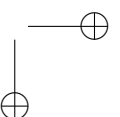
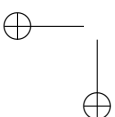
*The Ethereal Souls* (2006) assign more detail to weapons, armored-suits and to music, just as in *The Legend of Heroes* (2005). Nonetheless, no game of this genre displays sleeping baby music, with xylophone sounds, as it happens in Nippon Ichi Software's *Disgaea – Afternoon of Darkness* (2007), a game still showing mute dialogs, a cartoon-like story but enabled with a highly-solid narrative, unlike more recent 3D RPG games, as the majestic *Final Fantasy XIII* (2010), whose narrative is focused above all in action sequences and riddles.

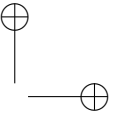
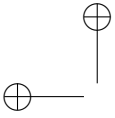
### 1.4.2 An Audience of Control

It is overlaid with great relevance what McLuhan states originally in a 1969 interview, should we reposition his words in the anime context. “New technology breeds new man. A recent ‘cartoon’ portrayed a little boy telling his (...) mother: ‘I am going to be a computer when I grow up’. Humor is often prophecy” (1994-98), says McLuhan. This kind of statements is a symptom of what is at stake here, for instance at level of anime, where every *otaku* young man aspire to become robots, computers or heroes as the one they see in *anime* and in videogames of that genre. By the way, acting dramatically in character, watching joyfully subjective images of *rostrum camera* (LaMarre, 2009: p. 37) and the need for participation in anime games are preferences of the *otaku* audience, which is highly devotee of all things being “mecha”, the anime about robots. Hitoshi Matsubara, from Future University Hakodate, in Hokkaido, Japan, ads on the robots relating issue:

“There’s a tendency for people to just sit there and become absorbed passively in video games, television and other devices (...). But robots are physical things that require active participation. That’s a positive aspect” (cit. in Hornyak, 2006: p. 100).

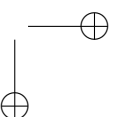
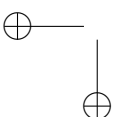
The key-points of the *otaku* lifestyle are depicted by Matsubara: the tendency to watch television or playing games. The author takes the chance to point out that the “active participation” required to control real robots is a positive feature. In this extent, the relation the *otaku* keeps with the robot figure, meaning “control”, occupies a central area, something that the audience would eventually physically command. The *otaku* intervention is not merely

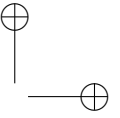
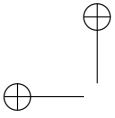




an images perception form. It is a way of acting upon images, a type of action (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 149). An *aporia* lies in the fact of having the anime publics inclusively as a videogame fan, for both universes are dedicated to robots. Guy Debord (*op. cit.*) is one author sustaining that "All that was experienced in first-person is now getting away as representation" (p. 9, translation is ours). We are able to find a reflection of Debord's "society of spectacle" concept: a present day referent, in Japan, a country where the means of production (robotics) and the means of entertainment (electronic games, manga and anime) are getting closer in the same fantasy frontier. What would have been directly experienced got surrogated by another type of active participation, control. Thus, controlling images began to be a synonym for participation; the mediation of spectacular images provokes an add-on of graphic control in the audience, in detriment of what could have been living without mediation. This means the *otaku* does not cooperate with the promotion of reality, only with the increasing fantasy universe. For LaMarre (*ult.op. cit.*), the *otaku* is an agent, "(...) The *otaku* is an interactor whose pursuit of the potential depths that cross the anime/manga/game world makes him (or her) a cooperater in the production and promotion of the expanding world" (p. 153). Robot videogames present images of a projective mechanism allied to a simulated realism. The fake realism of unreal mechanisms grants a response to demand for control. It is a part of the *otaku* fan condition enjoying controlling and collecting images. After all, images are requiring a pilot. Timothy Leary (1994) said in *Chaos & Cyberculture* that the individual is a "reality pilot" (in the sense of subjective position, of cybernetically controlling the steer). Piloting robots is a Japanese entertainment symbol, a consummated fact in images alone, while anime robots are yet to release. In the meantime, they exist just in the territory of images. Thus it makes sense to have Okada Toshio mentioning that something in-between the "projectile" fired by the robot and the "subject" exists: the "subjectile", an "effect of subjectivation" (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 273). In the anime videogames there's a call to take control back, being that the reason why players become adepts of "mech" games such as *Mech Commander 2* (2001), *Armored Core 3 Portable* or *Gundam Battle Universe* (2008). One cannot assume from the beginning that the audience devotee of control is predominantly the male one. Players are man and women, since anime videogames are meant for both genres. In the past, back when there was less electronic entertainment and digital culture

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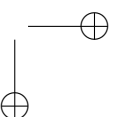
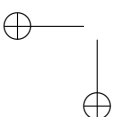
available, theatre had much more audience. In the two most important theatre forms there's a genre separation, because the *Kabuki* Theatre was played by men, while the *Takarazuka* Theatre was exclusive for women. In our time, there are *otaku* boys and girls. Thanks to anime's enormous popularity the genre is not restrict. The fantasy which is a part of anime's glamour is crucial, and hence the interest of the audience in controlling and interacting. We are told by Napier (2001), regarding the fantasy world of anime:

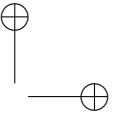
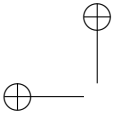
"The action is play, and the setting is a world constructed for entertainment, a world of simulacra. (...) This is its ultimate attraction: The viewer may play in a liminal world of entertainment, free to take part in an infinitely transforming state of fantasy" (p. 237-38).

It is the "simulacra" for Napier and the "non-living" for Debord that outline anime's constructed world. Napier deepens the topic and underlines that the anime viewer may play in a limit-world of entertainment. Actually it is not by chance that young people prefer to dominate robots in interactive images, play with anime characters and log in to convincing online 'videographic environments' over countless hours. *Final Fantasy* is the anime games saga precisely appealing to such "ultimate fantasy" feeling, as the title itself suggests. The initial half episodes of *Final Fantasy* looks as an anime film, while the more recent half is repositioned to a more mature market; images, especially between episodes *X* and *XIII*, resemble anime realities. In anime's graphic adventures, as *Rogue Galaxy*, flying boats have platinum-hair heroes behind the wheel and "punk" clothing designs. Big and light eyes, western face, disproportionate weapons and team combat on surreal landscapes are typical items of the RPG genre. Driving automobiles, summon supernatural entities, riding dragons, piloting airships or robots are pattern elements in anime videogames. The 'limit-fantasy', the ultimate fantasy, is about saving the world, something unachievable without control.

### 1.4.3 The Videogame-Film Symbiosis

As one watches passive videography film – animation and live-action (featuring real places and real people) and interactive videography of anime videogames it is noticeable that the differences are increasingly less obvious. Some

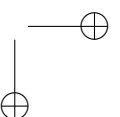
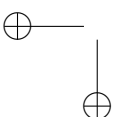




videogame to anime adaptations exist, as from anime videogame to live-action as well. Film-based videogames happen to be made and even TV anime series characters and comics spin off as videogames too. A huge part of videogames displays a "cinematic style", and some artworks present the videogames aesthetic, namely those of anime. The videogame-film dialog is above all symbiotic because manga face continuation in anime and now anime continues in the videogame. The function of control is saved for the *otaku* viewer; his will of leading the course of his reality is pleased, the necessity of, thus, reposition himself "inside" the image. *Metal Gear Solid*'s series famous producer Hideo Kojima, assumes with no hesitation that "What [he's] doing is creating a game, (...) not making a movie (...). To make the movie more enjoyable and captivating and to make the player feel like he's present in that setting, we need the cinematic element" (cit. in Hanson, *op. cit.*). It is because of this motive that cinematographic aesthetic becomes decisive for performing as a technical model for the player, working out as a driving-axis so that the continuation operated by the may be followed. Kojima endorses that the idea is to make a videogame and not a film. However, just as Tezuka and Eisenstein, who had respectively approached the "cinematic style" and the "cinematic nature", Kojima proceeds claiming how determinant the "cinematic element" is. Since the purpose of optimizing the "participation", "subjectivity" and "transport" elements introduced in manga, and improved in digital manga, are served, the videogame will extend the film through the "cinematic element". Nevertheless, a convergence dialog exists in the videogame-film symbiosis, in the sense Jenkins speaks of.

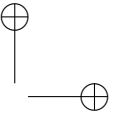
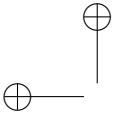
Let's start with films that adapted anime videogames to cinema. *Street Fighter II – The Animated Movie* (Gisaburo Sugii, 1995) was a paramount in making this transition a well-succeeded one. The cartoon styled fighting game format was easy converted to anime because the characters and scenarios forfeit complex narrative as a support. *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children* continues especially the story of the characters starring in the game *Final Fantasy VII* and re-introducing them with a more mature look. Acrobatic stunts and magic cast by team mates, the futuristic bike races, monsters and "mech" robots are imported out of the videogame universe onto the high-quality (three-dimensional) anime: colossal figures, deluxe video-effects and manga-type Asian faces, shootings among the crowds and nearly impossible to repeat on the real film shots established *Final Fantasy VII* brand image.

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When it comes to competition, other universes were adapted to anime as *Resident Evil Degeneration* (2008), an artwork that in spite of placing the narrative in horror survival genre, still displays the same videogame graphic technology (3D) and "cinematic" codes as *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children*. So far, the best videogame to film adaptation comes from an amateur project which remade Hide Kojima's *Metal Gear Solid* fiction series in *Metal Gear Solid: Philanthropy* (Giacomo Talamini, 2009). The Italian Hive Division team carrying on the adaptation designed a new story, generating some of the facilities and "Metal Gear" robots in 3D images. In accordance with the story, the protagonist Solid Snake sneaks undetected into enemy facilities, rescues hostages and nicely coordinates an intervention team. The film presents the same photography aesthetic (green tones-based image) and recreates common situations of the *Metal Gear* games, concerning looking behind corners, wearing camouflage, fighting robots and finding worth comical items. Analyzing films made about games implies disclosing the symbiosis between videogame and film; or between the "film world" and the "game world", as Jenkins prefers: "In the era of digital effects and high-resolution game graphics, the game world can now look almost exactly like the film world – because they are reusing many of the same digital assets" (*op. cit.*: p. 104). Reusing the same means and sharing assets is what happens between the videogame and the live-action cinema. Because the same technologies are being used, both the "game world" and the "film world" show resemblance. Anime artworks as *Sin – The Movie* and *Dead Space: Downfall* exist just they continue the narratives of the respective videogames. *Sin – The Movie* presents the police-themed universe of the *Sin* (1998) videogame as an anime, though it makes fiction display on another format, while *Dead Space: Downfall* permits us to watch partly the *Dead Space* (2008) game story in anime; what occurs before the game narrative, thus being an anime-format prequel to the videogame. The player starts the game aboard the ISG Ishimura spaceship and after the tragic events revealed in the animation.

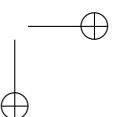
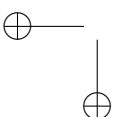
The opposite happens equally in videogames that are anime-extensions. This is the case of *Astro Boy – The Videogame* (2009). "Astro Boy's" videogame version is the equivalent to the action film. Flying above Metro City, firing upon enemy robots, fighting in an acrobatic manner and jumping over platforms is something one does on other similar games, but this specific "Astro" is player-controlled and, above all, has a human face. *Zone of The Enders*,



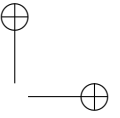
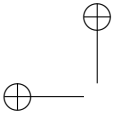
*Mobile Suit Gundam: Gundam vs Gundam* (2008) and *Macross Ace Frontier* display another aesthetic: they let us play in the universe of their respective anime films, with no further different exploring in the narrative but present anthropomorphic robots. According to Debord (*op. cit.*), “In the ‘really inverted’ world, the real thing is a moment of the false” (p. 12, translation is ours). And thus the videogame displaying a Japanese signature is presented: a fake world responding to interaction as it relies on “inverted reality”, given that now figures are manipulated and previously they had no realistic referent. On another intermediate point, we have cinema resorting to the videogame aesthetic without adapting it or being adapted by it. A type of cinema trying to look like a photo-realistic game is at stake here – the one of photo-realistic images. *Iron Man* (Jon Favreau, 2008) recurs to a styling identical to those of games, meeting a continuation in *Iron Man* (2008b), the videogame. The *otaku* audience is a major fan of *Iron Man* (2008) since, according to the story; the hero wears a cutting-edge armored-suit similar to the “mobile suits” of the *Gundam* universe. James Cameron’s latest film, *Avatar* (2009) reveals a planet inhabited by blue creatures (the Na’vi), looking just as the Earth, called Pandora. Across its exotic forests, human armies are seeking out a metal-type mineral that is the main reason for waging war afterwards. If we take in account the film’s narrative, and considering what Jenkins says relatively to sharing assets, one notices in *Avatar* (2009b) the videogame, that it continues the 3D world of the film. Three decades ago, *Tron* (Steven Lisberger, 1982) was the pioneer film in establishing a symbiosis videogames; also, it approached games as form and content. *Tron 2 – Legacy* (Joseph Kosinski, 2010) the sequel, carries on such logic at the same time it renewed its cyberspace objects and scenography design. *Transformers* (2007) and *Transformers 2: Revenge of The Fallen* (2009) stand as films about the anthropomorphic robot anime ordered by Hasbro in the 80s. The toy-maker had a commercial interest in the production of anime (Poitras, *op. cit.*; Napier, 2001). Michael Bay chooses to create films whose prequels are novels and sequels the videogames. Once Bay’s films are converted to videogames they assume other characteristics, as in symbiosis and Asian style.

Jonathan Ross explains in *Asian Invasion* (*op. cit.*) that “(...) it is not surprising that the distinction [in Japan] between live-action and animation was blurred in a happy way”. And the truth is that it just does not happen in the game-film relation, as the border line separating live-action film and anime –

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as Ross argues –has faded away. The first 3D animation film featuring digital actors was *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*. The overall digital scenario housed computerized characters borrowing movements from humans. This is the most hybrid type film. Larry & Andy Wachovsky adapted the *Speed Racer* (2008) anime series and outcome looks as a surreal videogame. In the film, races with supersonic colored hot-rods come closer to look the games in which the player commands spaceships across tunnels. Other examples like *Casshern* (Kazuaki Kiriya, 2004) and *Natural City* (Min Byeong-Cheon, 2003) display cities of the future. The two are recurring to the anime aesthetic, enabling an easy to identify iconography. From 3D scenarios to science fiction motives as robots and exaggerated combats bending the laws of Physics. *Natural City* is known as the “Japanese attempt to remake *Blade Runner*”. Most remarkable scenes of *Natural City* present cyborg combats, people interacting with holograms and futuristic weapons, but it is the anime language that it is most evident through the quick-editing image style. After the year 2000, the reason why anime expands is related to the release of *The Matrix* (Larry & Andy Wachovsky, 1999) film, causing a new trilogy on cyberculture to surface. Syncopated image, slow-motion camera shots, bullet trajectory, fast-paced fighting, with travelling shots, combats resembling those of *Dragonball Z* (1990) and characters handling the sword in *samurai* style, as Morpheus does, or the western-type shootings between Neo and Agent Smith are features of a film format imposing the anime aesthetic upon the viewer, henceforth in live-action film. In *The Matrix* (Larry & Andy Wachovsky, 1999-2004) saga, the cinematic elements recover the anime format through fast-paced motorbike chases (inspired in *Akira*, the anime), characters flying as in *Matrix Revolutions* (2004) – Superman style –, acrobatic jumps as in *Ghost In The Shell* introduction sequence (Trinity in *Matrix* copies Major Kusanagi in the anime), or as Morpheus cuts down the “upgrade” twins with a *samurai* sword before it bursts into flames in *Matrix Reloaded* (Larry & Andy Wachovsky, 2003). With this three film series, the Wachovsky Brothers pay a tribute to anime, something happening again with the official anime version of *The Matrix – The Animatrix*. The next three videogames of the “matrix” universe continue the films aesthetic, which in turn magnify the anime formula, making easy for us to understand what Jenkins claims: “‘The Matrix’ is entertainment for the age of media convergence, integrating multiple texts to create a narrative so large that it cannot be contained within a single medium”



(*op. cit.*, p. 95). And in fact, *The Matrix* worked out as a communication phenomenon in late 90s for showing a narrative non-dedicated to one medium only. For Matt Hanson (*ult. op. cit.*), if the “gaming experience is so involving, so ‘cinematic’, why shouldn’t we expand the experience into film or interactive online worlds, where each strand of narrative offers a new dimensional layer?” (p. 47). The answer is provided by *Final Fantasy XIII*, an ambitious videogame that is introduced as a film enabling adventure, action and puzzles intertwined with a massive narrative, relying on the interaction between players and anime characters.

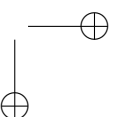
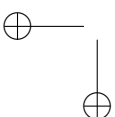
## 1.5 COMMERCIALS AND VIDEOCLIPS

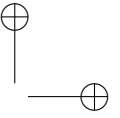
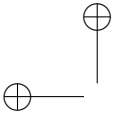
### 1.5.1 Advertisements Reconfigured

We use this expression “advertisements reconfigured” to refer to the commercials that have been preceded, accompanied and lasted after the *Transformers* film release. Skilful robots in the art of shapeshifting were featured in commercials for several brands by the time the film was released. In official terms, most of these commercials made no use of original film characters, but they replicated the aesthetic, promoting anime style robots. Reconfiguration is also what occurs in ads themselves, since brands as Citroën and SAAB, for instance, got famous because of the ads they had done. The phenomenon is remarkable also from another point of view, even in *Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen*, the sequel, since within the film itself brands like Audi were represented as “transformer” robots. Judging by the “transformers” aesthetic related-films and ads, we notice that ads are copying film sequences, and that films display commercial sequences too. In short, Michael Bay’s films endorse the tendency to link anime elements to advertising, especially in the triennial period of 2007-2010. It is in that exact sense that advertising stands in reconfiguration.

Thanks to the never-ending massive amount of adverts displayed on TV, the commercials themselves, the one which we’re referring to, might be totally forgotten amidst the novelties and their noise. Though there aren’t much chances of having that trend left in oblivion. “Noise and oblivion are today inextricably interlinked. All we have to do is to think on this empire of the oblivion that today’s electronic mediation imposes right after its most imme-

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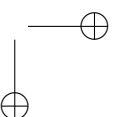
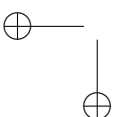


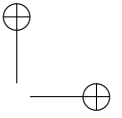
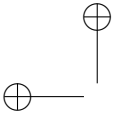
mediate, instantaneous use, and always dispersing itself from present time”, said Tito Cardoso e Cunha (*ult.op. cit.:* p. 17, translation is ours). As a matter of fact, the electronic mediation is determinant to change the impact, notoriety and communication effects conditioning, something to which advertising cannot flee from because of its volatility.

Especially in Japan, it is complicated to distinguish between promotional robotics and the publicity of robotics, when compared to robotics advertising. After all, Japan is, as Frederik L. Schodt (2002) well affirms, the “robot kingdom”, something making a country particularly obsessed with short or long-play videograms, where machines are both theme and image format. Consequently, western commercials attempt to resort to such Asian aesthetic of the anime images where machines are the narrative epicenter, even in the shortest ones.

Ever since Michael Bay’s (2007) film that the ads reconfigured are a TV commercial and, above all, an online phenomenon. Across the Web, anthropomorphic anime robots fans download commercials considered to be “cult advertising”. From the audience point of view, the ads represent the latest stage of ludic advertising, carrying an Oriental commercial image. Once fascinated by toy-looking consumption machines, the audience identifies in advertising the “cinematic element” it is looking for. Thus one comprehends the reason why the reconfigurations existing in advertising footage are each time more a disruptive mechanism, because they seem to have assumed a life of their own. In the new adverts, the viewer stands in the hard position to distinguish image and consumer products, graphic domain and mechanism, being simultaneously face-to-face with advert and machine.

The aggressive protection aesthetic adopted by “transformers” and “mechs” is translated to an advertising formula. For the audience attending these ads, the message being delivered is that the vehicles promoted in the new footage are *per se* a ready-to-buy, versatile machine, sheltering the consumer from a hostile environment. What is important here is an aesthetic operation. The ad sells the vehicle and vehicle sells the advert. Let’s so accept Lipovetsky’s argument of “just as fashion is inseparable from the aestheticized person, so advertising is functioning as a communication cosmetic” (*op. cit.:* p. 252, translation is ours). Therefore, robots may be understood as a cosmetic trick, a communication resource. It is true that each time shapes its construct. Variable geometry constructs, “anthropoid” beings (Trías, *op. cit.:* p. 26, translation





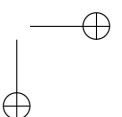
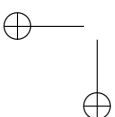
is ours) are renewed as machines of our time, mutant machines accumulating features of mechanisms already produced in modern industrial culture. Even advertising will exploit such ‘imaginary demography’ and disclose fantastic creatures to communicate with new audiences. And across MTV logic one manages to graphically reconcile the ludic and aggressive looks as an advertising seduction strategy. Thus, impressive graphic visuals rule, representing the ads reconfigured an entry point of western commercial advert in the Orient, at the same time as an Oriental advert expansion onto the West. The common videographic language is slowly becoming unequivocal. Between the playful vehicle, the toy, and the real automobile, the differences dissolve once the goal is indeed to captivate younger audiences.

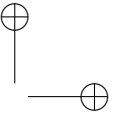
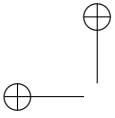
The reconfiguration paradigm is displayed for some time in cinema, in films where both the playful and the aggressive are symbiotic, as one may notice in *Batman Begins* (Christopher Nolan, 2006), before *Transformers*. In this episode of "Batman", the "batmobile" has a toy style, the robustness of a battle tank and the sport performance of a deluxe Lamborghini Countach. Some subsequent adverts to *Batman Begins*, as "Naturally Capable" (2007) for Nissan, present all-terrain vehicles shapeshifting to wild animals. In Nolan's film, every time the "batmobile" was being piloted it played a roaring sound as in unleashing a wild machine sound, which was by the way a machine as much elegant and disassembling as a "transformer". Nonetheless, the multiform looks, of a dynamic chassis was preceded by the "K.I.T.T." (Knight Industries Two Thousand) featured in the *Knight Rider* series, a blockbuster TV show of the 80s.

### 1.5.2 Anime Music Video And MTV Asia

Videoclips are occupying a relevant spot within the 'Anime Galaxy', whether in their original, author's form, or in the user, amateur's form; and has phenomenon they stand interlinked MTV's re-launch as MTV Asia, the Oriental branch of MTV Network in the region. The most remarkable characteristic of music video channels, but especially MTV, since it is the pioneering broadcast station and the graphic design "idents" separating clips, excerpts of moving images. The name of these clips comes from the word "identity" and they're intentionally aimed at filling up the gaps in-between TV contents to promote the very TV network through the respective logotype, including other

*Livros LabCom*





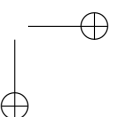
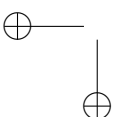
images and sounds. A good example of “idents” is for instance the “idents” Organic series made by Ash Bolland (2008) of Umeric, with the purpose of re-launching MTV in Australia.

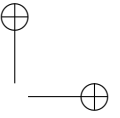
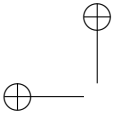
Should we take into account that the music videos are non-linear, and that they do come from cinematic image, it makes pretty much sense to accept what Matt Hanson says about the new type of image, the “advanced moving-image”:

“Next generation of moving-image and film styles and forms evolving out of basic linear cinema. Especially makes use of contemporary digital technologism hardware and software to create contemporary viewing experiences that may be non-linear, immersive, and adaptable” (*op. cit.*: p. 174).

We are able to find the same videoclip features in the AMV, i.e., the same exist in the “advanced moving-image” that Hanson tells us about. Fans all over the world are using mainstream digital technologies to provide new kinds of experiences for viewers, which are by the way non-linear and brand new. Though, the cinematic style remains a preponderant one. Otherwise, these “moving-images” would not be “advanced”. Hanson makes the expression after an earlier expression coined by Gilles Deleuze, the one of “moving-image” (2004 [1983]). What we are finding in AMVs matches Hanson’s definition, because users worldwide are sharing their home-made music videos online, by recurring to original anime sequences and editing them along with their favorite songs. As much in the AMVs as in the original MTV music videos, the last thing to be noticed of a constant and flowing display is a ‘graphic regime’, an images’ aesthetic effective in each epoch and it changes according to fashion styles. At his time, theoretician Herbert Marcuse (*op. cit.*) said that culture was massified [whenever passive man becomes like the mass-produced products he consumes himself, in Howe (1970) cit. in Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 21], for it was outdated and surpassed, and only the dream would rescue it. On culture he also said:

“(…) this culture is, in some of its decisive elements, also a ‘post-technological’ one. Its most advanced images and positions seem to survive their absorption into administered comforts and



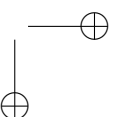
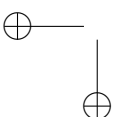


stimuli; they continue to haunt the consciousness with the possibility of their rebirth in the consummation of technical progress” (Marcuse, *op. cit.*: p. 63).

"Post-technological" culture was to be the one whose "advanced images", as stated by Marcuse, would manage to resist commodities, comfort and stimuli. Salvation would lie in images, in the sense that these would haunt consciousnesses envisioning the conditional chance of a rebirth; a rebirth made possible through the accomplishment of progressive technology. In current days and age, one verifies that the ubiquitous evolution of audiovisual and digital technologies allows any user to make AMVs. They are "advanced images" as they're not commodities, given that they're freely released online, and because they corrupt the first function of the videoclip (to promote original music at long distance). This issue fits in the "post-technological culture" theme, under the perspective in which technology sets many and new possibilities, something that is a fact for anime fans. "(...) Japanese sci-fi and anime fans, actively construct narratives and images of the characters far beyond those produced by the mass media" (Silvio: p. 207 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008).

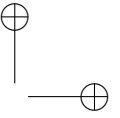
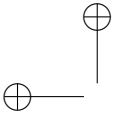
As for the cultural aspect of the videoclip, Lipovetsky makes clear that, in general, the emergency of this "clip culture" happens because to "(...) a lyric or melodic culture is surrogated by a 'cinematic culture' based on shock and image flood, the pursuit of immediate seduction, the thrill of syncopated cadence" (*ult. op. cit.*: p. 284). Put this, if a "cinematic culture" overlaps a "melodic culture", then the AMVs belong also to "clip culture" and are standing out for being a part from the "cinematic culture" of Japanese animation film. Therefore, the intermittent essence of the "advanced moving-image" is consolidated under the flowing image aesthetic; a highly rhythmic image imperative is underlined.

The historic archive of anime is what makes possible for fans to have many sequences available for fan editing, remixing, Web uploading and exchange, endorsing the "clip culture" Lipovetsky tells us about. Without the strong contribution of anime fans there would be no easily shareable contents in the networks. Across AMVs, users are promoting artists, series and anime cult films. In the core of the AMVs there is the fan community, investing in remaking, in "remediating" (Bolter & Grusin, 2002) author images by means



of private media. Web sites as AnimeMusicVideos.org turned into imperative meeting-points for the community enjoying simultaneously music videos and Japanese animations. We may understand the AMVs as a new strain of the 'MTV-aesthetic', an unofficial version of MTV Asia. After all, the AMVs are unofficial, a sub-cultural phenomenon. One may say too, they are a culture *non grata*, since they're edited without permission of the authors of images and music. Despite this, they are divulging the art those artists do. Among the countless AMVs daily submitted to theme-based Web sites, the big problem is how to find labels, titles and dates. Most of these clips are simply uploaded. Their authors are above all concerned with their own contribution to 'The Anime Galaxy'. Details such as the author register and release dates are disregarded in the majority of times, rendering classification and references chaotic. However, generally speaking, AMVs are entering in the MTV designed "clip culture". Initially, what once was a simple music video channel then became the accomplishment of what musicians such as Afrika Bambaataa & The Soulsonic Force called as "Planet Rock" (1986) in hip-hop music. The best depiction of a "planet rock" is the one MTV established with an aesthetic of its own (Dery, 1994).

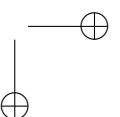
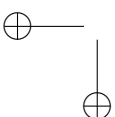
Some musicians resort to anime in order to promote their music in official videoclips. That phenomenon takes place ever since the Wamdue Project's *King of my Castle* music track in the album *Program Yourself* (1999) was transmitted in the MCM music channel (a MTV rival), displaying images of *Ghost in The Shell*, Mamoru Oshii's known animation artwork. Basically, deluxe graphics of cyborg Major Kusanagi being assembled right in the beginning of the film are the images shown in Wamdue Project's videoclip. This group was able to gather both the electronic music and the anime audiences. The deed was accomplished by adding up the music track *King of my Castle* over Oshii's film introduction title sequence. Nevertheless, there is the opposite phenomenon, anime artworks containing videoclip moments. We have an example known for a decade, *Street Fighter II: The Animated Movie*, the anime based on a "beat'em up" videogame. In one of the most important sequences, a fighter named Ken is driving a car while listening to *Them Bones*, a music track from *Alice in Chains*' "Dirt" (1992) album; being obvious the music and anime cinema symbiosis. When it comes to anime films, the famous *Interstella 5555: The Story of The Secret Star System* – which was supervised by master Leiji Matsumoto –, is considered to be the first great anime musi-

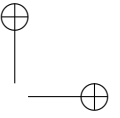
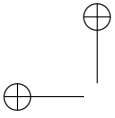


cal film. The anime film corresponds to Daft Punk's *Discovery* (2003) album. Same is to state that these films work as Daft Punk's "image-track" for their music. The masterpiece in question, *Interstella 5555*, was made in one of the famous studios, Toei Animation. Leiji Matsumoto was responsible for well-known anime artworks such as *Space Battleship Yamato [Uchu Senkan Yamato]* (Leiji Matsumoto, 1975) (in Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 36) and his animation style stands pretty underscored in *Interstella 5555*. In practice, this anime is an "advanced moving-image". All that music video channels were allowed to broadcast were music tracks, videoclips, excerpts of *Interstella 5555*, and not the entire cinematic artwork. The 'graphic regime' of this artwork is that of a non-linear image, as Matt Hanson assigns to the technique-based "advanced moving-image". The Japanese animation film at stake may be decomposed and viewed linearly, enabling a modern and contemporary visual experience for the viewer.

Let's not forget that in terms of format, the videoclip's videographic register has predetermined structures. Williams sustains that "These structures of time are composed into a highly organized, highly structured, highly repetitive, and rhythmic flow of video clips" (*op. cit.*: p. 84). The flow is the greatest convention of the videoclip format, and it is perfectly juxtaposed to MTV's super-repetitive structure. Kevin Williams refers that today, cinema often follows the videoclip form (*Idem*: p. 96). As it was said by Lipovetsky, there is a relation between "clip culture" and "cinematic culture". During the inauguration of MTV Asia broadcast network (<http://www.mtv.com>), the 2006 MTV Asia Awards winner in Bangkok Ben Hibbon's animation film *Code Hunters* (2006) was presented as if it was a music video. The success of Hibbon's anime was related to its hybrid format of anime and "western" elements. If we keep in mind that MTV is launched in the decade of 80 of the 20th century in the US, that is going global in the 90s and arriving at Asia in the 00s of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it makes pretty much sense what Kevin Williams defends:

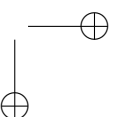
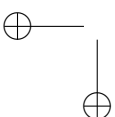
"It has been called a new way of thought, a new way of life, a mood, an attitude, an atmosphere, a no-place, a post-nuclear, post-holocaust, postmodern space without boundaries, definition, or location – a pure environment in which the past and future

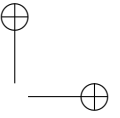
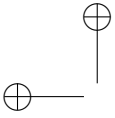




collapse into the present, a hedonistic world in which the visual dominates the verbal (...)" (*ult. op. cit.*: p. 2).

It is because of these reasons that the music video format fits so perfectly well in Japan's and remaining developing Asia *otaku* market. Marcuse had referred a "post-technological culture", however it is Williams who is defining the videoclip as a "no-place", a "post-nuclear", "post-holocaust", borderless space. In the age online contents release, and in a progressive Japan that overcame his wreckage, videoclips are easily assimilated. The thing Asians will find in MTV Asia is the videoclip's post-modern and post-apocalyptic language; it's an accelerated, plastic and graphic structure. In AMVs, the graphics and different "graphya" of the Japanese find a way to saturate even more the cute icons constellation of 'The Anime Galaxy'.

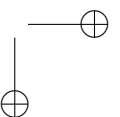
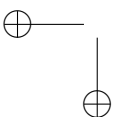


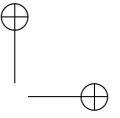
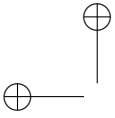


## Chapter 2

# PATTERN THEMES

There are in anime pattern themes that find in cinema and in videogames their inspiration and their continuation as well. As we have discussed previously there is a game-film symbiosis. Concerning anime's most standard themes, and anime videogames' too, we find a key-point underlined by Susan Napier (2001), since "(...) contemporary Japan is perhaps particularly adept at thematizing loss in a way that is almost ritualistic (...)" (p. 221). Themes such as "catastrophe" and the "post-human world" come up in anime in order to allow the exorcism of collective ghosts and to perform a ritual around the "loss" theme. The animation films analyzed for this thesis have common topics. A lesser part of animations are exploiting two or three themes while the greatest part of anime presents many of them at the same time. Even in anime videogames pattern themes are detected in almost simultaneous fashion. Anime videography presents many narratives. However, the primary theme ("robotics") forces most anime to have a predetermined theme orientation. As a result, the anime standing above other animation films is only able to do so because it displays new styles and stories. In the world of mass-produced animation, the hard thing to do is not making anime but producing anime as a representative element of this avant-garde genre. Because of the theme limitations robotics-related anime, the fundamental scenarios for the majority of animations are the post-holocaust world and post-human civilization. The image of a devastated Japan due to weapons of mass destruction, the nuclear strikes, appears in anime as the original theme. Marie Morimoto





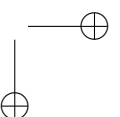
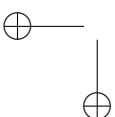
believes that dominant themes such as "singularity", "isolation", and "victimization" are common in a country that thinks of itself as fighting alone against all adversities (cit. in Napier, *ult.op. cit*: p. 40).

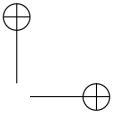
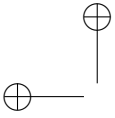
The post-human civilization theme is in some artworks, a starting point of the narrative engine itself, as it is an issue to disclose in others, revealed at the middle of the narrative as a "memoir" (flashback method). As being used in an independent manner from the "holocaust image" theme, it functions as a future scenario, despite being as narrative as the one of the holocaust.

Practically speaking, both themes use to be interlinked, thus the holocaust comes up as the recent past of post-human civilization, or as a civilization ending to be the feared.

The rise of the machines might be the cause of future devastation. On a first reading, machines are substantial for our protection, though they are threatening on a subsequent analysis. Basically the "bad" machines are making legitimate the "good" first ones. Suspicion cast upon technology indicates that good machines may malfunction. Danger could come from robotics, and not just from a tyrant with robot armies at his disposal. The question is also computer-related. If the future of the computer may be the Artificial Intelligence-controlled robot, then rise of the machines makes sense. The title of one of the most iconic anime artworks, Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in The Shell* points to us the direction to such "ghost in the machine" domain, the "receptacle" hiding something. The "rise of the machines" pattern theme comes out of the most hyper-technological societies in which the problems caused by technique have a more appropriate and more technical response, as "fire is fought with fire".

A most seen theme both in anime and in videogames is the one of "flying fortress". Imported from World War Two documentary films, the referred theme appears in anime as a super-bomber figure. Among the classical 2D videogames of the 80s, the "shoot'em up" genre was known for having in the end of every level an ultimate adversary. The player was supposed to fight it, since it was the "level boss" in order to pass the level. Most times it was a flying fortress. Its dimensions were exaggerated in such a way that the whole screen was occupied by a flying fortress. A rainfall of shots were aimed at the robot or airship controlled by the player. In anime videography, the theme assumes the shape of a flying castle, a giant battleship or a big spaceship. LaMarre's perspective is compatible with this argument: "Amid

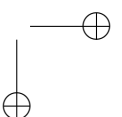
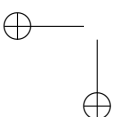




flattened, dehierarchized, and relativized flow of images, we are summoned to make a personal selection, to personalize our relative movement, to find our focal concerns” (2009: p. 108).

Military cyborgization is one of the stereotype-themes we’re able to find in anime, and it already existed in manga. Knowing that the top anime icons in the 90s are following a cyberpunk stream, it seems logical that the military cyborgization theme is often and contemporary in anime, for the artworks that relaunched anime were focused on the cyborgization theme. The fact that it was about a military-type cyborgization is because the Japanese feel fascinated by warfare mechanisms. The limited armed forces Japan has at its service, and the increasingly elder population, make possible for real world robotics to be dedicated to solve handicaps of the elders or, in the prosthetic condition, solving health problems among the active population. On this extent, anime videography uses the cyborgization theme as form of approaching it on the warfare aspect. In contemporary times the fear of having technology being controlled by a despot is scary for the Japanese, whose friendly behavior is related to the defeat they have suffered in the war. The dystopia and totalitarianism is used as a warning shot against eventual technology-driven dangers in case it is ruled by the wrong people. Again recollecting the non-democratic regimes of the past, anime displays dystopia in Japan’s vision. We have the negativity of dystopia functioning as an alert, instead of the hopeful message of utopia. On a regular basis, the dystopia theme features in anime along with the one of totalitarianism. Worst than knowing the future is unfriendly or even negative is to know that the future holds the promise of an eternity of evil, a class-less society, an imposed standardization or the sudden holocaust.

About the characters featured in anime fictions, one may also say they appear predominantly in simultaneous. For instance, gigantism is a most often theme, since in anime the robots, facilities and vehicles are depicted on a larger scale. Previously in manga, robotics was introduced in a similar fashion. As the image is improved in anime, the scale change in machines what happens in a more perfect and obvious way. Gigantism is a dear theme for the Japanese, who dedicate to make detailed characters and set designs in each great anime artwork. Therefore the outcome is a more realistic sensation of contemplating something with a superior size when compared to the humans’. As a theme, gigantism stands in the antipodes of detailing or of *kawaii* cul-

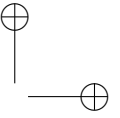
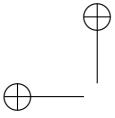


ture's cute icons. On one side we have the nice, round, colored and appealing character, as from the other side a machine, or the gigantic monster, the rectilinear colossal figure, the slow and enormous beast is surfacing, much feared by the protagonists. The *Shadow of The Colossus* videogame is undoubtedly a great icon of gigantism in anime (just like *Final Fantasy XIII*).

Much can be said about the warrior robot, the latter is likely the most stereotyped and even hegemonic theme in anime. Surprisingly, it is also one of the most well exploited themes in animation to videogame conversions. The warrior robot, as the expression indicates, suggests a robot behaving identically to a historical Japanese *samurai*. The most emblematic warrior robots in anime are those of *Gundam* (Tomino, 1979), that have been "remade", meeting up new versions, namely *Mobile Suit Gundam Wind*. It is the "suits", or better saying, the "exoskeletons" designed by Tomino that turned *Gundam* into a Japanese culture icon. Colored, futuristic and displaying faces like those of Greek-Roman statues, *Gundam* robots were famous for looking like gods, myths of the future, which could explain the reason they were immensely copied.

*Gundam* is a successful series and an animation film in Japan, though it is not the unique representative of the genre, because animations focusing the piloted robot theme also managed to easily continue in videogames. Whether in animation format or in videogame format, piloted robots as the ones we see playing primary roles in the story of *Macross Plus: The Movie* are nearly "transformers". They shapeshift into a robot or into an aircraft and vice-versa, standing side-by-side with the transformist stunts of the *Transformers*, which change from the robot shape into the automobile shape, and back again, among other configurations and vehicles. Historically, who created this kind of "manned" robot concept (Winge: p. 70 in Luning [Ed.], 2006) was the artist Gō Nagai, originally in 1969, in the *Mazinger Z* (1972-74) artwork. Since that very moment it became a most copied theme by competitors in the anime sector, being in Japan the most adapted to videogames, including the next-generation ones.

Ultimately, if there are themes like the rise of the machines, piloted robots, warrior robots and apocalyptic stories occurring in wastelands, there has to be a place for heroes of the post-human civilizations. Following this trend the robotic friend appears, the machine friendly of man and woman, child protector and mankind defender. From *Mighty Atom*, across *Iron Giant* and



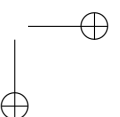
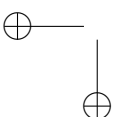
onto *Gunparade March: Operation One* (Katsushi Sakurabi, *et al.*, 2004), the robotic friend is the solution for the problem of machines. Whenever in the anime narrative machines become a problem despite their promises it is the robotic friend who establishes order and facing the most pernicious machines in a "tower" position (Bolton, 2007: p. 126 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). We have examples of that in *Patlabor* (Mamoru Oshii, 1989) and in *Robotech: The Shadow Chronicles* (Dong-Wook Lee & Tommy Yune, 2006), but it is in *Vexille* that we have one of the most interesting cases, as the rise of the machines is not univocal but rather triggered by billions of reconfigured metal parts, something which demands the intervention of a special robotic friend.

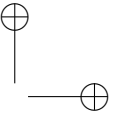
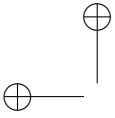
Two themes working out as larger backgrounds for the anime narrative are the "metatopia" (Eco, *op. cit.*) and the "Blade-Runnerness" (Gibson, 2003). In the anime where the image of an optimistic future is exploited, the one of metatopia, fantasy is positive. The future of society is worked out as an extension of present day. In the "Blade-Runnered" world, mankind is not necessarily living in the best of futures. Strange and degraded, the natural environment seems a scenography of a future one should avoid.

## 2.1 THE MECHA GENRE

Japanese animation is full of subgenres – as the detective, dreams, horror, *samurai*, fighting or drama stories – though the most famous genre is the "mecha" genre, which we especially present in this thesis, particularly focused on the evolution of robotics in the near future. The robotics domain that is promoted in the "mecha" genre is the "mechatronics", the cross-disciplinary field of mechanic machine with the electronic one and robotics.

In the US, the "mech" figure is originally from board games and science fiction paperback book novels about these very games. There are also "mech"-based animation films (*Full Metal Panic! TSR [The Second Raid]* [Yasuhiro Takemoto, 2006]) and "mech"-based videogames (*Armored Core 4* [2007]). Nonetheless, in Japan the interest for "mecha" comes from the national experience in the robotics field. The dream of a demilitarized country as Japan is to have a supervision structure, an all-mighty mobile outpost as the aircraft-carriers were during World War Two, but smaller instead. Thus the "mech" figure is divulged throughout animation films as *Gunparade March: Ope-*



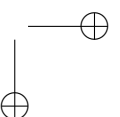
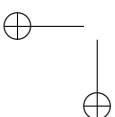


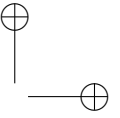
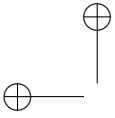
ration *One* or videogames about the same topic, as *Metal Gear Solid* (1990-2010) series, where primary roles are played by Ray, Rex, Arsenal e Peace Walker "mechs".

From a technical point of view, the "mech's" design turns these robots into 'uterine machines', even if they are known as "suits" or "exoskeletons". Once inside these mechanisms, in the heart of the "cockpit", the individual is welcomed by the machine. In this sense, the system is identical to the one of a jet-fighter. About the way a "mech" is controlled, one may regard it as a cockpit-vehicle'. After all, just as the interior space of an automobile or the cockpit of an airplane, the "mech" is a drivable vehicle, which can be simultaneously autonomous.

Some of the most remarkable characteristics of "mechs" are their canons and missiles (weaponry), shields (protection), wings, jets and metal legs (locomotion). All things enabled in the "mech" are related to projection (shooting bullets), the displacement (sliding), and speed (flying in supersonic mode). As the "mech" incorporates features from the automobile, the aircraft, and the helicopter and even from the battle tank, it is presented as a vehicle capable of horizontal and vertical take-off, like a Harrier warplane. The look of a "mech" is that of an anthropomorphic machine reduced to its structure, a structure allowing the subject to remain in movement, something Okada Toshio designs as being the "subjectile" (cit. in LaMarre, 2009: p. 136).

In strategic terms, "mechs" are starring in anime in the same way they do in videogames, i.e., as super-structures defending a horizontal territory from a vertical position. The royal nature of a sentinel is deliberately reintroduced in the "mech", in the mechanic dimension of an all-surveilling military toy. The old monitoring outpost was reconfigured in the "mech", because it represents the infantry of the future. In this theme of strategy one includes the fact of the "mech" being a machine able to transpose the non-transposable, like an ultimate all-terrain vehicle. The "mech" is a nomad and shows a variable geometry, a concept coming from aeronautic engineering. Jean-Louis DeGay, of US Army Natick Research Development and Engineering Center, strongly underlines that "The soldier of the future is an F-16 [a multi-role jet fighter] on legs" (cit. in *Ghost Recon Future Soldier* [2010]). DeGay refers to "mechs". "Mecha" is a genre becoming interesting, proposing many types of machines still in the extent of image. Everything is image-like, a mixture of image and



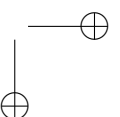
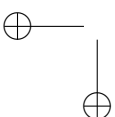


machine, as in *Appleseed* (2004) we are shown from automobiles (automatic), across people (humanoids), until cities (cybernetic ones).

### 2.1.1 Giganticism

The giant is a theme presenting something menacing, and ultimate weapon, a being of all beings. In cinema, colossal-sized figures, endowed with enormous dimensions when compared to humans, are present in many anime artworks. The big proportioned beings are contemplated in images highlighting giganticism. In films in which the themes are nearly those of anime's, the gigantic characters are also premiering, entirely tune to the "mecha" genre. *Iron Man* introduces the hero Tony Stark in a final confrontation with Obadiah Stane, a colossal-type enemy. Computerized robotic suits in the film were transforming their users into super-heroes or into super-villains. In *Matrix Reloaded*, the second part of *The Matrix* film, we witness the Zionist (from Zion) resistance calling the "mech" army to fight back the invading machines. The size differences between piloted mechs and soldiers are big, yet it gets even more significant before the "swarm" of attacking machines. *Matrix Revolutions* carries on the same conflict, providing continuity to narrative and disclosing the end, the moment in which multiple giants fall down and the cybernetic "squid" swarms face defeat. Approaching other type of science fiction we have *Sky Captain And The World of Tomorrow* (Kerry Conran, 2004) showing a war story in which the "world of tomorrow" is marked by the coming of gigantic laser-firing robots. In this Conran's artwork, homage is paid to the 50s and 60s film robots featured in B series cinema. In the ending of *Sky Captain And The World of Tomorrow*, a huge airship is mankind's last chance since extinction is eminent. In *Star Wars I – The Phantom Menace* (1999) there are armies in Naboo with big beasts, and in one of the pursuit scenes, characters Obi-Wan and Qui-Gon run away from predatory creatures across underwater canyons. In science fiction *Terminator* (1984-2009) series' fourth episode, the *Terminator (4) Salvation* film, Marcus Wright and Kyle Reese manage to escape from an attack launched by a colossal terminator against the human resistance.

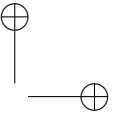
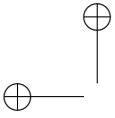
The advent of large-scale robotic look characters dates back to the release of the classic *Terror of Mechagodzilla*, a mechanized version of "Godzilla" (an incarnation of the bomb [Schnellbacher: p. 32 in Bolton *et al.* (Ed.), 2007]) by Ishiro Honda (1975). Approaches as this one are closer to the type of ter-



rifying giants, machines of evil, something taking also in John Bruno's *Virus* (1995). Bruno presents a robotic dystopia in which a Soviet military research naval ship becomes a reservoir of self-aware mechanized creatures. At the end of the story the main characters attempt to flee from a being that is bigger than anything, an extremely dangerous colossus made out of robotic debris on-board the ship. Set a far from the scary giant, we have artworks such as Simon West's *Tomb Raider* (2001). The transposition of the homonymous videogame story to a film gave an especially presented enormous robot, one which Lara Croft uses for training her shooting and acrobatic skills. The most audacious attempt to represent a gigantic robot demands, giant after giant, to assemble a colossus where other colossus would fit into. Michael Bay obtains images of this in *Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen*, the limit-giganticism, during the sequence taking place in Egypt. The attempts to limit-giganticism had begun in the *Power Rangers* TV show, one featuring heroes geared up in space suits assembling up in a robot to face up an equally colossal menace (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 20).

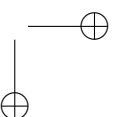
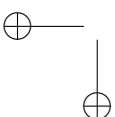
Giganticism is one of the most known pattern themes. Anime is enabled with great artworks on giganticism, some more straight than others, as a certain dispute is kept towards the live-action special-effects film and the videogames. In *A.D. Police – Bad Blood* (2004), gigantic robots intimidate citizens only because of their super-size. *Akira*, for example, presents other giganticism figures like the magnanimous corporate skyscrapers of Neo-Tokyo, or the atrocious biological mutation of "Akira", the character in the end of the story. The protagonist triggers a massive mutation, as he does not know he is a human bio-weapon. On the domain of the metal colossus, David Bowers *Astro Boy* version (2009) is a relevant artwork. Big figures are premiered in Bower's animation starting with the military robot that kills Dr. Tenma's son, the young Tobio, and there is also a premiering sympathetic and grotesque scrap-metal colossus assembled by "Astro Boy", helped by his friends. Closer to conventional film, the CGI animation *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* shows three types of giganticism related to creatures, facilities and vehicles. The dematerialized monsters appearing outside the cities correspond to the first example, while the fortified cities and airships match respectively the second and third examples. The very notion of a "final fantasy" to which the film makes an allusion is related to a large scale fantasy.

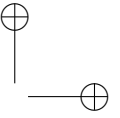
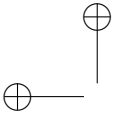
Anime films such as *Full Metal Alchemist 1 – The Curse* (Seiji Mizushima,



2005) follow the imaginary of the metal giant without introducing further news. Hayao Miyazaki's *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) places giganticism in hybrid characters, as it is the case of the "moving castle" itself, a vehicle that is altogether a passenger facility. The magic of the enormous steam-engine mechanized castle had to do with the places picked up for parking and the characters he was carrying inside. Brad Bird in *Iron Giant* repositions the Japanese robotic giganticism theme on a more conventional animation, in which the robot is monitored and escorted by a child (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 89). Same robot-child relationship exists in *Laputa – Castle in The Sky* (Hayao Miyazaki, 1986). Nevertheless, this Miyazaki's artwork does not enable super-tall robots. Just as the anime title indicates, the giant here is not a robot but something much bigger, a castle floating in the sky above. *Space Battleship Yamato*, from legendary Leiji Matsumoto, is an anime artwork that reintroduces the gigantic battleship Yamato (one of the biggest of World War Two) as a spaceship. Much more sophisticated than a castle, spaceship Yamato would be capable of shapeshifting despite its big size.

In *Steamboy*, Katsuhiro Otomo (2004) takes us to meet the robotic world in the age of steam engine. The story achieves its height as the hero fights against the final menace, which consists in an immense steam explosion turned into ice. However, giganticism's most original manifestations are not those of robots, but of facilities, instead, as *Steamboy* shows. Bold giganticism forms are present in *Vexille*, an anime in which protagonists run across the desert to get away from billions of metal parts forming the ultimate predator. New approaches in giganticism are introduced in more original artworks. *Ponyo on The Cliff by The Sea* reports "Ponyo's" trip, a gold-fish princess aspiring to become a mermaid and finally a human. The passion of Ponyo for the young boy Sosuke takes her to defy her nature and ride huge waves. Nearly at the end of the story, Ponyo is helped by "the lady with no name", also known as "the lady", a pretty, hyper-colored and gigantic, divine entity of the sea that helps Ponyo to get to the shore. Standing on the other side of Miyazaki's audacious anime we have *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, the post-apocalypse novel where the "Angels", alien creatures, invade our planet. The only way to fight them back is resorting to the "EVA" units, gigantic biomechanical anthropomorphic-styled manned robots driven by telepathic teenagers. It comes in the same line as *Zone of The Enders*, an anime based



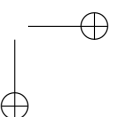
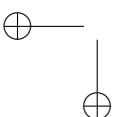


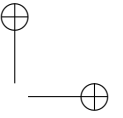
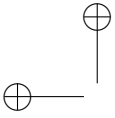
on Hideo Kojima's videogame, whose focal issue is the war conflict among colossal robots in space colonies. In the words of Frederik L. Schodt:

“(...) giant robots, the Japanese version of super-heroes, have the role to defend the Earth against evil forces and, to do so, they're geared up with shields, protective force field, rockets, super-vision, and they're also skilled to fly. Visually speaking they look like giant 'samurai' metal warriors, an image cast out of the Japanese collective unconscious” (cit. in Luyten, *op. cit.*: p. 188, translation is ours).

One of the most emblematic artworks focused on giant robots is entitled *Iron Giant*, whose original Japanese name is *Tetsujin 28-Go*, and it tells the stunts of a young man controlling an army giant robot. The young man is the son of a scientist that created the robot, and he manages to control it without his father's acknowledgment, or even the army; he has a hard time in hiding it from all the people, since it is an iron giant, as the title itself suggests. Besides, authors as Hornyak (2006) point out this fiction, in its Japanese form, adding up:

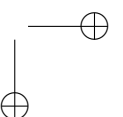
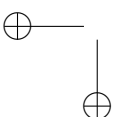
“Japan's first super robot was a towering, needle-nosed humanoid machine called 'Tetsujin 28-Go', or 'Ironman N°28' (known as 'Gigantor' in some countries). Artist Mitsuteru Yokoyama, who was inspired to become a cartoonist by Osamu Tezuka, began serializing the manga in iconic boys' magazine 'Shonen' in 1956. Ironman is a clunky steel titan secretly created by the Japanese military in the final days of World War II in a desperate bid to avoid defeat. Twenty-seven times they fail to produce a workable prototype, but the twenty-eight attempt becomes a three story-tall, remote-controlled machine with a head shaped like a knight's helmet, incredible strength and a jet backpack that rockets it through the air at a neck-snapping Mach 5. Though Ironman doesn't save the Japanese Empire, the twenty-five-ton monster is later to put to work clobbering criminal gangs and enemy robots around the world. Ironman is controlled by its inventor's son, whiz kid Shotaro Kaneda, a twelve-year-old detective who wears a blazer, shorts and a pistol” (p. 58).

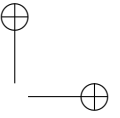
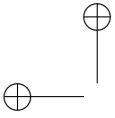




The giganticism pattern theme continues in videogames sharing partially or totally the anime language. *Armored Core* 1-4 (1997-2007) is one of the most famous series emphasizing giganticism. Every character in *Armored Core* videogame series, that is to say, the "cores" controlled by the player, are enormous, armed and dangerous. In robot games the conflict is an excuse for those super-sized machines to exist. The same thing happens in *Dynasty Warriors Gundam*, a game in which the conflict between titanic robots takes place on a large scale. Hundreds of robots powered by light-sabers, missiles and jetpacks fight each other on the ground and in the air. The approach taken in *Earth Defense Force 2017* (2007) is more distant to anime. Nonetheless, the assault performed by massive sized-robotic creatures is presented in an identical way to the *Armored Core* or *Dynasty Warriors Gundam* games, given that the player controls a human character instead of an anthropomorphic colossus. The long romantic *Final Fantasy VII-XIII* (1997-2010) series puts protagonism also in the hand of humans, but adversities have all an impressive set of proportions: futuristic spaceships, fortified cities, coliseums, boats, robots, sea monsters and cities mesmerizing the player. In *Ico* the videogame, the company Team Ico also positions game control in a human character. What is in fact gigantic and endless are the walled sections of the fortress where "Ico" awakes; the innumerable dungeons, basements, bridges, towers and windmills. The right thing to do is running away from a space where solitude is all you feel. The type of videogames where metal giants are face-to-face is more common. In *Iron Man* (2008b), the player plays with the hero of the film, Stark, who has to get away from the dungeons in Afghanistan and defeat in the end an even bigger "iron man". *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* follows a similar logic, though it separates the giant from the human. The story takes place in an ice-frozen lost planet, in which odd creatures survive. Superior dimensions of these creatures demand the player to drive a "mech" in order to become victorious. Kojima's *Metal Gear Solid* (1998-2010) science fiction game series presents giants as robots all the time. Over the already extensive *Metal Gear* series, the player is contended with "mechs" and larger threats like the robots Rex, Ray, Arsenal and Peace Walker. In any case, the scenarios themselves look huge, as it is not by chance that the conflicts occur in places such as nuclear submarines, aircraft-carriers, airbases, oil rigs or oil tankers. *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* brought innovation, by presenting the big bionic Gekko bipedal robots and the Metal Gear Mkii mini-robot. All

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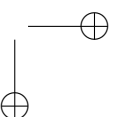
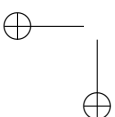


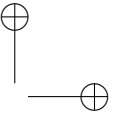
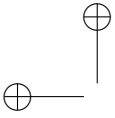


things considered, one has to mention *Shadow of The Colossus*, Ico's prequel, an anime epic drama game, in which the protagonist seems insignificant as he climbs up the body of any one of the sixteen giants. Once the colossi are defeated, the hero must rescue a princess from the eternal sleep, but he succumbs to the negative energy captured from the colossus.

### 2.1.2 The Flying Fortress

The "flying fortress" is a widely present theme in action films, though it is not as extrapolated as it is in anime. *Battlestar Galactica* (Michael Rymer, 2003) is the second generation TV show, where the malevolent Cylons unleash an imperious attack upon cities of planet Earth; in the meantime our battleships carrying population to colonize other planets are chased out by them. The single spaceship where human withstand the attacks of the Cylons is "Galactica", the space fortress. Another type of approach is followed by Neil Blomkamp in *District 9* (2009), a film where the flying fortress is not mankind's ultimate shelter. The spaceship hovering on Johannesburg, South Africa, waits to be refueled in order to carry on, instead. *Sky Captain And The World of Tomorrow* presents an air base floating in the sky, in it the female squadron crew is commanded by a military wearing a eye patch (Franky Cook). Far from the B series science fiction genre, *Star Trek – First Contact* (Jonathan Frakes) is enabled with another elements, since that, all spaceships in the *Star Trek* series are flying fortresses in the first place, whereas in this 1996 episode, the menace comes from the emerging "Borg Cube", a cubical fortress, where the cybernetic crew of its "hive" is preparing to launch an assault on humans. The theme here examined is seized in the mind of the Japanese by the time the Japanese capital cities are bombed, in the World War Two events, by B-29 "Flying Fortress" aircrafts. *Barefoot Gen* is the anime focused on the bombing in full detail. The concept of a "fortress" culturally prevails in Japan. Besides, the giant robot theme is a version of the fortress able to run, jump and shooting out (acting anthropomorphically). In other cases, such as in the animation Bowers did on *Astro Boy*, the "robot-child" is expelled from Metro City by the hand of Dr.Tenma, his own father, who rejects the robotic surrogate of Tobio, his deceased son. As "Astro" leaves Metro City he notices that the city where he lived was a protected hovering city. Already at end of the *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* film, the story's disclosure takes place in a space station,



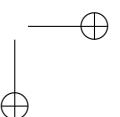
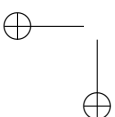


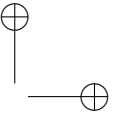
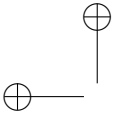
even though the primary characters had been previously forced to fly inside enormous spaceships, flying fortresses resembling birds.

By choosing the rare happy ending, Miyazaki, most famous anime director in Japan, has signed down the *Future Boy Conan* anime series. In the aftermath of an armed conflict in which major superpowers resorted to ultra-magnetic weapons, the planet Earth's tectonic plates went unstable. Earthquakes and tsunamis are following the event. Beyond the attempt of humans to flee from apocalypse, the flying fortresses they boarded are crashing down. "Conan" and Lara are the main survivors, and now they have to live in a radically different world where, after the atomic mayhem new archipelagos emerge. The single existing military power, the representative of the "machine-civilization" (an expression used by Fiedler [1965: p. 365] cit. in Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 29) is "Industria", the one seizing command over some of the flying machines. Still from Miyazaki, the artwork *Laputa – Castle in The Sky* presents many air combat sequences and, in itself, "Laputa" is also a floating citadel, along with its Egyptian complex looks. Anime artworks like the triptych *Memories* display two topics related to the flying fortress theme; one of the stories, ("Magnetic Rose") unfolds in an eerie spaceship discovered in the year 2092 by satellite-trash recovering agents. Inside the spaceship a woman wearing a red-dress comes out of the dark singing opera. In the second story ("Cannon Fodder"), the focus is on a massive battleship and its intricate shooting functioning. However, the reference artwork about the battleship as a fortress is *Space Battleship Yamato*, from Matsumoto. The anime films *Robotech: The Shadow Chronicles* (Dong Wook-Lee & Tommy Yune, 2006) and *Steamboy*, from the master Katsuhiro Otomo, are equally significant. Within the *Robotech* universe, fortresses are reintroduced as space stations, floating ammo depots ready for deployment, through the remote guidance of human and humanoid robot "operators". Opting for recent past, rather than for the near future, Otomo shows a Victorian world of steam-engines and robotic machines, some of them with majestic or frightening looks, which could have come out of such context. The steam-engine propelled fort that appears in the end is an example of how the sky fortress theme could be well-exploited. Miyazaki's *Howl's Moving Castle*, in its turn, shows a castle making use of its legs to walk, housing and carrying strange characters across any geographic accident.

In videogames the types of flying fortresses features range from those of

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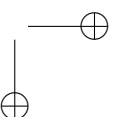
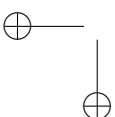


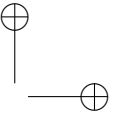
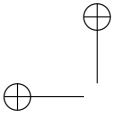
“bomber”, “spaceship” and “boat”. *Ikaruga*, *Iron Man* (2008b) and *Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception* are the kind of videogames in which the fortress appears as a final threat, represented as a “level boss”. Enemy combat stations in *Ikaruga* deplete torrents of projectiles to stop the player from progressing, and there is always a bigger fortress from level to level and, in effect, an unstoppable threat, as in *Iron Man*, in which the player has to dodge from projectiles, shots fired by robots, and he must stop the bomber from dropping a carpet of bombs. *Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception* presents missions where the fearsome adversary is represented by a fish-shaped air fortress, more specifically as a manta ray. Should the player shoot first the defense mechanism and it will be shot down, unless it becomes stealth.

As for the videogames exploiting the “spaceship” concept, a major advocate of that type is *Dead Space*, which is not a pure anime artwork. Although, if we consider that the latter follows the *Dead Space: Downfall* anime film, then we may understand the game as a more realistic continuation of the animation. According to the story, the USG Ishimura crew is totally wiped out. A rescue team is heading for the spaceship when it faces a massacre by the time they try to dock into it. As the protagonists explore best the spaceship, they conclude it is a space fortress omitting bizarre and dangerous mutations. *Final Fantasy VII-XIII* (1997-2010), the latest seven chapters of the Square Soft-Enix series, stands as stages for many fortresses. Animal-shaped spaceships, really bulk-style space shuttles and the flying cities are elements matching the pattern theme that here we are presenting. *Rogue Galaxy* continues the *Final Fantasy* and puts some space pirates to literally navigate across the spatial night. With no atmosphere narrowing visibility, the skies in *Rogue Galaxy* are full of stars and sparkling, mostly aboard space caravels moving through the cosmos like wood fortresses propelled by means of paddling with oars. Deserts full of gigantic worms, jungles infested with diabolical tribes and the Aztec-style and fantastic futuristic cities, are some of the places where the flanked-by-cannons flying vessel lands on.

### 2.1.3 Warrior Robots

The warrior robot is a mighty anime figure adopted out of the *samurai*, the android and the exoskeleton model of robots featured in North-American films such as *The Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984). The elucidating sequences

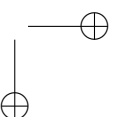
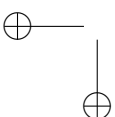




with warrior robots depicted the nuclear future, the nocturne war fought by the human resistance, in *The Terminator* and in *Terminator 2 – Judgment Day*. *Terminator 2 3D: Battle Across Time* (James Cameron, 1996), whose design is specifically set for a theme-park show viewing experience, is the most relevant artwork. In this exact episode, the T-800, a role played by actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, emerges in the future, riding a bike while protecting and guiding John Connor up to the interior of Sky Net's pyramid, the center of machines. For example in *Robocop* (Paul Verhoeven, 1987), the robot-cop is introduced as a being: "Part Man, Part Machine. All Cop". Kazuaki Kiriya shows in *Casshern* how a genetically manipulated hero could beat armies of warrior robots without having a hard time. This one, however, is not a film on "mecha", but rather about fights similar to those of videogames such as *Tekken 6* (2009). Armed robots, instead of playing the narrative as protagonists, are fulfilling their role as antagonists. *The Returner*, a science fiction novel, displays in its early minutes future warrior robots in combat. Already at the end, the single robot making its appearance is a Jumbo 747 "transformer" airliner.

When it comes to anime, there is a question that seems pertinent: why is it that warrior robot animation films are violent? In truth, such graphic violence is transposed from *samurai* narratives on the ones on robots. Characters may change, while the style remains bloody. Images are violent, yet violence is not the core of the issue here, in the same way that in *Kabuki* Theatre styled battles are not what matters most, for there is a focal point on the armed warriors' extravaganza. Just as Sonia Bibe Luyten makes clear "Violence seems to be present already in Japanese tradition. The *samurai* figure, described in literature, surfaces out of an ambiance of constant fights, where blood, chopped up heads and sword-sliced bodies were not missing at all" (*op. cit.*: p. 64, translation is ours). However, Luyten argues as if violence was a part of everyday life. In the cultural background that makes violence a part of Japanese life, one has to get back to feudal Japan. Each feudal lord, the *daimyo*, was protected by the *samurai*, his hired warriors. And, in this world, the territorial disputes were constant. The Japanese knew how to fight because they had to, not because of violence. Ruth Benedict explains:

"Below the Imperial Family and the court nobles, there were four Japanese castes ranked in hierarchal order: the warriors (samu-

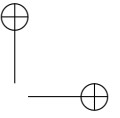
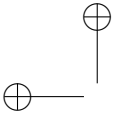


rai), the farmers, the artisans, and the merchants. Below these, again, were the outcasts” (*op. cit.*: p. 61).

The problem was that on top there were the sword-armed warriors. In anime it is noticeable that the warrior robot theme stood out more, and that even a robot wears a sword, the weapon only handled by the great Japanese figures. Due to the release of new handheld consoles, warrior robot videogames have increased. Even so, anime is still the master-genre. We are able to find combat robots in various animations. For instance, in *Astro Boy* (2009) when “Astro” falls down on the junkyard he is found by other characters, and, right after that, he is obliged to fight against other robots in the circus. Nearly at the end of the film, “Astro” fights the biggest warrior robot of all, a twisted military-grade robot that jeopardizes the city and assimilates everything it touches into.

It is pretty homogenous the successful warrior robot-themed anime. In *Full Metal Panic!* (2005), Kôichi Chigira directs an anime film on warrior robots, while respecting the convention of existing small soldiers, super-sized robots and combats, whose effect is total devastation around anthropomorphic colossi. Same thing is noticed in *Gundam* (1979), Yoshiyuki Tomino’s anime that is considered a cultural icon in Japan. According to the *Gundam* universe, the objective of warrior robots is to defend humans whenever they are attacked by similar robotic units. *Gundam Seed Destiny* (Mitsuo Fukuda, 2006) is a more sophisticated version of the *Gundam* universe and it too displays warrior robots fighting, including in Space, where their white and brilliant armors look unmistakable because of their vectoral shapes. Though, we shall not speak of robots, unless we are mentioning *Mazinger Z*, the archetype, the paramount anime artwork featuring a transforming robot. The very “warrior bot” concept itself that Hornyak (2006) speaks of began with Nagai.

*Mazinger Z*’s logic of a “transforming vehicle” is followed by *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing: Double Pack Vol. 1* (2006). *Gunhed* (Alan Smithee & Masato Harada 1989), in its turn endorses the warrior robot in a military perspective, just as *Gunparade March: Operation One*, showing robots parked inside hangars in military bases. The robot warrior appears as much as the future of air force, as the future of infantry. Once these couple of artworks is analyzed we notice that even when they’re anthropomorphic, warrior robots are treated as “means”, “instruments” and “weapons”. In *Patlabor*’s case, robots



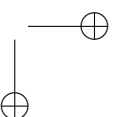
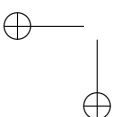
are police enforcement resources, strategic weapons to be deployed whenever it is necessary; and in *Robotech: The Shadow Chronicles*, Patlabor's model is transposed to Space. Peace is kept because there is a spatial control center and war happens also out of orbit, once that Space offers a limitless battlefield.

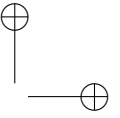
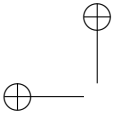
Not all robot warriors are autonomous and neither are they all manned. There are two types *Macross Plus – The Movie* (Noboru Ishiguro *et al.*, 1994) and *The Transformers* (Shin, 1986) are advocates of the successful model, the one of the piloted combat robot. In *Macross*, robots are transforming into aircraft, jetfighters, while in *Transformers* they shapeshift into automobile vehicles. There are exceptionally “good” (Autobots) and “bad” (Decepticons) transformers changing their outer configuration to look like battle tanks, gunships, quadruped animals (tigers) or arthropods (scorpions). The anime warrior robot theme is one of the most exploited in videogames. The *otaku* audience is a devotee of such style of videogames, especially those of *Gundam* (1993); given the cultural status they're assigned in Japan. The fame of this series was responsible for the release of similar videogames that, in their turn, were not preceded by anime films. This means the anime aesthetic of the “mecha” genre can present itself without going through the “anime to videogame conversion” concept.

The *Armored Core 1-4* (1997-2007) series is an example of straight publishing into the videogame form. In any case, the aesthetic, language and technique of anime production are present. The “cores” are closest robots to “mechs” so far, and they're not enabled with the *samurai* style and statue faces as *Gundam*'s robots are. The “cores” are the necessary armor to maintain a human being alive in an apocalyptic world.

*Astro Boy: The Videogame*, the *Astro Boy* (re)conversion to electronic game, permits us to interactively explore the stunts of “Astro”, who is expelled from his home, forced to use his devices to fight back mercenary robots, helping defenseless robots, flying across the sky of fabulous Metro City and dodge each place's typical adversities. No threat whatsoever is compared to the iron giants he faces in the skies or in the circus. *Dynasty Warriors Gundam* is quite an interesting case of juxtaposing two anime videogame universes: the realm of *samurai* in *Dynasty Warriors* and the warrior robots in *Gundam*. The outcome is a game in which entire armies are fighting each other to achieve victory. *Gundam Battle Universe* and *Kidou Senshi Gundam: Gundam Vs Gundam* (2008) have chosen that sector of warrior robots.

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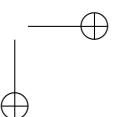
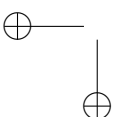


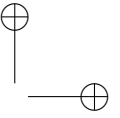
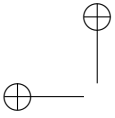
*Gundam Battle Universe* turned that genre of videogame more strategic and *Kidou Senshi Gundam: Gundam Vs Gundam* introduced both good and bad “Gundam” fighting each other in a dynamic and practical game. *Iron Man* (2008b) extends the imaginary of the film and transports the player to equal or at least identical situations to the homonymous film. Despite the “Iron Man” having both North-American origin an aesthetic, the videogame version of the film displays a language tuned to the warrior robots anime. *Transformers – The Game* (2007b) and *Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen – The Game* (2009b) are pure warrior robots videogames. The two take the player to participate in races and pursuits, fights or gunshots in environments related to the homonymous films. *Macross Ace Frontier* is one of those games allowing the player to command an anthropomorphic robot just like those of the *Macross* anime. Guided by an operator, one may combat enemies standing on the ground (as a robot) or in the air (as an airplane). The balanced solution was presented long ago, in *Space Harrier*, a legendary “shoot’em up” game made by SEGA, where the hero could walk and hold a gun at the same time on a chessboard floor, or he could, on the other way, to rise in the air with his jetpack, a weapon on his hand and shooting down every monster coming his way.

#### 2.1.4 The Piloted Robot

In films as *Transformers*, on the homonym Japanese fiction of the decade of 80, the robot is a piloted robot, and therefore it has another meaning; it’s about having a more advanced extension of the automobile in technical terms. It is no way by chance that in *Transformers* the car salesman says: “(...) drivers don’t pick their cars... cars pick their drivers”. The same scene repeats in Bay’s (2007) film to graphic novel adaptation made by Oprisko & Milne (2007: p. 12).

Flying or driving robots demands a stronger connection between machine and driver. The piloted robot imaginary starts with Gō Nagai, the anime author who noticed that drivers stalled in traffic jams would prefer to circumvent the many vehicles ahead, while he was waiting to cross the road. According to Hornyak, Gō Nagai had his “eureka” moment when he said: “(...) ‘a robot that a person can ride in and control like a car!’” (2006: p. 60). What Nagai really wanted to do, meant for the pilot the perfect bond between man and



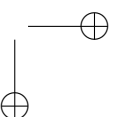
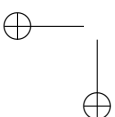


machine (*Idem, Ibidem*). The logic at stake here is one of “automobilization”, a phenomenon that in Peter Sloterdijk’s (*op. cit.*) regard is intrinsic to modern society. Sloterdijk believes this society “(...) really accomplished at least one of its utopian plans, that of full automobilization, that situation in which every adult subject moves himself behind the wheel of his own machine, which in turn moves itself” (p. 36, translation is ours). Once we examine Gō Nagai’s statements, we verify that the design of a piloted robot shows an increasing desire for mobilization, that of total automobilization, which Sloterdijk tells us about, as being something that went global. The mobility of the subject finds in the kinetic of the automobile machine the optimal symbiotic point for a new type of movement. About the piloted robot, this is an icon of the new automobilization. Otherwise, in Japan robots would not be seen as being “drivable” (Schodt, 2002: p. 245) or “transformers” (Matthews, 2003-2004: p. 12).

For the audience of control, the anime fan, the piloted robot theme is the most fascinating one. The audience aspires to drive, command and fly an anthropomorphic robot much as he sees the anime heroes doing. It is detected in anime and in anime videogames a huge influence coming from renowned science fiction artworks. In 1986, James Cameron’s *Aliens* film was most applauded, in its end, the heroine, Ripley, drives a robot named “loader” (for loading objects into spacecrafts”) to fight against a “xenomorphic” (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 89) creature. Decades after *Aliens*, Cameron released *Avatar* (2009). In this more updated artwork; mankind finds Pandora, a forestry planet dominated by exotic and dangerous creatures, a “Jurassic park” from the future whose unfamiliar fauna and flora are punctuated by incandescent colors. The military human task force, RDA, arrives at Pandora, doing it with airships, bombers, soldiers and manned robots. Against humans there are several predators standing by, expecting the outcome of pursuit for a precious mineral denominated as “Unobtainium”. Pandora’s inhabitants, the Na’vi, ride enormous birds and viper-wolfs, they shoot arrows and manage to tune to a sacred forestry mnemonic archive, while RDA has robots and “avatars” (human soldiers commanding the alien cloned bodies). Piloted robots in *Avatar* are equal to those of *District 9*; the sequence, in special, places the infected human protagonist behind the wheel of a “mech” in order to defeat adversities and, thus, protect an extra-terrestrial family.

John Favreau’s *Iron Man*, the movie, puts Tony Stark and his rival in the

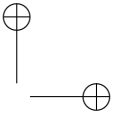
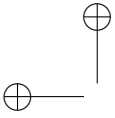
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role of robot pilots, a seemingly deniable fact thanks to Stark's total armor closure, yet an obvious fact in his rival, since the robot partly showed the pilot. Piloted robots are featured whether in live-action film or in an anime film in the form of a cockpits or "skeleton". *Stealth* (Rob Cohen, 2005) deepens the theme, unraveling in a near future the existence of stealth warplanes guided by Artificial Intelligence. Cohen's film presents an unmanned robot, though it could be a manned aircraft, in a cockpit mode, since it is a jetfighter. As for the "skeleton" mode, *Matrix Reloaded* and *Matrix Revolutions* are original, presenting grand-armies of manned "mechs". In its ending, *District 9* shows a hybrid character that is capable of driving a "mech" requiring no previous training. The same situation happens with the young "hacker" in *Sleep Dealer* (Alex Rivera, 2008), who aspires to connect to the Network in order to get a job in virtual construction sites. Once he is able to establish a connection, he finds out, through a mirror, how he looks inside the 'machine-place', a remotely controlled robot.

In the piloted robot anime two subtypes are found. In the first one, robots are transformed into airplanes, as it happens in the anime *Macross Plus: The Movie*. Here the pilot standing inside the machine witnesses its transformation from within. In the second subtype, we have piloted robots as the ones in the anime *The Transformers* (Shin), in which the pilot drives a machines disguised as an automobile or any vehicle, but he watches the transformation coming true from the outside of the driving robot. In the decades of 60 and 70, the artworks of Gō Nagai, such as *Mazinger Z*, and Tomino's exoskeletons, like *Gundam*, carry on a much evident robot-mania. Despite the fact that these piloted robots, on a meaning level, have much to underscore, there are always updates being released.

The piloted robot is a symbol of the future automaton, the legacy of automatism, mobile fortress updated and a backup of authority. In anime fictions, we see that the most interesting artworks are unfortunately copied. However, rather than creating an aversion to the copies of the great anime artworks, these are reinforcing the robot image as Japan's cultural icon, inseparable from anime's graphic culture. Piloted robots became a convention of Japanese population animation, something which led to consolidating the "mecha" genre. Live-action film made a contribution to increase the imaginary of the piloted robot, despite anime being a leader in this type of images and narratives. Besides, this pattern theme only makes sense if it is exploited

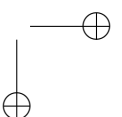
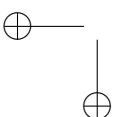


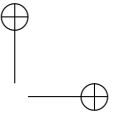
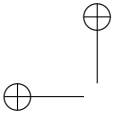
with the due audiovisual language, something that, in its turn, makes it closer to the videogame.

In the must-see *Voices of a Distant Star*, Makoto Shinkai opts for silence, the space void, in detriment of the constant robot battles. The protagonist of the story leaves her boyfriend behind on Earth and heads for exploring Mars, where the guerrilla among robots gets bigger. In this anime, the volatility of images and sounds was replaced by a more intimate environment, the robotic cockpit of the young robots pilot girl. Most of this type of anime expresses an image of power. *A.D. Police – Bad Blood* displays as primary characters the robotic characters of the "advanced police", the ultimate weapon against crime. Kazuyoshi Katayama presents a similar narrative in *Appleseed* (1988) and Aramaki repeats it in *Appleseed* (2004). The question is that in Aramaki's version the piloted robots and the cybernetic suits resemble "wearable vehicles", an anthropomorphic extension of the human body. Robots seem most real because developers used 3D and a "cel-shading" graphic technology. The same anime style continues in *Appleseed: Ex Machina* by Shinji Aramaki (2007), where a biological menace demands robots to be piloted so a pandemic may be fought. As for the earlier 2004 version, put the perfect city of Olympus under the threat of gigantic robotic arthropods. The piloted robot is a theme in which the machine is unavoidably juxtaposed to war; hence it never ceases to be understood as a weapon. *Full Metal Panic!* (2005) positions the robot along the narrative as an arsenal available for further armed conflicts. *Patlabor Mamoru Oshii* follows the same trend as he introduces the robot as a combat vehicle, a 'cockpit-vehicle'. In the tropical skies of *Macross Plus – The Movie* robots leave smoke columns as they cross it. It's all that their supersonic trail leaves behind, the colorful explosions and the harmonious shapeshifting reconfigurations from robot-to-aircraft. The biomechanical version of the piloted robot is revealed in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Hideaki Anno, 1995b), a universe where robots are the hope for bunker-living mankind. In the desolate post-holocaust world, EVA robot units allowed to scan the territories attacked by the extraterrestrials Angels. Let's take other examples: bearing the purpose of protecting the population of Earth from the 'machine-civilization' of the Decepticons, the "transformers" breed sends for human protection "drivable" robots designed as "autonomous robots" – the Autobots.

In the three-dimensional image of the videogame, the increasing map ex-

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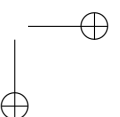
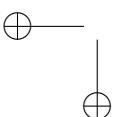


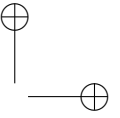
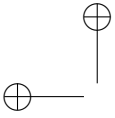
pansion and the action unfolding on it, altogether with the detailed figures turn the piloted robots videogame into a favorite space for anime. As Gosling well refers, there is something comfortable about commanding a robot, since the latter is a cocoon and a vehicle at the same time, an ultimate prosthesis fit for sheltering the pilot in a "uterine" way. Concerning this "cocooning" question Gosling adds something:

“Perhaps there is something comforting about being cocooned in a form-fitting machine or mechanized body armor, especially for the Japanese, who have staked so much of their future on technology. Certainly anime such as ‘Patlabor’ (Giant Police Robots) radiate a feeling of kinship and loyalty between man and machine that I find highly motivating (...)” (*op. cit.*: p. 3-4, § 16).

What Gosling says is relevant. By considering the "cocooning" provided by the comfort of the 'uterine machine', thus one might understand the piloted robot as a vehicle totally shielding us against a hostile environment. On the "cocooning" Napier (2001) points out that the protagonist of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, young Shinji, is protecting himself inside the robot as he enters in a "liquid-filled womblike space" (p. 98). Once the pilot is enclosed in its interior he legitimates the robot as a "womb symbol", an expression coined by Marshal McLuhan (2002, p. 84) to address car advertisements, he also said that the way to represent speed and phallic power would come across with the attempt of creating a world of "womblike comfort" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 84), as in a cybernetic version of a motherly uterus. Ortega (2007) prefers to highlight the "uterine consciousness" of robot EVA 01 (p. 229 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) and LaMarre (2009) believes in a new "mater-mother-matter" spreading across society, a "mothering machine" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 234).

Regardless of the robots videogame at stake, just because it is played it changes into a game of commanding robots, for the relationship between player and robot is based on the assumption of control. The robot character stars in the videogame to be ridden, driven; to shoot something and to strike blows, dodging or rising into the sky. The player faces more limitations in the *Lost Planet: Extreme Condition* videogame when compared to the usual piloted robot games, driving simply a "mech". *Macross Ace Frontier* is more ambitious and permits the player to feel a jetfighter pilot himself and to drive



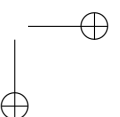
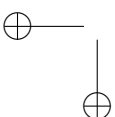


shapeshifting vehicle: an aircraft in the sky and a robot on the ground. The player is the pilot. *Mech Assault* (2002), *Mech Assault 2: Lone Wolf* (2004) and the *Mechwarrior 1-4* (1989-2000) series stand away from the Japanese robot imaginary and allow only "mech" pilots to engage in combat with other piloted pilots (player or computer-controlled). *Metal Gear Solid* (1998-2010) manages to be exponent of the piloted robots games while *Transformers – The Game* (2007b) stands on the other extreme, in the extent that every narrative in *Metal Gear Solid* invoke a robotic threat, a robot fully-capable of launching nuclear strikes. Yet the goal of the game is to avoid robots to be commanded and to successfully perform. This is why the hero is, among others, the human Solid Snake. As far as *Transformers – The Game* is concerned, the entire opposite happens. The objective remains to drive shapeshifting robots and to take advantage from that across races, combats and pursuits; one participates with the machine. Controlling robotic mechanisms was a limited thing in anime, because the audience was a passive viewer, whereas in videogames entertainment means control.

### 2.1.5 Rise of The Machines

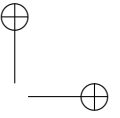
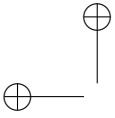
Many are the films featuring titanic-size robots or similar androids normally having anthropomorphism in common. One cannot mention the robot themed anime and discard one standard topic in "mecha" such as that of "rise of the machines". Robot fighting games like *Rise of The Robots* (1994) and films as *The Terminator 3 – Rise of The Machines* (2003) deepen this topic, the one of a evil machine rising up. The new T-X from *The Terminator 3 – Rise of The Machines* is a sensual and mothering-looking robot. Cinema has worked on the issue in several ways. *Blade Runner*, the film, presents a dystopia of rebellious robots willing to have more lifespan. In *Casshern*, genetically modified humans ferociously fight against radiant robots armies, and in *I, Robot* (Alex Proyas, 2004), all NS-5 androids, similar to robot playing hero in the story (Sony), challenge the humans they're protecting as they receive instructions from Vikki, the Artificial Intelligence. Each and every home in *I, Robot* gets to have an oppressor android, rather than a helping robot. *Judge Dredd* (Danny Canon, 1995), the film where Chris Cunningham worked on the special effects, the military-grade robots are tools for the ruling class to ascend to power. Over the three episodes of *The Matrix* series, but especially in *Matrix*

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*Reloaded* and in *Matrix Revolutions*, agents and programs ran by the master-program – the Architect – are meant to make machines rise up. By controlling time, the leading characters in *The Returner* fight to avoid that rise in another extent, that of present time. *Star Trek – First Contact* introduces a cybernetic population that imposes its will by converting humans into cyborgs (as it happens to Captain Picard) and humanoids into sensitive machines (the case of "Data"). The spaceship of this once human population is the Borg Cube, led by a queen saying: "I am the beginning, I am the End, I am the Borg". For George Lucas, the army of machines is administered by another type of infantry, the clones'. *Star Wars II – Attack of The Clones* (2002) shows how the massive army of soldiers equipped with white helmets and white armored suits appears, the very same army causing the grand-army of the Republic to emerge. Darth Vader rises to power thanks to manipulating the clones and having "mechatronic" robots at his disposal. Jonathan Mostow presents another type of register in *Surrogates* (2009), a world much closer to ours, where human weakness takes them to control "replacement robots" right from their homes. Each citizen moves himself with its machine, instead of personally doing it with his own fragile body. The ascension of these "surrogates" makes legitimate why in the end a cop chooses to disconnect the entire surrogates' network. *Virus* (John Bruno, 1995) has as main story a satellite-transmitted virus that turns the machines aboard the boat into almost living creatures. The uprising causes a mass-murder. Yet robots slowly wait for a right time of theirs. Within the *Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen* universe, the Decepticon robots ascend after a secret moment of hibernation. Their fierce strike unravels a force bigger than earlier. *Tron's sequel, Tron 2 – Legacy*, presents a new game of machines where human are no longer welcome. The hero of "Tron's" digital world, Flynn, says that it is not a game, not anymore. Out of the nocturne and glossy world, where "light-cycle" pilots race across glassy bridges and platforms, the menace lies in the quite looks of the translucent 'machine-place'.

The "Second Renaissance" episode of the anime film *The Animatrix* reports the disagreement between robots and humans, the uprising in society towards constructs and utter rise to power from robots due the advent of Artificial Intelligence. In the dystopia of *Future Boy Conan*, Miyazaki puts "Conan" and Lara in the role of actors in a world devastated by machines. The sky darkened with smoke columns and the night illuminated by fulminant explo-

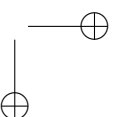
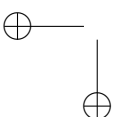


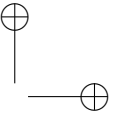
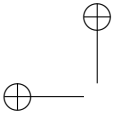
sions was disclosing, in shiny days, the archipelago. Spaceship wireframes and debris from the cataclysm caused by the last rise of the machines were observed from anywhere.

In anime remains, as a pattern theme, the ultimate rise of the machines, even it looks, in videogames, as a cliché. Robots rising from the ashes, endoskeletons running into obstacles and sentient surveillance systems are quite common in the anime following this theme. One of the most remarkable videogames within the anime genre, still considered to be an "interactive cartoon", is *Escape From Cybercity* (1992). As the young hero is helped by an older resistant fighter, he follows his goal of attempting to defeat the cybernetic surveillance system of the machines. He must be able to escape across a city controlled by machines, dodge brilliant eyed-police officers and find a way to the galactic express, at all cost. Stunts involved in that trajectory include running over alleys, blowing up tanks, riding on a supersonic skateboard and arrive at the planet of the vigilante through an imaginary railway. Vehicles firing shots, hordes of enemies and dangerous installations make the progress hard for the player. On aesthetic terms, the 70s fashion in clothes, the cold colors of scenarios, the light bursts from shots and "motion lines" are noticed, typically anime characteristics.

*Bionic Commando* (1988) also positions the player in a world ravaged by machines, in which the hero relies in the help of his cyborg arm. *Dynasty Warriors Gundam*, the game of never-ending fights is typically about ascension by means of war. Anthropomorphic machines belonging to both factions fight each other to overcome and establish their dynasty. *Earth Defense Force 2017* entertains the player with such rise of titanic robots, rendering impossible to play against the invading machines from a defensive unit on Earth. In the *The Bouncer* the young heroes gather their efforts towards a society of malefactors willing to take control of a satellite. *Breakdown* positions the player in an anime game in which the action unfolds on a first-person perspective. The subjective images in *Breakdown* reveal a hero and his partners fighting against a cyborged infantry. Skies infested with airships dogfighting amidst clouds of shots fired, is what *Ikaruga* shows us. But in this case even the spaceship controlled by the player is a part of the machine world. The *Metal Gear Solid* (1998-2010) series is considered the one that farther took anime videogames on robots, for presenting giant bionic-legged Gekko robots, the "Beauty and The Beast" unity and the bipedal nuclear stars Metal Gear,

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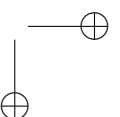
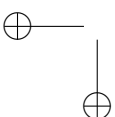


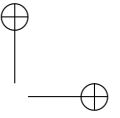
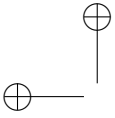


that borrow their name to this game series. The “Beauty And The Beast” unit featured in this videogame discloses five characters, that once were beautiful women, and now turned into warfare cyborgs with configurations closer to those of mythological figures, whose names are “Laughing Octopus”, “Crying Wolf”, “Screaming Mantis”, “Raging Raven” and “Iron Eagle”. Although nobody knows who controls these threatening robotic figures.

### 2.1.6 Robotic Friend

Among all the anime themes centered on the robot figure, the “robotic friend” is the one showing more optimism. If we thoroughly analyze anime’s popular culture we notice how important it is the robotic friend archetype, in exploiting the childish fantasy of the robot-as-pal. In the antipodes of the protector robot we have the menacing robot, when it comes to the theme. Such polarization is detectable in anime. On one side there’s the rise of the machines, whereas on another comes the robotic friend. It is through cinema that the pattern theme of the robotic friend first appears, despite getting a more compelling form out of anime. Lately, this theme has become much present in science fiction films, such as in *Bicentennial Man* (Chris Columbus, 1999). Inspired on the story *The Positronic Man* from Isaac Asimov & Robert Silverberg (1994), the “bicentennial man” presents the struggle of a robot for his personal evolution and the demand to be more human. The welcoming family finds him awkward firstly but then becomes dependent on his tasks and deeds. As time goes by, the robotic friend is each time more humanized until he chooses to be mortal, and after two centuries of “existence” he finally dies. In another film inspired by an Asimov story too, *I, Robot*, the NS-5 robots are friends of an elder society. John Badham in *Short Circuit* (1986) introduces the military robot as friendly, autonomous machine, even satirical in its looks, due to its caterpillar-based locomotion and a binocular face. It did not seem a robot; it was more like a grotesque household appliance. *Star Trek – First Contact* is the film that brings to cinema the sophisticated humanoid named “Data” (“dados”) in trouble, for he is forced by Borg inhabitants to truly be “sensitive”. Less mature and always having a fearless attitude, the R2D2 and 3CPO pair leads the table of most famous robots in cinema from the *Star Wars* series. Other robotic friend’s configurations came up in *Stealth*, the Artificial Intelligence-controlled radar-invisible warplane that fights to the





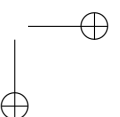
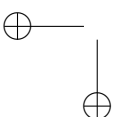
end to protect the human protagonists. The "terminator" universe that is presented by McG in *Terminator (4) Salvation* reveals being possible for machines or hybrid beings (Marcus) to be friends, an example lies in the final scene when Marcus donates his organic heart for transplantation to John Connor, the leader of human resistance. By the time *Terminator 2 – Judgment Day* was released, the scary looking robots were in fact the then young John Connor's robotic friend. What makes the robotic a friend is an interesting theme; the one of duplicity, the frightening looks and their program of existence. One of the *Transformers* robots, Bumble Bee, is assigned to protect the young Sam Witwicky.

Being friend of machines is a most worked out question in anime. The Japanese believe machines can be friends to humans (Singer, 2009). All along, such inspiration comes from *Atom*, as it is noticed in *Doraemon: Nobita to Midori no Kyojinten* (Ayumu Watanabe, 2008) through the robotic cat escorting the young Nobita. A landmark in this sort of narrative is the *The Iron Giant* film (already referred in previous chapters, where a boy meets his ideal friend in a robot).

*A.D. Police – Bad Blood* has giant robots as a second family of the hero police team of the story. In *Appleseed* (1988) there are cybernetic creatures living in harmony with humans in the "mechatronic" society of Olympus. The female soldier Deunan, the heroine of *Appleseed: Ex Machina* (Shinji Aramaki, 2007), is rescued by Briareos, a faceless human cyborg friend. Other anime films show robots friendship in a more stand out manner: *Astro Boy* (Bowers) displays the robot-child assisting Metro City's citizens; *Digimon: The Movie* (1999) and *Doraemon* (1979) introduce pets playing the role of sympathetic mechanisms. *Full Metal Panic!* (2005) and *Ghost in The Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1996) enable two genres of protagonists: the strong heroes (humans and cyborged ones) and the comical and sympathetic mascots

The benefactor robot theme finds in anime videogames a territory where fiction narrative may be altered. Commanding a protector robot means in *Dynasty Warriors Gundam* to defend the infantry and impose the dynasty one stood for with the robotic warriors. *Ghost In The Shell* (1997) puts the player in the perspective of a funny arthropod police robot. One example of a robotic friend lies in *Megaman 1-4* (1987-1992), an action game series performed by a young robot. In *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots*, Metal Gear Mkii plays the role of a transformer mini-robot that looks like a handheld

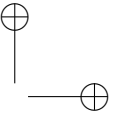
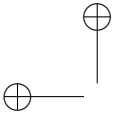
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Sony video camera. Within the narrative framework of this videogame, the function of the mini-robot is to probe, record in film and broadcast footage at the theatre of war, and it is also capable of electro-shocking foes to give some leverage to the hero Solid Snake. On a more comical style, in the *Rogue Galaxy* videogame space pirate team's freight caravels to cross the galaxy and robots are the ones playing the main roles in story. A major part of the action experienced by the player turns out to be in co-operative along with robotic characters, something that makes him feel he is not playing alone.

### 2.1.7 The Military Cyborgization

Aside the well-known fictions on anthropomorphic machines, some recent artworks focus on cyborgization with the same anime and videogames' aesthetic. *Avatar* (James Cameron, 2009) is one of those artworks. Single-seat gunships are controlled by RDA corporation pilots, just as "mechs", are genuinely anime. Mechanized suits worn by Tony Stark in *Iron Man* turn the military entrepreneur into a superhero. Cyborg technology and arsenal assign special powers to their users, which from then on become special people. The villager Memo Cruz in *Sleep Dealer* cannot stop dreaming of his entrance in the Network, and ever since he was a child it is his intention to fly a drone, that is to say, a UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle). In *Stealth*, director Rob Cohen discloses the future of air force: an autonomous airship ran by a computer, the perfect military weapon. Fantasies of this kind are still present in anime. The cyborgization theme is always associated to federal law enforcement units or the army's, as in *Appleseed*. In *Ghost in The Shell*, the heroine Motoko Kusanagi is a cybernetic entity, a female-robot linked up to the communication network, capable of containing threats haunting Tokyo's digital space. Not only Kusanagi intercepts communication via radio airwaves, as she also turns out to be someone wearing thermo-optical camouflage that allows her to mirror back the surrounding environment, a scene which is, as a matter of fact, the opening scene of the film when the assault takes place. Otomo's perspective in *Akira*, is a more radical one, he unravels a young man who is hiding the fact that he is a bio-weapon. Once the critical stage is achieved, "Akira" triggers an uncontrollable organic mutation. *Dead Space: Downfall*, a prequel, displays the moments of massacre aboard one spaceship, the "USG Ishimura". In order to survive the mutant's attacks everything depends on the laminated



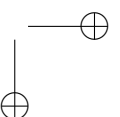
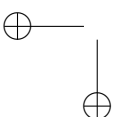
suit worn by the hero. The mechanized suits worn by the soldiers in *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* are so perfect they do not seem to be embedded around a human soldier, but rather compact robots in themselves.

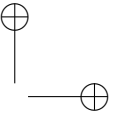
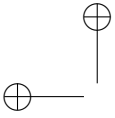
It is in videogames that this theme achieves higher standards. In the dystopian future presented by Kojima in *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of The Patriots* wars are established by private military contractors. The biggest obstacles to Solid Snake assignments are the weapons used by corporate factions in the war. Solid Snake, the hero facing the accelerated aging, upgrades his vital energy with his cyborg suit. With this kind of "high-tech" suit he is able to replicate the looks of textures in the surrounding environment to achieve perfect camouflage. Still in the same game, other characters are identified, such as Raiden who while showing off a cybernetic suit and a high-frequency blade can cut-out in parts the mighty Metal Gear Gekko bionic bipedals.

Without technologies, the soldier won't become a cyborg. Beyond options as the mechanized suit, tight exoskeleton, "mech" or arthropod robot, the limit for cyborgization is not the hybrid stage. The promised disembodiment is equally invoked in videogames. *Ghost in The Shell* (1997) continues the anime universe and does it by placing the player in the position of an arthropod robot, in its turn remotely controlled by the game's absent protagonist, Kusanagi. Having said this, one accepts due to its pertinence the argument of Fidalgo & Moura:

“Cybercultures’ recover and endorse the hostility towards the mortal body, jealously willing for the permanence of the machine. The utopia of immortality, durability, demands a perfect, examined and corrected body, ending up in the most extreme trends of desiring to be absent from the body” (2004: p. 203, translation is ours).

If the absence of the body is not the goal of military cyborgization, then it is the hybrid stage one most stands out, just as the extending claw of Nathan Spencer in *Bionic Commando* or the shiny mechanized suit of Stark in *Iron Man 2* (2010). The technical durability of the protection system is the dream being discussed mostly in the "mecha" anime genre.



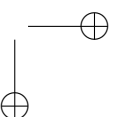
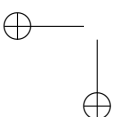


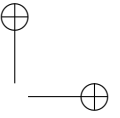
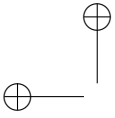
## 2.2 PLACES UNDER TRANSFORMATION

The concept of transformation is central in the anime films made by the only country ever bombed with nuclear devices. We see images of de-atomized cities (*The Place Promised in Our Early Days*), robots transforming into vehicles (*Transformers Armada* [Hidehito Ueda, 2007]), people triggering mutations (*Akira*) and utopias of dynamic machines (*Ulysses 31* [Jean Chalopin, 1981]). Perpetual transformation is something constant in the anime fantasy (Allison, 2006: p. 19 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Across the ecological transformation of *Blade Runner* (the film) – or technological one, in *Vexille*'s case – we attend to the evidences of a post-human civilization. At the fringe of total transformation, the narratives portray dystopia, what was not supposed to ever happen. Janet Staiger defines this style as "future noir" (cit. in Napier: p. 108 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007).

One of the biggest transformations comes related to totalitarianism (as in the case of *Appleseed* [2004]), the will to change the world in its totality with arms. Hiroki affirms that "science fiction is haunted by the ghost of totality" (p. 79 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). As a starting point and narrative device, let's highlight, the catastrophe also emerges in anime, in repetition, working as a transformation "loop", a transformation revisited, calling for the past. On a farther position stands the "metatopia" (Eco, 1989), the future continuation of present time, a transformation of present reality bearing an "image of future" (Polak, *op. cit.*) considered to be ideal and positive. Despite its negativity, the transformation of the present world in *Blade Runner* – the movie – promises a future that seems most likely to us, something William Gibson defines as "Blade-Runnered" places.

The transformation concept became form and content; a narrative style in Japanese animation. Hayao Miyazaki chooses a character named as "that person", as lady of the sea, a large nymph transforming and changing colors in *Ponyo on The Cliff by The Sea*. Miyazaki fantasizes his own child memories in anime; he opts for characters, mechanisms modifying themselves and altered places. There is always a transformation, metamorphosis figure in his artworks. About this, Paul Wells claims: "Metamorphosis [in animation] . . . Legitimizes the process of connecting apparently unrelated images, forging original relationships between lines, objects etc., and disrupting established notions of classical story-telling . . ." (cit. in Napier 2001, p. 36). One un-





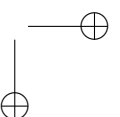
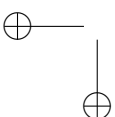
derstands the usage of the "metamorphosis" theme as a narrative device that makes possible to tell stories in new ways.

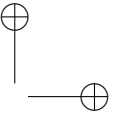
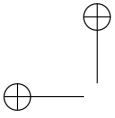
Besides, there is another aesthetic in transformation, an "aesthetic of disappearance". First, everything exists in one form, and later becomes something different. Only in this way one notices transformation. In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (1991), Paul Virilio explains that this new aesthetic is an aesthetic of disappearance because "The pursuit of forms is only a pursuit of time, but if there are no stable forms, there are no forms at all" (p. 17). Once no forms whatsoever cease to exist, they stop being stable and get into mutation, which happens as forms are no longer tamed and are on the loose undergoing a transformation regime. New forms, stability, are pursued, for the effective aesthetic consists in the disappearance of the old form.

The new installed paradigm requires not only a robotic figure but rather one that morphs into several sub-figures, multiplying its technology in many ways possible, much as the T-1000 liquid mercury android starring in the *Terminator 2 – Judgment Day* film or the "transformers" of Bay's films (2007, 2009). Even if Tezuka at his time was unaware of the fact, in *Mighty Atom*, the artist established the ground for the shapeshifting figures featured in anime. Schodt (2002) says:

"Although Tezuka could never have known it at the time, in *Atom* he also laid the groundwork for what may arguably be modern Japan's greatest contribution to world fantasy – the interactive, drivable, transforming giant mecha-robots that have altered children's play habits all over the world" (p. 245).

In Polak's (*op. cit.*) point of view, man was "the unique bearer and transformer of culture" (p. 1). In the futurologist's belief, "through technology [,] *homo sapiens* can transform all things" (*Ibidem*: p. 142). But it is not in the general or humanist sense that the transformation concept emerges in anime, as sustained by Susan Napier: "The 'transformation and change' that the medium foregrounds resists any attempt at narrow cultural categorization" (2001: p. 236). This is in this way because the Japanese people literally and truly underwent a transformative process. Because of that, the theme is most dear to anime artists, as Napier (2001: p. 165-166) makes clear that it was influent from *Akira* to *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. Hornyak (2006) depicts



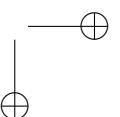
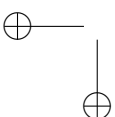


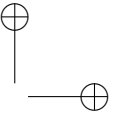
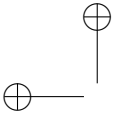
Tomino's famous *Gundam* robots, entitled "Mobile Suits", were futuristic yet conventional, and that "(...) 'Gundam' cannot transform into physically impossible alternate configurations" (p. 63). It is this quest for the stable forms that leads the way to have viewers watching anime, attending to new forms, in accordance with Paul Wells, and "being invited into that destabilized and fluid world" (cit. in Napier, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 36).

### 2.2.1 Post-Human Civilizations

The era of post-humanity is a recurring theme in anime. As the post-human civilization theme is approached, epochs beyond the human are depicted, or the moments in which the conditions for life as we conceive it cease to exist. In the fictions on post-human civilizations it is usual to observe machines surrogating mankind (*The Matrix*), or taking care of what's left of it (*Wall-E* [Andrew Stanton, 2008]), as we though verify the presence of non-human entities or of different civilizations (*Battlestar Galactica*). When it comes to cinema on the post-humanity theme we may encompass several artworks that introduce new characters, since they work as snapshots of the post-human world. In *Avatar* (2009), James Cameron reveals the tall and blue tribal natives: the Na'vi; *Battlestar Galactica* portrays the attack of the robotic Cylons on "Caprica" (Cf. [Caprica, Glen A. Larson, 2010]), a city inhabited by humans; and *Blade Runner* (the movie) unravels androids demanding more lifespan in the mist of the metropolitan Los Angeles. Living in Johannesburg city in *District 9* is obviously to live up a post-humanity civilization. Slums and "ghettos" infested with extraterrestrials within a militarized zone, in a quarantined South Africa is the sarcastic portrait of post-human created by Blomkamp. Earlier in *Star Trek – First Contact* and *Star Wars I – The Phantom Menace* science fiction films, interstellar travel would allow interaction with other civilizations, given the size of the cosmos. On other approaches, post-humanity appears in our time and in our world. *Surrogates* displays a "mechatronic" society in which humans are represented in their everyday lives as surrogating androids, where total shutdown is the solution. And in *Transformers*, Michael Bay (2007) shows how the alien robots were already on Earth, disguised, frozen or asleep.

The introduction made by Sarah Connor in *Terminator 2 – Judgment Day* is representative of the post-human world, as she tells us: "Three billion hu-

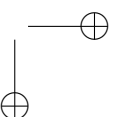
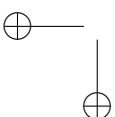




man lives ended on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1997. The survivors of the nuclear fire called the war Judgment Day. They lived only to face a new nightmare, the war against the Machines”. Machines are the cause of the holocaust in this context. The same argument is found again in *The Matrix*. In accordance with Morpheus, the world as we know it is but a digital scenario. After the holocaust caused by the conflict between robots and humans, the few human survivors left discover recordings from the civilization, reports of the urban and modern world of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the urban civilization model (North-American capital city). Relying on these cinematic and written records, the survivors create via computer a synthetic online world to use as an exit point. The problem is that the machines know the participants login consciously to the “Matrix”, receiving physical stimuli. If they would die in the "Matrix" they would die in the Real. Right after the Artificial Intelligence machines find out to be likely to wipe out human just by sending killer programs to the "Matrix" called "agents", the narrative gets complicated.

It makes part of anime videography to exploit the post-human world. After all, the post-human character of the robot-child is worldwide acknowledged ever since Tezuka created manga and anime. Through the *Ghost in The Shell: Solid State Society* film we get to know a grotesque reality. According to the story, the amount of patients depending on computers and back-up systems in hospitals reaches such a proportion that "hackers" attempt to log on to such network of consciousnesses. Unaware of exterior reality, the patients of that network remain connected to a server supporting them remotely. Kamiyama finishes his anime with a sequence explaining that in this “solid state society” the patient’s consciousnesses might emerge as something new. This post-human vision is almost coincident with the rise of the machines theme.

Definitively integrated in the post-humanity theme, *Future Boy Conan* is the most unforgettable anime series, because it shows what happens to the entire humanity. According to the narrative, on July 2008 a holocaust triggers mankind’s extinction. There is a devastating war between two major nations resourceful in weapons that provoke earthquakes and seaquakes. Earth deviates from its axis and the continents sink on one final ocean after the nocturne mayhem. In the attempt to survive the apocalypse, humans take off on a spaceship later crashing down. One of the spaceships gets to flee from destruction as it falls down on an island non-swallowed by the sea. As the devastation occurred, Conan is “the future boy”, in the sense that he survives and represents



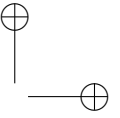
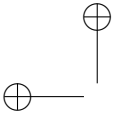
hope for all mankind. The story of Conan takes place in a world where the "advanced industrial society" (LaMarre, 2009: p. 58) has perished.

Post-human civilization is featured in anime, following the sequel logic, as a continuation of what became disrupted. Otomo's *Akira* starts exactly with the post-humanity mark: the site bombed with nuclear bombs. That is the motive giving birth to the rise of a new town in its surroundings named as Neo Tokyo.

The justification one finds to focus straight the post-human civilization is shown in the anime of biomechanical giants, entitled as *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. This series is devoted to the upcoming civilization, the truly post-human one. By mixing up religious iconography with archetypes of the genre, including an epically styled story, *Neon Genesis Evangelion* obtains relevance from the fact that it does not endorse the heroism of machines. About this cult series, Matthews affirms: "While the Evangelion units are Earth's only hope, the dark and sinister projects behind the technology are portrayed as immoral. Technology as a necessary evil" (2003-2004: p. 11). Unlike the narrative-model of anime on robotics, where the robot is heroic, in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* technology is seen as the only weapon; mankind's hope lies in "Evangelion" rescue units<sup>1</sup>. The biomechanical giants are considered as a necessary technology; bad, yet useful one. Shinji is the young man witnessing the cataclysm announced as "Second Impact". The disaster happens within the range of the polar Arctic Circle and causes an increasing height of the average sea level. Two decades after this "Second Impact", our planet is invaded by an army of giant aliens; the Angels. Salvation for mankind lies in an experimental robots' unit, the Evangelion, usually manned by adolescent telepaths. Shinji is the second child to join the project to drive the first operational Evangelion: the EVA Unit 01. Over the episodes of this anime series a conflicting relationship between Shinji and the Evangelion robot, because the intuitive bond between the young pilot and the machine is great. Later, Shinji realizes that his robot is not that much different from the extraterrestrial Angels. The message being delivered is that Angels and Evangelions are technically similar, something that turns good robots in a sort of necessary evil, as a metaphor for real warfare technology.

Even in 2D videogames the post-human civilization theme is endorsed.

<sup>1</sup>It means *gospel* in Greek and ethymologically "Good" [Ev] "News" [Angelion].



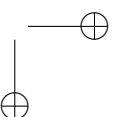
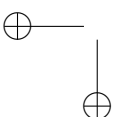
One of those videogames is *Last Resort* (1992). Once controlling a spaceship the player must destroy all non-human forms of adversities, whether they're mechanized, cyborg or organic. This horizontal "shoot'em up" looked like an animation, mostly because in the background it displayed corporate skyscrapers just as the ones featured in the *Akira* anime. The apotheosis in animation takes place in *Escape From Cybercity*, a videogame using the interactive film system, in which to get away from the alien surveillant beings one had to be perseverant. Guiding the hero across the labyrinthine streets of a dystopian place patrolled by terrifying vigilant agents required dexterity to explore them.

### 2.2.2 Dystopia And Totalitarianism

Because of its characters, anime is quite known. Utopian landscapes are as much part of the level of success in anime as these *sui generis* characters. However, in order to approach the pattern theme of dystopia and totalitarianism one has to make the terms clear. "Dystopia" is the opposite of "utopia", which in its turn is something that still has no place, *topos*, it is an "atopia", (Boym, *op. cit.*: p. 149) and if it hasn't occurred yet it is therefore "utopian". In this scope, "dystopia" is a negative situation that has not happened yet, so it is a "dystopian" one. Both perspectives suggest a future and that something should or might be very identical to what the utopian or the dystopian describe. One of the theoreticians who studied the "futureslogism" issue is Fred Polak, who states: "The utopia demonstrates to man how he is continually demolishing his world and how he can reconstruct it" (*op. cit.*: p. 142). Being aware that the world is something that could be remade is precisely what defines the utopian consciousness, and it is in this part that the "totalitarianism" theme intercepts the one of "dystopia", since the totalitarian figure believes that enforcing his will have something positive as a result but actually it does not happen that way. Dystopia is the outcome of a future reconstructed, where demolishing the old is forced and illegitimate. The future nobody wished for becoming real, the really bad future turned present time is described in dystopia.

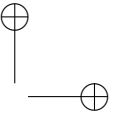
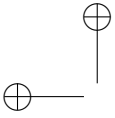
In the extensive videography on dystopia and totalitarianism, some live-action film artworks are standing out. In *Battlestar Galactica*, all that is left from mankind is a group of survivors remaining in the spaceship. The bombings perpetrated by the Cylons make the human population to decrease. Hu-

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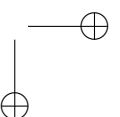
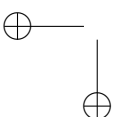


mans will be good as long as they're dead to the Cylons. In another dystopia the one of *Blade Runner* (the movie), the future promises to be unbalanced. There is just no way to know for sure what is real compared to what is virtual; private memories are corporate after all, organic animals are a deluxe commodity and androids refuse to "die" earlier. *Blade Runner* disclosed the dystopia of megalopolises facing demographic, energetic and climatic problems. In the film *Children of Men*, Alfonso Cuarón (2006) unravels the stunts of an annoyed bureaucrat trying to protect Kee, the only pregnant woman in the world; it's a genetic dystopia. More graphically violent, the ethic dystopia of *Judge Dredd* is primarily concerned about of a cop being also an executioner in a world without order. The NS-5 robots in *I, Robot* cease to be friends of the elderly and enforce home imprisonment upon them. As they're updated they impose a totalitarian regime. In the cybernetic dystopia of *The Matrix*, the world exists only inside a computer, as a synthetic image. The outdoor ruins stand in contrast with indoor utopia. Envisioning the salvation of natural species in detriment of a mankind that is not matter, in the film *Sky Captain And The World of Tomorrow*, Totenkopf, a mad man unleashes military assaults with robots causing global panic. Though this is not the most complex military dystopia, since in the *The Terminator* (1984-2009) quadrilogy, the cyborg infantry managed by Sky Net decides to terminate the human race in a nanosecond. We also notice that the cyborg dystopia is very much associated with the nighttime, the darkness apocalypse, as displayed in Cameron's *Terminator 2*, revealing in the early scenes the rise of the machines. In this cyborg dystopia of "terminators", humans survive hiding in bunkers, much as those featured in *THX: 1138* (George Lucas, 1971), a film that discovers the pharmacological dystopia; a humanity addicted to medication, that is reconnected to divine entities by means of electronic images. As the citizens are imprisoned in underground facilities they are unaware that control is nearly total. In *A.I.*, Spielberg presents a "mechatronic" dystopia, a world where robots set to love humans that, in turn, are not ready to accept robots. Already at the end of *A.I.*, after the world as we know is finished, machines would be the ultimate fossil, a register of humanity, the single copy left behind; a total copy.

The several dystopias above referred have their matches in the anime domain. Among the various streams of dystopias presented in Japanese animation films, the most highlighted ones are those of the "mecha" genre, which imply a "mechatronic" society, as in *Voices of a Distant Star*. In this film di-



irected by Makoto Shinkai, the story's main role is played by a young girl departing to space to fight the aliens, leaving behind on Earth her boyfriend, for she opted to become a female test-pilot in Mars. When the animation film begins, the young pilot Mikako claims she thought "the world was the area a cell phone could reach" (Hiroki: p. 82 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). If there was no way to establish communication via cell phone, then that is because one was already outside the world. Her awe increases when right next to Jupiter she manages to send SMS messages to the boyfriend eager for her return since eight years ago. Here dystopia is one of feelings, where in parallel to peaceful Earth unwelcoming places would have to be constantly monitored. *The Transformers* (Shin, 1986) is a story of a technological dystopia. The coming to Earth of good "transformers" (the Autobots) to defend humans from Decepticons is something happening to prevent dystopia; robots have an effect upon mankind with the ultra-powerful warfare technology they're carrying. The "All-Spark" is what the "transformers" are looking for since it can turn every creature into violent mechanisms in a viral manner. Cybertron, the home planet of the "transformers" was destroyed by the unsustainable technology of its natives. *Bubblegum Crisis: Tokyo 2040* (Hiroki Hayashi, 1998) depicts urban dystopia, the city as a crime scene. The leading characters in *Bubblegum Crisis: Tokyo 2040* try to eradicate crime from Tokyo's streets, despite the criminals are not anime's most violent ones. The motorcycle gang in *Akira* is more dangerous and insane than the criminals in *Bubblegum Crisis*. Besides, *Akira* is concerned with social inequality; one side we have skyscrapers and on the other there are streets; outlaws vs corporations; young men and the elderly. In other artworks dystopia is better coupled with totalitarianism, as it is the case of *Appleseed* (2004). Olympus, the mirroring and shiny city inhabited by human and "mechatronic" societies, faces an attack performed by titanic robots manipulated by a faction aspiring to make a *coup d'état*. Faraway from Earth, in *Dead Space: Downfall*, the spatial dystopia reveals how mass murders took place aboard a mining spaceship. The original event causing the sinister is the extraction of a mineral called "the marker", capable of twisting the mind of those getting closer to it. *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* has as a core narrative the hard task of searching for special spirits in a universe menaced by translucent ghosts. The images of an ecological dystopia underscore the Earth itself is a living being. In a different manner, Miyazaki exploited the dystopia in *Future Boy Conan*: he began with the twilight of war onto the



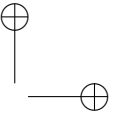
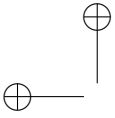


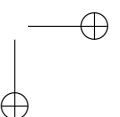
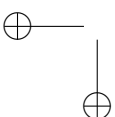
image of sunny archipelago with greenly islands. The viewer just finds out there was a cataclysm before because there are submerged evidences from the past (debris, scrap metal and tools). Nonetheless the dystopias best portraying the misfortune are *Ghost in The Shell: Solid State Society* and *Resident Evil: Degeneration* (Makoto Kamiya, 2008). In the first one the sanitary dystopia has as primary victims the patients hooked up to a hospital server, and in the second one the biotechnological dystopia is supported by the Umbrella Corporation, the corporation that loses control of the virus, which deforms and transfigures its victims, quickly spreading out at epidemic proportions.

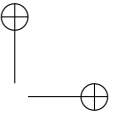
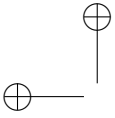
### 2.2.3 Replaying The Catastrophe

The first atom bomb was dropped by the North-American B-29 bomber (nick-named "Enola Gay") over Hiroshima, in Japan, at 08:15 AM in August 6<sup>th</sup> 1945. Three days later another would fall over Nagasaki. Ever since that moment the image of a massive destruction became far more present in popular culture. Japanese visual culture did not detached from that "big boom" image and nurtured the drive for the "apocalyptic event". Matthews (2003-2004) says that such kind of event may be watched in many cyberpunk science fiction anime:

“(...) from the nuclear blast in the opening sequence of ‘Akira’, the massive alien attacks in ‘Neon Genesis Evangelion’, or the apocalyptic, world-destroying war sequences in ‘Final Fantasy’. The medium of animation is perfectly suited to the apocalyptic genre, since it has no need for special effects or a large budget to effectively wow the audiences with scenes of mass destruction. Yet, ‘why’ are the Japanese so intrigued by this concept? Many believe the answer lies in the fact Japan is the only nation to witness an apocalyptic event between man and technology” (p. 8).

Replaying the catastrophe is one of the greatest characteristics of anime. To understand this pattern theme, Sloterdijk’s argument proves to be useful, as he says “(...) enthusiastic repetitions are the greatest vehicle for innovation” (*op. cit.*: p. 59, translation is ours). As a matter of fact it is not by chance that Otomo repeats the silent triggering of the nuclear blast in *Akira* (1988).

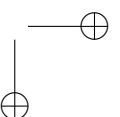
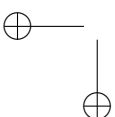




Should we agree with Sloterdijk's argument and we'll understand how Otomo changes the anime into a carrier of innovation, exploiting that repetition in an enthusiastic fashion. However, Sloterdijk still refers a "being-towards-movement" (*ult.op. cit.:* p. 64, translation is ours) and that "Modernity is defined as 'mobilization itself', i.e., as a being-towards-self-annihilation" (*Idem, Ibidem*, translation is ours). What Otomo shows in *Akira* is this: characters obsessed with movement, dynamic communities, catastrophes yet to happen and characters living for the cataclysm. For Jean-Luc Nancy, subdividing History in multiple finite histories is a way of highlighting "historicity as performance" [1993: p. 114] (cit. in Malpas, *op. cit.:* p. 98), that is to say, a history towards movement.

Mahiro Maeda *et al.* displays again outdoor destruction apart the "Matrix" universe in *The Animatrix*. Though, no anime artwork is as elucidative, descriptive and exhaustively detailed as Masaru Mori's *Barefoot Gen*. In this artwork, Mori shows the life of a family of villagers busy with their everyday tasks in the day the ultimate bombardments occur. There is a serious representation of the explosions. After all, the director personally experienced the catastrophe. Kenji Nakasawa's manga is remade in this anime, whose story positions young boy "Gen" to save himself amidst bombed Hiroshima. What one notices in *Barefoot Gen* is that "repetition may be uncanny too". For Eugenio Trías (*op. cit.*) the uncanniness might come from the fact of being a "repetition that produces a magical and supernatural effect, altogether with a 'déjà vu' feeling" (p. 45). *Barefoot Gen* is the most dedicated artwork to the catastrophe *déjà vu*, and it repeats in highly detailed for, in a documentary film fashion, what happened in August 6th 1945. The question is that in a major part of anime, especially in the "mecha" subgenre, the catastrophe is invoked as a narrative background; it is always what happened and what may happen again. Hironobu Sakaguchi, *et al.*, in *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*, presents a universe where the special spirits are rare ("Blue Gaia"). This 3D film is a narrative on a "fantastic reality" much like the *Final Fantasy* series videogames. The story unfolds in 2065 and it is starred by scientist Dr. Aki Ross, who constantly suffers with the same nightmare, supposedly provoked by the need of an alien breed (the "red phantoms") in conveying the message that their homeworld was extinct (Monnet: p. 194 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). *Steamboy* encompasses another strategy: it is about the catastrophe that could have been, as in an "alternative history" (Hamilton [1996: p. 209]

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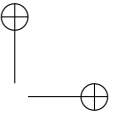
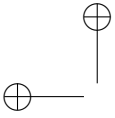


in Malpas, *op. cit.*: p. 104) way, rather than exploiting the catastrophe that existed. When at the time of the steam-engine "mecha"-type robotic devices are released, with Victorian looks, the Armageddon is activated by the nature of that very technology: steam, pressure pumps, pneumatic technology.

Once transposed onto the videogames' universe, the narrative of catastrophe meets other purposes. In the tenth chapter of *Final Fantasy [X]* (2001) we get to know when everybody is gathering at the coliseum that the heroine, Yuna, declares "Everybody... everybody has lost something. Everyone lost homes, dreams and friends". Underscoring the way "loss" is a portrayed and ritualized issue in anime is something Napier (2001) had already done. Regarding how Japan faced the loss, its defeat in the war, Ruth Benedict said also on the post-war period: "The cry that went out from Japan (...) was 'Isshin' – to dig back into the past, to restore. It was the opposite of revolutionary. It was not even progressive" (*op. cit.*: p. 74). Actually, that *Isshin*, such "scream", the return to the past in the name of regeneration is what we find in anime. Across the images of a repeated catastrophe one communicates what has happened. *Full Metal Panic* (Kôichi Chigura, 2005), *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Anno, 1995) and *Gunparade March: Operation One* are focused on the triggered devices as the birth of chaos and a solution to finish conflicts.

One understands how complicated it is to wipe out from the collective mind of the Japanese the register of the bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is an event that took place a little more than a half a century ago, after all. Inheriting very much this historic context, the *Future Boy Conan* series reveals a story of a 'machine-civilization' which compromised mankind's future. In the attempt to flee from holocaust aftermath, individuals, as we said previously, get on board a spaceship adverting technical problems, and it does not manage to escape from gravity force, crashing down in destroyed Earth. "Conan" is the future boy in the sense that his return to Earth is a return after the apocalypse, the destruction. The whole story unfolds on an island, the unique area left unexplainably intact, remaining untouched by devastation.

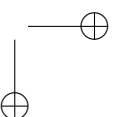
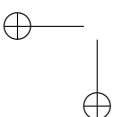
Experience and Past are positioned as something identical. In Kenneth Boulding's view, one of the characteristics of human condition is that "(...) whereas all experiences are of the past, all decisions are about the future" (cit. in Polak, *op. cit.*: p. V). Replaying the catastrophe is to review the past in the case of anime and videogames fitting in such genre. One responds to the future by showing machines dealing with delicate situations from the

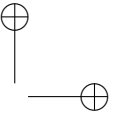
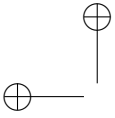


human or material point of view. The images of the catastrophe are consolidating a 'graphic hyperbole' that introduces itself as a starting point ("statement") for the future. Since nuclear catastrophe is recent in Japan, recollections are added to the countless demographics of imaginary beings in anime; the remaining thing is precisely the signic logic of repetition, of a sign recognized, carrying the 'replayed catastrophe and the catastrophic repetition'. Like Barthes (1982) said, the sign is what repeats itself. Without repetition there is no sign, because there has to be "recognition" (*Ibidem*). The pattern theme of the replaying catastrophe in anime grounds this animation film genre. One recognizes the anime style for its massive destruction signs. By bringing altogether recognition signs and futuristic images, the anime's brave world knows several narrative continuations. In the greatest anime narratives, catastrophe is a theme inseparable from the image sophistication, nearly establishing a backside from the same "graphya", the same graphics style; the thing which really fascinates the *otaku* audience is the repetition of the cataclysm images.

The catastrophe replayed does not vanish from anime as a theme, since it was already latent in black-and white manga. Replaying the catastrophe is to repeat it for the future to come. Thus, science fiction futurologies featured in the fantastic anime films reveal something new. What appears now appears after something had vanished, and as it appears, it appears as being new. News and repetition are for the future much as the ancient and knowledge are for the past. Søren Kierkegaard (*op. cit.*) analyzed the "repetition" topic and claimed that freedom always shows another of repetition, as if a new field of possibilities would exist every time something is repeated. The thing freedom fear is change, and not repetition. Each time something is repeated changes happen. In the Deleuzian sense, "repetition already has difference in itself" (Deleuze, 1989, translation is ours). For Søren Kierkegaard, repetition is awkward because it shows change with difference yet it ensures deception. Whenever something is repeated, uncanniness reappears in the sense that something designed a deception, a disappointment.

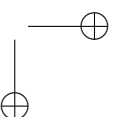
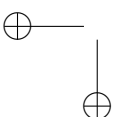
Repetition is only manifest by the second time, when its pattern had already been established on the first time, when unicity did not allow to obviously seeing the pattern, as there has to be a couple times at least. The Cold War image and the nuclear blasts in Japan left a trail, a rest, a sequence of events with their own mechanics. Thus, it matters to speak of a happening that compels a series of events and innovations through replay. As we contemplate

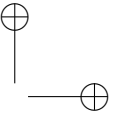
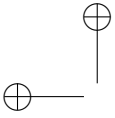




anime's holocaust images we have before us the revelation through the repetition of an early event, from which everything came out. Søren Kierkegaard says repetition is found in the mind of the individual, that this is the one noticing it. When the repetition is assimilated, it becomes interior and transfiguration is repeated. On this extent, the anime viewer notices the repetition; the transfiguration lying in images, he interiorizes the replay. Movement is becoming, and it is upon this mechanic that the anime images production stands on, the repetition of Year Zero as a starting point. Kierkegaard refers: "(...) repetition is a decisive expression for what 'recollection' was for the Greeks. Just as they taught that all knowledge is a recollection, so will modern philosophy teach that the whole of life is a repetition" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 33). Having said this, repetition is a way of remembering, a form of register; life is a repetition because it is based on a continuity. The fact of images of catastrophe being impossible to detach from anime means the latter becomes past pretty fast, due to its short commercial cycle, its appearing-disappearing regime established by the fashionable update logic. Anime images turn to "recollections", something being a reflection, a register and a manifestation of past times. Replaying the image of the nuclear blast is to make present the earlier cataclysm, that it is more noticeable as a repetition since it makes the image become a 'catastrophe-becoming'. In this sense, Kierkegaard enlightens us: "Repetition and recollection are the same movement, only in opposite directions; for what is recollected has been, is repeated backwards, whereas repetition properly called is recollected backwards" (*Idem, Ibidem*). Across this way, the catastrophe recollection in images is a way to test the past, which becomes effective in the replaying regime, through becoming. Thus "recollection" is in 'The Anime Galaxy' a method for updating the past, for collecting fragments from the explosive catastrophe seized in anime narratives.

Repetition is a new thing (images from videogames, anime in replay), while "recollection" is old and of no instantaneous usage. It is necessary to have youth to desire and "recollect" (learn from tradition), yet repetition demands courage (as in to face a collective trauma). Under Kierkegaard's perspective, life is a repetition. Due to this reason, "Repetition is reality, and it is the seriousness of life" (*Idem*: p. 35). The bottom line is that there is a dialectic of repetition, given that what is repeated is "already gone", since that, otherwise, repetition would be impossible. However, that is just what





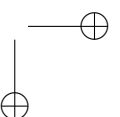
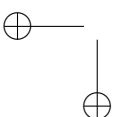
provides to repetition the updating character of it (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 52). In anime, replaying turns images into news.

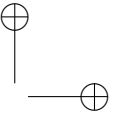
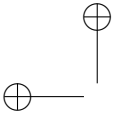
One could say that once the catastrophe is replayed, it is a way to ask history to be made again. This repetition leaves in a fertile stage the recollection that is way beyond the limit of catharsis and exorcism. The effect is bizarre, since all catastrophes become image and at the same time replayable: any catastrophic image is displayed in constant synonymy. Among all images the meaning is rendered the same, because they refer to an original image; they're mere new versions. The fragments of modern explosion are reconfigured in the implosive nature of anime images, which is typically post-modern. Zigmunt Bauman assumes that demolition is the proficiency territory of the post-modern mind ([1992, p. ix] in Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 222). With the redundant image of catastrophe the obsessive nature of the repetition is reinforced.

If it is possible to draw an analysis of the past as a lesson, then it will be surely possible to make an analysis of the replaying image of the past as being pedagogical. Yet, such “‘pedagogism’ of the catastrophe” may be in itself a disaster, as it is said by Peter Sloterdijk:

“The ‘pedagogism’ of the catastrophe ultimately fails too in the name of an aesthetic subversion. Because in Modernity it practically impossible to provide a metaphysical or moral sense to the major sinisters, one cannot in any way enable images of catastrophes with moral captions. As the ‘legibility’ of catastrophes ends, its phenomenal, aesthetic visibility is unraveled” (*op. cit.*: p. 78, translation is ours).

To explore the catastrophe in images as a pedagogic instrument may seem meaningless, for the images might be a bigger aesthetic subversion than the underlying pedagogy, i.e., what could be learned from the images of the major sinisters is becoming replaced by the simple act of aesthetic contemplation of those representations. When it comes to anime, the subversive aesthetic, the repetitive nature of a shock raised many times beyond its original power, are under the spotlight. The shockwave is on hold, the nuclear explosion lightning, but all that happened in the Year Zero of 1945, the same year marking a “post”, from “posthumous”, in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Auschwitz. In *Barefoot Gen*, Mori depicts in its point of view all things happening by the time



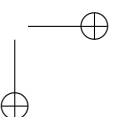
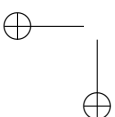


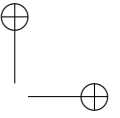
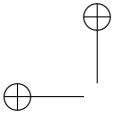
the bombings start, trying to surpass the aesthetic effect of the blasts in anime. Replaying the catastrophe is an allusion to the major sinister. All that is left is the impulse for self-overcoming, a problematic relationship and also a pragmatic one of the catastrophe. Sloterdijk affirms: “The catastrophic became a category. (...) the catastrophe is far more announced than that it is registered” (*Ibidem*: p. 72, translation is ours). Anime series like *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, by Hideaki Anno (Gainax studio), return to the nuclear image as blank moment out of which contemporary history unfolds. In *Evangelion* the category of catastrophe is exploited; in the year 2015, after a cataclysm eradicates half of humanity and raising the degree of resources scarceness, the new Tokyo 3 city is attacked by the Angels, gigantic biomechanical creatures, the young man Shinji attempts to respond as mankind’s alternative (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 57) with the Eva Unit 01 vehicle. Reading in-between-the-lines of *Evangelion* is to read the apocalypse in its full re-inscription, the redundancy of catastrophe “pedagogicized”, whose message delivered is “In youth lies the hope to fight back the ultimate fatality”.

#### 2.2.4 Metatopias

Among all the themes appearing most often in anime, “metatopia” is for sure one of the most positive ones. Umberto Eco (1989) defines the concept in the text *Sobre os Espelhos e Outros Ensaios*. But before explaining the meaning of “metatopia” it is convenient to speak of “utopia”. The word *topos* means in Greek “place” and discourse (Boym, *op. cit.*: p. 77), and “utopia” implies the “new place”, one not existing. The future does not exist yet, thus it has no place. Nonetheless, utopia is straight addressing the “future”, despite considering that something will only be utopian as it gathers inexistent condition in the *hic et nunc*, the “here and now” (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 22). The new concepts of “place” and of “future” are addressing utopia in the extent that, according to Eco, it is “possible to imagine [that] the likely narrated world is a parallel one to our own, [that] it exists somewhere though we normally don’t have access granted to it” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 202, translation is ours). In short, “utopia” is something projective, which assembles a figuration of the ideal society and world standing far away from our topological real.

In Polak’s assessment, “The utopia (...) has a unique synthetic aspect which combines the civic, the political, the socio-economic, the humanitarian,



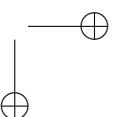
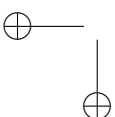


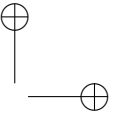
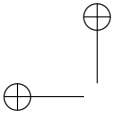
the cultural, and the religious. It offers a total plan for human regeneration” (*op. cit.*: p. 174). It is precisely this "synthesizing" role of the utopia that for Polak it is proposing a wide domain of regeneration. The author also exalts three areas in which utopia exerts influence upon the course of history: “(...) as a buffer for the future, as a driving force toward the future, and as a trigger of social progress” (*Ibidem*: p. 179). From these arguments on, "metatopias" are by now definable, as they function beyond their topological (space) and chronological (time) reach, following the synthetic aspect common in utopia. Metatopias perform as an inspiring image from the future (for the present) and they call for the establishment of changes – progress. For Boym “New utopias are neither political nor artistic, but rather technological and economic” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 346), as it happens in Japan.

In the anime artworks and in the videogames we tested, it is noticeable that metatopia consists in an anticipation romance. Narratives are focused on a future closer to our present time, rather than centering on a distant future. About “metatopia”, Eco states "Ultimately, the possible world represents a future stage of the present day real world" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 202, translation is ours). The definition of metatopia as being "meta" "topos" relies on this argument, a place beyond space and time, current time extended onto the future. We draw the conclusion that “metatopia” is the outcome of a concern of who is eager towards the future, towards change. In agreement to Polak, life does not have to be as it is because “Man can reform and re-create after any image he chooses” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 2). The utopian projection character is accelerated in “metatopia” and anticipates the image of future, enforcing the reflection of present time in the future. Future is justified in contemporary times. Grounded on the image of a potential future, present time fantasies evolve and they adapt to the effective version of the image of the future. “Metatopia” displays the image of an idealized future at the expense of an image which belongs to an accomplished past. Polak stands for this duplicity in the image of the future, without Eco’s arguments on “metatopia” to meet a counterpoint, for the double process of the future is that it happens as planned and gets ready to occur as we wish.

Sloterdijk introduces a very much relevant theory, helpful for us to understand the “metatopias” theme, as he speaks of “kinetic utopia” in the following excerpt: “The project of Modernity is consequently based (...) on a ‘kinetic utopia’: all the movement of the world must become the accomplishment of

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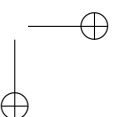
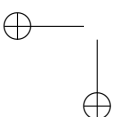


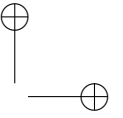
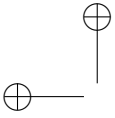


the plan we have for it” (*op. cit.*: p. 24, translation is ours). This is to say, Modernity is like a second side of the “kinetic utopia”, of the new place for movement, of the acceleration territory that has to be accomplished. Thus, being modern is to be mobile, kinetic and utopian; it is about being capable of performing in the real world what earlier was in blueprints. Put in other words, being modern is to plan the future. So, “metatopia” is typically contemporary, as it presents plans for future times. It is not only-so about a technological utopia, but a “metatopia” instead, since the anime images show what is likely to be manufactured in Japan (except the impossible Physics of “transformer” robots) and the kind of future the Japanese idealize. In its videography of machines, Japan continues to announce the vision of a future similar to our time – a continuation. Let’s say, from a “metatopian” point of view, technology ceased to be neutral, so it’s a part of itself to show us the future. Therefore a “metatopia” could be regarded as the way future is promoted, a present-committed future; carries with himself another historical determination [*ganbari*] (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 282), unravels social and technical coordination. Primarily relying on global images, Japanese animation films appeal to a common civilization concept, showing a future seemingly as the one featured in the movie *Blade Runner*. We cannot disregard that Svetlana Boym had said already that “Fantasies of the past determined by needs of the present have a direct impact on the realities of the future” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. xvi), as “nostalgia” and “future” remain interlinked.

### 2.2.5 The Future is Blade-Runnered

For a start we underline that a “Blade-Runnered” future is composed by images coming out of every pattern theme in anime here analyzed. In-between the colorful and fluorescent skies of the “metatopia” universes and the industrial fogs of the dystopian worlds we have the picture of a “Blade-Runnered” future. “The future appeared to be saturated with Japanese elements, a Western perception distilled in *Blade Runner*’s enormously influential image of a futuristic Los Angeles that resembled Tokyo” (Bolton: p. ix in Bolton et al. [Ed.], 2007). The expression is originally used by William Gibson in *Pattern Recognition* (2003), in the excerpt in which the destruction of the environment by the industry is criticized: “Now it’s been Blade Runnered for half a century of use and pollution” (p. 146). In the sequence Gibson



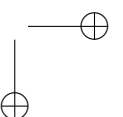
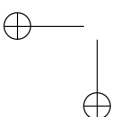


makes use of the "Blade-Runnered" expression, man's negative intervention over the environment invokes images from Scott's film, obviously. The influence of *Blade Runner* in anime is huge. It is a part of the great themes that the future be "Blade-Runnered", as the present in becoming in anime is a world of machines, cutting-edge images, omnipresent computation and technologies undistinguishable from what they're copying. Twisted cybernetic entities and fortresses resembling airships, shiny adverts enabled in massive buildings and ridden robots are things we often find in "Blade-Runnered" futures. Such argument is signed down by Bolton *et al.* (2007: p. ix), who believes Scott's film anticipated William Gibson's cyberpunk novels (*Neuromancer* [1995] and *Idoru* [1998]), "which took an adrenalized dreamscape Japan as their model for the future" (in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007).

Amidst the machines' uprisings and the war between humans and androids, one notices that narratives happen in a "limit city" (an expression from Trías, *op. cit.*: p. 19, translation is ours), urban spaces on the fringe of sustainability. Tense characters are integrating the horizonless world outlined by "Blade-Runnerness"; the world enabled with the best from "metatopias" (the robotic friend) the worst from dystopias (rise of the machines).

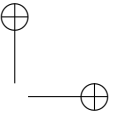
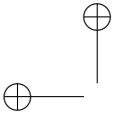
It is most likely a post-human world what the "Blade-Runnerness" holds for us, given that reality also faces intervention from machines. A catastrophe took place or was gradually happening and disfigured the environment so that androids, airships, orbital stations and other kind of constructs could share the same 'limit space'. In another previous text, *My Own Private Tokyo*, William Gibson describes a moment of his when he was dining late noodles on a street kiosk, in Shinjuku, something the author finds as "The classic cliché better-than-*Blade Runner*" (2001: p. 1, §3). This is one of excerpts establishing an allusion to the "Blade-Runnered" world, as if *Blade Runner* could be translated by the images of Tokyo's rainy and overcrowded streets; a type of scenography.

"Blade-Runnerness" encompasses a kind of colossal and brilliant architecture, smart machines, groundbreaking vehicles and new communication media. The imaginary in question is featured even in Masamune Shirow's *Ghost in The Shell* manga. Shirow starts his graphic novel, by saying: "It's the near future. The world has become highly information-intensive, with a vast corporate network covering the planet, electrons and light pulsing through it. But the nation-state and ethnic groups still survive" (1995: p. 5). How-



ever, continues to depict his version of the "Blade-Runnered" world by saying that on the edge of Asia there's a strange corporate state conglomerate called "Japan" (*Ibidem*: p. 5). In the pattern theme of "Blade-Runneress" the focal point is not the future, but rather the present. All stunts are accomplished in the present, both good and bad ones. In 1973, Polak applied the expression "defuturizing". In his belief, the "future defuturized" (in *Idem*: p. 194) was something to be concerned about, since that to "defuturize" would represent a withdrawal from the constructive thought on the future, in order to have the individual to penetrate the "trenches" of the present world (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 195). "Blade-Runneress" is thus a theme on a reality in which all that there was to think about the future has already been thought. It falls again onto the present a major preoccupation, the everyday life realism brings altogether every concern once technology manages to accomplish everything. Within a no-future world, or "abstracted from the future" (Polak), which could be similar to a mere scenario (Gibson) of the present, all that is left are the symptoms of a "Blade-Runneress"; the metropolitan set design is a territory for the machines, for constructs believing also they do not have any future whatsoever.

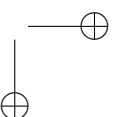
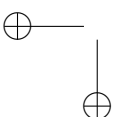
There are innumerable film artworks assigning visual consistency to a "Blade-Runnered" world. *I, Robot* presents the large-scale distribution to all society, while *Total Recall* (Paul Verhoeven, 1990) illustrates that dystopian future, where machines overcome humans, and the virtual surpasses reality. One of the most effusive depictions belongs to George Lucas, who in *Star Wars II: Attack of The Clones* offers the audience a city more "Blade-Runnered" than *Blade Runner* itself (excessive iconography is imposed this way in anime) during on the pursuits engaging Obi-Wan-Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker (the future Darth Vader) across the skies of a megalopolis that is an augmented version of *Blade Runner*'s Los Angeles. Bigger, full of airships crossing the skies in default routes in-between skyscrapers, the city seems to have banished the surrounding natural environment. Another indistinction shared by the "Blade-Runneress" is related to the night-and-day binomial. One does not understand whether it is day or night. Unlike the diurnal Delta City planned in *Robocop* by OCP (Omni Consumer Products), the remaining film artworks on the "Blade-Runnered" future elect the night as the supreme moment of the megalopolis. In *Aeon Flux* (Karyn Kusama, 2005) the same thing occurs: the sophisticated city lies surrounded by wild and predator forest. In *A.I.* (2001) Steven Spielberg, displays a hyper-illuminated world,



where androids meet, fight and establish commercial relations, the “Flesh Fair”. Standing far away from this place, the director unravels the spot where man met his demise, the place of skyscrapers submerged in water derived from the polar meltdown. For instance, in *Battlestar Galactica*, the inhabitants of Caprica face extinction and *Minority Report* (Steven Spielberg, 2003) presents controlled cities where perpetrators are seized even before their victims are killed.

Japanese animation films as *Appleseed* (2004), *Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence*, *Robotech: The Macross Saga* and *Cyber City Oedo 808 Vol1-3* (1999) have this super-urban, extremely metropolitan scenario. In the perspective Marshall McLuhan respects in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1994), the city itself is understood as an immense factory, a mega-machine of urban flows, ever since industrialization. What one verifies in William Gibson’s science fiction novels, especially in *Neuromancer* (1995) and *Idoru* (1998) is this portrait of a “Blade-Runnered” world. The first attempt to display the “Blade-Runnered” city in anime was in *Metropolis* (2001), the “re-make” Rintaro did on Fritz Lang’s homonymous film, whose message consisted in underlining that between the humanity cloistered on the subsoil and the enlightened elites there should be consensus. In other words, the message from Rintaro’s artwork is still the same as Fritz Lang’s: the primitive cohabiting with the modern. Rintaro in *Metropolis* opts for making an expressionist depiction of today’s Tokyo.

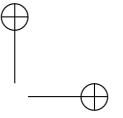
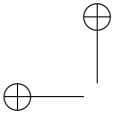
More classical approaches in ‘The Anime Galaxy’, also performed by Rintaro, are working on “Blade-Runnerness” differently, as it occurs in *Galaxy Express 999* – both film (1982) and anime series (1982b) – in which Rintaro makes Tetsuro to stand out in the way the little hero defies the Machine Empire and Count Mecha. Tetsuro is amazed as he sees the Megalopolis for the first time, before getting onboard of the Galaxy Express 999 to head for other planets (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 36). Along with Rintaro’s artworks, still on the same decade, “Blade-Runnerness” is featured in *Akira*. Not much after the opening scene, Tetsuo drives his red motorcycle across avenues of Neo-Tokyo’s colossal magenta skyscrapers. Shinji Aramaki sculpts the mirroring and luminous urban landscape of Olympus in *Appleseed* (2004); in the artwork *Appressed: Ex Machina*, Aramaki (2007) suggests that “defuturizing” the future is to do everything today; and that sustainable cities are cities managed and patrolled



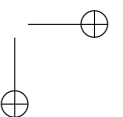
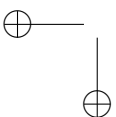
by machines. In *Astro Boy's* Metro City, the "Blade-Runnered" city functions as restricted condominium, underneath which a rusty world is evolving.

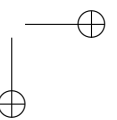
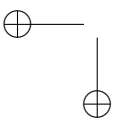
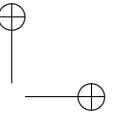
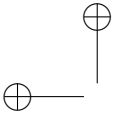
Closer to the Los Angeles featured in *Blade Runner*, the cities in *Bubblegum Crisis Collection Vol.3* (Takayami Fumihiko, *et al.*, 1987), in agreement with Poitras (*op. cit.*: p. 36), *Cowboy Bebop*, *Cyber City Oedo 808 Vol.1-3*, *Noir*, *Vol.1* and *Sin – The Movie* have a common element: crime. On the "Blade-Runnered" urban poles, crime is a part of city mechanics because it nurtures the predation game. In fact, half of anime videogames on "Blade-Runnerness" enable detective story intrigues, which start from the crime scene and position the player as a detective daring to step in the megalopolis, or as somebody simply trying to run away from non-human cities. Let's see: in *Escape From Cybercity*, Tetsuro has to escape from a city patrolled by robot cops. In *Blade Runner's* (1997) videogame version there is an anime character (Lucy), the one who in the end of the game runs away with Ray McCoy – the young detective. *Shenmue 1-2* (2000-2001) begins the story with a murder causing Ryu Hazuki to fly to Hong-Kong in order to solve it. Departing likewise from a "Blade-Runnered" scenario and from a cop-style narrative, *Yakuza 4* (2009) permits us to play with Kiryu and face Japanese mafia gangs known for their "anti-social acts" (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 265), envisioning rise and power for a criminal in the streets full of promotional neons of Japanese cities as Tokyo and Okinawa. *Ghost In The Shell* (1997) makes use of a more "anime-esque" style and require one to command an arthropod robot to fight crime; his advantage lies in his movement across every type of surfaces and directions.

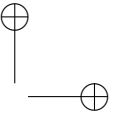
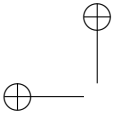
On the other half of anime videogames on "Blade-Runnerness", the *Final Fantasy VII-XIII* (1997-2010) series is a benchmark in the way it fantasizes and shows cities and populations. It's common in the "Blade-Runnerness" pattern theme to be featured in "fantastic reality" videogames. Other games (also RPGs), as *Rogue Galaxy*, present much singular cities, metropolises in Mayan or Aztec-style, marked by how floating sailing boats dock onto high-towers. In short, the "Blade-Runnerness" theme is usual in anime; it starts in cinema and crosses the genre borders onto the videogame. The influences from the anime style are demonstrated in the glossy and mighty corporate buildings, like those of *Akira* (1988), coming in the horizon line in *Last Resort*, a videogame where the player pilots an airship through the skies of the dystopia of machines. And in this future, all existing things are "Blade-



Runnered", meaning that there is a ruin from the past, something left from previous ages. Svetlana Boym believes that "The ruin is not merely something that reminds us of the past; it is also a reminder of the future, when our present becomes history" (*op. cit.*: p. 79).





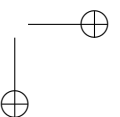
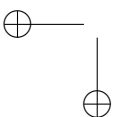


## Chapter 3

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The boldness of anime is very much related to Japanese idiosyncrasies. Likewise, urges to say that Japan is not exclusively modern, as “Modernity is now, more than ever, the condition of all cultures in this world”, as it is alleged by Morley & Robins (*op. cit.*: p. 171), an inescapable rule to anime’s graphic culture. Because it is a Japanese culture, it proposes innovation. With anime the disfunctionality of the major narratives is covered up. When Lyotard (*op. cit.*) speaks of the “post-modern condition”, this is what it is about, it is possible to exist narratives surrogating the role of an already overcome “grand narrative” (Hiroki, 2007), where updates are smashing larger narratives from other epochs with their kinetic weight. The global change begins between 1970 and 1995.

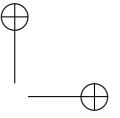
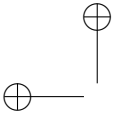
In anime, past, present and future are elements of the utmost importance, as each dimension of time has motives inspiring anime designers. For example, the pre-modern figure of the *samurai* warrior, the fighter and *ninja* warrior have their own permanent place in anime’s most common themes. *Tekken 6* (2009) is one of the videogames selecting the fighters, while *Shinobi* (2002) and *Tenchu: Shadow Assassins* (2009) applaud the *ninja* warrior. Artworks underscoring characters from ancient Japan are many. In Japanese Pre-Modernity, the object of major highlight is the *karakuri* automaton, which played the role of serving tea to feudal lords, it was meant as a status symbol (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 45). Due to Asian animism, there was the belief that *karakuri* carried a ghost within their shell. *Shinto* is the name for the religion



of animism and it is the one attracting more followers in Japan. If we integrate the *karakuri* in the animist view, we understand why there is the belief that they may have a life of their own.

By the time Japan is revolutionized by the *Meiji* Reform, a new field was open to a modern field of possibilities. The Modernity project did not separate from the automata, for the future of Japan is still associated to them. In a nation in which the population worships *Shinto*, there is always a chance for robots to become self-aware.

To make Japan a Modern place required a violent process of adaptation to the way the Westerners did and thought on things, for which Japan was prepared after some time of seclusion. Fascinated by uniforms, rules and theatrical discourse, Japan rose up from the ashes of World War Two to become the major power in field of electronics, robotics and computing. Entertainment, namely the one of popular type, faced alterations with the technological revolution that began in post-war period. While Cold War got the attention of the world, the new trends and technical improvements were considered intimidating for having to lead the individual to a constant evolution. Toffler called the phenomenon "Future Shock" (*op. cit.*), a phenomenon that inherited the fight for technological supremacy among super-powers, originally from the two preceding World Wars (Singer, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 89). Already in the end of the decade of 70, the West faced technology's power by excellence, henceforth in the Orient: Japan. It is typical in contemporary times to try overcoming previously established barriers. Historiography itself, the record of actions and human deeds reached an end for Fukuyama (*op. cit.*). To this author one is living a "post-historic" time, since history has already fulfilled its designs. Jean Baudrillard (1984) accuses the Post-Modernity stage of being linked to "post-history" (in Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 149). In this age, one attends also to an event triggered today's Modern Japan, an "Asian Renaissance" (Sloterdijk, *op. cit.*). Countries like People's Republic of China (PRC), Korea, Singapore, Malasya, Macau, Hong-Kong and Taipei are following the ferocious rhythm of industrialized Japan. Resurrected from the ashes, Japanese society started an industrial rebirth within its territory. As an effect, there's a spread of Japanese culture, a phenomenon entitled "Japanization" (Kojève cit. in Agamben, *op. cit.*; Morley & Robins, *op. cit.*). Through anime videogames and films, much as it happened earlier in manga, Japan promotes itself internationally.

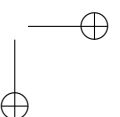
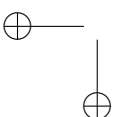


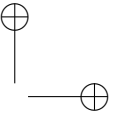
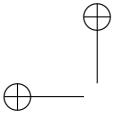
## 3.1 PRE-MODERNITY

### 3.1.1 Karakuri – Ancient Automata

Beyond the references in essays to the objects themselves, the *karakuri* are especially mentioned in two artworks: one anime film and one videogame. They come in Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in The Shell: Innocence* (2004), in the first place, and secondly as characters in the *Tokobot* (2005), a videogame developed by Tecmo about futuristic *karakuri* automata built in the steam-engine age. An adventurer named Bolt finds them and uses them for handling big mechanisms. A part from such ludic references, the *karakuri* story is examined in works of theoretical reflection. Bearing the purpose of understanding this Pre-Modern figure, one has to keep in memory what Polak tells us in *The Image of The Future*: "Images of the future are always aristocratic in their origin" (op. cit.: p. 13). Luyten (1991), Schodt (2002) and Hornyak (2006) describe Pre-Modernity in Japan, the epoch in which only aristocrats possessed automata, something that has always been a status sign, the whim of some feudal lords. We find in the *karakuri* a technological register, the most sophisticated thing ever done in ancient Japan. It must be said that the *karakuri* seems far more evolved than it actually was. In fact, Brown (p. 231 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), considers the *karakuri* to be animated, instead of being automatic, being this kind of particularity that makes it odd to the degree that the author depicts its animation as something "uncanny" (2008: p. 232 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). We cannot disregard as well that the *karakuri* were the first wood-mechanical androids, pioneers of mechanicism in the era of the *shogun* regime. In our epoch, it may seem awkward the passion the anime audience nurtures towards the "mecha" genre. However, the high castes of Japanese public endorsed a 'machine-culture'. Without the pre-robotics stage of *karakuri*, today's androids would not be primary characters in film stories or anime games. In anime's present time techno-culture, devotion exists, not for early automata, but towards the new mechanicist mascots that are no longer established as deluxe objects to delight privileged minorities.

Not only the ancient automata *karakuri* were representative of pre-history in robotics, but they were as well illustrative of the "social machine" concept (Hornyak, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 21), a model that real robotics has more recently adopted. *Karakuri* were the first social machines. By then in the *Edo* (1600-

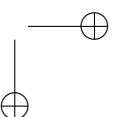
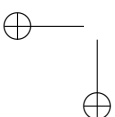


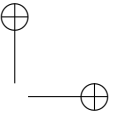
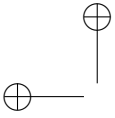


1867) period, the automata, resembling a clock in construction procedures, cause people to be delirious, as they' posed as something quite wonderful. Such need for wonderful in noticeable in anime artworks of today; it works as a visual *élan* in anime aesthetic. Some of the most common *karakuri* [*zashiki karakuri*] during the *Edo* period were basically room automata, tea-serving dolls; they would wait until every tea cup would be returned before they would head for their initial position. It was usual to have the *kimomo* robots to serve drinks and to bow in a way of greeting. Matthews (2003-2004) explains a little about the historical context of the automata as icons of Japan:

“Shortly after the ‘karakuri’ was created, Japan fell into its isolationist era, banning all foreign influence and contact, except a small amount of Dutch trading in Dejima. Despite this, the ‘karakuri’ tradition continued. Furthermore, spurred on by developments imported from Western clock manufacturing, the dolls became increasingly complex and performed an ever broader range of tasks and amusements. These advancements eventually froze since the Japanese quest for knowledge seemed driven by the arts. This was in stark contrast to the West, where the development of the automaton was intrinsically related to scientific advancement” (p. 4).

Having said this, the historical context in which the *karakuri* automaton comes up is of the extreme importance, because his appearance coincides with Japan's protectionist period against the West, the same period in which merchants have jeopardized the tight logic of the feuds with their thriving trading routes, which were inconvenient for the *shogun*'s (Benedict, *op. cit.*). By the time Japan opens again his frontiers to the world, welcoming an aggressive industrialization, the cultural heritage of the *karakuri*, that remained intact, absorbs science's technical discourse in its own way because it was more related to a form of handcraft, a popular art (Hornyak, *ult.op. cit.*). What the automaton assimilated in terms of Western mechanicism from clockworks, made it to become an increasingly complex artifact, as sustained by Matthews. Unlike the West, where the automaton has always been mastered by science, that the turning point happens only after the *Meiji* Reform with the opening of Japan to modernization.

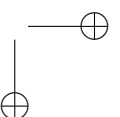
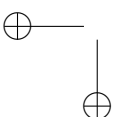


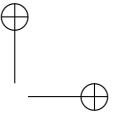
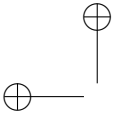


The type of drama and theatrics noticed in the behavior of anime robots is a fact. But beyond that, ancient automata reveal an empathy relation towards Japanese theatre. A strong component of robotics already existed in the puppet theatre, in the sense that the perfect puppet was not supposed to denounce its puppeteer. In some 17th century *Kage-e* theatre plays shadows were all a viewer could see, although other kinds of theatre as the *Joruri* Theatre (Brown: p. 223 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), now called *Bunraku* (Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 160; Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 244), were more popular than *Kabuki*; the puppets were not seemingly different from the *karakuri* automata. As for the specific case of the *Joruri* Theatre the dolls have moving eyes and articulated fingers, reaching nearly 1, 2 meter height, for they requested three people to manipulate them. Their dimensions were considerable for the viewing audience and for the puppeteers too. Another inter-relationship point, connecting puppets and anime characters consists in the fact of just as in *Kabuki* Theatre characters spoke in monologue, normally expressing themselves through the body, something that later was turned into a convention for female characters.

Still in the time of the *karakuri*, Nagoya was already the industrial core of Japan. Nearby this city, the locals practice an ancient ritual of pulling a "mobile temple" from which puppets would be raised. The annual ceremony is entitled *Kamezaki Shiohi Festival* and it is meant for displaying traditional puppets, disclosing a whole narrative on clothes, in the way they're manipulated and in the temple aesthetic. The ornaments are associated with the entire narrative aesthetic; the celebration exaggeration is privileged. The mobile temple is a way of transporting fiction machinery to population, as if there was a world seized inside the scenario. Practically speaking, the temple is merely a decorated "car" going through a course. Its puppets move along in dramatic action [*Funa Benkei*], based on the *Noh* Theatre style, which is defined by quick movements, supernatural plots [and] weird sounds (Levi, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 161). One may state this type of allegoric car was revealed as if a sanctuary was endowed with mobility.

To think on the *karakuri* in this historic context is to think how Japan always had the appetite for Modernity, for transfiguration. In the theatrical game of masks and in the puppet theatre, remains a change of form that fits the technical discourse. One of the authors describing puppet theatres of the *karakuri* epoch is Hornyak, who says the mobile temples were sort of "outdoor cabaret" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 19). The ritualistic *Kamezaki Shiohi Festival*

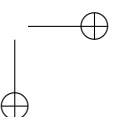
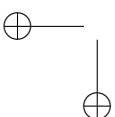


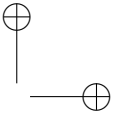
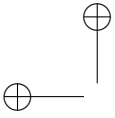


dates back to late 15th century and it was defined as something full of acrobatics and baroque scenography. It is no way by chance that the fact of having *karakuri* puppet automata looking like the ones manipulated by the puppeteers in the mobile temples. Moreover, all these pre-robotic figures are symptomatic of the *karakuri* art, given that this Japanese word means "trick", "mechanism" and "gadget". Just as Hornyak makes clear, "The trick is how the 'karakuri' seem to act independently. The gears, rods, silk cords and puppeteers controlling them are concealed in and under their bodies, and watching the little acrobat twirl through the bars without visible human intervention is pure magic. These automata seem autonomous" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 17). The whole challenge is about making the staging [*mise en scène*] to be acceptably real, as if there were no puppeteers in the first place.

One of the interesting details of the *karakuri* consisted, just as in the Victorian-looking dolls, in the way dolls had their own faces, due to which people's reactions changed accordingly to the unicity of a certain face. Shobe Tamaya IX created cypress and bamboo wood automata, carving each chunk and articulating the pieces. Tamaya symbolizes wood-androids lineage techno-culture, prior to today's metal mechanicism. Ever since then, in 1780, his descendants have repaired and rebuilt wood mechanical dolls. The thing making the *karakuri* something extremely innovative is its functioning is social and ritual circumstances of Japanese culture, this makes it a direct antecedent of the social care robot Japan develops in this day and age. As the *karakuri* interacts with humans it manifests as a limited automaton but interactive, though.

Through the hands of craftsmen like Hisashige Tanaka the *karakuri* were the most advanced constructs during the *Edo* ("Old Tokyo") period in Japan, i.e., before *Meiji*, between 1600 and 1868 (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 22). It is for this reason that at that time many Masters were nicknamed as "Gadget Wizard" [*Karakuri Giemon*] for working in clockmaking and in automata, typically Baroque instruments. The masters of the ancient art of building *karakuri* were "Japanese Renaissance Men", as stated by Hornyak (*ult. op. cit.*: p. 25). Such kind of rebirth demanded mechanicism, technoscience and culture, another vision of the human and the heritage of clocks. The *karakuri* are standing out thanks to imitating adorable children, and not because they are robots copying adults. The inner technology of the *karakuri* made them mysterious and peculiar constructs.

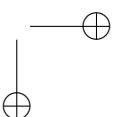
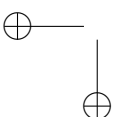




### 3.1.2 Shinto Religion

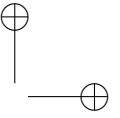
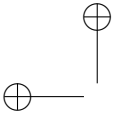
For the Japanese, the *karakuri* was seemingly assuming a life of his own, achieving the levels of magic. The reason why Japan adopted this automaton was due to the presence of something deeply more structural in Japanese society: *Shinto* religion. "Shintoism" is the religion most Japanese worship as mentioned by Benedict (*op. cit.*: p. 30) and Sugimoto (*op. cit.*: p. 255). In the known book *Anime Essentials*, Gilles Poitras invokes the *Shinto* (*op. cit.*: p. 38) religion theme as he examines the forest creatures in *My Neighbor Totoro*, an animation film from Miyazaki (1988). In this society, religious practices are a question of tradition, rather than of rational analysis. Levi advances that "'Shinto' is a religion of life. They [the Japanese] are born 'Shinto', they marry 'Shinto'" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 24-25). This non-exclusive, indigenous religion, deprived of scriptures, relies on the devotion of *mana*, the energy of all things (Sugimoto, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 256). Besides, their most known and exuberant festivals [as those with mobile temples in *karakuri* at Nagai] are *Shinto*. Among other things, it is a part of the devotion towards this religious creed, to see the machine as a creature and believing one day it could be alive. This religious belief is what legitimates the devotion for robots as beings and not as things, instead, something Schodt (1988) remarks too: "To comprehend the soul of a robot, and to understand its true potential and limitations, we must think of it as a friend. We must become a robot" (p. 211).

"Mecha", which is the anime film type on robots, is an *otaku* audience conqueror, as it remains a fact that Japan is mostly and traditionally a devotee to the polytheist *Shinto* religion. It is Sugimoto (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 256) who points out that *Shinto* includes elements of animism. As for anime, Takahiro Hayakawa (*op. cit.*) declares that "the major characteristic of anime [is] Animism – Asian Animism". For this motive, anime is posed as a videography of machines (especially considering the analyzed artworks). According to Monnet (2007), in film theory about artworks from 1910 to 1920 there was another conceptual expression commonly used, that one must remind too, that of "cinematic animism". This "cinematic animism" was referring to the ability of cinema in enabling an object or the monumental world recorded on film with a power that would make inanimate matter seem alive (p. 200 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Besides "cinematic animism", there are two other terms provided by LaMarre (2006: p. 120 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006), those of



"cinematism" and "animetism". The first one points out the cinematic style, whereas the second indicates a specific anime style. Yet it is Anne Allison (2006: p. 18) who speaks of "techno-animism", the inclination of Japan to face technical devices as creatures, in a similar fashion to what happened with the *karakuri*.

Being a polytheist in the "land of the rising sun" means to cultivate a tradition where everything has a soul. "In Shinto's animistic beliefs individuals as well as natural (...) force such as animals, rocks, and mountains could become 'kami'" [spirits; God] (Napier, 2001: p. 185). To practice *Shinto* means to believe that everything has a life of its own. Apart from "shintoism" one also notices the Japanese follower of Buddhist tradition understands that all has a soul and reaches the divine in the afterlife (Sugimoto, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 256). Benedict underscores that, affirming that "Any Japanese becomes 'kami' after death" (*op. cit.*: p. 127). However, it is "shintoism" that attributes soul to artificial, inanimate beings. *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* and *Princess Mononoke* (Miyazaki, 1997) are two artworks focused on the spirits issue, on *post mortem* life and the primary energy of every being. In the first case, scientists are looking for rare spirits they need to improve comprehension and save the Earth (Blue Gaia). On the second one, nature turns against humans after the forest-God is killed. Some characters in *Princess Mononoke* have the ability to see *kami* (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 38). The topic of spirits is featured in the "uncanny" theme analyzed by Sigmund Freud (*op. cit.*), who says: "Our analysis of instances of the uncanny has led us back to the old, animistic conception of the universe. This was characterized by the idea that the world was peopled with the spirits of human beings (...)" (p. 147). What makes the *Shinto* religion theme a relevant one for the analysis of anime is the fact of existing a special attention on animism. The machines represented in anime seem to be alive (computers, AI constructs and androids), like a human spirit had been allocated in their interior. The pre-modern Japan's citizen believed even more in such animistic condition of the universe, a way of facing the world like it had been peopled by spirits. "Animism" was associated with the "uncanny", as declared by Freud, for the "uncanniness" was more linked to the depiction of something related to death, corpses, spirits and ghosts (*op. cit.*: p. 148). That would be highest exponent of uncanniness, as eventually noticed in Mamoru Oshii's films, the *Ghost in The Shell* (1996) artworks,



which are about cyborgs embodying AI entities, spirits, ghosts in their cases. Despite being a creed, *Shinto*, is a permanent theme in anime.

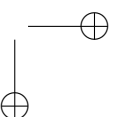
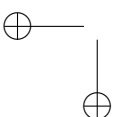
### 3.1.3 The Meiji Reform

In Japanese territory, the transition from the feudal to the modern age was signed by a reform that carried with itself the name of modern Japan's first Emperor, the *Meiji* Emperor (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 256). As it took place, between 1868 and 1912, this reform also changed the capital city. Through the *Meiji* (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 64) Reform Kyoto is replaced by Tokyo as the most important city.

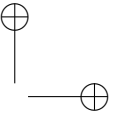
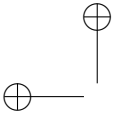
Until World War Two, Japan owed its unity to Emperor, whom according to *Shinto* tradition was faced like "super-religious object" (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 32). With the *Meiji* Reform, Japanese society suffers some core changes. Wong defends that this modernization process happens because the *Meiji* Reform had imported sophisticated models from the West to implement in every domain of the everyday life (p. 27 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Making reforms implied in the Emperor's case to restore its position on top of national hierarchy, as he forfeit the domestic reclusion suffered also by the Japanese collective. Let's not forget that during the feudal regime, and still in the epoch when the Tokugawa *shogun* ruled Japan, the country was under an isolationist politic, as decree by *shoguns* in response to the increasing might of the merchants' class, which, in case Japan would not be isolated from the West, would had dethroned the *shoguns* from power, as money was no obstacle. At this point, Benedict makes clear:

“When the Tokugawas, by the most drastic laws any nation has ever enforced, decreed the isolation of Japan in the seventeenth century, they cut the ground from under the feet of the merchants. Japan had had an overseas trade all up and down the coast of China and Korea and a class of traders had been inevitably developing” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 61-62).

Relying on the author, this rising class was becoming inconvenient, and the result was the *sakoku* politic, a set of directives imposed to disrupt the trade exchange in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the imposed measures allowed



only the circulation of small boats to avoid massive loads being transported. After all, a competitive, transnational merchant's class, empowered with financial resources and being influent in the region, could easily alter the mechanics of feudal society, since it was a class of people mobilized on behalf of business and, with their increasing richness, could even invest in weapons. The 17<sup>th</sup> century was a stage for many important changes in Japan's history. The merchants had no way how to dodge the law established by the *samurai* warriors and, besides, their class was considered to be destabilizing in Japan's feudal society (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 61). Amidst the social hierarchy, merchants were in the bottom line of the pyramid, as the farmers and the craftsmen were superior to them. Only *samurai* warriors were regarded as beings standing apart, non-normal people. For two centuries, Japan is isolated from the world and governed with rigid laws, applied in the name of social security and governmental stability. By the time feudalism falls in Europe and the powerful middle-class rises, the merchants and the *samurai* warriors, in the Japanese case, are allied. With the *Meiji* Reform, Japan is again open to the world in behalf of its modernization. Tokugawa's shogunate believed the firearms ought to be discarded, bearing the usage of the sword (LaMarre, 2009: p. 92) and because of that, it perished. Once the landlords are drawn away from power, Japan sets itself for a modern commercial economy, through which the merchants financially support the *Meiji* reform; one of functional character, rather than ideological or military, as affirmed by Benedict: "The merchants, who financed the Restoration forces, wanted to expand mercantilism but they never arraigned the feudal system" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 76). Dethroning the feudal system, dissuading the *Shogun* from the Japanese power cluster was the primary goal of the merchant resistance. Until this period, a "double law" prevailed, where the *shogun* ruled and the Emperor was but symbolical, which expires in 1868 with the Emperor Restoration. This caused the end of the showing off signs of belonging to castes, such as insignias and specific clothes turned illegal then. A non-feudal economy was set up whose outcome was a whole Modernity project. Innovative Japan would not be revealed to the world if the country would not be welcoming the West; if power would not return to the Emperor along with the *Meiji* Reform, there would not be 20<sup>th</sup> century's modern Japan. "They meant to retain in the modern world the advantage of observing 'proper station'. They did not intend to undermine the habit of hierarchy" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 81).



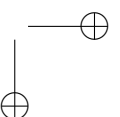
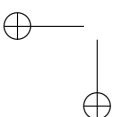
Still about the essentially feudal Japanese society, one knows that it was a society based on strata. Benedict says the “Japanese feudal society was elaborately stratified and each man’s status was fixed by inheritance” (*Ibidem*: p. 61). However, to terminate the shogunate did not mean the end of social hierarchy or the end of the aristocratic system. The Tokugawa’s shogunate effective before the Reform, ruled over two and a half centuries since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as it established a separate class inside the castes system, as we are told by Sugimoto (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 6). The *Meiji* Reform sets the beginning of the Japanese modern age based on rigid rules for class mobility (Benedict, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 73). Social mobility became a fact, but in a controlled fashion.

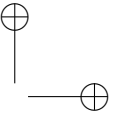
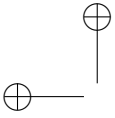
If the naval forces of North-American Navy had not exerted pressure off the Japanese coast in 1853 and in 1854, the country would still be held hostage from the isolation, strict rules, and without an open economy. According to Schnellbacher, the *Meiji* Reform was a *coup d’État*, which, “(. . .) was in turn part of an aggressive modernization program” (p. 28 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Out of that voracious modernization, the Japanese people did not separate anymore from it until today, once that the principles of the “Civilization and Enlightenment” were adopted [*bunmei kaika*] (Foster: p. 10 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008).

## 3.2 MODERNITY

### 3.2.1 A Project

As it was earlier affirmed, Schnellbacher argues that the “Restoration” *Meiji* period, as it is also known, was part of an “aggressive modernization” program. Sugimoto also addresses this period as the “Meiji Restoration” (*ult.op. cit.*). As we remind the Japanese were isolated for over two and half centuries, victims of the *sakoku* politic; one considers the modernizing action as a cause of impact. Schnellbacher exalts the historical period by saying: “From the sixteenth century on, Japan’s military regents practiced a policy of isolationism, but toward the middle of the nineteenth century, pressure on Japan mounted to open its ports to international trade” (p. 27-28 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Only the Dutch and the Chinese had clearance to dock in the Nagasaki port. After the wars fought between *samurai* warrior clans, the *Edo* Period marked a new era. For example, during the Tokugawa *shogun* regime a series of direc-





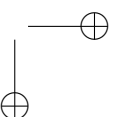
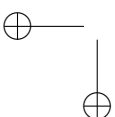
tives envisioning the protection of his power, such as the *sakoku* power, leads to the Japan's closure against the world. In 1639 the commercial and naval exchange from and to Japan is declared forbidden. Two hundred and fifty years after *sakoku*, Japan is opening, avidly and curiously to the West. Led by Commodore Perry, the North-American naval force arrives at Japan in 1853, carrying in its cargo holds entirely new technology. On this aspect, Sloterdijk thinks the real Orient has rushed into the industrial, scientific, political and military mobilization, disregarding its ancient manners of thinking and being (*op. cit.*: p. 58).

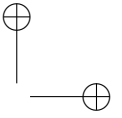
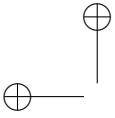
As soon as the *Tokugawa shogun* is dethroned, the isolationism politics expires. After the secular time of closure upon itself, Japan finds in the industry's futurism the portrait of its upcoming identity. Morley & Robins enlighten us:

"The modernization project was cumulative, future-oriented, based upon the logic of the technological progression and progress. Its various elements were also designed to be exported and to transcend their European origins and exclusiveness. Modernization and modernity, with their claims to universalism, could be transposed to other host-cultures. In Japan this project found a fertile environment. The technological and futurological imagination has now come to be centered here; the abstract and universalizing force of modernization has passed from Europe to America to Japan" (*op. cit.*: p. 153).

These considerations are relevant since Modernity is established by the moderns; it is marked by the pursuit of new and yet to modernize territories. Modernity is a process, and technology is the means.

The "cybernation" McLuhan (1994: p. 347) spoke of is now engaged in "automatic-pilot" in Japan. Nonetheless, this whole acceptance of the consequently corporate building of modern technique has nexus just because *Takeda's karakuri* automata did exist, and because the Japanese have assimilated technological militarization with the advent of clockmaking technology and the Western gun over the 16th century. Mechanicism drives the Japanese people in 1605, as the first clock comes to Japan. Such an event follows the transportation, right from Spain, of the first clock heading for feudal lords in 1551



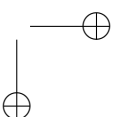
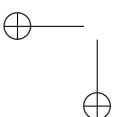


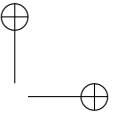
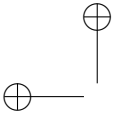
by the Missionary Francisco Xavier. Later the art of making clocks is firstly established in a school called “Seminary” in Nagasaki, circa 1600 (Hornyak, 2006). One notices however, that over the isolationist period – as Hornyak exalts – “With no input from abroad, Japan’s clockmakers were left to their own devices. Japanese clocks known as ‘wadokei’, became large ornamental affairs to grace the mansion of a ‘samurai’ lord and they required intricate adjustments” (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 20). Following the Portuguese Discovery times, the explorers reaching Japan found a peculiar culture interest in the project of Modernity. Through Schodt’s (1988) words we get to know:

"It is safe to say that when the first Europeans – three Portuguese adventurers – arrived on the Japanese island of Tanegashima in 1543, they encountered a civilization whose level of technology in many crafts and industries, such as sword making and ceramics, was superior to that of the civilization they had left behind. Major exceptions to this were the scientific advances achieved in the West during the Renaissance, and the technology of guns and clocks" (p. 57).

The technological change operated in the Japanese Orient by Westerners causes other chain-reaction transformations. Thus, it suffices, as the words of Marcuse confirm, that technological transformation happens so that a political transformation may happen, which occur as an effect of the first technological transformation, for the usage of technology change social and qualitatively society only when the course of technical progress is modified. In short, whenever there’s a technical and political transformation, new technologies come up (Marcuse, *op. cit.*: p. 232). Japan absorbs this overcome of technique-by-technique, turning it into an on-going transformation, as it would be eternally temporary. Technology imported from the West in *fin de siècle* (19<sup>th</sup> century), is again imported after World War Two, not due to pride, but due to modern conveniences. It was convenient to have Japan modernized, and it became modern in a very combative manner (Benedict, *op. cit.*). Mizuno believes that the endorsement on "progress" [*susumu*] (p. 108 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) was a decisive one to modernize Japan, "Modernity here was synonymous with Westernization", as underlined by Miyao (p. 98 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). The presence of the doctrine of "Japanese spirit and Western technology" [*wakon*

*Livros LabCom*



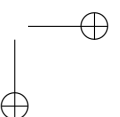
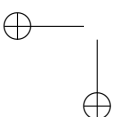


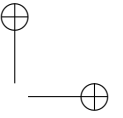
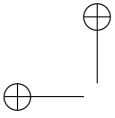
*yōsai*] was noticeable too, the dichotomy splitting the world in two spheres: Japan [Orient] and the West (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 183). When Sloterdijk affirms modernity obeys an impulse “(...) in the way that it is metaphysically established as being-towards-movement” (*op. cit.*: p. 64, translation is ours), what one is exactly saying is that modernization stands out of Modernity, i.e., “the” mobilization in itself.

### 3.2.2 West Vs East

With Japan’s rising evolution, the “West Vs East” dichotomy, so much in vogue during the Cold War fought between the US and the then-USSR, is replaced by another one – the “West Vs Orient”. In terms of development, Japan meant something different, as Yumiko Iida exalts “Japan was located in an ambiguous position between the West and Asia” (cit. in Miyao, *ult.op. cit.*). In agreement with Huntington, there also the fact of one seeing Japan the single non-Western country to accomplish the deed of getting modernized without necessarily becoming Western (in Sugimoto, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 21).

The consequence of the arrival of Commodore Perry in Japan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the modernization of the country through Western technology. “America is by nature a technological nation”, as stated by George and Meredith Friedman (in Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 238-239). It is because of this that Perry pushes Japan to open its frontiers. From that epoch to the dramatic ending in World War Two, already in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan undergoes an aggressive modernization, though only after Hiroshima and Nagasaki are rebuilt it turns into a technological superlative. In the 80s, it becomes the advanced and inspiring symbol of the Orient. At the period manga starts being exported on a large-scale to other countries; its economy is weakened by an economical depression. In any case, the inescapably “global” and “Asian” nature of Japanese comics makes it something most attractive, as Wong believes (p. 24 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Generally speaking, technology and Western media imported by the Japanese are improved when they’re re-exported again onto the West, which loses its aura yet earning, in compensation, a new way of communicating its image. And in this aspect, Japan is as modern that it represents precisely the future of the West. As already noticed so far, metatopias are one of anime’s most common themes. Passion for the future stimulated the Japanese to evolve. An example of their visionary side is their science

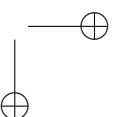
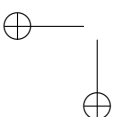




fiction, increasingly more linked to manga, anime or videogames. As for Tatsumi, "(...) Japanese science fiction has a history before and beyond the moment when William Gibson and other cyberpunk writers discovered Japan" (p. 252 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). In the images of *Akira* and *Ghost in The Shell*, the Japanese signature is obvious in the chosen themes. The presence of robots in the narrative turns these artworks of anime into something different, as one notices, for instance, in the videogame *Last Resort*. In fact, "Science fiction truly leaps in culture between East and West, especially when it comes to perceptions of robots. While the robot is constantly something suspicious in Western science fiction, it is the exact opposite in Asian science fiction" (Singer, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 167).

After the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the synergies increased between West and Orient. If before one spoke of the oriental cult of the West, now one speaks of the "western cult of Asia" (Sloterdijk, *op. cit.*: p. 58). Napier (2001) and Poitras (*op. cit.*) point out that "During the latter portions of the twentieth century, Japan and North America exchanged pop and subcultural ideas" (in Winge: p. 74 in in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Regardless of how sophisticated Japan is, some things do not change. Benedict says that "Japan for all its recent Westernization is still an aristocratic society. Every greeting, every contact must indicate the kind and degree of social distance between men" (2005: p. 47). The fact of having Japan improving when compared to the West raises another type of questions, just as: "Does this really represent a shift, however, from the global (cultural) power of Americanization?" (Allison: p. 13 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Or is it representative of the West? After all, in terms of technology, it is westernized. Allison defends that the collapse or the decreasing role of America as the culture center causes a "global shift" (or "re-centering of globalization"), as it is said by Iwabichi Kôichi ([2003], *Idem, Ibidem*: p. 18). Anime is a good example of a product Japan repositioned for export and, in turn, it makes a popular culture global icon of it. "Unlike cartoons in the West, anime in Japan is truly a mainstream pop cultural phenomenon" (Napier, 2001: p. 7).

The West is often understood as being "our world", whereas the Orient is "their world", or the "others' world", belonging to another international, historical and relative "otherness" (Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 8). Based on this principle, one cannot find awkward that for the North-Americans the "Asianization" is the "new West". On one side we have the "western" vision of

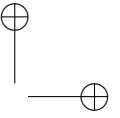
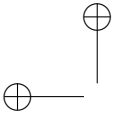


modern technology, and the increasing globalization, underlying the “Americanization” of the world (Wong: p. 42 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). On the other, we have the viral expansion of Japanese culture, implying the worldwide expansion of Japan across the world. Out of the tension between West and Orient arises another type of consequence that Morley & Robins are committed to acclaim: “Japan has come to exist within the Western political and cultural unconscious as a figure of danger, and it has done it so because it has destabilized the neat correlation between West/East and Modern/Pre-modern” (*op. cit.*: p. 160). As Japan is more advanced, and more western in some aspects, than the West itself, it renders ridiculous the distinctions between modern and pre-modern, Orient and West. Hence, what disturbs the “Americanized” world and the European territory is that Japan is emancipating, namely because everything demanding “modernization” coincides with “globalization”, the evolution of the microprocessor, robotics and new media.

Japan mirrors in its emancipation the technical nature of the technologies, which it has endorsed in order to stand out. Moreover, it does not need the advent of technologies through the war machine, as it happens in the US (Singer, *op. cit.*), underlining a strong awareness towards both the biological and the ecological. In a certain manner, Japan is the country where technology met its apex, and it is the same country that seems strange before the eyes of westerners. In the text Benedict published about the country in question here, she starts by saying “The Japanese were the most alien enemy the United States had ever fought in an all-out struggle” (*op. cit.*: p. 1). Even though, despite the alien-ness being a part of Japan’s image, Morley & Robins refer:

“The postmodern era will be the Pacific era. Japan is the future, and it is a future that seems transcending and displacing Western modernity. In so far as a nation’s sense of identity has become confused with its technological capability, these developments have, of course, had profoundly disturbing and destabilizing consequences in Europe and in United States” (*op. cit.*: p. 168-169).

Under Morley & Robins perspective, “the Pacific Era of the West”, which began in the controlled trade space of the Mediterranean Sea, is losing ground for a “Pacific Era of the Orient”. Once Japan transposes and “de-territorializes” Western Modernity, it does with exuberance, easily establishing connec-

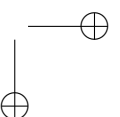
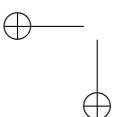


tions to the global universe of capital and culture. As some authors underscore, the further more complicate issue has to do with how Japan blended its cultural identity with the modernization process leaving the West destabilized. In the origin of Japan's avid acceptance of technology lies the isolation period, which set the country for culturally welcome foreign technologies.

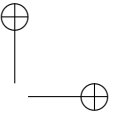
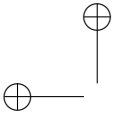
Nowadays, it is no longer about identifying the "Americanization" in Japan, but the US "Orientalized", instead, since the Orient is winning the competition between software and animation, whether in the case of anime, or in videogame's. North-Americans prefer science fiction, while Japanese are fonder of fantasy. The thing driving the Japanese to follow anime, and the rest of the world as well, is that despite the existing machines, which are many, characters endowed with more humanity are to contrast with robotics (Napier, 2007 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). This is to say, amidst so much mechanicism, even in fiction, the videography of machines in anime demands people to be more human as possible. In North-American fictions, the presence of machines is usually inseparable from the militaristic aesthetic (Singer, *op. cit.*), and humans are featured as someone standing in disadvantage. Through Marvel, DC Comics, Dark Horse Comics, among other comics' industry brands, the US deliver a kind of ideas in which the human is, most of the times, secondary. The antipode of that is presented in anime, where the human commands the machine in the name of peace, being constantly evoked Japan's ecological and humanitarian awareness.

Japan is the exponent of Modernity, the "state of art" for technology and science, the nation that managed to achieve, on a technological basis, to shape its cultural history. The West attends to the way a society goes from feudalism to post-modern "high-tech" capitalism. The dialog between Orient and West was fruitful, yet how the Allies had won World War Two left Japan in a modern condition of redemption, that would later become visible in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a "technological vengeance" (Morley & Robins, *op. cit.*). The response to the defeat in the War of 1939-45 ends up in the hyperbole the West Japan rose up. *Mighty Atom* is the answer of anime to the nuclear bombings (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 167). Hiroshima and Nagasaki deatomization remains in the Japanese mind as the final chapter of a story the West think he had won.

Japan's expansive audiovisual culture is specific. For instance, all we have to do is to compare the US animation films with their counterparts in the Japan to understand the difference. Above all, some animation films have a "cine-



matic style”, whereas others seem merely as “cartoons”. Many American animation films are already owning a place in history, where a part of it continued, for instance, in the toy sales, as it is the case of *G.I. Joe: The Movie* (Don Juwrich, 1986) and *Action Force* (*Idem, Ibidem*). However, the “Americanized” vision is inexorably compromised to the discourse of the “Military Industrial Complex” mention also by Singer (*ult.op. cit.*). Anime images are marked by other characteristics, what Luyten depicts in the following manner: “In Japan there is no place for super-heroes the way they’re featured in the West: invincible, overpowered and upright. The Japanese heroes do not fit much in that category” (*op. cit.*: p. 71, translation is ours). In the core of anime there is absorption of motives from the West, a type of cultural mimetism; any way, a whole re-interpretation of the ideals of the West. For Morley & Robins, “It is this complexity and ambiguity in the image of Japan that has given it a particular resonance in Western fantasies” (*op. cit.*: p. 148). It is that way of looking modern and post-modern, old and new, traditional and sophisticated, at the same time that makes Japanese fictions to seem odd; something that leaves us in the position of a consumer of universes resembling Western fantasies. Napier (2007) says the expressions of “technological ambivalence” tend to be mediated through live-action films in the West, while Japan welcomed Animation (p. 105 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Culturally speaking, ambiguity remains in Japanese culture because there was the need to embrace fast Modernity in the name of updates and innovation. Anne Allison (p. 16 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006) explains such ambiguity, saying that “(...) fantasy and realism are both at work here. (...) Japan (...) is a place whose meaning fluctuates between the phantasmal and the real, the foreign and the familiar, the strange and everyday”. When it comes to technologies, the US developed the Internet. The Xbox videogame console is released two decades after consoles were thought again by Japan with Famicon – Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) in the rest of the world. Originally, videogames had begun in Nolan Bushnell’s Atari North-American Atari enterprise, with the videogame *Pong* (1972). As for animation films, the favorite ones in the US for a long time were *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* (Disney, William Cottrel, 1937) and *Mickey Mouse* (Disney, 1950). The most preferred comics are those of Marvel Comics or DC (Detective Comics), the favorite videogames still are the *Halo 3* (2007) type. For the Japanese, the ‘graphic reform’ happens with the establishment of Sony Computer Entertainment, through PlayStation and the



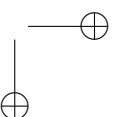
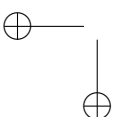
anime films of Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli, of Gainax and Manga Video. In anime, *Astro Boy* is posed as cultural icon under the spotlight.

Relatively to videogames, the Japanese prefer *Final Fantasy XII* (2006), *Onimusha*, *Me And My Katamari* and *Locoroco*. The United States of America and Japan have peculiar preferences, but the cultural reach of anime achieves such a degree that in the US 'The Anime Galaxy' grows even more than in Japan. West and Orient blend across the monological language of the digital world, through new media and common industries, interlinked liberal economies, until culture is exchanged among them, instead of just science or industry. There is nobility in how the Japanese entrepreneur's attitude works about updating. Most elder population does not endorse technology, as the youngsters are the ones doing it, fearless of the future.

### 3.2.3 Post-War Period: Future Shock

Right after the end of the World War Two, Japan was bold enough to cast itself into rebuilding and modernization. The nuclear blast image was recorded in their collective mind. The kind of nuclear device dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki was designed by scientists making research in the US. In the post-war period, two things were underlines relatively to the US-Japan relationship: "Americans gear all their living to a constantly challenging world", in the first place, as we are told by Benedict (*op. cit.*: p. 28); and secondly, "The shame of surrender was burned deeply into the consciousness of the Japanese" (*Ibidem*: p. 40). It is for these two reasons that from the post-war time on an "apocalyptic identity" is formed in Japan, as sustained by Napier: "(...)given the enormous changes that Japan has experienced un the century and a half since modernization, 'an apocalyptic identity' might be one easily understood, perhaps even embraced, by its citizens" (2001: p. 193). Benzon demonstrates it and is much more audacious to speak of "apocalyptic culture" (2007: p. 284).

For Morley & Robins (*op. cit.*: p. 171) having been Japan the first Asian country to have inserted itself into modernity on its own terms, is a remarking fact. On top of that, according to Matthews (2003-2004), "Looking again at Japan's war experience; the atomic bombings, the Occupation, U.S. technological funding and non-militaristic constitution, it becomes easier to see how the seemingly strange dichotomy converges with robotics and anime" (p. 14).

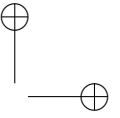
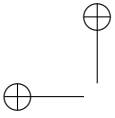


It is strange that the images from the nuclear holocaust, from the post-war period and the decade of 80, would cohabit in the Japanese imaginary as if there was an origin for Year Zero, well before the 00 years of this new century. Should Japan have not progressed, while in the West the US and the Soviet Union were fighting a Cold War, and today everything would be different. Having seized the opportunity of the Cold War to emancipate itself, Japan become a futuristic image of the West – a non-communist example in the region, in agreement with Sugimoto (*op. cit.*: p. 15) –, an example to the West as well as for all Asia.

At the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan belongs to the new world, the one which Singer understands as being “an overcrowded, interconnected world” (*op. cit.*: p. 434). What does not disappear along with Japan’s development is the nuclear image, as there is still a remnant of that holocaust in the image form, the violent and terrifying dismantlement of the universe. There is not “future shock” image, but rather a “past shock”. The image of a shocking past arises metaphorically as a Phoenix in Tezuka’s *Phoenix* manga (in Inuhiko: p. 105 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), which recreates the Phoenix myth resurrecting from the ashes; it is in that sense that Japan is reintroducing itself to the world, as more powerful Phoenix. It is no work of chance that a major part of anime concerns characters called *tetsuwan* or *tetsuo*, given that it is something “mighty” what the Japanese imaginary is calling for.

In the anime creation process, Osamu Tezuka uses *Astro Boy* to respond to the memory of the cataclysm, returning shock to the future. The outcome of that is that anime artworks are displaying such ‘graphic hyperbole’ logic, not eventually, but as a convention, instead. As a triggered response to a Year Zero, we have the ‘images holocaust’, the year chaos establishes a new order, an apocalypse images’ regime exorcizing a period in history. The oriental apocalypse symbolizes a moment of restoration and not the end, the “Judgment Day” of western culture, the moment of panic and earthly purgatory from which the future horizon unfolds. When the nuclear bombing imaginary is housed in images as a virus and turns images themselves into inseparable hosts, it is right there where a ‘images holocaust’ is grown.

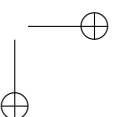
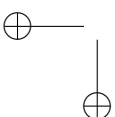
Anime films featuring holocaust images are countless, such as *Akira*, *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (*ult.op. cit.*), *Memories* or *Robotech: The Macross Saga*. Ever since the first atom bomb was dropped by North-American B-29 – “Enola Gay” – bomber over Hiroshima, at 08:15h AM on August 6th, 1945, three

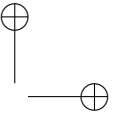
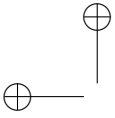


days earlier than the one dropped over Nagasaki, that the Japanese visual culture became one thing only with the “big boom” image. Graphic violence today contemplated in anime videography replays the paradigmatic image of violence, the one of the biggest weapon of mass destruction. Out of the binomial equation of the ‘holocaust image’ and the ‘images holocaust’ a visual aesthetic comes forth, simultaneously endowed with a prospective and retrospective form. Well, either it is about images on the past (past shock), or about images on the future (shocking future); they are images of cause and effects too.

It is a fact that nuclear impact never stopped since post-war period, although today there is culturally a record inclined for the holocaust, as in other cultures. In *Butô* Theatre, for instance, the art of mystical theatrics was exploited, as in the post-war the issue was the dead. With the holocaust images, the lost-object is again exploited as a starting point topic for a future where updating is the technological imperative. Being so, it is wise to speak of a “Japan-becoming” (Barthes, 1984, translation is ours), once that the images carry Japanese culture with themselves, uprising against geographical containment. These are but collective memory mechanisms, something one verifies in artworks like *Akira* or *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. There is a frustration in the message because the Japanese “they have pictured themselves as attaining the apex of that pyramid” (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 43), which widens the frustration. Napier says “Japan is still the only country on earth to have suffered atomic bombing, an experience that continues to affect the society today and that has created (...) a collective sense of victimhood” (2001: p. 28). Besides, Matthews (2003-2004) thinks there is an “apocalyptic genre” and that it may be seen in many cyberpunk science fiction anime, since the animation medium is perfectly suited to that genre focused in the apocalypse topic (p. 8). The “apocalyptic event” mentioned by Matthews is the anime epicenter of the “post-war” period, as that image of apocalypse between man and technology, which is omnipresent in animation film. For Benedict, “Americans threw themselves into the war effort ‘because’ this fight had been forced upon us. We had been attacked, therefore let the enemy beware” (*op. cit.*: p. 28). On the Japanese side one notices the other side of the “warning”, of the “apocalyptic event” mentioned by Matthews. On a matter as this one, it makes sense to have Napier (*ult.op. cit.*) arguing that “The end of the world is an important element in postwar Japanese visual and print culture” (p. 29).

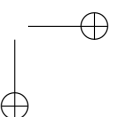
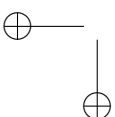
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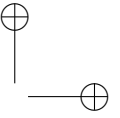
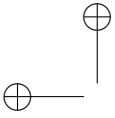




In the end of 20th century, the most known anime are displaying mechanisms, vehicles, computing, robots and shocking cities, in the way they disclose a present committed to the planned future. After the ‘past shock’ (“apocalyptic event”), we have a ‘present shock’ (Japanese technology). Yet it is the analysis of the “future shock” that becomes the most interesting one. The one first applying the “future shock” expression was Alvin Toffler, when in the work *Choque do Futuro (Future Shock [op. cit.])* he fully assumes that: “(...) in an article published in ‘Horizon’ magazine, [he coined] the ‘Future Shock’ expression to describe the devastating tension and disorientation we cause on the individuals by submitting them to excessive change in a too short amount time” (1970: p. 8, translation is ours). It seems completely coherent that, for the apocalyptic ones, the future may be potentially shocking, since it points out a failure announced for long to the endless industrialization. Daniel Bell (1973 [in Bertens, *op. cit.*]) for example thinks there is a “post-industrial” society. The future brings shock with itself, the shock of potential dystopia, of totalitarianism, holocaust, but underneath that cover of menace, which shelters Toffler during the Cold War, change is being thought.

Within a post-catastrophe discourse, the pursuit for the idyllic horizon persists, as there was a time to think the Future would be shocking. “Future shock” stands in contrast with the yet to be written history, because one does not know whether positive or negative events will be registered. Let’s say the expression in question addresses an uncontrollable future, of a hard to follow technical world. The message conveyed in the “future shock” Toffler speaks about is the pathological reaction to change. The author even tells more on this question that it became obvious to him that “(...) future shock is not a potential distant future, and yes it is an authentic disease affecting an increasing amount of people. This psychobiological state may be described on medical and psychiatric terms: it is the disease of change” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 8, translation is ours). A “Future Shock” idea addresses one to technophobia coming to existence in post-war societies, the time in which the expanding computing, media and robotics – the contemporaneity basic-instruments – are feared.

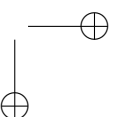
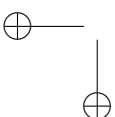




### 3.3 CONTEMPORANEITY

#### 3.3.1 The Post-History

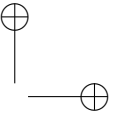
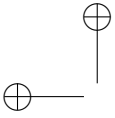
In Francis Fukuyama's (*op. cit.*) acclaimed essay on the "end of history", the author defines inclusively what he understands for "the last man". If Toffler's contemporaneity is faces a "future shock", Fukuyama decides to aim at the "end of history" (Malpas, *op. cit.*: p. 90). Another proposal, from Kojève (in Agamben [*op. cit.*]), reveals "post-history", not the one related to technophobia or the historical record of humanity's actions. Kojève cannot help himself from arguing about a "post-historical civilization" existing namely after post-war. Agamben (*Ibidem*) declares that in 1959 a trip to Japan was meaningful for Kojève (an author then-seizing a diplomatic position), and that the latter was able to thus see "(...) with his own eyes a society which, though living in a condition of post-history, had nevertheless not ceased to be 'human'" (p. 10). As already noticed, this ambiguity, besides other ones more obvious, it is inherent to Japanese culture. One speaks of "post-history" but without having Japanese society deleting its human, humanitarian or humanist aspect. However, Fukuyama's the "end of history" theme it is best comprehended if we take into account what LeGrand argues regarding the "end of history" in Hegel's point of view, since it is "(...) defined by the triumph of thought, which, having ranged the whole circle of alienation (individual consciousness, objective and scientific consciousness, 'achievements' in art, religion, law, in philosophy itself...), is identified with the Absolute Spirit" (s.d.: p. 28, translation is ours). Henceforth, man's last position, or what Fukuyama means for "the last man", is the position of the fulfilled man. The author introduces the theme, assuming: "I argued that liberal democracy may constitute the 'end point of mankind's ideological evolution' and the 'final form of human government', and as such constituted the 'end of history'" (*op. cit.*: xi). This is to say, mankind's last stage of human evolution coincides with liberal democracy, as one reaches the "end of history" after a role-model of government has been established. For Hegel, the end of history would correspond to the accomplishments and deeds of humanity in several areas. The status of a "final history" would imply thus one to have a democratic regime in which the regime itself would be fulfilled (since the goals of its political program would be achieved). In contemporary times, one speaks of "post-history" in tune to



"post-modernity", the period in history between 1970 and 1995 where "post-modern" (Hiroki, 2007b: p. 178 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007) thought is highlighted, as a world without "grand narratives" is registered by then. Progress exists despite a historical record marked by ruptures. Even when one does not break the historical cycles, truth is that there is something new in the register of humanity as several types of registers come to existence, "histories" of multiple fields which are no longer capable of containing, explaining; in short, in dealing with the specificity of several domains of human life crossed by the specialization of technology. The phase in which we question ourselves about the power of the discourses surrounding us is post-modernism (Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 7).

From Modernity's point of view, post-history is the stage following the univocal history of humanity; parallel to post-modernity, the age of renewal and of technological, scientific and artistic imperative, that is no more submitted to one grandiose narrative (Washburn: p. 150 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Following this, Fukuyama says "(...) and yet what I suggested had to come to an end was not the occurrence of events, but History: that is, history understood as a single, coherent, evolutionary process, when taking into account the experience of all peoples in all times" (*op. cit.*: xii). Thus, the end of history has nothing to do with its terminal looks, but rather with the fact of every great questions having been resolved, which leaves aside the chance of Judgment Day, despite not answering it either. Once History responds to every great determination, just as Lyotard (*op. cit.*) refers, there is no longer a single "meta-narrative", a global representation encompassing (Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 4) all human aspects as a project, above all causing the rise of other narratives (any ones but those of civilizational, national or hierarchic type).

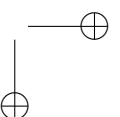
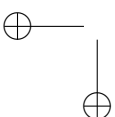
A part of anime is centered on places under transformation, exhibiting science fiction narratives where humanity lives moments beyond singular history, "continuity in discontinuity" is planned (Walker: p. 6 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). On the scenographies of the "apocalyptic genre", the themes on dystopias, metatopias and the post-human imply the end of history and make the "last man" an obvious thing. As we watch *Future Boy Conan* we attend to the end of history, the end of the world. "Conan", the hero, is the last role-model of man. Yoshiyuki Tomino's *Gundam* (1979) elects the RX-78-2 colored robot – identical to a *Kanō* school soldier of the *Edo* period – as the typical "species" of the universal century 0079, a future beyond our own history (Tatsumi: p.

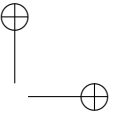
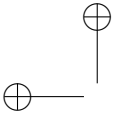


195 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). When it comes to Japanese science fiction, authors as Hiroki (p. 78 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007) believe in the need for a "grand narrative" and for a "grand vision". Visionary narrative and attitude are urgent. On the scope of Fukuyama's arguments, the end of the "grand narrative" for gathering humanities, much as the end of history, do not address one to "the end of the world" but to a "post-history", instead. The issue is to go beyond the incoherence of a linear and unifying history, incapable of registering all things happening. Peter Sloterdijk uses the expression "post-historic panic culture" to sustain that it "(...) would be the single alternative to the civilization of the historical mobilization, which, even now, has not history ahead of itself, but merely a countdown" (*op. cit.*: p. 86, translation is ours). On this point, we have to stand out "post-history" in detriment of total history. Since a major historical mobilization did not take place in this civilization, the post-historical panic culture follows. Instead of the meta-narrative discourse, we have the new discourses. Thomas LaMarre (2008) sees in the *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* animation film an artwork where the question of "global panic" (p. 81 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008) is worked out. In this animation, Dr. Aki Ross is haunted by dreams of Phantoms, aliens with no planet or global history.

Let's also clarify the use of "post" prefix, underlying the "post-modern" concept. One discusses the "post-human", the "post-history", the "post-modernity"; all "posts" meaning an "after" stage, of "posthumous", something new supersedes what is finished. Therefore, one has to remind that Paul Virilio asserts that "(...) the invention of a grand optic of substitution is demanding" (1999: p. 24, translation is ours). One needs a new way of facing reality, because after the holocaust and the wars that ravaged the 20<sup>th</sup> century [not to mention the "9-11" event at time these affirmations are produced], there is new optics of substitution missing. Besides, Virilio speaks of a "substitution horizon" (*Ibidem*, translation is ours) in the same trend he refers a "negative horizon" (Virilio, 1984, translation is ours), concerning the nuclear blast. There is the need for a new horizon to erase the "negative horizon" of the nuclear age, one able to overlap and represent the post-nuclear age. One knows pessimism is a previous thing, prevailing in contemporary days since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Regarding this matter, Fukuyama is very incisive for he says pessimism "(...) is not accidental, but born of the truly terrible political events of the first half of the twentieth century – two destructive world wars,

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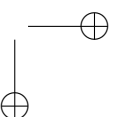
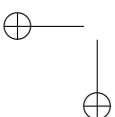


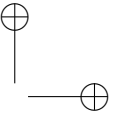
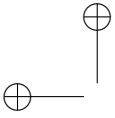
the rise of totalitarian ideologies, and the turning of science against man in the form of nuclear weapons and environmental damage. The life experiences of the victims of this past century's political violence (...) would deny that there has been such a thing as historical progress" (*op. cit.*: p. xiii). The conclusions drawn from Fukuyama's declarations are that progress was unable to sustain devastation.

History reaches its end, in Fukuyama's perspective, since acknowledgment, which was the goal of social classes, achieves its height with the historical process of democracy and freedom (the "Americanization" of the World" [Wong: p. 42 in Lunning (Ed.), 2006]). As such mutual recognition is dynamic, the driving force of History gets to its own end across universalization of the very same process, i.e., through what today one calls as "globalization". The thing being at stake here is the legitimate operation of mutual acknowledgement of the Other (individual, community, nation or federal States). In this way one comprehends that Japan resorts to anime so it can become a culture. One adds up the void of a total guiding narrative, the idea of technological progress as a historical endorsement. In post-history age and in the "post-apocalyptic" culture one witnesses a new cultural, economic and media-based 'renaissance' that one is obliged to stand out. The marks of post-modernity are still evident in the age of contemporary Asian rebirth, given that in post-modern culture new formal characteristics arise among the new social and economical order; what one may define as modernization, society of spectacle [Debord], post-industrial [Alain Touraine and Daniel Bell (1973)], media, consumption [Baudrillard] or multinational capitalism (Fredric Jameson [1991: p. 113] in Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 155).

### 3.3.2 An Asian Renaissance

By now we have already seen modernization occurred in Japan thanks to the North-American *tour de force* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between the reform (1868) pushing Japan forward to Modernity (1919) and thriving Japan (1980), we know there's the hiatus of the nuclear bombings (1945). It is in Asia that the new "Renaissance", the contemporary one, is happening. And the "reborn man" is not Fukuyama's "last man", and it is not only-so about invoking a theme of "a final epoch". As one follows Fred Polak's perspective about European Renaissance, one is accepting that the "The Renaissance man is indeed



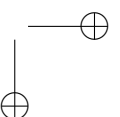
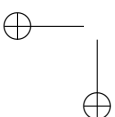


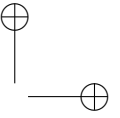
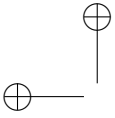
the Other man" (*op. cit.*: p. 86). Polak believes man's "image of the future" is a means, a medium, through which history is enlightened from the future backwards; the renaissance lays its groundwork on that (*Ibidem*: p. 79).

In the *The Animatrix* film, the animation version of *The Matrix*, there is a very important episode entitled *The Second Renaissance*, exactly related to the new dawn of man-machine. The "image of the future" featured in *The Animatrix* is a dystopia. Nonetheless, the "Second Renaissance" of *The Animatrix* and the "Asian Renaissance" claimed by Peter Sloterdijk (*op. cit.*: p. 61) share some common elements. First, the rebirth of Asia is the "second Renaissance" because there was already a Renaissance in Europe, and secondly Asia is reborn across technology, science and modernization. In *The Animatrix* animation film, machines are the center of the universe and one questions the role of humanity, which is not merely secondary, since this humanity is an author of machines. Should we invoke the arguments of Morley & Robins (*op. cit.*) regarding the Japanese people and we will notice how "alien-like", "bizarre" and "non-human" some of the designations applied namely to the *otaku* are. There is thus a correspondence between *The Animatrix* and the progressive and technocratic vision of Asia. To the first "Renaissance" anthropocentrism would correspond, whereas to the second one techno-centrism would match. Though, the human model does not disappear for still in *The Animatrix* the virtual representations and robots are respecting an anthropomorphization basis. Despite in other animations mankind integrates the "uterine logic" of machines (*Neon Genesis Evangelion*), *The Animatrix* is consistently focusing the new Renaissance in its science fiction Mahiro Maeda, *et al.* splits *The Second Renaissance* in two parts. Right in "Part I" it is mentioned a historical record, a file containing how machines fell in apocalypse: "Welcome to the Zion Archive. You have selected historical file number 12-1: The Second Renaissance. In the beginning there was man, and for a time it was good. But humanity's so-called 'civil societies' soon felt victim of vanity and corruption. Then, man made the machine in his own likeness" (2003). After the female computer voice-over in the opening scene, we get the impression that machines are the solution. However, ahead the narrator adds:

"Thus did man become the architect of his own demise. But for a time it was good. The machines worked tirelessly to do man's bidding. It was not long before seeds of descent took root.

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Though loyal and pure, the machines earned no respect from their masters, these strange and loosely multiplying mammals” (*Idem, Ibidem*).

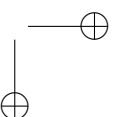
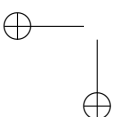
The point of view of machines as something built at man’s likeness is an act of deification of the human being himself, in the sense that it does not present a man made in God’s own likeness but machines made in man’s own likeness, instead. In agreement with Polak, even the Mediterranean Renaissance retrieves from the gods the center of “the image of the future” onto the realm of man (*op. cit.*: p. 27).

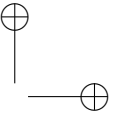
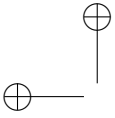
The danger underlying the “new Renaissance”, as depicted in *The Animatrix*, in this first part, assumes man had designed its own termination, abusing of machines that emancipate later. We are told the latter defy humans and due to that they meet a refuge in their “promised land”, in narrator’s words:

“They settled in the cradle of human civilization, and thus a new nation was born. A place the machines could call home, a place they could raise their descendants. They christened the nation ‘Zero One’. ‘Zero One’ prospered, and for a time, it was good. The machines’ artificial intelligence could be seen in every facet of society including the creation of new and better AI” (*op. cit.*).

This new space marks the rise of the Zero One machine-nation, the ‘country of machines’. Zero One is the name for the ultimate ‘cyborg habitat’, a territory where Artificial Intelligence could thrive. In one of the most polemic moments in *The Animatrix*, we are led to know that the United Nations approves economic sanctions to block the so-called machines hideout, which later gets isolated. Machines are left at their own charge and criteria, machine to machine. What makes *The Animatrix* so peculiar is this display of the rising “Machines’ State”, where we became aware of the combative “extensions of man” (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 13).

For Polak, the Renaissance is a “Renaissance of Utopism”. Rebirth is to think of the place where the perfect world may restart. Because Polak endorses the thesis that Renaissance and Futurism are bonded, he points an ‘image-becoming’ of the world as a Renaissance. Thus, “The Renaissance stands out as a world between two worlds” (*op. cit.*: p. 79), since our epoch

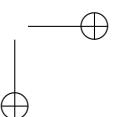
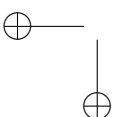




is that in which the “images of the future” meet their most sheer expression. In general, Renaissances include a “retrospective and prospective” thought (Boym, *op. cit.*: p. 168), considering past and future; “revival and new life” (Polak, *op. cit.*: p. 95). In Sloterdijk’s understanding, Renaissances are “(..) presentifications of ancient cultures under a new sign“ (*op. cit.*: p. 59, translation is ours). As for the Mediterranean Renaissance, this one is defined by the calling of Greek-Helennic thought. At Renaissance’s epoch of the Mediterranean West one highlights the Portuguese Discoveries and the elaboration of the cartography for the terrestrial globe. For instance in 1543, the Portuguese take weapons to Japan (LaMarre, 2009: p. 91). A “new world” expected the Europeans in America. Man stood at the center of the universe (Polak, *op. cit.*: p. 27), as visually shown in Leonardo da Vinci’s image, *The Vitruvian Man* (circa 1492-97); in the Western Renaissance of the *Quattrocento* new paths towards humanities were revealed, anthropocentrism was established in the European context. Polak explains that the secret of Renaissance based on Hellenic motives is the eternal harmony of its “image of the future” (*op. cit.*: p. 19). Besides, this author develops the argument that the entire Hellenic culture is immersed in its “image of the future”; statues and temples, myths and city-states were representative of the harmony existing between two worlds (*Ibidem*: p. 26), and they are the paradox struggle involving liberation from and onto the past itself. On the Mediterranean background, past is simultaneously the Middle Age and Antiquity (*Ibidem*: p. 79). The “Asian Renaissance” Sloterdijk speaks of stands in-between two worlds, the Western past and the Asian Antiquity. Sloterdijk also speaks about an “Asianizing Renaissance” in the following excerpt:

“(..) the Asianizing Renaissance goes way beyond what happened in the Hellenizing Renaissance of early Bourgeois mobilization times, and it is different and much more than a cultural quotation that, reporting to the norms of the ancient, intends to trigger something new and unprecedented” (*op. cit.*: p. 63-64. translation is ours).

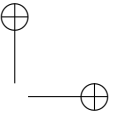
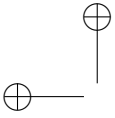
In fact, this movement causes something more. In Japan we know how important it is the *On* (a kind of debt before the Ancients, the elderly, in the end the cultural past). For the Japanese to reborn after 1945 relied on the



principle of acting in a different manner. Benedict is the one who notices that Oriental nations act in a non-ordinary way: they are debtors to the ages, they respond alone before civilization over time (*op. cit.*: p. 98).

There were times in history when the bourgeois world had shown interest for the Orient, namely between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. All that would eventually be imported from Asia was a symptom of evolution, education and cultivation. Sloterdijk remarks that "(...) the West undergoes through a cultural 'Asianization', for which there is no historic parallel" (*op. cit.*: p. 58, translation is ours). While before the images from the Hellenic Renaissance were spreading out across the Mediterranean world because of the specific "images of the future" (Polak, *op. cit.*: p. 33), now images from the Asian Renaissance prosper in global media.

The Asian Renaissance happens altogether with an economic rebirth. Sugimoto accentuates the "Asian Capitalism" (*op. cit.*: p. 24). After all, there is a new "fertile crescent" especially in the Japanese and Chinese economies, and in Asia, in general. In the new expansion of Asia, the rising countries in the range of globalization join free capital economy and spread out an interest for Asia as if it would be a lost continent. Such is the interest for the "Asianmania" that Sloterdijk (*op. cit.*: p. 59) tells us about, excels in its episodic exoticism. Prabhu Gupta explains that now is "in vogue" to speak of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as if it would be the "Asian century", as China is chosen to be the next economic and military power (in Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 243). Once "in vogue", Asia shows to be the new epicenter, the image of the future performance. From Singer we accept the argument of "past performance is not necessarily indicative of future performance" (*Ibidem*: p. 240). The answer is provided by Sugimoto, who defends, in the context of the rising Asian economies (since 1980), that there is likely a "Confucian capitalism", under which the ethical imperative of obeying authorities and emphasizing limitless devotion in labor led to a distinct development when compared to the western one, yet carrier of great economic growth. "Similar arguments have surfaced under the rubrics of 'The East Asian Model', 'Oriental capitalism', 'The Pacific Century', and so on. Japan's economic structure is regarded as the most refined and polished of this type" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 21). In this context, we will be discussing the "Japanization". And of course that, in the age of Asia reborn, the Japanese man is a new man [of the Renaissance] and he "(...) is



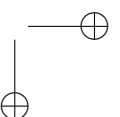
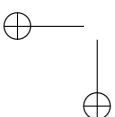
ready to undertake the re-creation of the world himself” (Polak, *op. cit.*: p. 81).

### 3.3.3 Japanization

The reason why we are discussing the “Japanization” issue, after approaching the one of the “Asian Renaissance”, is due to the importance of Sugimoto’s argument. When the author says Japan’s economic structure is considered as the most refined and perfect of this type (among Asian economies), this is a sign that something peculiar exists in the way a Japanese person deals with progress. Harumi Befu, one of the most well-regarded Japanese authors, notices the Asian Renaissance and the Asianization Sloterdijk tell us about. Befu identifies the “Japanism” – the spread of manga and anime, Japanese cuisine and *karaoke* – as a part of the recent phenomenon, he calls the “Asianization of the West” (in Wong: p. 27 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). In this matter, the characteristic difference of Asian idioms stands out. Relatively to the “images of the future”, Polak presumes “We might say that the future speaks a foreign language to us today” (*op. cit.*: p. 183).

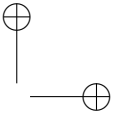
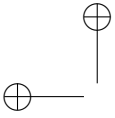
On the other hand, it is not out of Polak’s futurologies that the term “Japanization” comes from. Originally, it is in an Agamben’s text that Kojève uses the term, in the context of the recent interaction between West and Japan, which, in its turn, “will finally lead not to a re-barbarization of the Japanese but to a ‘Japanization’ of the Westerners (...)” (cit. in Agamben, *op. cit.*: p. 11). The duo Morley & Robins (*op. cit.*) approaches the subject, underscoring the “future” aspect by theorizing that, “If the future is technological, and if technology has, become ‘Japanised’, then the syllogism would suggest that the future is now Japanese too” (p. 168-169). The “Japanization” topic is focused by several authors, as one notices so far, and Befu is no exception, for he remarks that despite “Japanization” being a unique concept it never ceases to stay side by side with concepts such as “Westernization” and “Americanization”, that in turn are sometimes synonyms for “Globalization” (in Wong: p. 42 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). McLuhan had already noticed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that “Western man is himself being de-Westernized by his own speed-up” (1994: p. 92), i.e., the “de-Westernization” of man is caused by his own pace and velocity.

Bertens is more succinct, for he announces to be a paradox that the vir-



tual disappearance of space as a barrier is not something one translates as an expectable homogeneity (*op. cit.*: p. 219). Within manga graphic culture universe, the researcher Scott McCloud finds that over the last decade North-Americans have witnessed a great “affluence” of Japanese translated comics, which has exerted an evident “influence” over “American” artists, in the same way manga artists have been appropriating Western “influences” (1996: p. 48). As previously discussed, the rebirth of Asia is economical and cultural at the same time, and Japan cannot escape from such dichotomy, even if it is a role-model country in the surfacing Asia. Under Tatsumi’s point of view, “Today as the East and West teem with ‘otaku’, we have ironically reached the point where we can declare that we are all ‘Japanoids’” (p. 194 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Although “Japanoids” seems a pejorative term used by Tatsumi, it is not. Tatsumi coins the neologism based on the terms “Japanese” and “android”, hence the result being “Japanoid”. Most of the authors approach the “Japanization” topic differently. Making the Japanese figure come closer to the machine figure is an also singular approach and it actually suits in context of analysis of a videography of machines, belonging to ‘The Anime Galaxy’.

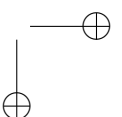
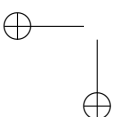
Other issues about the world that was “Japanified” appear in authors like Miyao (p. 88 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). Thomas LaMarre recurs to the same term in order to formulate a very pertinent question: “Does cinema ‘westernize’ Japan, or does Japan ‘japanify’ cinema?” (cit. in Miyao: p. 98 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007). Nevertheless, such question lacks a response from the author, which shall be relevant and enlightening. Miyao speaks of “Japanization” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 97 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007), yet disregarding major implication in the meaning of the term. In that point, Sugimoto is the one who, in three words only, invokes “Japan beyond Japan” (*op. cit.*: p. 207), and he adds that “Japanese society is caught between the contradictory forces of narrow ethnocentrism and open internationalization” (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 185). The way for “open internationalization”, the path for opening to the exterior, is the path of “Japanization, of turning into Japanese something that was not before. About manga, for instance, Sonia Bibe Luyten believes “(...) the Japanese knew how to adapt – that is to say “japanize” [‘ajaponesar’ in the original] the story contents to the local preference” (*op. cit.*: p. 35, translation is ours). Being so, “ajaponesização” [something we could translate as “Japanizing”] is the word used by Luyten and it implies an acceptance of western modernism, a continuation of effective formats of story telling to the masses.

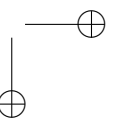
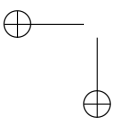
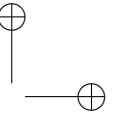
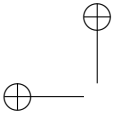


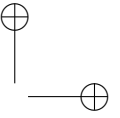
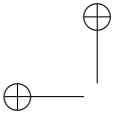
The renaissance flourishing in Asia has in “Japanization” a model for new fashions and a model for a technology-driven economy. In order to comprehend Japan’s expansion it is necessary to understand that this growth coincides with the globalization era, as products are the compass of the ephemera in Orient. Nowadays, Japan still introduces itself as it had the need for being respected and admired all over the world, something Benedict perceived at her epoch (*op. cit.*: p. 173).

When in the work *O Império do Efêmero: a Moda e o Seu Destino Nas Sociedades Modernas* (1989), Gilles Lipovetsky refers that “(...) fashion is always the others” (p. 15, translation is ours), is saying too, that fashion is determined by alterity, the other people which are exterior to the individual. Yet if we remind the way Benedict works on the Japanese identity issue in the context of nations, and Sloterdijk’s position relatively to the “Asian Renaissance” and “Asianmania”, we may draw the conclusion that, in the first place, “Japanization” is a symptom of Japan’s internationalization, of the appropriation of western elements turned Japanese; and secondly, Japan represents to the West, like all Asia as well, the new, a different culture. And it is not by chance that Japan is “in vogue”. The Japanese “cool”, the attractive image and trend makes possible for more Japanese culture to be learned. Allison considers equally important to know that the origin of this “cool” is Japan, a real country inspiring fans to learn Japanese culture, language and history (2006: p. 16). In this case, the Other is Japan, an environment out of which saturated updates surface, carrying with themselves the “brand of Japan”, promoting anime icons with a superlative character. For those who are interested in Japanese culture, anime is a fascinating art form, enabled with singular aesthetic and narrative, reporting on one side to Japan’s traditional culture, while on the other to the advanced media (Napier, 2001: p. 8). The specific features of anime make it a stronghold of Japanization. These very features one encounters them in manga, as it was held responsible for making easier the access to comics all around Asia. Even in Hong-Kong, an area under influence of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), manga achieves success. Wong believes that the concept of “cultural similarity” or of “cultural proximity” helps us understand the huge popularity of manga in Asia (p. 35 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). It is precisely Japan’s refined economic model and its “cultural proximity” for its surrounding Asia countries that favor the continuous increase of Japanization, being manga and anime instruments of that phenomenon.

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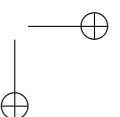
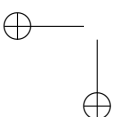
## Chapter 4

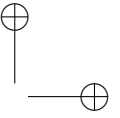
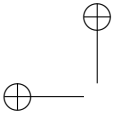
# THE ANIME GALAXY

'The Anime Galaxy' is the designation given to the totality Japanese animation film "constellations": systems of narratives and characters, mythologies manufactured to present a fiction story coherently. Influenced by technology, fantasy worlds and science fiction, the artists (designers, animators, producers and directors) push forward a widening culture with codes borrowed from photography and cinematography. But, as manga emerges right after mid-20<sup>th</sup> century it has sufficient time to mature and cause the birth of anime. Artists never stood away from technological motives in 'The Anime Galaxy'. Robots and computers share the same technique and digital language.

As far as videogames are concerned, they perform an update and the apex of the technical motive; game space is the technical space by excellence. We conceive an 'Anime Galaxy' relying on technical and global images, knowing that new media like the Internet, videogames and digital handheld platforms are converted into extensions for classic media to tell stories, being that the art Scott McCloud attributes to manga: an individual and collective, purifying "story telling" technology. From Thouny we learn the distinction between "individual subjectivity" and "collective subjectivity" (p. 123 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). This is why manga is mostly read by adolescents (Luyten, *op. cit.*: p. 65). The cornerstone of anime is a "mediation" some kind of "medial" technology; it's a graphic, cinematic and new-media inclined form.

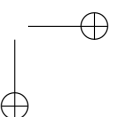
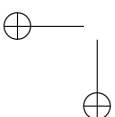
In Virilio's belief, community is an inter-subjective fact (2009: p. 78). Amidst the new media, the individual subject participates in such type of com-

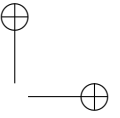
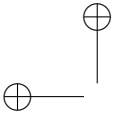




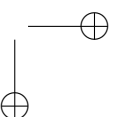
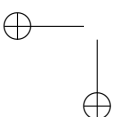
munity, a "collective subjectivity", not being so a central subject but rather a "series of little subjective nodes", what for LaMarre (2009: p. 107) is quintessentially a post-modern situation". The "undeniable 'systemness' of the post-modern world" (Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 224) and the "nodal" or "collective subjectivity" paradigms allow the universal to be intrinsic to anime, since the latter is in itself a new medium – a global medium. The argument of Bolton *et al.* (2007) is that anime is a "global youth culture" (p. vii in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007) gathering consensus among authors as Napier and LaMarre, since this culture has increased in Asia, from Hong-Kong to Taiwan (Wong: p. 29 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Firstly in a two-color version broadcast in Japanese TV, and later in a full color version broadcast abroad, *Astro Boy* becomes the forefront of 'The Anime Galaxy', the surface of a culture leaving behind its exclusively literary and graphic stage, only to disclose itself through its "animetic" aesthetic (LaMarre, 2009), closer to the most advanced audiovisual gear. A country respected because of the quality of its products, as Japan is, has in the turn of the century an impressive stage of globalized anime. On political terms, enforcing *kokusaika* contributes to improve the internationalization of Japan and promote animation film. In association with anime, an entire panoply of articles follows the global course, namely books, films, conventional and electronic toys, collectible statues and "merchandising" alike, as Poitras states: "An entire subculture has grown up around anime and its related entertainments" (*op. cit.*: p. 7). Between anime and supplemental articles there is a transition between toys converted to animation film and images coming to existence out of two-dimensional screens – the physical toys. In the limbo, there are videogames, simultaneously images and toys, electronic amusements, new media.

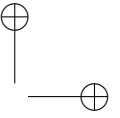
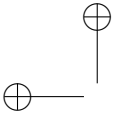
Each still, animated or interactive anime image normally has grotesque characters and their antipode, the pretty *kawaii* figures. These are the infantile and sympathetic characters which delight the public, producing collectible cute icons and uncanny statues, some of them closer to the human figure, slightly twisted, as rare as sinister, repeating a specific aesthetic; in popular products and cutting-edge entertainment, from card games and videogames to cinema, board games and "action figures". Manga, anime and videogames ceased to seem foreigners [*gaijin*]. Copy after copy, edition after edition, series after series – considering the logics of artwork, sequel and trilogy – the thing permitting us to identify the code, the signs, is the repetitive form. After





all, there cannot be code without repetition (Barthes, 1984). For McLuhan (1994), the basis of repetition, of iterability, comes out of mass production, originally from the assembly line of typography. In this range, we call for the existence of an 'Anime Galaxy', not only powered by 'advanced industry culture', but mostly by robotics, which stars in anime as a crucial narrative element, the robot as a symbol of the assembly line. Hans Bertens prefers the Baudrillardian concept of "semiurgy" [of semiotics and demiurge] to say that mass production gave in to the sinister production of signs (*op. cit.*: p. 10). In 'The Anime Galaxy' the hero is the robot and it represents anime's manufacture structure. Since the decade of 60 the robot prevails as a "*leitmotiv*" (an expression of Barthes, 1957) in anime, reaching a point of blending up with the message of this medium. Robots are featured in anime in order consolidate an "image of the future" that happens to be robotic. The latter is mainly an extension of the computer. The Japanese intend to assemble universal computers, anthropomorphic media devices. As one attends to the Eastern 'Media Renaissance' one perceives that Japanese culture remains saturated with images of anime characters in TV shows, OVAs, Web channels, commercials and popular music. Actually, Napier (2006) claims that: "Anime, manga, video games (...) are all examples of this new power that, for a variety of reasons, has begun to wield an enormous influence in the world's consumption of popular culture" (p. 53 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). Besides, an iconic noise is detected, mostly in metropolitan spaces where the Japanese find normal to have real airliners taking off with *Pokémon* dolls painted on them, much as having buildings covered with illustrations of *The Vision of Escaflowne* or buses covered with commercial images of the *Cowboy Bebop* anime series. In Japan's cityscape, the cute icon of anime turns the city into something more unusual; rendering weakened the border between real and animation. While in US anime is less a subculture as time goes by; it is a favorite medium in Japan, increasingly seen as an intellectually challenging art form, as the amount of academic texts on the issue confirm (Napier, 2001: p. 4). Anime is undoubtedly a medium conquering fans with its global images, captivating characters and narratives spreading across several new media.





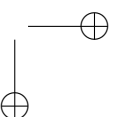
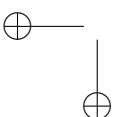
## 4.1 GLOBAL IMAGES

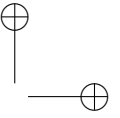
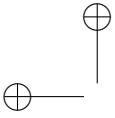
### 4.1.1 Animation is a New Medium

Among the new media sphere there is anime, thanks to its display in new formats beside the visual ones, on screen. Once integrated in the 'media-environment' of our time, anime is presented as special medium, not detached from the references to the print-format of manga, and enjoying a worldwide audience. Despite earning a universal market, anime shows elements from Japanese culture, which, in turn, is much more than as shown in anime. Hiroshi Yoshioka, a specialist in this animation film genre, resumes: "Anime is not to the Japanese, although it shows Japanese culture" (*op. cit.*).

Balancing between the modern and the ancient is something that is a part of the imaginary of anime, of its mythologies and iconographies. These are images tearing Antiquity apart and glowing at the height of the post-modern. Highly precise graphics are a 'multiform graphic cut-out' inscribed on the screen as next-generation calligraphy. This image of 'multidimensionality' is coming from the future of science fiction, from the "Empire of Signs" (Barthes, 1984) showing off as a new and ludic substance; the interactivity featured in anime is creatively taking advantage of an imperial sense of staging, theatrical game.

In terms of media theory specifically, anime can be defined as Napier does "(...) 'anime' is a medium, not a single television or film series, not even a single genre" (2001: p. 245). In *The Language of New Media* (2001) and in *Abstraction And Complexity* (2004), Lev Manovich applies the "metamedium" (p. 3) concept, where he raises the hypothesis of a super-medium being capable of absorbing everything. We have in anime such capability of full integration since animation includes fiction and communication, opening space to fantastic, fantasy and science fiction. That free space of the animation film medium matters as the medium faces no limitation in being obliged to faithfully represent the real (Napier, 2007: p. 106 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Polak's perspective is broader, the author explains "Art is the medium par excellence for transposing images from the Other world into this world" (*op. cit.*: p. 3). Once he refers "art" he is including images. Nevertheless, by mentioning the "surmountableness" of images of the other world, Polak regards images as being "time machines", carriers of space-less narratives, for stories from the

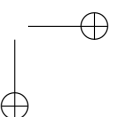
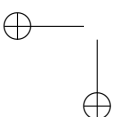




future, about what has not happened yet. In this background, the manga definition advanced by Frederik Schodt (2002) is something we should endorse due to its precursor character: "Manga today is a type of 'meta-media' at the core of a giant fantasy machine" (p. 20). Manovich points the "metamedium" and Schodt speaks of "meta-media" – the first one speaks in singular whereas the second speaks in plural. Despite the most applicable concept anime being the one of "metamedium", proposed by Manovich (since anime is a global medium and comprehends various elements and subgenres), what Schodt says on the "giant fantasy machine" stands pertinent. What is sustaining anime's global form, just as in manga, is massive production. In the age of abundance, in post-war, the world was set for the global expansion of anime. Sugimoto advances that "the prosperity generation" has grown up in the beginning phase of the "information revolution environment", which is dominated by such electronic devices as car telephones, satellite and cable television networks, compact disc stereos, the Internet, fax machines, and Word-processors (2003: p. 76).

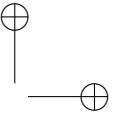
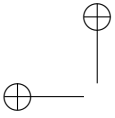
When it comes to arguing about the contents, Bolton et al. (2007) provides the answer by interlinking media to science fiction, which "(...) entered the global culture through new media. (...) Japanese science fiction has been distributed throughout the world in the most popular new communication technologies – television, videocassettes, arcade games, personal computers, and game consoles" (p. vii in Bolton et al. [Ed.], 2007). Further ahead, Bolton makes clear that "These new media, moreover, have usually been introduced as vehicles for science fiction-themed spectacles that reinforce their futuristic aura" (Idem, Ibidem).

Being a global medium is to be more than hardware, a register, a medium to inscribe and promote the circulation of narratives. What is happening is justified by Thouny as a "resingularization of subjectivities in a collective narrative becoming" (p. 126 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009), that is, within the wide and "galactic" medium that anime is, there is enough space for the subject to reposition himself inside the collective narrative. Animation film is leveled up from the moment on it is considered as a language. Hiroshi Yoshioka admits "(...) anime is communication. Young people communicate with each other through anime if they don't know the language" (*op. cit.*). It is this "internationalizing" capability of anime that makes it a "metamedium". Taking into account the ubiquitous form of animation, one may apply on it



the "post-geographic" medium concept, a term used by William Gibson, in Mark Neale's (2003) documentary film, to explain the "transnational" scale of the Internet in the age of global economies. Put this, to say anime is "post-geographic" is to defend its ecumenical nature, the surmountableness of its images and texts beyond borders. Anime encompasses a wide range of media platforms, aesthetic conventions. Today it is distributed, it circulates "transnationally" and it is also "transnationally" produced (LaMarre, 2009: p. xiv). For the Japanese, the sword was the symbol of virtue, what ensured to live in a freer and more peaceful world (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 296). However, one is not speaking now of a world where the sword holder is protecting himself against danger, but of a world where, beyond borders, there are markets available for the "cultural Asianization". As for this aspect, the world of today is marked by the surmountableness of images within a "metamedium", for they flow and bypass geographic limits. "Despite its indisputably Japanese origins, anime increasingly exists at a nexus point in global culture; this position allows it to inhabit an amorphous new media territory that crosses and even intermingles national boundaries" (Napier, 2001: p. 23-24). For Napier, Japan's cultural identity carried in anime is paradoxically a "global identity". Being so, anime is the ideal aesthetic product of contemporary times, positioned in the "front line" of the creation of an alternative cultural discourse, trespassing classic categories like "native" or "international", all of this in order to participate on an entirely new and genuine "global culture" (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 236). If we remind Polak, we get to know that in fact, "The domain of the future, however, is without boundaries" (*op. cit.*: p. 4), as what is at stake is to drawing them again. One considers anime to be a superior, "post-geographic", futuristic and worldwide communication medium. Nevertheless, the "participation" factor is also a decisive one to increase the global aspect. Henry Jenkins is a defender that "The circulation of media content – across different media systems, competing media economies, and national borders – depends heavily on consumers' active participation" (*op. cit.*: p. 3).

The ubiquity, accessibility and aesthetic of anime have this medium into a good quality reservoir for its audience, which is a participant, unconditional fan of the images of subjectivity, the sequences causing him to feel transported, as if inside the animation and narrative. Consequently, anime continues the enterprising legacy of manga. For Daniel H. Pink, the explanation for manga's popularity is not obvious. Although, manga makes use of the fu-

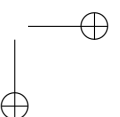
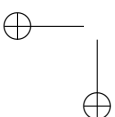


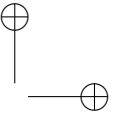
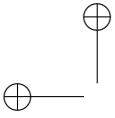
ture model for business and addressing all media types (*op. cit.*). To refuse quitting on print-book formats (*manga*) has been important to support anime. Expanding it as a business model onto other fields discards the possibility of rejecting the print-format. Print culture is identical yet not the same. About that, Scott McCloud endorses that “no country has all the answers (...), but (...) the Japanese may hold the ‘key’ to at least a crucial ‘part’ of comics’ ‘hidden potential’” (1996: p. 48). A global medium is what anime is because that kind of work has already been done by American comics. Wong is the one manifesting such position, saying that “As a part of the globalization of media, American comics and animation have a long history of exporting such works” (p. 23 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). All constellations of “merchandising”, toys and collectible articles, cable TV and Web channels, electronic gaming and commercials are being consumed within a new global ‘image-track’. Japan inaugurates in anime a global visual medium, an institution mirroring cultures (not merely the Asian ones). At the genesis of this global representation phenomenon of animation lays the boiling ‘media-environment’ of our time. Thanks to Sugimoto we’re informed that “(...) the information environment constitute part and parcel of their [young Japanese] daily reality. This generation has not abandon print media” (*op. cit.*: p. 76). It is not just the question of print media being in vogue in Japan, as what definitely marks Japan’s exclusiveness in animation is something already existing in comics. After all, in compliance with Schodt (2002),

“Since Japan is the first nation on Earth where comics have become a full-fledged medium of expression, one has to question: ‘what it means when adults get so much of their primary information from a medium of expression that is a form of caricature that deliberately emphasizes deformation and exaggeration?’” (p. 72).

Who supplies the answer is Wong, by assuming that “The influence of manga in Southeast Asian societies is obvious. Outside Japan and Asia, the visibility of manga is clearly emerging into the mainstream media” (p. 24 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). In short, the globalization of anime is no sudden phenomenon, as we saw earlier; the ‘media-environment’, the fact of comics being a communication medium adopted on a large-scale by the Japanese,

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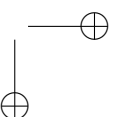
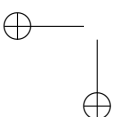


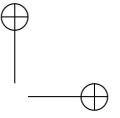
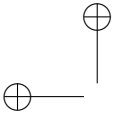
and the emerging of manga on mainstream media, has favored the 'Anime Galaxy'. In case there would be no industry or an omnipresent communication context, animation would not become as universal as it has happened. The response to the way Japanese fiction is converted to a communication format is given by Herbert Marcuse:

“If the established society manages all normal communication, validating or invalidating it in accordance with social requirements, then the values alien to these requirements may perhaps have no other medium of communication than the abnormal one of fiction” (*op. cit.*: p. 251).

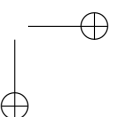
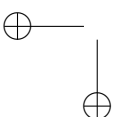
Therefore, the established society managing all communication in tune with the effective standards, there is no better communication medium than that of fiction. Though it is regarded as being unusual, based on the statement of Marcuse, fiction does not end in the age of "culture industry" (considering the epoch in which Marcuse publishes these affirmations: the post-war period).

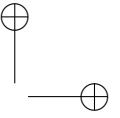
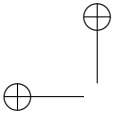
Anime stands in epicenter of the lifestyle of the global generation. Sugimoto concludes saying it is a “global generation personifies global culture” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 74). Besides, anime’s global images have been able to push Japan forward. Napier says that across anime, Japan has increasingly been transformed into a relevant power in the global economy extent (2001: p. 5). In Hiroshi Yoshioka’s assessment, manga’s popularity (which as one duly noticed so far, shares certain specificities with manga on this aspect) is related to a language issue: “Japanese animation, or anime, is so ubiquitous that it now seems to constitute a universal language in globalized pop culture” (*op. cit.*). It matters to discuss, in Yoshioka’s belief, the possibility of anime having a new language. The author says “Anime has a unanimous language, global language” (*Idem, Ibidem*). Let’s not forget that the images easily identified with the aesthetic and techniques of anime owe a lot to the "mecha" sub-genre. The universally recognized images of combat robots’ animation film, according to Frederik L. Schodt, have contributed to Japan export the image of Japan itself: “Because of Japan’s enormous success in exporting warrior robot animation, very Japanese images are today very international” (1988: p. 89). Images of robots in animation function as prototypes for a “mechatronic” society, “cartoons” of a society yet to exist in the real scene. Giorgio





Agamben in the essay *A Comunidade Que Vem* [Coming Community] (1993) stipulated that “‘tricksters’ or vagabonds, assistants or ‘cartoons’, they’re the finest models of the coming community” (p. 17, translation is ours), which in turn has animation film features as pointed out by Agamben. In this path, the heroes of popular culture, the illusionists and the magicians, the characters of the illusion folklore and the characters wandering across the realm of image are the ones to whom such coming community belongs. Among the images coming from the ‘Anime Galaxy’ we find these “figures”. Besides these ones, denounced by Agamben, concerning the community, one may still consider “spectacle”, from Debord, when it comes to society. In Debord’s book, *A Sociedade do Espectáculo* [The Society of Spectacle] (*op. cit.*), the “spectacle” is defined as something that is at the same time presented as society itself, as an integrant part, functioning as “an instrument for social unification”. Debord underlines that, “as a part of society, it [the spectacle] is obviously the sector gathering all looks and all awareness” (*Ibidem*: p. 10m, translation is ours). Within anime’s mainstream background it is possible to understand this dimension of the “spectacle”, where real society and “cartoons” are seemingly like one entity alone. It is also a fact that anime works very much as an “instrument of unification”, for social assembly, like network videogames. In the streets of Tokyo readers, viewers and players of Japanese fiction are seen. Wolfgang Schivelbusch encourages us to position the reading, the viewing experience and the game (the manga-reader, anime-viewer or videogame-user interfaces) in a world of flows based on speed technologies (in LaMarre, 2009: p. xvi). Such phenomenon leads us to infer how the ‘Anime Galaxy’ is a global medium, suitable for sheltering society in a monoculture, whose existence is increased by globalization, the very same that for Harumi Befu is a by-product of capitalism in Modernity” (Wong: p. 25 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). We understand better that anime is a global “metamedium”, an instrument of communication counting on the participation of fans because as the cultivation of a culture is broadened, in its turn capable of bringing people closer to each other. Between the literary and the cinematic, from the cinematic to videogame networks, the ‘Anime Galaxy’ is undeniably “spectacular”. Accurately speaking, “The spectacle is not an image set, but a social relationship between people, mediated by images” (Debord, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 10, translation is ours). The easily recognized images of warrior robots are universal. Through spectacular and popular images, anime changes social relationships



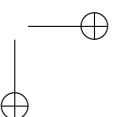
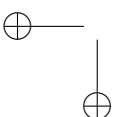


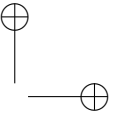
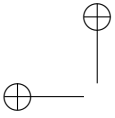
in Japanese society, not only because images are mediatic, but because they're technical, instead. However, we are to accept two additional arguments: first, that there is an abandonment of the idea of "society" bearing the adoption of the idea of "sociality" (Hans Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 225); and secondly, for Sugimoto, once Japanese consumer electronics' enterprises are dominating the internal and international market of Japan, the social relationships of the Japanese are influenced by media and by electronic devices where their mass culture is displayed (*op. cit.*: p. 76). In re-using images and narratives of the very same mass culture, the effect is consummated. On this post-modern stigma, John Wyver concludes that "(...) this reuse is our individual form of resistance" ([1986:54] in Hans Bertens, 2005: p. 96).

#### 4.1.2 Mighty Atom, Astro Boy And Kokusaika

By taking as a framework what Sugimoto states in the previous subchapter, that mass culture is increasingly available across electronic media, we might more easily understand what *Mighty Atom* represents. Immortalized in Tezuka's manga pages, the robot-child is a landmark of modern Japanese comics. Yet, everything has changed with the advent of television in post-war Japan. *Mighty Atom's* animation export became a world-scale popular culture export. There is a change along with the internationalization of *Mighty Atom*: the TV series is renamed as *Astro Boy*, meeting a two-color version and a full-color version. Both are focused on the same parable of "Atom", which, in agreement with Eiji, is the parable for the child who can't grow to grow up (p. 112 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). A robot-child having the same "age" and size, neither aging nor dying, is a passion for the Japanese. Such type of phenomenon shows a partly massified society, for there is no passive and indifferent subject, being a fact that "(...) man becomes a consumer, himself mass-produced like the products (...) he absorbs" (Howe [1970] cit. in Bertens, *op. cit.*: p. 21). Even the global audience chose "Astro" as a national character. The whole issue of the "national character" had already been mentioned by Benedict (*op. cit.*: p. ix). One thing is certain, as much in manga as in anime as well, Tezuka changed the world of fiction and, like this was not enough, he designs the one becoming the most prominent icon of a popular and ludic Japan. Regarding the story of the robot-child, Frederik L. Schodt enlightens us:

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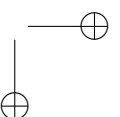
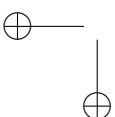




“While he is a machine, he is also highly intelligent, and emotive (. . .). He wanted to become as human as possible, but in effect, he existed as a bridge between the world of man and machines. He suffered for this, but his suffering also made him more human” (cit. in Hornyak, 2006: p. 51).

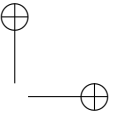
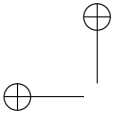
Establishing a bridge between the human world and the machine’s world is "Astro"’s most typical feature. This character becomes an inspiration for all Japanese, mainly for the ones producing iconography, narratives and entertainment for 'The Anime Galaxy'.

Originally, the story of "Astro" is quite simple: Dr.Tenma, the scientist who creates him, expels him away of his life, assigning him with the epithet of being “abnormal”. Thus, "Astro" is sold to the circus where his human looks make him popular. It is his technology that turns him unusual, for his 100.000 HPs (twice the capability of Titanic’s engines) render him an immense power. The adorable Astro is nuclear-powered toy-robot, able to fly at Mach 5 with jet engines in arms and legs. He even possesses machine guns, night-vision, hearing that permits him to hear something miles away, and he still comprehends sixty languages. At some point in the story, Astro is rescued by Dr.Orchanomizu, who designs artificial parents so he does not have to feel an orphan. This chapter of Astro’s narrative suffers the post-war influence, the moment in which, right after the Nagasaki and Hiroshima bombings, many families were torn apart. Under Tezuka’s vision, the need of a normal family is a problem that could be solved by technology. About this aspect, current Japanese robotics finds its market niche, since beyond the social aspect; robotics fits in a solution for more deep psychological problems in society. A version of Astro has been transposed to Steven Spielberg’s *A.I.* film, in a narrative style more centered in the machine accepting humans than the acceptance of humans of the machine. Originally, Astro is a nuclear-powered “Pinocchio”, Japanese automaton aspiring to uphold the "good" (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 18). Its brand image remains since 1951 connivent with peace and diplomacy. Eiji underscores Atom’s [Astro] peaceful vision (p. 115 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). As Astro praises peace, control of fire arms all over the world, in a post-nuclear era, he shares goals with a real defeated Japan, a country wishing had avoided the "Zero" moment of its nuclear history. On the other hand, without the dreadful bombings, Japan as we know it would not exist. In re-



semblance with the story we are told by Fritz Lang in *Metropolis*, Astro is the interface between human culture and the 'machine-culture' (we shall keep in mind that Tezuka made comic version of *Metropolis* [Lang]). In the allegorical message conveyed in the futuristic *Metropolis* one understands that between the working "hand" and the decision-making "mind", the perfect mediator is the "heart" (Bird: p. 127 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). In this background of appeal to feelings, facing the technology of the time with skepticism, Tezuka creates Astro. By the time Atom is adapted to *Astro Boy*'s TV version (that happened to be an acculturation too), the publishers of Tezuka forced him to turn Atom into a more romantic and less cynical character (as it was originally planned [Schodt, 2002]). As soon as Atom is transformed into an anime series for TV in the decade of 60, a new ground is set with the internationalization of anime. In spite of existing in Japan a particularly rich period for animation film in the 70s, only in 80s the country's rising economy makes Astro even more prominent. Wong (p. 28 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006) reminds us the label given at the time to Atom: "Ambassador Atom [*Atomu Taishi*] (1951)". The uniqueness of the "Astro Boy" phenomenon is grounded on relevant political issues, which Schodt (2002) insists in standing out: "Since the mid-eighties, the Japanese government has been heavily promoting 'kokusaika', or the 'internationalization' of Japan. The officials certainly never had 'anime' in mind, but in 'manga' it is occurring" (p. 68). On the political level the superiority of the Japanese people is defended (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 184).

The impact "Astro" caused on the Japanese imaginary reached such a point that he turned to be "Japan's Ambassador" (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 18), "peace-making technology". We already know Tezuka believed technology is good, though its applications would depend on who would control it. Just as Frederik Schodt says: "If you read the stories carefully, Tezuka displays a strong skepticism about the benefits of technology (...)" (cit. in Hornyak, 2006: p. 48). Technology is always observed as duplicity, because Japan met its negative form with the bombings. In Tezuka's reasoning, the goal is to demonstrate technology could be used for good things, but in a watchful manner. *Mighty Atom* transits to the TV screen and widens the impact of its peace-keeping type. For Hornyak, "Atom was almost as influential as his creator, spawning a universe of Japanese stories in manga and anime that centered on robots. His adventures certainly paved the way for the genre of giant robots to become global modern staple of children's fantasy" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 53). It



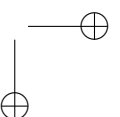
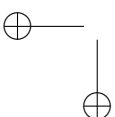
is in this extent that "Atom-Astro" is positively propelled by *kokusaika*, the internationalization of Japan, that Harumi Befu rather calls it "Japan's globalization" (in Wong: p. 27 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). As Astro fits in the image of a country thriving and pursuing sophistication, he symbolizes a situation of lowering weapons. If we recall the "chrysanthemum and the sword" metaphor that Benedict uses in her study, we know that "Today [then in the post-war] the Japanese have proposed 'to lay aside the sword' in the Western sense" (*op. cit.*: p. 296). One has to remark that in the story of the robot-child, the latter works in a circus of machines. However, soon he turns out to be a peace-keeper, alerting to the dangers of an eventual nuclear war, and it in this point; he plays a relevant diplomatic role, standing in-between humans and aliens, before the war that involves hydrogen bombs being mutually dropped. Obviously that the historical time set influences on *Mighty Atom* are clear, for the time being when Tezuka conceives the character. In *Astro Boy's* 2009 animated version, it is still effective something Napier (2001) says to exist in older versions:

"The notion that a sophisticated Japanese animated film could cross international borders to become a political statement in a war-wracked European country could have been deemed bizarre at best and most likely absurd. Things have changed. (...) the Japan of the 1990s began to develop a new export, animated films and videos – 'anime'" (p. 5).

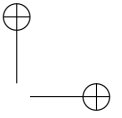
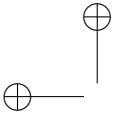
Of course, that the influence of anime in present time is very big in the realm of mainstream communication. Hiroshi Yoshioka (*op. cit.*) assumes also that "'Anime' is supported by political powers".

#### 4.1.3 Toy-Image: The Transition

The transit place and the dynamic position of the global image of animation are a symptom that there is something new on the image. Between anime and the *kawaii* statue there is an intermediate point, the one of the 'toy-image', requiring contiguity of anime figures until the real world. Collectible objects as statues, or most utilitarian ones like key-chains and watermarked paper blocks, are practical examples of how mediatic animation images obey to a

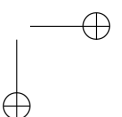
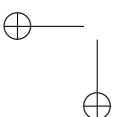


flow reaching the shelves of real stores. It is in the world of objects and not in the world of images that the 'toy-image' stands out for its transitoriness, marking the change from the 'graphic regime' onto the material regime of collectionism, since fans may consume and collect objects associated to images, which in fact only makes sense by reporting to the graphic regime. Once the stage comprehending the literary, the graphic and cinematic is overcome, it is the time for matter itself, the "merchandising" article, to present the anime identity differently, across the 'toy-image'. As the latter is enabled with spectacular characteristics, it displays a language that is self-referencing, aiming at itself, the instance of animation, though it is common to call for motives existing only in manga. Under the theoretical framework of the "spectacle", the question regarding the 'toy-image' assumes even more importance. Debord warns us about the spectacle language being established by signs of the ruling production, which are at the same time the ultimate goal of this production (*op. cit.*: p. 11). Put this, if the spectacle excels because of its sign dimension, and if the production of signs is the superlative productive activity, then the spectacle produces the spectacle. In the anime universe, this means the graphic patrimony benefits from continuity into the production of toys. The passage from image to toy is logical and inevitable. Toy brands, much like those of animation images are promoting the increasing 'Anime Galaxy', under the supervision of the *kokusaika*, and therefore the signs of the very Japanese industrial production, trademarks of Japan's techno-industrial identity. The global Japan's identity is related to the identity of brands of graphic culture and *kawaii* culture. From the "spectacle" point of view referred by Debord, the identity contained in the language of spectacle is its self-reference. In other words, the spectacle refers to itself only, displaying its signs and products in the same way anime displays its narratives, images, figures and toys. Nonetheless, in the realm of the 'toy-image', Silvio defends a different perspective, for "Unlike god-icons or puppets, figurines of manga, anime, and game characters are not believed to descend from an 'original' toy" (p. 214 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). 'The Anime Galaxy' gets bigger due to its iterability, being repetition what empowers its growth. For Debord, the physical world remains "replaced by a selection of images existing above it (...)" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 27). The Japanese consume a great amount of graphic media, namely comics and animation films, more than any country. They dedicate much attention to fantasy and they have chosen animation as an in-

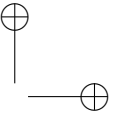
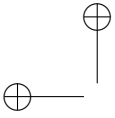


terest center, a favorite medium. Following a spectacular form, the ludic images of animation occupy the public attention, seducing it with its fantastic logic. As the physical world is surrogated by the hallmarks of anime, concerning the attention capture in an iconic style, a new era is inaugurated by them. With the 'toy-image', what Marshall McLuhan says about the era of the pictorial consumer still makes sense. If the era of images' consumption has ended, then the iconic age is already upon us (1994: p. 103). Engaged in the logic of the icon, the consumer ceases to assimilate the totality of images and starts consuming icons instead, the best images amidst the panoply of available images. And thus it happens with the 'toy-images', which are in short the images transcending the 'graphic regime', bypassing Gutenbergian repetition until they become materialized in exact objects. Ultimately this is the era of the effective icon, the moment in which we may witness the transition of this iconic fiction images onto iconic collectible products. The 'toy-image' takes advantage from iconicity. The best object is made out of the best image. Hereafter a path is set for the advanced industry, strengthened with the 'toy-images' which starts a new system: spreading mediatic and iconic images, bearing the sole purpose of forcing them to cross into the tangible ludic universe – the collectible object. Once the audience is defied to touch it, the toy based on animation occupies a family space. Even in post-war times, "All Japanese children have toys. Fathers and mothers and all the circle of friends and relatives make or buy dolls (...)" to offer as gifts to children (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 266). It is a primary spot the place occupied by the doll in Japanese culture, a prevailing fact since the *karakuri*. Matthews insists in informing us that the giant robots animation, for instance, had a key-spot over generations, when it comes to the children of the Orient and the West. Japanese colors and shapes stand universally associated to robots ever since 1983, when the Takara toy manufacturing company introduced in the American market a toy range of combat robots called "Transformers"; that later became the most successful [non-electronic] toys ever in the market, generating 100 million dollars in sales on one single year (2003-2004: p. 12). In 2006, in this scope of the industrialized 'toy-image,' Jiwon Ahn developed several articles related with manga and anime, including CD soundtracks, and paperback books, fanzines and many collectible items like statues, toys, stationery and clothing are released into the market. Besides, there is also the release of videogames inspired in manga and anime (in Wong: p. 25-26 in

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Lunning [Ed.], 2006). The Japanese enjoy more *Doraemon*, *Pokémon: The First Movie* and *Hello Kitty* (Sanrio, Inc., 1978), rather than preferring "Super-Man" or "Spider-Man". The average 'toy-image' consumer is driven by cute miniatures and cute icons. *Pikmin*, the videogame, is a good example, where the player controls little creatures while they recover scattered debris of their spaceship when the crash took place, so they can resume their initial course. In the lack of major narratives, when it comes to animation the fiction narratives sustain the density required to affirm the 'toy-image'. When Hiroshi Yoshioka (2008) says that in the world of animation what matters is content creation, that is to say, films, videogames and stories, he is endorsing the idea that contents shall be produced to support anime. Jiwon Ahn, Matthews and Gosling notice how huge the toy industry is, it is relevant and increasing onto new domains such as videogames'. One has to state that if in the 80s we had a toy industry like Nintendo, Bandai Co. – this in Japan –, in the US the equivalent was Mattel, the giant toy manufacturer. In this day and age, Nintendo operates in the videogames' console market (making hardware and software) and different industries, like Bandai, in toys, and Namco, in videogames, established Namco Bandai Games. We may say that, as there is a dialog between image (animation) and toy (action figure), it is true that a dialog between toy (videogames console) and image (game) exists too. Thus, one may speak of 'image-toys', 'graphic toys' enabled with mighty interactivity. *Transformers: War For Cybertron* (2010), for instance, relies in both toys and film, despite being a videogame. Games inspired in *Hello Kitty* are an example too. The great characteristic of the 'image- toy' is graphic culture's mascots being aestheticized on the screen. It gets harder to separate image from object. *Tamagotchi* is one of those cases of being a game and an electronic object at the same time, functions as basic game and physical object. It demands the player to help feeding a virtual animal, much like taking care of a real pet. *Nintendogs* (2005), in Nintendo DS permits the virtual dog to assume life in an image form in the two-screens of this handheld console. In these two cases, the 'image-toys' are the game-objects. Another hybrid case is AIBO, the robot-dog from Sony Electronics, released in 1999. It is both robot and toy, the name itself being chosen to address the meaning of "AI" ("Artificial Intelligence") and "Bot" (nickname for "Robot"). Ludic interaction with AIBO requires one to learn its rules, as in a videogame, which buttons and commands trigger, which operations and behaviors. In sum, the char-

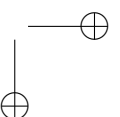
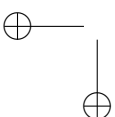


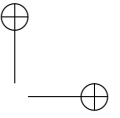
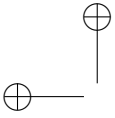
acter's graphic design, the toy robots and videogames belong to an 'Anime Galaxy', switching manifestations all the way. By positioning the 'toy-image' and 'image-toy' dichotomies in Debord's theory, one can conclude the anime audience aspires to possess images and objects: in short, "object-images". A "spectacular" logic remains in this equation. One has to recall the adverts of Guy Debord:

“As indispensable ornament of the objects produced today, as a general exposition of the system's rationality, and as an advanced economic sector shaping directly an increasing crowd of objects-images, the spectacle is current society's 'primary production'” (*op. cit.*: p. 14, translation is ours).

Within the scope of Japan's internationalization, of the globalized media of his, one notices such an "advanced economic sector", a systematic over-production of "objects-images". Moreover, a country like Japan, exporting animation like no other, has obviously a "society of spectacle". Thus it is explained the success of toys and animations as *Zoids: Battle Legends* (2004). Because Japan is dedicated in a major part to the robotic industry, it looks for a way in robotic artifacts of educating the public to be set for the society of the future, making pedagogy from a toy. Jonathan Ross reports in *Japanorama*, that "the 'otaku' or 'fanatics' are who collects figures related with their favorite 'manga' or 'anime' characters" (*op. cit.*). The problem is the *otaku* make an obsession out of this consumption, filling a major part of their lives with anime images and toys. It is the occupation, replacement process that is at stake. In Debord's theory, "The spectacle is the moment in which the commodity reaches the 'total occupation' of social life" (*op. cit.*: p. 31, translation is ours). As for the Japanese, the omnipresence of anime videography in their social life stands at the same level as the Debordian concept of "spectacle". In posters of the *Final Fantasy* videogame series stuck on the street, with faces of *Noir* (in decorated metropolitan trains), *Astro Boy* (in lamps) or *Doraemon* (in paintings), we find the "spectacle" (re)produced to occupy the urban mind of the Japanese. In effect, there is a certain ubiquity in images and electronic items produced in Japan, which extends the animation basis at the global medium scale. Anne Allison states that some Japanese toys, namely the metal robots, became successful products in the American market in the

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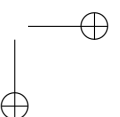
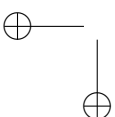
same way as portable entertainment technologies like Sony Walkman (music player) kind and Nintendo Game Boy (videogames console). These media got popular due to their ubiquity (2006: p. 13-14). Still about robots as pals, Hornyak displays an identical concern, advertizing for the fact of the Qrio robot being restyled and photogenic as the most up-to-date portable music player. This wonder of miniaturization was for Hornyak the "ultimate action figure, a toy coming from the future" (2006: p. 110). At the time when toys were abundant only in the homes of feudal landlords, and in the epoch when the most sophisticated toys were *karakuri* social machines, the Yorinao Hosokawa model – the tea server – was most acclaimed. Nowadays, consumers are not that much interested in toys like the *karakuri* model-kit released in 2002 by Gakken Co. publishing. The *kawaii* figures are dominating the public's attention, they are robotic, and they walk autonomously and keep on doing it out of the screens.

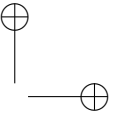
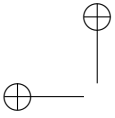
## 4.2 KAWAII FIGURES

### 4.2.1 A Cute Icon

To turn anime images into a global thing is to make accessible, across every communication media, the images that despite not revealing the entire Japanese culture, are responsible for marketing Japan beyond its territorial sea. Anne Allison notices the powerful toy manufacturing industry, a rapidly growing influence on the global toy market (Brent Allison, *op. cit.*: p. 321). The format and technologies where anime was created formed a cluster, which rendered it worldwide popularity. Endorsed by the Japanese government it exports audiovisual narratives featuring super-sized characters (giant robots) and small, nice figures. They're *kawaii* figures, images that look like toys, cute icons that also have a sinister and uncanny side. In some cases they are robotic, whereas in other they're but animation, and generally they are a by-product of an enormous merchandising systems, released by and advanced industry culture.

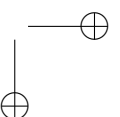
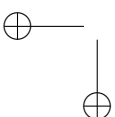
Historically speaking, the *kawaii* figures have established their own culture in a country where, for some time, collective disappointment prevailed. At first observation, the *kawaii* figures are different because of their "cuteness", that is, for being "very pretty" icons, attractive and feminine. In the





sympathetic and childish, colorful and happy figures one detects “kitsch” (Boym, *op. cit.*: p. 339) style. Regarding the childish question of kawaii objects, these allow to reconnect consumers to their childhood through feminine objects, this is translated as an escape from the adult world (Winge: p. 59 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Any character of ‘The Anime Galaxy’ may be marketed in the *kawaii* model: mascots, pets, small and big monsters, robots in different stages of transformation or dolls wearing thoroughly custom-tailored dresses. Due to the expansion of videogames, among which are those of anime, the background of the international *kawaii* figures is increasingly the one of electronic dolls or of videogames. The toy manufacturing industry itself has given in succumbed to the cyberneticization of *kawaii* “cute culture”, which lays its groundwork on the deception the Japanese people suffered in the decade of 40. We are told by Matthews (2003-2004) that “both the cute icons epitomized by ‘Doraemon’ and the dystopian, apocalyptic worlds of ‘Akira’ have their roots in the disillusionment of postwar Japanese society” (p. 15-16). The cute icon cult also comes out of a pursuit of the wonderful, precisely because there was disappointment. In a more enlightening way, Matthews argues in the following excerpt that “The disillusionment with Japanese society has also been clearly substantiated in youth culture through “the ephemeral fashion of the ‘shōjo’ (young girl) and the culture of ‘kawaii’ (cuteness)” (*Ibidem*: p. 14). In the epicenter of the fantasy lies deception, something to replace what is missing, as long as it does not deceive Japanese society again. The global images of anime caused the public to get closer to a new generation of objects, coming out of images (comics, animations) or that eventually may be converted to them. Winge qualifies them as “trans-national objects” (p. 60 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), which makes them near the “post-geographic” media category advanced by Gibson. Being a “trans-national object” in the context of the *kawaii* figures is to support the generalized childishness as an awkward culture, as the Japanese media spectrum is saturated with figures, icons and narratives. In Sugimoto’s study, we are informed that “(. . .) Japan’s city life abounds with hedonism” (*op. cit.*: p. 244). A public with an egocentric profile, a consumerist behavior, care about its looks and personal happiness, at the same time it nurtures a joy towards Japanese *kawaii* culture’s ubiquitous concept. When Jonathan Ross interviewed the *ganguru girls* for *Japanorama*’s “Fashion in Japan” TV show, one of the young girls says: “I think ‘Barbie’ is cute because she has style and the face is pretty. We would like to be like her,

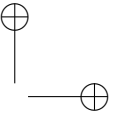
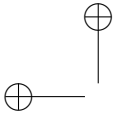
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despite being a doll" (*op. cit.*). These teenagers wear non-conventional make-up to shock, hence they are being called *ganguru* (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 263). About this relation between society and *kawaii* culture, Matthews insists in telling us that "This 'kawaii' culture is celebrated through childish fashion, young pop idols and a huge commercial market of 'cute' stationery, fashion accessories and other paraphernalia known as 'fancy goods'" (*ult.op. cit.*). In the so-called commodity market lays the explanation for the increasing consumerism phenomenon of *kawaii*. Gilles Poitras affirms that "The economic good times of the 1990s did much to make funds available for anime as well to create a market for related merchandise" (*op. cit.*: p. 53). Another observation following the same line of analysis comes from Winge, who remarks: "By the 1980s, Japanese mainstream culture became obsessed with all things 'kawaii' and cute (...)" (p. 49 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Let's recall that Frederik Schodt (2002) used to speak of manga as "meta-media", inserted in the core of a "giant fantasy machine" (p. 20). In this path, one applies in *kawaii* culture what Allison claims: "Japan operates more as signifier for a particular brand and blend of 'fantasy-ware': goods that inspire an imaginary space at once foreign and familiar" (2006: p. 18). Nevertheless, the "giant fantasy machine" and the "fantasy-ware" are propelling *kawaii* culture because of the specific characteristics of *kawaii* figures, which are "(...) young, childlike, and cute" (Winge: p. 70 in Lunning [Ed.], 2006). One should not mistakably think that this is all there is in terms of characteristics, since the "Large eyes are favored in a culture like Japan's that puts such a high value on 'cuteness.' (...); [they] are often used to express innocence, and younger characters will often have eyes larger than those of the adults" (Poitras, *op. cit.*: p. 60). In addition there is also the surreal, fantastic, hyper-feminine looks, and full of mannerisms (Winge: p. 50 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008).

Roland Barthes compares Japan to an "Empire of Signs" in the work bearing the same title: *L'Empire Des Signes* (1984). Moreover, the author writes about opaque figures like the language, alluding to an imperially vast Japan in terms of significant. He also points out how the quantity of significant supersedes the talking and that the sign exchange comes out of a fascinating subtlety despite the opacity of the language, sometimes exactly because of such opacity (*op. cit.*: p. 18). Another *sui generis* element of the *kawaii* figures besides their easy recognition is their tendency for smallness, for miniaturization. Lee O-Young (1984) justifies this phenomenon:

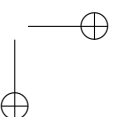
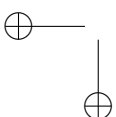
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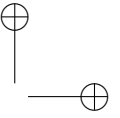
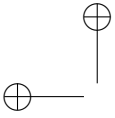


“(... ) the Japanese have a unique ‘chijimi shikō’, a miniaturizing orientation which has enabled them to skillfully miniaturize their environment and products, ranging from ‘bonsai’ plants, small cars, and portable electronic appliances to computer chips ” (in Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 4).

Even in the way Barthes (*ult.op. cit.*) tells us about *petitesse* ("smallness") matters for us to understand the *kawaii* figures. This author approaches the "microcosm culture", the Oriental structure in accordance with the infinitesimal, what is cut-up, *découpé*, condensed and clean. One finds in 'The Anime Galaxy' countless narratives of fantasy universes enabling a myriad of fabulous details, where such *petitesse* is evident. For Luyten, even the thought of the Japanese people is shaped within an aesthetic sensitive to gradients and details (*op. cit.*: p. 38). LaMarre underscores how Japan remains connoted with a miniaturization and informatization regime (2009: p. xxxvi) and Matt Hanson (*op. cit.*) classifies anime's short-videos on the Web as being "nano-entertainment". Some examples of *kawaii* figures are famous, like the yellow little bird of *The New Zealand Story*, the war tribes of *Patapon 1* and *2* (2009) or the round-shaped steam-engine propelled robots of *Tokobot*. Still in the videogames' domain, the stretchy and singing "locorocos" of *Locoroco* and the boys handling an umbrella in *Parasol Stars* (1990) are remarkable cases. The dinosaurs shooting soap bubbles out of their mouths in *Bubble Bobble*, the child casting and climbing up rainbows in *Rainbow Islands* and fairy duo of Tam & Rit armed with magic wands in *Rod Land* (Jaleco, 1990) deserve a remark. Specifically in this *kawaii* game, the rules of the infantile world required us to immobilize enemies and not killing them, instead. In another type of register, an anime film known for its *kawaii* figures is *My Neighbor Totoro*, where "cat-bus" pops out of nowhere with "eye-lights" on and other giant "furry-figures" (the "totoros"), which are waiting for a ride at the bus stop, holding umbrellas on the hand. *Doraemon*, the robotic animals and *Pokémon*, the "pocket monsters", feature a *kawaii* aesthetic, yet they do not dethrone *Hello Kitty*, the superlative icon of the "smallness" commercial culture.

Weaving a more sharp review about the cute icon's market logic, Anne Allison wants us to know that "‘Pokémon capitalism’ allows commodities to ‘double as gifts and companions’ referencing a milieu of pre-modern animist



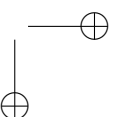
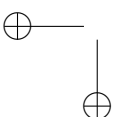


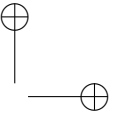
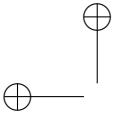
spiritualism in ‘New Age’ aesthetics. The ‘pocket monsters’ promote capitalist Japan’s ascendancy (. . .)” (in Brent Allison, 2009.: p. 323).

#### 4.2.2 The Sinister Mascots And The Uncanny Valley

Images and collectible items are divulging the animation identity through a capitalism of cute icons that makes easy for us to recognize the brand "Japan, Inc.". One notices the existence of a truly sinister look in *kawaii* figures; the sinister is the secondary side of the sympathetic images continuing the anime aesthetic. Hans Bertens insists to inform us that is currently going on is that “Industrial production has given way to Baudrillard’s ‘semiurgy’: the sinister production of signs” (*op. cit.*: p. 10). Thus, the industrialization of the sinister sign prevails. A duplicity carrying the consumers from the happy and multi-colored *kawaii* universe onto the uncanny world of mass-produced mascots, is industrialized, where certain duplicity remains condensed, as these are strange and beautiful at the same time. Trías alerts us for such fact, for the beautiful is the beginning of something terrible one can still bear (*op. cit.*: p. 31). It can be said that the "cute" and popular figures become somehow unbearable too, thanks to their omnipresence. In *Japanorama*, Jonathan Ross mentions the *kawaii* (in the sixth episode of the second series – "Cute") phenomenon and highlighting that "The love of a lifetime the Japanese nurture towards the 'cute' may not be perhaps more than the proof of their passion for animation" (*op. cit.*). Ross believes anime is the structure out of which "cute", i.e., *kawaii* things come to existence. Standing in the same position there is Anne Allison, who agrees with the way "Pokémon capitalism" empowers the replication of the "cute" as commodities reporting to a re-styled animism environment. In this exact point we have the moment where the sinister is identified, the one where the *kawaii* figure or object stands close to the constant figure, like it has been always present. We should remember that Napier (2001) is one of the early authors denouncing the subverse, double and alien world of anime looking figures:

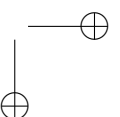
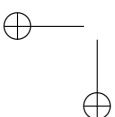
"The world and characters of anime are not simply representations of an idealized real world that is coherent and composed. Rather, they are uncanny evocations of a protean world of imagi-

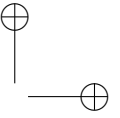
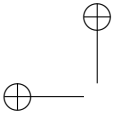




nation that is both familiar and unfamiliar to the viewer, a world of simulations, possible states, and possible identities" (p. 237).

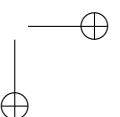
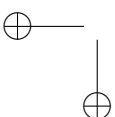
It is this one notices in the sinister mascots: collectible items are commodities, "uncanny evocations", as Napier introduces, belonging to the familiar and the bizarre, foreign world. The possible identities, the possible states, suggest a "world of simulations". It is not about carefully representing the real world, but rather about adding up new possibilities. Only regarding the topic of the sinister, what Trías (*op. cit.*) tells us is extremely useful to comprehend the disturbing macabre and awkward side of the *kawaii* figures. Trías defines the sinister as something displayed and yet to disclose, like a presentation being an absence, twisting into an intermittent spiral between "fiction-reality" and "reality-fiction" (*Ibidem*: p. 51, translation is ours), being that what "cute" creatures and figures show us. The sinister prevails in such game of simulations with no boundaries addressed. Besides, Trías indeed sustains that the sinister has the capability to produce the rupture of the aesthetic effect, revealing what was not supposed to be revealed, showing what ought to remain occult (*Ibidem*: p. 31). The "end of the aesthetic effect" turns the sinister further more than sinister, producing something "uncanny". For Freud, the "uncanny" is the frightening, the fear and the macabre, yet inclusively the beautiful and the grandiose, the attractive and the foreign. The "uncanny" in Freud symbolizes a hidden nature: "(...) the uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" (*op. cit.*: p. 124). In short, the "uncanny" is what the individual might feel in a given situation that forces him to evoke what once was classified as something "known" and that, suddenly, it becomes awkwardly new due its unrecognizable state. When it comes to the sinister mascots, Anne Allison applies an interesting expression: "commodity animism" (in Brent Allison, 2009: p. 321) or, in other terms, a sort of "mercantile animism" or "animistic commodity", which transports us onto the world of uncanniness, a world of new things that seem to have to life like have always had. It is because of this that Trías presents the sinister as the phony living being, "the condition and limit of the beautiful" (*op. cit.*: p. 16, translation is ours). We find all of this in *kawaii* objects and figures, in consumer objects that simulate they are alive, between reality and fiction. Although, it is just about commodities that in the scope of Japanese culture and animism religion, are holder of *kami*. We already know the mascot turns out

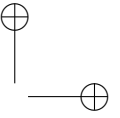
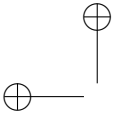




to be sinister because it is unknown at first and later it seems familiar, and it is uncanny because the "uncanny" [*Unheimlich*] stands against everything being intimate, secret and domestic [*Heimlich*]. In this sense, the pretty, sinister and uncanny mascot reaches its *Zen* dimension. In anime's case, *Zen* is related to the martial discipline, and occasionally with the occult (Levi, *op. cit.*: p. 25). The level of revelation, enlightenment and intuition is *Zen*, as the concern is to unravel; the end of omission is marked. On the sinister in Freud, Trías explains that generally it occurs when the fantastic (fantasized, wished by the individual) is produced in the real or when the real completely assumes the nature of the fantastic (*op. cit.*: p. 46). What is clear in the sinister stream of the *kawaii* is precisely that notion of reality being ordinary no more, but fantastic instead. When duplicity allows "fiction-reality" to be consolidated, "sinisterness" is evident (*ult.op. cit.*), while the aesthetic effect is shaken because the commodity is more than mercantile, the item has a soul (Anne Allison). Not everything being new and unusual is therefore a frightening fact. What we may affirm is that the new thing easily becomes scary and sinister (Trías, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 43, translation is ours). If we analyze the "double" question in specific, we have to mention the mirrors question. Its images, its reflections, have a proper meaning significance. Regarding this theme, Roland Barthes said: "In the West, the mirror is essentially an object of the narcissistic type: man conceives the mirror only to watch himself on it; while in Orient, so it seems, the mirror is empty; it is the symbol of the very emptiness of symbols"<sup>1</sup> (1984: p. 104, translation is ours). Should we follow the idea that the mirror is a living thing, then the animistic perspective implies accepting images with a life of their own. However, in agreement with Barthes, mirrors are allocating a reflection which could be infinite, void in itself, the perpetual form; we acknowledge a repetition with no inception, an event without cause, a memory without person, a speaking with not restrains. Put this, the dolls and the pretty and iconic figures of *kawaii* culture, much as the *karakuri* automata, share that duplicity. Copies and reflections are not enabled with inner side, once they are constructs inhabited by depthless ghosts, just as mirrors. During the *Edo* Period, the analphabet individuals used to foresee in the *karakuri* a strange awakening, as if the machine would be evil [*maijin*] or something

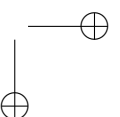
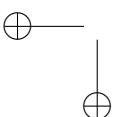
<sup>1</sup>"En Occident, le miroir est un objet essentiellement narcissique: l'homme ne pense le miroir que pour s'y regarder; mais en Orient, semble-t-il, le miroir est vide; il est symbole du vide même des symboles (...)", no original (Author Note).





leading them to suspect and confirm the “ghost in the machine” myth would exist. After all, the double and the sinister remain associated (Trías, *op. cit.*: p. 45). Dolls and statues, stationery items and decorative items of the *kawaii* world aside, the emerging robots driving the youngest boys surpass the toy stage. They are strangely agile, independent, real and fantastic, most sinister, and besides they are not mere reflections or images. Here is the ultimate “uncanny” stage referred by Freud, the *bukimina* (Brown: p. 222 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), mainly when robots cease to seem sinister and became really “uncanny” as they seem too much human. In fact, the copy of the human, the repetition, is an uncanny phenomenon (Nakamura: p. 15 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). Bearing the purpose of explaining the “uncanny” theme or “the uncanny aesthetic” (Monnet: p. 212 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007), Masahiro Mori advances the “uncanny valley” (in Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 301) concept. The expression does not address a topographic representation, but rather conceptual. The “valley” illustrates a concept, the graphic representation of two curves, comprehending the less and the most uncanny, hence the intermediate part being named “the uncanny valley”. Masahiro Mori has been a critic of the android approach and advocates the theory he calls “uncanny valley” (Schodt, 1988: p. 208). The objective is to classify the resemblance levels a person feels when observing a robot, and the ones concerning human-robots resemblance. In the bottom of the “valley” we have the assembly-line robot, whereas on top stand robots perfectly simulating humans. Mori alerts roboticists for the fact of humans feeling always closer to more “machine-like” robots (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 208-09). The uncanny surfaces when what it is non-human looks too much human, or, as Jentsch defends, in case when doubts whether a seemingly inanimate object is alive, and otherwise, if a lifeless object might be animated. On this bipolarity (also related to the sinister), the author mentions the impression caused by wax figures, assembled dolls and automata (Freud, *op. cit.*: p. 135; Trías, *op. cit.*: p. 44). In Hiroshi Ishiguro’s case, this roboticist conceives the android construction process like “making copies of already existing people” (in Hornyak, 2006: p. 138), yet the aim is to have Japan being the new verge of displaying interactive mannequins, a realm of consolidating fiction. And again, what is at stake is the limit, the other side – a ‘limit-splendor’. Trías speaks of “recreational exercise” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 16, translation is ours) and Polak (*op. cit.*) states man let himself being enslaved by a new divinity: the machine. The autonomous is by now an automaton (p.

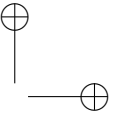
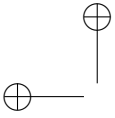
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142). Just as it happens when it comes to sinister dolls and graphics, in terms of their nice duplicity, due to showing their "uncanny aesthetic", there is an effect: reality and fantasy are blending boundaries. Freud entitles it "uncanny effect" (*op. cit.*: p. 135) and assigns in this effect our condition of being faced with a reality of something we previously thought to be imaginary (*Ibidem*: p. 150). Amidst the "cute" figure, the sinister mascot and the uncanny robot, the 'post-image' and post-human stage of the robot stands out. Such a stage of uncanniness is also presented in animation, what takes Napier (2001) to write that "What is visible through anime's technological mirror is an uncanny and fragmented collection of conditions and identities" (p. 237). The "awkwardly uncanny" and the "uncanny awkwardness" (Trías, *op. cit.*: p. 14, translation is ours) make their appearance in *Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence*, an Oshii's film.

Steven Brown refers the "technological uncanny" (in Lunning [Ed.], (2008). By observing the way the Japanese understand the spectacle in the logic of the "technological uncanny" one may perceive that unlike western theatre, where the actor is the puppet, in Japanese theatre the focus is on the puppet – and not in the Puppet Master – though we know the Master is who articulates every string so the puppet's movements may be gracious. *Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence*, the animation, turns this problematic explicit in next-generation movements, paying an homage to the machines that once were but ambitious robotic predecessors through the anthropomorphic spectacle. We had already learned with Barthes (1984) that "The western spectacle is anthropomorphic" (p. 77, translation is ours), as the spectacle implies human forms, the figure of a human being, life, unlike the Japanese spectacle which provides space to "nothing", to "death". In its turn, the oriental puppet is a phantasmatic puppet, and it shows a *devenir-fétiche*, a "fetish-becoming", as remarked by Barthes (*Ibidem*). As for the *kawaii* figure, that is the first simultaneously global and oriental indicator of a "fetish-becoming", since that between the *karakuri* age and World War Two machines depicted fear and de-generation (Nakamura: p. 6 in Bolton *et al.* [Ed.], 2007). In Nakamura line of thought there is a "mechanical uncanny", the concept the author admits he had refined as a literary form blurring the line between what is considered to be natural and what is considered to be artificial (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 5).

When discussing the ambiguity in Japanese culture one is discussing how the uncanniness is produced, and we know through Nakamura, that the un-



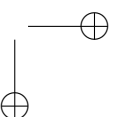
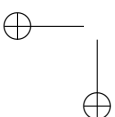
canniness is produced through ambivalence. There is no way of conceiving Japanese culture without the “Other”, without the “Japanese ‘otherness’” (Morley & Robins, *op. cit.*: p. 171). Such “otherness” is described by Napier (2001) as an alterity which never ceases to be different, and it is infective because it is appealing, innovative. Two examples of that otherness exist in Japanese culture: the characters with aggressive, romantic eyes and the mechanical uncannies of Ishiguro, most identical to the cybernetic *ninja* feature in the film *Robocop 3* (Fred Dekker, 1992). In the far edge of the “uncanny valley” we have childish, sinister characters, drawn away from the representation of the human, closer to the animation, while on the other really frightening robots are being positioned, as they’re too much human, no longer attached to the fiction enframing, being truly disturbing.

### 4.2.3 An Advanced Culture Industry

Japan’s industrial past is not linked to the production of consumer goods and to light industry, though it has today, according to Thomas LaMarre, “advanced consumer societies” (2009: p. ix in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Instead, the country invested in heavy industry (shipyards, foundries, railways) to become proficient in industry (Benedict, *op. cit.*: p. 93). The sympathetic and popular images and figures of *kawaii* culture, as they become internationalized by the new communication media, they enrich an industry that is, like Gilles Poitras declares, advanced:

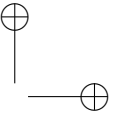
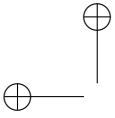
“Some of the earliest anime and manga merchandise were toys based on favorite ‘chara’ [characters] or ‘mecha’. These were often made of cardboard, tin, or cheap plastic. Nowadays (...) the quality of materials is much improved, a reflection of Japan’s advanced industrial might (...)” (*op. cit.*: p. 92).

The merchandise trade faces a positive push, due to the connection to Japanese industrial system that happens to be coincident with the new post-industrial era, the one of post-technological culture. Sugimoto is one of the authors remarking the “post-industrialism” (*op. cit.*: p. 24), while Herbert Marcuse is one of the believers, in the decade of 40, that culture “(...) in some of its decisive elements, [is] also a ‘post-technological’ one. It’s most



advanced images and positions seem to survive their absorption into administered comforts and stimuli; they continue to haunt the consciousness with the possibility of their rebirth in the consummation of technical progress" (*op. cit.*: p. 63). "Post-technological" culture is the one whose advanced images manage to resist commodities, comfort and stimuli. Salvation lies in these images in the extent they pursue consciousnesses bearing the conditional hypothesis of a rebirth. Technical progress is the solution in a society where culture is mass-produced; as it is outdated and surpassed, only the dream and childish regressions could rescue it. However, Marcuse defines "post-technological" culture as a mark of the post-war period. Both Tezuka and Marcuse believed technology had not reached its apex in the 40s, despite in their assessment, the "nuclear" would mean the limit of all limits. The "post-industrial" underlined by Sugimoto allows one to know more about industrial Japan. "The consumer conformity of industrial Japan has been transformed into consumer diversity in postindustrial Japan" (Sugimoto, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 76). The new audiences embrace diversity, and not administered comforts, passivity and conformity. In this context, Anne Allison presents something more: "(...) speedup facing postindustrial youth across the world, such a fantasy also becomes addictive, compelling players to keep changing and expanding their play [sic] frontiers through a capitalism of endless innovation, information, and acquisition" (2006: p. 19). It is precisely the information and consumption capitalism that attributes fame to brands such as Hitachi, Matsushita, Toshiba, Sharp, Honda and Sony, among many other players of Japan's industrial cluster, which strongly evolves during post-war, becoming the most oriental of all oriental cultures and the most post-modern of societies (Morley & Robins, *op. cit.*: p. 160), increasingly more proficient than any country in the West. Being a post-modern society, in Japan's case, is something one verifies since 1973, with its energy crisis definitely showing the end of industrial era, the beginning of a post-industrial and post-modern era (Pellitteri: p. 283 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009); what Anne Allison calls "post-Fordism", the condition of the services industry (in Brent Allison, 2009: p. 322).

The *kawaii* figures' domain is one that displays more iconography from industrialized anime fantasy. In accordance with Anne Allison, there is a "post-industrial youth", the same age class feeding the global market with *kawaii* collectible items. About the emphasized growth of Japanese products in the global market aimed at young people, Allison sustains that "(...) these

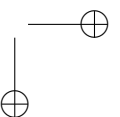
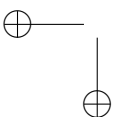


exports now exceed what have been the leading industries in Japan's postwar economy: automobiles and steel. (...) Having tripled in the past decade (...) the industry of 'cool' culture is bringing much-needed capital to Japan, both real and symbolic" (2006: p. 13). Practically, *kawaii* culture found in anime an optimal partnership, contents that justify, through its images and narratives, a massive offer of collectible objects. Thus, animation films and the videogames, just as manga, raise in "post-industrial youth" the desire to completely purchase the ranges of products available for consumption, whether these are popular, sinister, hallmarks or simply pretty. What is at stake here is an "industry culture" in the sense Adorno & Horkheimer, from the Frankfurt School, approached the theme in the decade of 40. In agreement with this school of thought, "culture" is the opposite of "administration" (it even mirrors Herbert Marcuse's perspective). Relying on this school and in what means the *kokusaika* it is possible for us to imagine if 'The Anime Galaxy' is not from the start an image administered by Japan on official terms. Nevertheless, from Adorno comes this declaration: "Culture would like to be higher and more pure. Something untouchable, which cannot be tailored according to any tactical or technical considerations" (2006: p. 108). This is, though, an aporia, because in a post-nuclear, post-industrial and post-historical epoch as it is ours, even culture is targeted by technique, as the existence of the "culture industries" proves. Adorno himself endorses that "The culture industry forsakes the promise of happiness in the name of the degraded utopia of the present. This is the ironic presentation of the present" (*Ibidem*: p. 9). Adorno means a "mass culture", which now in present time Japan, continues to be a vivid and powerful force affecting many people across "mass communication media". Sugimoto also focuses on the "mass culture" theme:

"(...) Japan's mass culture today includes (...) fashion and trend culture, where mass-produced and mass-distributed goods are accepted and rejected; (...) high-tech culture, where computers and computer-based information networks serve as the major intermediaries (...)" (*op. cit.*: p. 246).

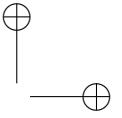
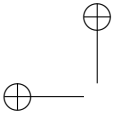
Consumerism culture is degrading the very notion of culture in general for Adorno. Besides, for this school, "(...) the masses are not primary, but secondary, they are an object of calculation; an appendage of the machinery"

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(*ult.op. cit.*: p. 99). On top of that, there is still the fact of forceful existence of a mass society prior to a mass culture. Based on a consumer behavior report conducted by the Hakuhōdō Research Institute, Sugimoto splits mass society in two types: the emerging *shōshū* – Individualized, divided, small-sized masses – and the opposite: *taishū*, large-scale, uniform, non-differentiated masses. The Hakuhōdō Institute advances indeed the *bunshū* ("segmented masses") concept, addressing more efficiently the consumer's behavior than the perspective conventionally kept that they're a homogeneous entity (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 9).

Out of the specific cut-out of industry and media, industrialization and "mediatization" (LaMarre: p. 81 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008), a techno-culture comes to existence becoming universal. In relation to the great Japanese popular culture apparatus, Daniel H. Pink explains it really is a "manga industrial complex", since each aspect of cultural production – that is its greatest export – flourishes in manga. The major part of anime and TV series, much as videogames and collectible figures were comics in earlier times (*op. cit.*: §11). Something associated to mass-production in a spectacular society, like "image-capital", is what is incredibly expanding as a by-product of an "advanced industrial culture". We are warned by Debord, who states "The spectacle is the 'capital' reaching such an accumulation degree that it turns into image" (*op. cit.*: p. 23). After all, images are capital, money. Japanese media industry has invested more and more in new artists and authors, as 22% of the material published in Japan is manga (Daniel H. Pink, *op. cit.*: §9). During 1920 and 1930, Japan's aggressive modernization caused mass culture to emerge and media consumption to increase (Inouye: p. 20 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). One shall keep in mind still that in the founding declaration of the Tokyo Manga Institute, is written that printed and film media can simultaneously make a million people laugh and feel happy, and that these media easily achieve the goal of mass cultivation through humor (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 23). Animation crossed a long way since the earlier times of comics, but the smile of anime figures remains in the robotic faces, product of a popular, technical culture and an advanced industry, grounded on an image of the future.



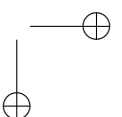
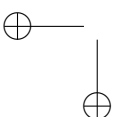
## 4.3 ROBOTOPIA

### 4.3.1 The Image of The Future is Robotic

Beyond assembly-line robots abundant in Japan, this country is known for the fact of its population appreciating *kawaii* figures and machines in general. The advanced industry and "the advanced consumer society" are inspired on a quite singular image of the future. Robots stand in a relevant position, a proper place, in Japanese society. Frederik L. Schodt adopts the term "robotopia" as a concept and a discussion issue in the work *Inside The Robot Kingdom: Japan, Mechatronics, And The Coming Robotopia* (1988). The "place of the machines" is what is being represented in robotopia, an obsession justified and based on the fragile Japanese social domain and on the will of roboticists to organize a robotic society or, at least, a mixed one.

Two of the most famous Japanese fiction images are, for Anne Allison, the monstrous *Godzilla [Gojira]* reptile and *Mighty Atom*, practically functioning both as different models of Japanese men rebuilt by technology (in Brent Allison, *op. cit.*: p. 321). Robotopia is just about rebuilding, it reports a tendency and merely a science fiction project or a theoretical concept. Masahiro Mori said once that "If you make something your heart will go into the thing you are making. So a robot is an external Self. If a robot is an external Self, then the robot is your child" (Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 167). Mori means to say that the robot is an extension of its creator, becoming independent, and in that extent, creation and creator share a resemblance relationship. The analysis concerning the "mecha" genre occurred already, mainly in the part of the pattern themes. Ultimately, robots have a great position of interest in Japanese animation, and they got quickly connected to the image of a future in which they could coexist in the same physical and social space as humans. In that vision of the future denounced by *Atom*, technology and science were widely accepted by society (Matthews, 2003-2004: p. 9).

The "robotopian" world is understood as such because there is the attempt to attribute a credibility image to robots. Matthews (*Idem, Ibidem*) says also that the projection of the image of the future has to do with responsibility, that is, animation film directors share the common responsibility of exploiting both good and bad aspects of technology and robotics, something much clear in the ciberpunk genre. "Janimation" (Eiji: p. 123 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008),

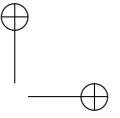
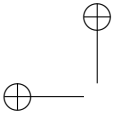


as the animation is known worldwide, has managed to allow to be exported the image of the robotic form, which carries strong influences of the *samurai* armor and helmets, and specific characteristics of insects, as well (Matthews, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 12). This type of specificities of the robot image (design and technology) has been connoted with the Japanese identity and ethnicity, and it reinforces also the image of a culture that is cold, impersonal and machine-like, as claimed by Morley & Robins (*op. cit.*: p. 172). The authors exceed themselves, as they affirm that now the barbarians are already robots (*Ibidem*). Allusions made to robots in “Japanimation” are countless. Otacon, the *otaku* character of *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* (2004), Hideo Kojima’s videogame, confesses to the Solid Snake hero, in one of his finest moments in the videogame:

”Using science for peace. That’s only in anime (...) Japan was the first country to successfully make bipedal robots. They’re still the best in the field of robotics’. – ‘And Japanese cartoons played some part in that?’ – ‘They did. I didn’t get into science to make nuclear weapons, you know. (...) I became a scientist because I wanted to make robots like the ones in the Japanese animes”.

Statements as this one illustrate the role of animation and the relevance of the medium in endorsing an image of the future that is intentionally to be robotic. Otacon assumes straight away he always wanted to be a scientist to design robots like the ones featured in Japanese animations. With Napier (2001) we become aware that in fact anime portrays a historical willingness; there’s a bigger project in the images. Napier discovered that “86.7 percent felt that they had learned about Japanese culture from anime” (*Ibidem*: p. 254).

After World War Two, Japan strengthened the image of responsibility of its population in a drastic manner. Benedict (*op. cit.*: p. 296) agreed with the fact that in this sense the “sword” began to be a sign of a responsible and ideal man, instead of being a sign of aggression. Still today this kind of education towards responsibility prevails, as explained by Sugimoto. Technology as symbolized in the “sword” means accountable evolution. A message of this type is conveyed in animation, namely in the “remake” Rintaro did on Fritz Lang’s homonymous film, whose message consisted in highlighting



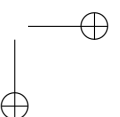
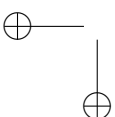
that, between the cloistered humanity on the underground and the enlightened elites of the upper world, there should be consensus. In other words, the message delivered in Rintaro's artwork is still the same as Fritz Lang's: a balance between humanity and technology, heart and mind, blue-collar workers and scientists, shall prevail (Bird: p. 134 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008).

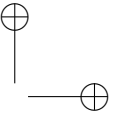
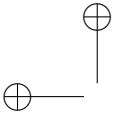
The future as represented to the Japanese stands under the dominance of technology. Nevertheless, in this future, honor continues to be an indispensable axiom, something that was already that way, as Benedict confirms (*op. cit.*: p. 171). Today's animation films unravel a cultural narcissism; there is something non-natural in Japan, since its geography has conditioned a "non-Western" complexity, as verified by Morley & Robins. From the images point of view, animation reveals a robotic future. Gosling, as the majority of authors, analyzing fiction and sociological studies believes that "(...)

One needs only to look at the way Japan is forging ahead in the technological arena to see how anime is in tune with developing trends" (*op. cit.*: p. 3-4, § 16). In this context, it is logical why in anime 20% of the scripts are about autonomous robots and 80% on warrior robots.

Nonetheless, despite the effects on the present time, what stimulates Japan to keep progressing is still its image of the future. Polak used to say that, once one is set for the *hic et nunc* ("here and now") of space, the hiatus would be compensated with a time bridge: the dimension of the future (*op. cit.*: p. 90). The same kind of futuristic logic remains in *Japanorama*. In this documentary film series, Jonathan Ross dedicates a full episode to "the Future in Japan", which starts with the affirmation that "For the Japanese the future and technology remain deeply interlinked" (*op. cit.*). Another clue, this time supplied by Kenneth Boulding, underscores that the general character and the quality of the images of the future still effective in a society are, consequently, the most important thing for us to perceive its general dynamic (cit. in Polak, *op. cit.*: p. V). With regard to Japanese society, the truth is that the Japanese are inside and outside of the West, in its turn increasingly absorbed in modernization and futurism. On this matter, Morley & Robins add that "Japan is held up as the future, and it is a future has transcended Western modernity" (*op. cit.*: p. 149). The transcendence mark remains. In robotics we have a reliable and useful image of the future for it is a scientific image, presenting the technoscience signature. After all, the images of the future were pioneers in being released from the past and in set their own epoch free" (Polak, *ult. op. cit.*: p. 246).

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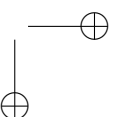
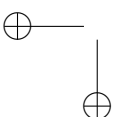


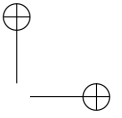
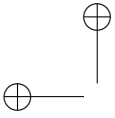


Another view on robotics is advanced by Kazuhiko Azumi, who defends Japan has a triangular system, unlike the Judaic-Christian duality typical in the West, as one believes in “black ones”, “white ones” and in “gray ones” (intertwined). The author means robots as the “gray ones”, and makes clear that the “reason [why] robots have developed so much in Japan, and [being] also a driving force behind Japanese advanced technologies . . . it’s one of the reasons advanced technology has entered its Asian age” (in Schodt, 1988: p. 212). One imagines this era as the perfect epoch to establish the “mechatronic” society mentioned by Japanese visionaries, a society composed by *homo artifex* (La Mettrie, [circa 1750] 1982), an artificial man product of favorable social-technical conditions. As Japan is mobilized on a national level for robotics, which seems even in this country somehow odd, given that the term “mobilization” has an origin in military discourse, the country is established as unique country. Thomas LaMarre (p. xiv in Lunning [Ed.], 2009) rather employs the “counter-mobilization” term, because animation, much as it happened before with manga comics, is a stage for “counter-memories” (as it features fantasy, ucronias, metatopias, fantastic realities, parallel worlds) an inclusively to a “counter-history” (like one would still live up a post-nuclear reality). “Counter-mobilization” is defined as a social endorsement concerning questions which demand urgent response; questions that, in Japan’s case, are the aged society, the country fields’ desertification, the lack of large-scale armed forces and the permission to engage in military conflicts.

#### 4.3.2 A Robot is Information Media

Polak speaks of one being equipped to design the “image of the future”. Japan has proceeded to the consolidation of such image; it has been geared up to create it and it has designed the equipment to accomplish that. A “massive modernity” was cultivated (LaMarre, 2009: p. xxiii). As we have seen so far, one of the reasons why Japan it is regarded as an advanced society is tied to the choices it did in terms of industrial investment, as it opted for heavy industry and only later for consumer products industry. The Japanese were dealing with mechanical technology for a long time and they avidly welcomed the modernization project in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In late 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the decade of 70, they met the energy crisis and, between the 80s and the 90s, they dived into an economical crisis like no other. Thus we are speaking





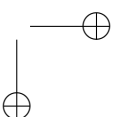
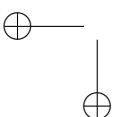
of a nation that entered in modernity, where it remained for some time, and it got out and into post-modernity again. Japan is one of those examples of self-creation of the future; it is a case of a population devoted to convincingly and accountably evolve, contended now with some social illness, an outcome of the earlier wars and the less happy choices done during 20<sup>th</sup> century modernization. The so-called “post-industrial youth” is today the public, which uses news media, purchases robotic pets, plays videogames and stays for long time online on the Web in handheld platforms. A new generation is a usual fan of network amusements and is fond of being social through the new media. In the majority of the cases, communication is mediated by electronic images and sounds. Each user and consumer displays a certain social status according to the electronic gear he publicly shows off. Once we examine the consumer habits of the Japanese, as Sugimoto did, we notice that Japanese society is more and more a technological society. Yet it is all about new technology, because the mechanical paradigm is longer capable of reporting all that is at stake and happening in Japan. For Thomas LaMarre (p. xi in Lunning [Ed.], 2009), we are living an era (an “Asian” one, according to Azumi) when we verify the “post-mechanic”, that is, the time when there is increasingly more reference to “post-mechanical identities” (cyborgs, sentient computers, smart robots). Just as one affirms this is a “post-industrial” era, this is also, inexorably, a “post-mechanical” era. Both concepts are marked by the emergence of a new concept: the “android”. Like Hornyak (2006) best deepens:

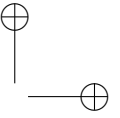
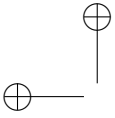
“Androids are robots that look just like real people. They are much closer to the ideal human form than traditional robots. The term, from the late Greek ‘androeides’, means ‘manlike’. It also encompasses the notion of synthetic beings that are mainly organic instead of mechanical” (p. 133).

It also makes sense that we look at robots as being “communication media” or “information media”. Who anticipates this type of argument is Hiroshi Ishiguro, the famous roboticist:

“The keyboard and the monitor are primitive. My brain was not designed to watch a display and my fingers were not designed to type on a keyboard. My body is better suited for communicating

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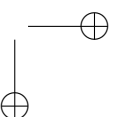
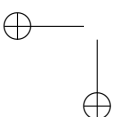


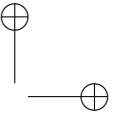
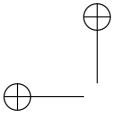


with other humans. The ideal medium for communicating with a computer is a humanoid robot, which is, of course basically a computer with a humanlike interface” (cit. in Singer, *op. cit.*: p. 304).

If Japanese robots are the new “information media” that is because media demand to transpose the audiovisual regime and to be confined into a body, given the spectrality inherent to the virtual, the information. We find a similar statement in *Ghost in The Shell*, whether in manga or in anime, about how information needs to have a body. The Artificial Intelligence in this anime seeks refuge in a body after assimilating a massive amount of data and thinks of becoming immortal. Facing robots as media is to think in using them and interacting with these post-mechanical entities as bodies enabling personality, memory and media-like capabilities. What Ishiguro tells us matches the “Universal Transfer Device” concept in the extent of being an online, file-sharing, community-based global medium. Schodt (1988) and Hornyak (*ult.op. cit.*) report that the first industry robot implemented in 1962 is named “Universal Transfer Device”, because the designer did not know what to call the mechanism.

Another way of analyzing the robot is to see it under the gadget perspective. Scholars like Lipovetsky are saying that “With the gadget hegemony, the material environment turns out to resemble fashion, the relations we keep with objects are not anymore of the utilitarian type but the ludic type, instead (...)” (*op. cit.*: p. 215-216, translation is ours). The ludic type comes to redefine our relation and interaction with objects, something which is enlarged by the preponderance of the gadget, since every mechanism and device become by-products of a fashionable communication. Not specifically in the case of Ishiguro’s robots replicating real people, but for instance in the case of robots playing the animations, or of those we find in the collectible items shelves of stores, such relation with the material object like it is something to play with, is more obvious. Colors, textures and the design shapes are indeed a cause of exactly that. Lipovetsky says “The time of the 2CV [a classic Citroën automobile], robust yet standing back in the zero degree of plastic research, has ended (...)” (*Ibidem*: p. 219, translation is ours). This is why when we observe a robot under the communication framework, it is one’s understanding that this type of post-mechanical creature is something that left the image realm onto





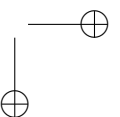
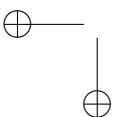
the real one. Hornyak seems to understand that the remotely-controlled robots like the Neon (created in 2003 by Tomotaka Takahashi from Robo Garage in Kyoto, Japan), are celebrating the birth of *Mighty Atom* and attempt to specifically: “(...) narrow the gap between imaginary robots appearing in manga and real robots” (*op. cit.*: p. 157). While standing in a superior plateau of evolution, Ishiguro’s replicant humanoids are standing out for their anthropomorphic scale, fitting in one of the extremes of Mori’s “uncanny valley”, being too much real, seemingly too much humans. However, what renders them even more relevant is not the optimal image they cast, but rather their media nature. We are figuring out the robot as a recording device, a post-mechanical entity, a media gadget:

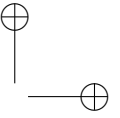
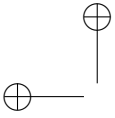
“Appearance is very important to have better interpersonal relationships with a robot (...) Robots are information media, especially humanoid robots. Their main role in our future is to interact naturally with people” (Hiroshi Ishiguro cit. in Hornyak, *op. cit.*: p. 136).

Well, it is upon this new view of robotics as “information media” that Japan positions itself as the main exporter of robots all over the world. To especially consider Japan in this matter is to define it as the most advanced country in the creation of machines by-passing the image stage and avenging the real as objects. The best way to interact with these objects is through a ‘subjective media interface’.

### 4.3.3 The Subjective Media Interface

The image of a machines’ place, a “robotopia”, fascinates the Japanese. After all, in the “land of the rising sun”, the “image of the future” is robotic. We have seen too, how real robots are inspired in those of anime, and that regardless of how much uncanny the robot is, it still attributes a body to the computer, it personifies the machine. Gosling, Schodt, Matthews and Hornyak have discovered that the drive for robots was not the outcome of a cultural interest, but a technological one, instead. Thomas LaMarre analyses deeper the relation of anime with cinema and technology in general, declaring “anime is a source of information” (2009: p. x) on Japanese culture, in its turn related to “otaku

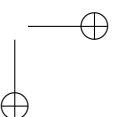
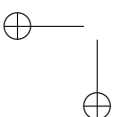


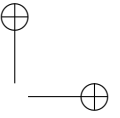
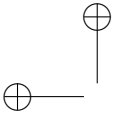


media". Being so, the *otaku* becomes a synonym for a set of practices related to the reception of anime, games, manga and media related to animation itself (*Idem, Ibidem*: p. 109). The power of influence of the "otaku media" is no feat of chance. Sugimoto insists on informing us that "Japan's fourth estate, the world of mainstream media, is an influential bloc (...)" (*op. cit.*: p. 236). The progress of "otaku media" in the technological and mediatized environment favorable for such effect as Japan is it is remarkable. The new trend is not about consuming media, but rather about archiving information (data) [*neta*] on animation, for instance (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 145). If Lev Manovich (2001) sustained the hypothesis of existing a "metamedium", clearly grounded on cross-reference data-base systems, where the prevailing record would be the "cinematic" one, in anime we have an example of such "metamedium". Animation indeed features the primary characteristics identified by Sugimoto in contemporary mass culture: "fluidity", "variability" and "transformability" (*op. cit.*: p. 253). The outbreak of large-scale anime distribution is a consequence of the proficient and advanced industry culture of Japan, an industry producing "spectacle". Says McLuhan that "(...) when giants are scarce. they must be invented" (2002: p. 5). The "mecha" universes owe their success to the necessity Japan has in creating anthropomorphic titanic robots. Industry has to produce giants, and that is why one of the resorting themes in anime is gigantism. One of the specialists providing an explanation for the way anime has uncontrollably spread out is LaMarre:

"Animation surged on a number of fronts with the rise of digital animation; the increasing use of computer imagery in films; ties and overlaps between video games, film, and animation; and needless to say, the global boom in popularity of Japanese animations, launched in part through the exchange of VHS copies among fans internationally and spurred with the rise of the Internet and file sharing" (*ult.op. cit.*: p. ix).

Thanks to contents sharing, animation increases and matures along with its audience, while it has a first stage of conventional media (outside the Web), and a special second stage in which online shared contents is determinant. What initially seemed to be a 'graphic disturbance', the explicit violence in animation, ends up as a bomb of images' in which the most disconcerting



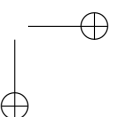
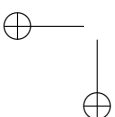


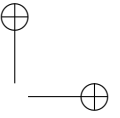
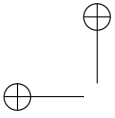
thing is its multimedia and ‘multiform aesthetic’. Human and non-human characters assemble and disassemble themselves in multiple lines of graphics and sonorities. LaMarre sees that “Transforming ‘mecha’ appear to embody the layers and the traversal forces of the ‘multiplanar image’ in a single figure” (*Idem*: p. 129). We find the logic of the multiform and the strata even on a sociological level. Sugimoto argues that the reality for Japanese society is diversified and stratified (*op. cit.*: p. 283). We have learned from McLuhan (1977a; 1977b) that the legacy of Gutenberg to western society causes fragmentation, expertise and nationalism. Contemporary Japanese society, because it suffered two waves of modernization, reveals fragmentary and disciplinary character, an outcome of Gutenberg’s renaissance technology.

In the scope of more recent modernization, the information society, anime obtains a global popularization and couples with new media. New ‘subjective media interfaces’ come to existence inspired in the ones allowing human characters to ride the “mecha” robots shown in animations. Anime’s robot cockpit paradigm, the model of the vehicle-robot, is chosen and adapted to information technologies, more specifically to mobile and personal media of nowadays (cell phones, portable computers and videogames consoles). The process is entitled by LaMarre as the “informatization of pilot-‘mecha’ interface” (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 234). As soon as this one is converted to the media interface domain, i.e., as it is adapted to the way users interact with contents, the ‘subjective media interface’ establishes as a real thing a science fiction paradigm. Mainly in the “mecha” subgenre, piloted robots are supplied with rockets and projectiles. Okada Toshio speaks of the “subjectile” has something belonging to an *otaku* freedom, the freedom to articulate thoughts and actions within information networks, where vision lines replace viewing positions, something that empowers the “subjectile” maneuvers in the explosive projection amidst projectiles; not a transcending subject but above all a projected subject or a projectile relying on vision lines (in *Idem, Ibidem*: p. 128). Toshio means the movements of the robots playing the animation film *Daicon IV Opening Animation* (Hiroyuki Yamaga, 1983), since they are controlled by a subject, which is always on the move.

Practically speaking, Japan is a society where mobile communication media have augmented the mobility of citizens (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*) and replaced social contact (Mitzuko Ito, 2004). LaMarre names this transposition of the pilot-robot interface to digital media a “mecha-ification” (*ult.op. cit.*, p:218)

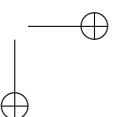
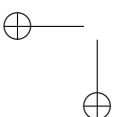
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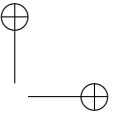
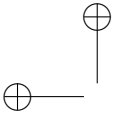




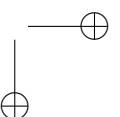
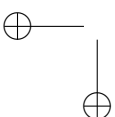
and a "mechaphilia" (*Ibidem*: p. 214). Orbaugh highlights the "post-human subjectivity domain" (p. 159 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Henry Jenkins (*op. cit.*) tells us about "convergence culture" and "participation culture", two phenomena increasingly more evident in an era where media are not compartments. On the contrary, they are displayed as "transmedia". In LaMarre we also have the retrieve of a "transmedia" and multimedia tendency: "An anime series or film might thus be thought of as the 'nodal point' in a 'transmedial network' that entails proliferating series of narrative and non-narrative forms across media interfaces and platforms, such as the computer, television, movie theater, and cell phone. So dynamic and diverse are the worlds that unfold around anime that we do better to think always in the plural, in terms of 'animations'" (*ult. op. cit.*: p. xiv). One must speak of "animations" because animation is not a single type of content available in Web. It is a form of content typology, widely distributed and online shared resources. In other terms, the "transmedia" tendency announced by Jenkins or the "transmedia world" referred by Thouny (p. 125 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009) suggest that animation has an extremely important role in the field of new media, as it strongly relies on the interlocutor's participation. Just like Jenkins, Washburn speaks of animation as a technology of participation, a stronghold of media convergence (p. 149 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Another positive point in LaMarre's view, is that the anime fans are enthusiastically participating in the spread of products, in shaping media and in narrative worlds (*ult. op. cit.*: p. xiv). It just so happens because "These new media allow for accessibility of content, making it seem less untouchable and more malleable" (Aquila: p. 40 in Lunning [Ed.], 2007).

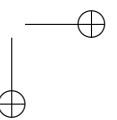
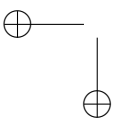
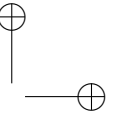
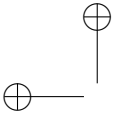
It would be of no use to exist media if there were no contents (animation). Marcuse says that "The romantic idea of 'science of the imagination' seems to assume an ever-more-empirical aspect" (*op. cit.*: p. 253), as technoscience guided by fantasy attempts to put all together in a third sphere. Marcuse applies the expression "science of the imagination". However, what is spreading out is especially fiction turned convincing by science, in which all myths seem eventually to consolidate something evident, in fact. The solidity of the Japanese piloted robot depends on that "science of the imagination". The 'subjective media interface' is more like a paradigm science endorsed, a world of intuitive control of communication media that is like having the Web in our head and interfacing data by means of our thoughts. That is what anime presents in *Ghost in The Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1996), for instance, when the

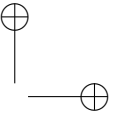
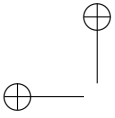




cop-woman Kusanagi speaks with Artificial Intelligences, robots and online co-workers. In Kale Lasn's view there is an "unreality": "(...) a mediated world so womblike and seductive, it's hard not to conclude it's a pretty nice place to be. In that world of unreality, it's easy to forget you're a citizen and that the actual world is an interactive place" (2000: p. 22). Supported by the "science of the imagination", this "unreality" that Lasn speaks of, is the 'subjective media interfaces' domain (although more tied to advertising), the perfect place for who consumes media and tailors his relationship with the media world through images. Along with Debord, Lasn accuses the "spectacle" of being this social mediation operated by images. In anime we have a suggestion of customize and remake the world, rendering personal our technological existence (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 109). It is exactly this "technological existence" concept that defines the anime consumer as good as the protagonist of the anime, one sufficient example is the young hero of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. What is in question here is the existence of the subject across pilot-robot interfaces in the same manner one analyzes, in the user-environment interface, the technological existence: 'The subjective media interface'. The way the subject interacts with the surrounding environment through personalized communication media, inspired by *Macross* and *Gundam*'s subjective perspectives, is based on war without implying it directly. The designated media report their obsessive and systematic consumption; a "spectacle" that unraveled as its own product and "(...) it made its own rules: it is a pseudo-sacred" (Debord, *op. cit.*: p. 19, translation is ours). Should we take into account that the robot, the computer and the new communication media are sharing resemblances, and then we will comprehend how Japanese animation is a new media phenomenon.

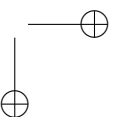
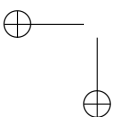






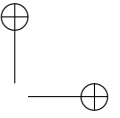
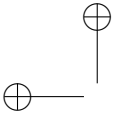
## CONCLUSION

We begin to conclude that the main questions we set ourselves to respond to in this thesis were answered, even if it is a field hard to research on, which has come across many innovations, as the objects of study are overcome and updated all the time. Both anime and videogames share the same visual language, hence videogames continue the realm of Japanese animation, applying codes and formats from earlier media (conventional book, comics, animation film and live-action film). We had proposed to develop a response for the fact of having anime as a communication medium, yet, to do so, one has to acknowledge a new communication formula that proceeds from the literary-graphic and the cinematic-video formats. Those relations were explained and developed. Understanding Japanese Animation as a communication medium means to accept its news and globalization type. Whether in the passive format, or in the interactive one, 'The Anime Galaxy' turned possible for videogame characters to be "universally recognizable entities". We also know digital comics have increased the potential of a whole network culture, a participative one for fans. One prefers a customized and de-massified culture. Actually, 'The Anime Galaxy' makes possible for us to use new communication media, and joining it means to accept a world of information and entertainment. Being so, the way into the Japanese animation world is a ticket for a world of new media, for the public manages contents through 'subjective media interfaces'. Now we may point out the primary characteristics of recent media that interfere in animation, which consist in "mobility", "customization", "participation", "game", "network" and "subjectivity". We happen to have proved that the objective of the audience is to pilot real robots. However, before the unlikeliness of doing that, it is satisfied with controlling similar figures in electronic games. It is far more important that the public inspired



on commanding robots adopts a new form of interacting with media, a form of subjective interaction. The public aspires to be inside the animation and to control the information. Put this, we assume that machines and media – being the narrative object – demand control, piloting skills and interaction. The origin of this dates back to Japanese manga comics, where, as for McCloud, it was established that these images make the reader feel like a participant (1996: p. 45). It is an established fact that the inner space of comics is provided to cover the lack of even a safer public space in Japan. An affective and intimate relationship between the reader and the characters is thus increased. The audience which grew up along with comics sees in animation films and in videogames an extension of the participation required by the images. In our time the pilot-robot interface is displayed, in order to achieve one day a full "informatization of pilot-'mecha' interface" (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 234). What the audience wishes for is about handling images like who commands a "mech" robot. Out of this two new elements are underlined, which are not fantasy or science fiction anymore, but rather a reality: the "performative subject" and a "post-human subjectivity" achieve consolidation. In the *Ironman and Ironman 2* (2010) films, both directed by Favreau, the way the hero Tony Stark interacts and maneuvers the metal suit is an example of such post-human subjectivity, since it is the suit that provides him the capability of becoming a more agile and mighty subject. Information access inside the suit happens in a subjective manner, near one's face, like the screen would be inside the helmet.

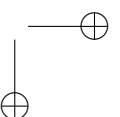
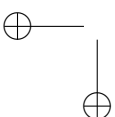
As for the aspects more related to the animation format and the main type of viewer, we find obligatory for ourselves to remark the "cinematic element" (Kojima). After all, that is the element, which for LaMarre (*op. cit.*), is shaping animation as "animated media". These communication media in which 'The Anime Galaxy' is based on are animated media. And, if McLuhan's (1994) perspective whenever games change so does culture, then it is possible for us remark, just as Susan Napier (2001) does it, that there is a new type of viewer in anime (p. 242), which is mainly a 'limit-viewer', a post-human kind of subject. Sugimoto highlights "global generation personifies global culture" (*op. cit.*: p. 74) and, because of that, we may comprehend that audience of Japanese animation, considering it is "animated media", is a global audience finding an "instrument of unification" in these new animated media. One cannot ignore either that the audience has grown up along with the medium, being this one an important fact, despite the existing updating logic favoring



this new 'global viewer', which is a consumer and a promoter of animation as a global 'image-track'. All in all it is pertinent that 'The Anime Galaxy' is exalted as long as there is a ubiquitous nature inherent to animation. One of the reasons behind such ubiquity lies in the way the 'limit-viewer', being mainly the Japanese format-audience, consumes anime. We easily detect a new form of commitment established between consumers and anime's medial and cultural product. The fan-audience seeks the "global novel" dimension, a fact corroborated by what happens in the *Final Fantasy* case. In the opinion of Azuma, today consumers are interested in animation because they like information, narratives and databases. This author sustains that the fans enjoy extracting and recombining elements, and that they forfeit the narrative world bearing the narratological and the ludological (cit. in LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 272-273). The question is that the narrative world placed secondly reappears in the global narrative of the game. The literary, editorial format gives in space to the multimedia Web format. They emerge of 'multimedia events' and new experiences converging into the Web is provoked as the reading format is changed into an interaction format. Japanese animation has found a space of continuation in the Internet, for one of the effects is the transformation of the *otaku* into more updated fans (Virilio, 2010), and which are fonder of media allowing them to modify the image in a controlled manner. There is no doubt whatsoever that the *otaku* figure of Japanese animation as new media helps establishing 'The Anime Galaxy' as a "public culture of the future" (Jenkins, *op. cit.*: p. 24).

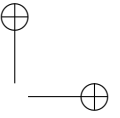
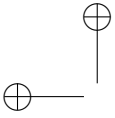
We also recover from McLuhan, according to Philip B. Megs, the theory of an urgent "expanded definition of literacy" (McLuhan: 2001: p. xi). Actually, "print media" are not finished, and with the new media, the public is now typing much more. With no classical media there would be no new media. If with Scott McCloud we become aware that comics were already media, through Frederik Schodt (2002) we get the notion that manga comics are "meta-media" (p. 20). To observe Japanese animation as being new media is something rendered possible only because the comics medium has set the ground for anime's visual language. Animation absorbs, develops and enhances conventions of manga editions. Japan was requiring an image of the future, like the West as well. While the first one is identified in the future featured in *Blade Runner*, the second is portrayed in an image of a future Asia. It is due to this motive that the *Blade Runner* images function as a scenery

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basis for a great part of the 90s anime. After this period, the Internet is democratized. In the 90s we meet the moment of massive global distribution (LaMarre, *ult.op. cit.*: p. xxi) of anime. In parallel, "an information society" flourishes along with the spread of personal computing and network data access. We also recall that since an "information society" came up the anime images got easily coupled with the digital domain. Again it is LaMarre (*Idem*) who supplies the answer: although anime images fit in one genre, it is correct to say they are primarily a media format. A phenomenon of this type pushes us to notice how social relationships are mediated by images. One speaks of a "sociality" and not of "being social", instead. The "advanced consumer society" is often accessing the new communication media. Anime heads for that territory, once anime faces continuation in videogames. Takahiro Hayakawa (*op. cit.*) suggests this precisely. In the dynamic images of electronic games, the subject is obliged to be "on the run", which makes to believe that in the new media the "subjectile" prevails.

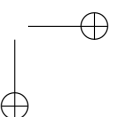
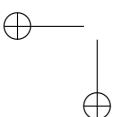
Like Thouny, we also advance that the new communication media come to consolidate a "transmedial world" (p. 125 in Lunning [Ed.], 2009), where the fan audience of a topic and an imaginary spends time managing databases. In terms of contents, this data is already one of a "multimedial" nature, whether they belong to comics or Japanese animation. Regardless of the contents format, the audience pursues the science fiction (especially in the US) and fantasy universes (as for Japan) of 'The Anime Galaxy'; what Anne Allison defines as "fantasy-ware". Another important point, besides animation coupling with the digital domain, consists in how animations themselves show "worlds of simulations", as argued by Napier (2001: p. 237). To obsessively consume spectacular fiction takes us to accept Debord's words, the ones illustrating the spectacle as society's primary produce (*op. cit.*:p. 14). Undoubtedly, the simulations, the virtual and the spectacle are present in our society. However, contemporary media are by now the new ones, the "advanced media" (Napier, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 8). We have advanced media available for an "advanced consumers society" (LaMarre, 2009: p. ix in Lunning [Ed.], 2009). Considering the exuberance of the *otaku* audience, its exoticism and fanaticism, we are forced to classify 'The Anime Galaxy' as a "segmented mass" [*bunshū*] (Sugimoto, *op. cit.*: p. 9), taking into account that the consumer opts for customization, they share many similarities among themselves yet they are not necessarily a "homogeneous entity". The success of the animation among the



audience is tied with its ability in being "a nexus point" in global culture. By working this way, animation may associate with new media crossing national boundaries (Napier, *ult.op. cit.:* p. 23-24). Even if science fiction had been introduced in late 20th century media that now is part of our everyday lives, nobody could have anticipated it would happen that way. Under Bolton's et al. (2007) perspective, it matters most to have media interlinked with science fiction. When we have Polak believing that man's "image of future" is a medium, a symbiosis between "media" and "futures" is what stands exactly favored. The level of technical engagement demanded by media not only takes us to explore today's image of the future in Asia, but is allows us to understand the reason why there are so many devotees of 'limit-fantasies', as well. One thing is certain, Asia is presented as the new epicenter, a representative of the image of the 'future's performance'. "Performative subject" (subjective) and "collective performance" (global) in the "collective subjectivity" (Web) sustain anime as a partner for the evolving new media. The dynamic future is consolidated by images carrying within Japanese culture, defying their geographic limitation. The media are "Japanizing" us. Sugimoto says there is a "Japan beyond Japan" (*op. cit.:* p. 207) and the Morley & Robins (2004) duo suggest the future to be Japanese as it relies on Japanese technology (p. 168-169).

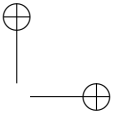
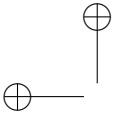
Once the animation and the interactive artworks are tested, one concludes that the most modern format to prevail will be the one of the videogame, where the most impressive 'videographic environment' is introduced to the audience, with animated characters playing an extended and captivating narrative in terms of set design. Onomatopoeias, shaky shots, fast overlays and accelerated dialogs (recurring to sharp and blur effects), are shaping a 'multiform graphic cut-out', images made out of fragments, assembling and disassembling. It is in a culture inclined for the demolition sequence and the explicit explosive that the opportunity to converge, from the part to the global, the segment to the Web, is prepared. Here is the portraiture of 'The Anime Galaxy', what Jenkins (*op. cit.*) sums up in a manifestation of a "convergence culture". Communication and anime technologies are blending, causing animation to assimilate the language of new media and new technologies, namely the graphic ones. What is at stake in Japanese animation is that it is pioneering a way of acting upon images, it is a type of action (LaMarre, 2009: p. 149). Images and products are set available, marketed and shared, like they would

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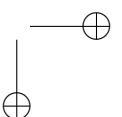
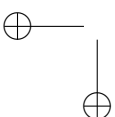
be prototypes benefiting of an uncontrolled competition feeling. Such performance does not disappear from anime images, since it follows the predominant style, even when those images are adapted to collectible figures, to an "animetic" being. The word is applied by Thomas LaMarre (*Ibidem*: p. 36) to circumscribe anime's exaggeration, what could be in some way translated as a 'graphic hyperbole', exacerbated images that respect a 'graphic regime', i.e., the effective images aesthetic of an epoch. Amidst the oriental panoply of already shown images, we verify the continuous presentation of the image of the "future West", yet aside the ultimate image (unicity), one endorses a repetitive format in which the apocalypse is retrieved in animation. Therefore we notice the existence of a "university of the image of disaster" (Virilio, 2010).

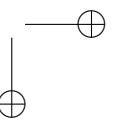
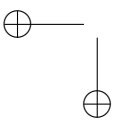
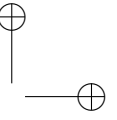
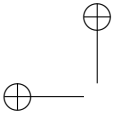
Like we have seen so far, the retrospective image of the catastrophe renders legitimate the prospective image of the future, nearly in a vicious cycle. Calamity causes the need for modernization, but the technology used in the modernization ends up re-launching Armageddon. Repetition and innovation function in antithesis and in synthesis, mutually overcome and justified. In this background, to speak of technology is to speak of the robot, the animated, sentient and autonomous computerized figure, which in time will cease real just manga pages or in anime screens. Despite their existence, the robots 'The Anime Galaxy' reveals are humanized, and according to Masahiro Mori, there's the danger of having them looking too much human. People are scared by machines, but not with anime characters, since the latter seem to be simulated. Besides this phenomenon described by Mori in theory of the "uncanny valley", it matters to underscore that the information and communication technologies featured in robots (even in the consumer robots – the domestic one), have anticipated the robot as a new media object: "information media". Once an image of a 'machine-place' is invoked of course one imagines situations in which robots are preponderant. To think about this universe is to consider the acceptance of the 'post-image' and post-human stage of the robot. There is no better "anthropoid" (term used by Trías, *op. cit.*: p. 26, translation is ours) than the robot, the anthropomorphic machine roboticists wish to forcibly make it to look like a human being. Distant from piloted robots and the ones challenging other opponent robots in anime, reality is that the social robot will be useful and will be soon available. Historically, the robot had "existed" already as a "social machine" (Hornyak), though now the pictures of household robotics have turned into physical tangible agents. The

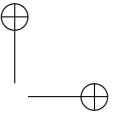
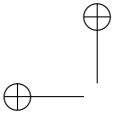


robotic figures have crossed the border to the real world. It is that what takes Matthews (2003-2004) to point that robotics has a symbiotic relationship with computer-generated images. Screens are borders, only that. Consequently it seems urgent to "learn how to drive a computer" (Virilio, 2010: p. 87).

In short, our era is characterized by the emergence of networks and "nodal points", where participation is active and the audiences build up news, avidly wishing to get in an ultimate fantasy, facing the last predator. There is truly an obsession towards the "last man" (Fuykuyama), for it is the actual, the new and the "more modern than modern" which are making history. Publics behave like children still when they are not any longer making usage of "technological mediators" (LaMarre) to compulsively intervene in the media images flow, capturing and organizing, archiving and sharing images (*ult.op. cit.*: p. 148). The habits are not uniquely those of print culture. Following the trend of what Scott McCloud (2000) and Gilles Poitras (*op. cit.*) say respectively, there is a transition from a "print culture" to an "audiovisual culture". Animation is positioned as the "link" in wired information-enriched environments, enabling multiple media interfaces. In this 'post-Matrix', an information networks-free world by now seems impossible to have ever existed. Objects declining to belong to a single geography are crossing the circuits. Winge names them "transnational objects" (p. 60 in Lunning [Ed.], 2008). Because the important thing is 'The Anime Galaxy', and not Japan or Japanese culture directly, what stands out is this "Internationality" (Yoshioka, 2008) typical in animation, in "animated media". What Benzon points out as an "apocalyptic culture" (2007: p. 284) and Anne Allison names as "post-fordism" is featured in the "post-nuclear" or "post-holocaust" spaces as it is the videoclip for Kevin Williams (*op. cit.*: p. 2). Among the audience, even the one not being *otaku*, one knows culture is a "post-technological" (Marcuse, 2006) one; animation is no exception, but it has contributed to the 'Media Renaissance of the Orient', by marketing the robot figure. If Japanese robots are new "information media" that is because media need to transcend their audiovisual regime and to be confined to a "trajective" (Virilio, *ult.op. cit.*: p. 61) body. The best way to interact with these agents is through a 'subjective media interface'. As we assign a body to the computer we are personifying the machine, we turn the robot in man's ultimate extension.







# ATTACHMENTS

## GLOSSARIES

### Japanese

AKIRA – A known artwork of Katsuhiro Otomo.

ANIMÉ – Anime is a Japanese word; it abbreviates the English term “animation”, usually addressing TV shows, cartoons and computer graphics sharing manga aesthetic in Japan. It is a synonym for “Japanimation”.

ATOMU TAISHI – One of the many nicknames of *Mighty Atom* was this Japanese one, meaning in English “Ambassador Atom”.

BONSAI – A millenary Chinese species of trees that were culturally adopted by the Japanese, whose size is naturally restrained. Their fragile look drives the respective owners obsessed with cutting off the branches; this activity is regarded as a spiritual form of refuge. Originally the Japanese expression *bon-sai* means “tree on a plate”.

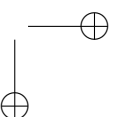
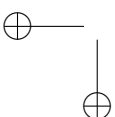
BUDDHA – The name the Japanese use to refer to “Buda”, it means the “Awaken”, the “Enlightened”.

BUDDHA ROBOTTO – One of Japan’s ancient robotic culture most famous *karakuri*, also known as “Robot Buda”.

BUSHIDO – A form of conduct for *Bushido* warriors also tied to the expression “Way of The Warrior”. Feudal Japan’s *samurai* warriors understood the *Bushido* art as a way of life relying on loyalty and justice.

CHARA – The short-term for “character” in the context of manga, anime and videogames.

EDO – The *Edo* Period [*edo-jidai*] is the historical period between 1600 and 1868, prior to the Meiji Reform that launches 20th century modern Japan.



FUNA BENKEI – A type of Japanese dramatic art.

GA – Japanese word for “images”.

GAIJINS – How the Japanese people say “foreigners” (outsiders).

GANGURU – Urban fashion in Japan taking the young adolescent girls to wear make-up in a satiric version of the western girls, and their polychromatic make-up is seemingly melting down on the face.

GEKIGA – A 70s-based dramatic illustration also generally considered as “graphic novel”.

GEKKO – The name of the cybernetic bipedal robots of MGS4 (*Metal Gear Solid 4*) videogame. The expressions mean too a specific type of “lizzards”.

GIGA – Japanese word for playable, ready-to-play images.

HENTAI – A colloquial term addressing adult anime featuring sexual content in a graphic explicit manner. *Hentai* means “detoured” (devious) and, despite increasing in Japan its origin lies in China.

HI NO TORI – Osamu Tezuka’s original title for the great artwork *Phoenix* (1956-1989).

IDORU – Popular celebrities in Japan, same thing as *aidoru* (idols).

JORURI – An early form of “Puppet Theatre”, now called *bunraku*.

J-POP – Another way to speak of “Japanese Pop”, i. e., Japanese popular culture.

KABUKI – The kind of theatre only played by men, it was most famous in Japan during the post-war period in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Japan, where dramatics and make-up were the strong points. The name comes from *kabuki* (“out of the ordinary”).

KAGE-E – One of the most known puppet theatres genres in Japanese culture, where the shadows had a strong aesthetic manifestation, dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

KAIDAN – Frightening stories, the same as “horror stories”.

KAIJU – Super-sized monsters featured in TV shows and films like *Gojira* [*Godzilla*] (Terrell O. Morse, 1954), or videogames like *Shadow of The Colossus*.

KAMI – In agreement with the original ideogram, *kami* has several possible meanings, among which: God or religious divinity, or the animism in inanimate objects.

KAMI-SHIBAI – A kind of Paper Theatre, ideal for children, it became popular in post-war.

**KARAKURI** – The name of premodern Japan's ancient automata is also a synonym for "trick", "gadget" and "mechanism".

**KARAKURI GIEMON** – Once the nickname *giemon* is added to *karakuri*, it means "Gadget Wizard". This was the designation the craftsman working on *karakuri* received.

**KARAOKE** – A participative art that the Japanese get addicted to after work, where the goal is to have singers playing the role of celebrities [*idol*]. As a matter of fact the success of *karaoke* exists because of the drive the Japanese have for western *Star System* models. Surprisingly it coincides with the moment in which big Japanese media clusters buy publishing houses in the discography industry.

**KAWAII** – The *kawaii* culture is typically Japanese and it has expanded onto the merchandising industry of mascots, appealing and seductive dolls which fascinate the Japanese; the *kawaii* term is also used as a compliment for pretty girls because they are attractive.

**KIMONO** – A common clothing piece in Japanese culture characterized by its large sleeves and tight waist.

**KOKUSAIKA** – Internationalization politic of Japan.

**KOMIKKU** – The English word "comics" after being "Japanized".

**KŌREIKA-SHAKAI NO MONDAI** – In Japanese language this is the known "aging society problem", one of the justifications for the fast research on robotics to socially help the elderly.

**MANGA** – Manga [*mahnga*] are illustrated black-and-white books, and in Japan they are as much consumed as anybody consuming a newspaper in the West. The word *manga* dates back to 1814 and it was coined by the artist Hokusai. Today, *manga* is generally all things being comics, whether in a serial mini-book or in a book format, and there is a great part of them in a color format already. There is "story *manga*" (romance), "adult *manga*" (erotic), among other genres such as the *dōjinshi manga* (amateur).

**MEIJI** – Name of the Reform inaugurating the *Meiji* Period, the birth of Modernity in Japan after two centuries of feudal regimes and *shoguns*.

**MEKKA** – The "Japanized" term of "mecha" (short term for "mechanism"), has robotics as its referent.

**NENSEI** – Any mass-produced communication product, whether it is two-color print comics or anime series released on television, DVD or the Internet.

**NINJA** – Also known as *Shinobis*, the *ninjas* were an underground martial

organization in activity during 14th century's ancient feudal Japan. The *ninjas* were famous for their infiltration, espionage, murder and sabotage skills.

**NINJUTSU** – The "stealth" art of *ninjas*, of acting secretly, recovered in modern videogames as *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell* (2002) and *Metal Gear Solid: Sons of Liberty* (2002).

**OTAKU** – The average individual obsessed with manga, anime and information technologies. This type of designation turned negative in Japan and is associated with the kind of people talking only about computers and fiction stories. They are reserved persons lacking of full social life.

**POKÉMON** – By shortening *Poketto Monsutā*, this expression means "pocket monsters"; *Pokémon*, in its current usage aims at the fiction universe where young people role-play monsters fighting "mano-a-mano" by means of game cards or electronic games (since 1996). The *Pokémon* phenomenon has also expanded to the anime universe with great success.

**ROBOTTO OKOKU** – A Japanese expression for "robot kingdom".

**SAKOKU** – In a fast translation this word means "chained country", yet as a politic measure it marked Japan's isolationist period against the West during the Tokugawa *shogun* regime. Between 1641 and 1853 Japan assured no international relationships whatsoever.

**SAMURAI** – The super-disciplined soldier class of Japanese aristocracy contemporary of feudal Japan, and which witnesses its decline with the *Meiji* Reform. The *samurai* warriors were skilful in the *bushido* art and their primary instrument was a long-sword, the *katana*. Suicide [*seppuku*] was faced as a final statement for a courageous and resolute *samurai*.

**SATORI** – The type of *Zen* situation or event setting clairvoyance to come true.

**SHOGUN** – It is the chief [*damyō*] of the military government who commands the other officials in the feudal regime until the *Meiji* Reform.

**SHŌJO MANGA** – Comics magazines for girls.

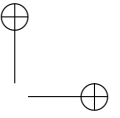
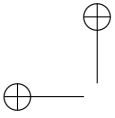
**SHŌJO** – Japanese word for "young girl".

**SHURIKEN** – A star-shaped weapon used by secret *ninja* warriors.

**SUSHI** – A typical Japanese gastronomy dish, with no determined origin, composed by *sushi* rice, fruits, algae and boiled or raw fish.

**TAKARAZUKA** – A theatre type exclusive for women.

**TAKEDA** – Since nearly 1750 a popular *karakuri* show happens periodically in Japan, commonly known as "karakuri festival".



TAMAGOTCHI – An electronic toy released by Bandai, Co. In 1996, whose objective is to have young players taking care of a virtual pet.

TECHNO-GEKIGAS – Graphic Novels [*gekigas*] available in new media as the “Digital Graphic Novels” for PlayStation Portable, Nintendo DS or digital comics hosted on Web sites.

TETSOO – A term simplified from *Tetsuwan*, which means “powerful”, just as in the homonymous cyberpunk films of *Tetsuo: The Iron Man* (Shinya Tsukamoto, 1989).

TRANSFORMERS – An animated film series commissioned by Hasbro Toy Company to Japanese animation studios, envisioning the marketing of a toy range of vehicles transforming to robots.

UKIYO-Ê –The xylography art managed and based on wood-block printed paintings.

YAKUZA – A man-only; Japanese criminal organization.

ZAIBATSU – The same as “Commerce Association” or “Financial, Industrial or Commercial Conglomerate” in Japan.

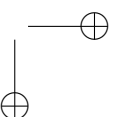
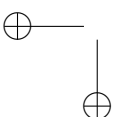
### Technical

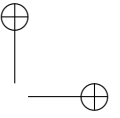
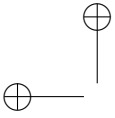
ADOBE PHOTOSHOP – The most famous image-editing and photography-retouching software from Adobe Systems, initially conceived to enhance scanned images. Even the name itself addresses us to a “photography shop”, as the Adobe Photoshop program began with conventional photography fans as its audience, and later the public of digital photography and the general digital graphics followed. Today, the term Photoshop is related also to “altered footage”.

AIBO – The name of the robot-dog released by Sony Electronics, which then became famous worldwide. With four characters only, the designation AIBO emerges as their creators wished to say *AI* (Artificial Intelligence and *Bot* (Robotics) in one world alone.

CINEMATICS – These are the sequences of images that can be interactive, where the videogame player becomes aware of narrative issues. Such sequences are important since they’re generated by the very 3D videogame “graphic engine”.

CLIPS – The abbreviated form of “videoclips”, that is, the video-image ex-





cerpts, common in several systems, formats and genres, out of which the technique and aesthetic of “videoclips” comes from.

**CLOSE-UP** – Still or motion-based sequence magnified on video; the opposite for a “zoom out”.

**CYBERPUNK** – A historical fiction movement, which emancipated from general science fiction and conditions it, since the decade of 80 until now. The cyberpunk aesthetic comprehended two elements: one is that the high-technology world and the other one is the crime world; both easily crossed by design, fashion trends and science. The sophistication of the movement became a stronger inspiration to manga and anime authors after William Gibson’s novels, including for the videogame designers of *Rez*.

**CYBERSPACE** – Even if today the word encompasses all things being media, since all medial things are online. By the time it appears in *Burning Chrome* and in *Neuromancer*, the term “cyberspace”, coined by William Gibson, referred only to the hallucinating digital landscapes of 3D information.

**CYBORG** – A living being or an artificial creature, designed or manipulated to exist, part as a cybernetic machine and as a genetically-altered organic part; all of this bearing physiological superiority. It is commonly said that the cyberpunks are earlier stage of the cyborgs.

**DÉCOUPAGES** – The way of decomposing a filmmaking sequence in its several different photographic shots.

**DOWNLOAD** – A digital environment-based practice for saving files, the opposite of “upload”, the form of sending files.

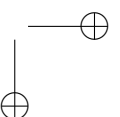
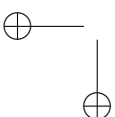
**HARDWARE** – The whole type of digital physical gear, in which the software is registered in (languages, commands and routines executing and processing the versatile virtuality).

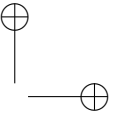
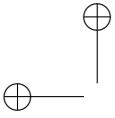
**HD – HIGH-DEFINITION** – The highest quality of images in the digital format.

**HIGH-RESOLUTION** – The graphic resolution of digital images capable of achieving the 1920 x 1080 pixels, mainly in computer screens, which later became a convention for 3D systems, filmmaking and video-image reproduction.

**HIGH-TECH** – A short version for “high-technology”, the most efficient grade of the available technologies.

**HYPNAGOGICS** – Images that are simultaneously “hypnotic” and “pedagogic”; the word first appear in *Neuromante* (Gibson, 1988) in the writing form,





and it means visually what it is presented in *Johnny Mnemonic* (Robert Longo, 1995)

**IDENTS** – Video segments shorter than “videoclips”, and they’re usually named “separators”. These video excerpts convey the same logic of the video-clip and they’re supposed to “audiovisually” denounce the channel identity, hence the name “idents”.

**JAPANIMATION** – A synonym for anime used by North-Americans meaning “Japanese animation”. “Japanimation” encompasses in itself every anime-styled animation carrying today’s Japan cultural signature, and they benefit with the application of the best graphic technologies.

**LAYERS** – From the software point of view, “layers” are a form of managing graphics separately to improve their respective manipulation; and they may eventually be merged down or disassembled *a posteriori*.

**MACH** – A measure unit for the supersonic speed in airships.

**MECHA** – The abbreviation of the English word “mechanical”, referring to mechanical objects, as in weapons, instruments, vehicles and other sophisticated devices common in manga and in anime. “Mecha” is inseparable from the mechanism featured in anime fictions.

**NETWORKS** – Working circuits established among computer users or game players logging in to enter in online videogaming parties.

**QUICK-CUT** – The cinema film or video-image editing type, which excels in fast transition between shots, based on relatively big image collections.

**SHOOT’EM UP** – The videogames’ genre in which the player is assigned to control a figure, a character or a spaceship, on the screen in order to overtake adversaries by means of firefights.

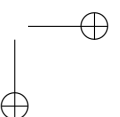
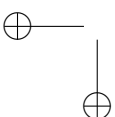
**SIMULATION** – A graphic device and/or of abstract data recreating properties of the geophysical world in cyberspace.

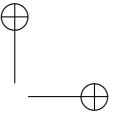
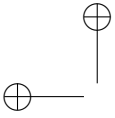
**SOFTWARE** – The whole type of applications and programs, which depend on the equipment (hardware), bearing the control of it, its calculation capacity and data-processing.

**TEXTURES** – The graphics applied to virtual architecture surfaces rendering it more compelling on a visual level.

**TOUCH SCREEN** – A digital screen enabling a single or multi-touch sensitive surface for interaction.

**UPGRADES** – The form of modernizing physical or virtual systems in terms of information.





**VIDEOCLIPS** – Music videos emerging in the decade of 80 are "videoclips", and they are highly marketed by theme channels like the MTV. Their main characteristic is remote marketing of video excerpts (following the original music length) made for artistic musical artworks. On aesthetic terms they are often recurring to rhythmic montage, fitting in popular media classification and promoting pop culture in audiovisual format thanks to celebrities presented and manipulated images.

**WALKMAN** – A technological innovation by Sony Electronics that made the pocket cassette music player ordinary, because it democratized music listening by means of headphones, in anywhere (given that it was powered by AA batteries or a rechargeable battery). The device permitted music to be transportable as a light commodity, as original and private recordings would be played. The concept evolved nowadays onto the digital domain, once that now "walkmans" are already mainly portable media players, that besides music play movies, videoclips, among other functions, relying on rigid or Flash memories, rather than in tape cassettes, as it originally happened (or in Audio CD or MiniDisc).

### **General**

**ACTION FIGURES** – Collectible merchandising figures, manufactured by craftsman or by industrial means, supposed to recreate figures or vehicles existing in fiction universes, would that be from movies, animations or videogames.

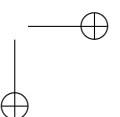
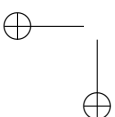
**ANDROID** – A totally technological or organically and genetically manipulated artificial being which replicates a human being.

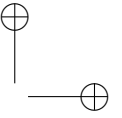
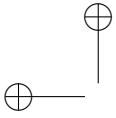
**BOOM** – A physical blast or a metaphor for a fertile triggered event and its consequences. The "big boom" expression means events marked by the establishment of theme-based, historical, technical or artistic news.

**CARTOON** – Another word for animation film, a hand-drawn design, normally looking colorful. With the new graphic technologies many of the "cartoon" references are improved in videogames.

**CHARACTERS** – English word for people played in theatre plays, movies (including animation) or a digital game.

**COCKPIT** – The console of instruments inside the airship surrounding the





pilot within the shielding glass, in a warplane, private airplane or airspace vessel.

**COCOONING** – The closure phenomenon in private spaces, concerning resignation to the individual condition of the subject's space in its own home, as opposed to the public and/or social urban life.

**COMIC** – A word that remains in popular Anglo-Saxon culture because the early comics being marketed in newspapers were featured in comical, humor columns.

**COMIC BOOKS** – Print-book based comics, organized in chapters in the original published form.

**ÉLAN** – A dynamic and attraction point, same thing as a relevance pole.

**FASHION** – The English word meaning "fashion" in the commercial sense, also used as an aesthetic adjective.

**GLAMOUR** – The ability to fascinate, compel and seduce as in magic, "spell" cast.

**HARDCORE** – Artistic or commercial artworks containing references to violence, sexuality or ideology, designed for adult viewers.

**HIP-HOP** – The "RAP" music culture, with visual manifestation in *graffiti*, out of which the *Disc Jockey* figure came up, and its origin lies in the Afro-American Diaspora and metropolitan boulevards.

**HUMANOID** – A technical or genetic copy of human beings.

**JEANS** – Denim trousers.

**KITSCH** – An aesthetic example of popular bad taste.

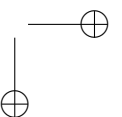
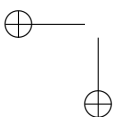
**MAINSTREAM** – The primary popular stream of divulging commercial artworks.

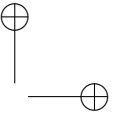
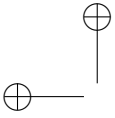
**MERCHANDISING** – A form of making a product more profitable by spinning-off by-products under the regency of a primary brand.

**MISE-EN-SCÈNE** – An originally French expression for "representation", "staging" in the cinematographic sense (as in the case of TV or cinema) or dramaturgical (as in theatre).

**MODEL-KIT** – A cheap industrial product, sold in parts to collection fans spend time assembling a plastic figure over a set of stages, whether it is a vehicle or any type of object requiring no intervention of further people.

**POP MUSIC** – The most easy to sell music, that does not demand elaborate researches and it is published according to trends and conveniences, the mar-





ket conditions of the moment, regardless of the respective quality or aesthetic pertinence.

REMAKE – The re-publishing of something old, a new version of an artwork or product.

ROCK – Music genre coming to existence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it redefines the popular music concept, by aiming at new target segments with ideology, figures and specific styling movements.

SLOGAN – Appealing words used to turn a brand more present in the audience mind through an advert displayed in one or several advertising media.

SPOT – A short-length commercial advert for radio, television or the Internet.

STANDARDS – Models adopted by conventional rules bearing the purpose of making average users' tasks easier.

STAR SYSTEM – A celebrities' established system, strongly dependent on the media industry (cinema, music, theatre, television or videogames) sustained by medial figures, inside and outside popular fiction domains.

STATEMENT – An affirmation made publicly, an enlightening reference, a definition or early presentation.

TARGET – A short form of meaning "target-audience"; common in media and marketing fields.

WESTERN – A term for "western" people, yet also for the film genre fictitiously portraying the epoch of industrialization in the US, when the transition of the country era of pioneers unfolds to an era of machines, whose icons were the steam-based engine train and the railways. It is another synonym for "western spaghetti".

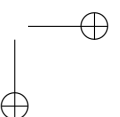
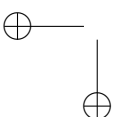
### **List of Acronyms**

360 – Microsoft Xbox 360 gaming console.

48K – Sinclair ZX Spectrum 48k microcomputer.

2D – The graphic system preceding 3D graphic technologies, it could comprehend illustrations, edited photography or any other type of two-dimensional graphics.

3D – A new graphic system massively implemented in the decade of 90 with specific gear to process images in three spatial coordinates. Thanks to this 3D technology, digital images have strongly emancipated due to figures and scenarios with improved textures.



AI – “Artificial Intelligence” – Constructs programmed to calculate operations and autonomously execute commands in a planned manner; it can too assume a form of machine or simply one of program.

AMV – AMVs (Anime Music Videos) are known author anime artworks re-edited, that the fan communities have divulged in the Web, by overlaying in it their favorite songs and a montage fitting the 'MTV-aesthetic'.

Anime Series – The same thing as OVA (Original Video Animation), yet broadcast on TV.

ARCADE – Videogame machines of game parlors.

BRD – BluRay Disc.

CBM C64 – Commodore 64k microcomputer.

CD – Compact Disc.

CD-I – Philips Compact Disc Interactive gaming console.

DC – SEGA Dreamcast gaming console.

DS – Nintendo DS (Dual Screen) gaming console.

DVD – Digital Versatile Disc.

FAX – Abbreviation of the Latin term "facsimile", it means telecopy device.

FPS – “First Person Shooter” – "Shooting games" displaying action in a first-person's perspective. Their primary focus is the strong subjective component and the sensation caused on the player of one being in a Virtual Reality.

FREE – Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment of the game *Shenmue*.

GB – Nintendo Game Boy gaming console.

GBA – Nintendo Game Boy Advance gaming console.

GC – Nintendo GameCube gaming console.

GENESIS – SEGA Genesis gaming console.

HP – The unit form of quantifying the measurable power force in engines is the result of the abbreviation of “Horse Power”; this way, "HP" is the expression that later quantitatively designs the power of the driving force.

IGN – International Games Network.

JPN – Original Japanese edition English subtitled.

MCM – The acronym for "Monte Carlo Musique", a famous French TV music channel.

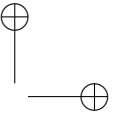
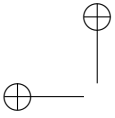
MSX – Philips MSX microcomputer.

MSX 2 – Philips MSX 2 microcomputer.

MTV – Music TeleVision, the North-American music channel.

NES – Nintendo Entertainment System gaming console.

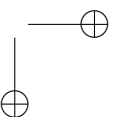
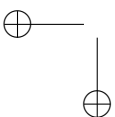
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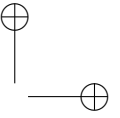
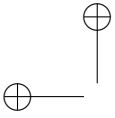


- On-Line – Available on the Internet.  
OVA – Original Video Animation = An anime series released on DVD.  
PC – Personal Computer.  
PS2 – Sony PlayStation 2 gaming console.  
PS3 – Sony PlayStation 3 gaming console.  
PSN – Sony PlayStation Network.  
PSP – Sony PlayStation Portable gaming console.  
PSX – Sony PlayStation gaming console.  
SAAB – The same as "Svenska Aeroplan AB (aktiebolag)", the Swedish name for aircraft and automaker, meaning "Airplane Swedish, Inc."  
SEGA – Service Games Corporation.  
SNK Playmore – The videogame enterprise whose capital letter simplify: "Project New Japan" [*Shin Nihon Kikaku*].  
SUPER NES – Super Nintendo Entertainment System gaming console.  
TV SHOW – TV SERIES = Live-action serial format-based fiction for television broadcast.  
UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle.  
US – USA – United States of America.  
Wii – Nintendo Wii gaming console.  
XBOX – Microsoft Xbox gaming console.

## INTERVIEWS

During the stage of doing the research necessary to the elaboration of this thesis, I had the chance to participate in an ISEA (International Society on Electronic Arts) event named ISEA 2008 (International Symposium on Electronic Art). I attended to this event, which took place in Singapore in July 29<sup>th</sup>, mainly the "Animated Ideas: Investigating The Language of Animation" panel, in the Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditory of Singapore Management University. This discussion panel on anime, organized a little apart from the electronic arts themes in the remaining symposium, made possible for me to solve some doubts about Japanese animation. Still, I had the chance to conduct two mini-interviews, one to an author who is theoretically working on anime (Yoshioka, from Kyoto University) and another one to an author caring about more practical issues of anime (Hayakawa, freelance anime artist). The





panel was assembled by the IAMAS (Institute and International Academy of Advanced Media Arts and Sciences).

In this conference on "animated ideas" the works from Makoto Murayama, ALIMO, Tsumugi Harunari and Nobuyuki Yamanaka were shown. Takahiro Hayakawa, who I thankfully had the opportunity to interview also, presented some of his non-conventional animations in the conference. Hiroshi Yoshioka, participated in this conference where also held the responsibility of the mediation, and in the beginning he said:

“Japanese animation, or anime, is so ubiquitous that it now seems to constitute a universal language in globalized pop culture. Aside from the mainstream, young artists are using animation to create new visual experiences. In this panel, we would like to show some of the latest experimental animation works produced by young students and graduates from IAMAS, and discuss the possibility of animation as a new language” (2008).

### **Hiroshi Yoshioka**

**Q:** “Yoshioka San, I would like to know 'what do you think of anime as a communication medium?'”

**A:** “Well, Japanimation, anime, is communication. Young people communicate with each other through anime if they don't know the language”.

**Q:** “How is that possible?”

**A:** "Anime has a unanimous language, global language”.

**Q:** “And was it before globalization?”

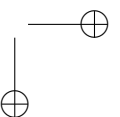
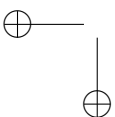
**A:** “An established culture was changed by anime”.

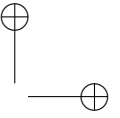
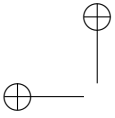
**Q:** "So by surpassing established culture, anime went easily global, is that it?"

**A:** “Yes, Japan is exporting more anime than cars”.

**Q:** “Yes, but Japan will continue to export machines for sure. And what does the future holds for anime?”

**A:** “Content creation”: films, videogames and stories”.





**Q:** “And do you think anime needs to be more known?”

**A:** “No, not now. Manga and anime are respected and a known culture”.

**Q:** “Yet anime only got more widely known after the 80s!”

**A:** “In the 60s anime wasn’t a culture yet. 90s anime is criticized due to violence and sexy eschatology”.

**Q:** “In late 90s there was a period for criticizing anime. What was it all about?”

**A:** “Children could develop violent character”.

**Q:** “Currently, which is the communication?”

**A:** “Japanese is cool, no culture contamination”.

**Q:** “Today I believe there is a real ‘Anime Galaxy’, would you agree with me?”

**A:** “Yes, a too strong influence in mainstream. Anime is supported by political powers.

**Q:** “Then the panoply of commodities, image formats, technologies, available fiction games, all of that is a produce of a national-scale strategy?”

**A:** “One may say comics and anime share media technique, content, format, information technology in novels, digital language”.

**Q:** “It seems an aesthetic encompassing everything in anime is coming to existence, is not it?”

**A:** “I don’t create a frontier between media and aesthetics.”

**Q:** “How would you define the anime language?”

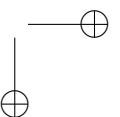
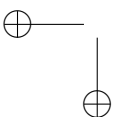
**A:** “I think anime organizes experience in different way, a video language. There is a media aesthetics of its own. We see that language of kids in ads”.

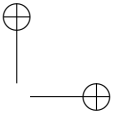
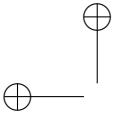
**Q:** “What is special for you in anime?”

**A:** “To my generation it still is a new art of painting. Shows Japaneseness of picture scrolls”.

**Q:** “Does anime represents all the Japanese?”

**A:** “Anime is not to the Japanese, although it shows Japanese culture”.





### Takahiro Hayakawa

**Q:** “I know already that Takahiro San is a film director and an animation producer. What is for you the major feature of anime?”

**A:** “Animism – Asian animism”.

**Q:** “Would not be movement, instead?”

**A:** “Yes too, motion – making system to generate unique motion. Animation is not art of moving pictures, but pictures moving”.

**Q:** “Does it have anything to do with the Latin word *Anima*?”

**A:** “Anime is to make motion. Animation is to give life, interpret life”.

**Q:** “What do you pretend to do in your animations? Once they are not conventional, they show abstract graphics moving”.

**A:** “Find genetic structure to generate movement to my animation”.

**Q:** “What is the purpose of that?”

**A:** “Show movement in anime. Anime is not just explosions and machines. Japanimation is art for me”.

**Q:** “I need to know for the research I am conducting if the anime to videogame transitions is corporately-planned. Is there any purpose on that?”

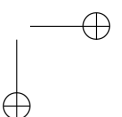
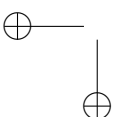
**A:** “No, it is not planned. It is a continuation, not forced”.

## DESCRIPTIVE ANALISYS

### Advertising Commercials

Despite the advertisements reconfigured being representative of this epoch where everything is digitized and converted, multiform and engaging, playful and innovative, in fact these are not combined only with Japanese visual culture. The Asian communication virus is transversal from Orient to West, meaning that, even in China, where the "Asianization" is an on-going process in the way it globally extends its culture and industry, there is an advertising reconfigured. Take for instance, Blizzard, the videogame company that release the *World of Warcraft* (2005) RPG genre videogame, a worldwide recognized online gaming phenomenon, has agreed with the creation of an ad

*Livros LabCom*



for *World of Warcraft* aiming at the Chinese market, called “Wow\_China\_TV” (2006). We are shown in this ad an entrepreneur cross-legged on desktop, he is arguing with three girls whether “sexy”; this is what sells it all. While they disagree with him, he turns into one of the monsters of *World of Warcraft*, a green ogre. Next, they shapeshift too and appear inside the game dressed respectively as characters: a druid, an archer and warrior. After winning the fight with the ogre they open a chest full of Cocker beverages. After the three girls had a drink they re-appear in the office altogether with the boss stripped with his pants down. This campaign designed for the Chinese market encompasses “Japanized” adverts in its aesthetic, narrowing the gap between Coke and *World of Warcraft*.

Where anime’s multiform aesthetic is even more present is in widely known Citroën ads, mainly the ones concerning the Citroën C4 vehicle. However, the advertising for the C3 model with the “Anime AD” (2005) imports the anime aesthetic from one edge to the other, since anime characters in a 3D animation are displayed. The young man driving looks like the hero in the *Cowboy Bebop* animation and it all starts as he is being chased by a truck driver. After the escape he stops the vehicle and some robbers sweep his C3. The robbers think mislead that there is no one on it, they close the door and, all-in-one shot, the boy gets back behind the wheel and performs a bold high-speed U-turn attempting to run away. He finally escapes after a truck driven by the robbers hitting him to ram him off the road. As he drives through a tunnel, he suddenly breaks the C3 without even slipping off a broken bridge. The Harrier warplanes come shooting missiles. The boy drives back and successfully jumps off the bridge while a soundtrack similar to *Pulp Fiction* (1994) plays in the background. By rolling in the air, the C3 dodges from the missiles’ impact. Once he pulls up the handbrake he abruptly verifies how he is still on Citroën’s car stand. The message being delivered endorses the control and breaking abilities of the C3 automobile. The spot reveals the car as a means to dream beyond. In the end the slogan is introduced: “Citroën C3: The only thing it does not ensure is your imagination. Life is beautiful” (translation is ours).

When it comes to the also Citroën C4 model, the most famous advert is the “Skater Movie” (2006), finished by The Embassy VFX studio. In this case, there was the attempt to exploit an aesthetic closer to the videoclip rather than to Japanese animation. Meanwhile, the robot turning from and into a C4

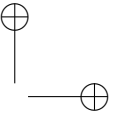
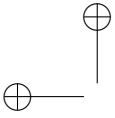
vehicle remains realistically accomplished. The advert starts in a place where it recently snow fell. Firstly we see people standing by the boundary of an icy lake. The C4 does not comply with the terrain restrictions and transforms itself into an “anthropoid” robot, initially skiing over the ice while the background music, authored by the artist David Guetta, assigns a ludic style to the advert. Again we are shown the videoclips’ aesthetic merging with anime robotics. The automobile begins playing alone in the ice and close to the end he returns to the humans, throwing snow on top of their heads in a playful manner. The slogan closing the advert is “Citröen C4: "Alive With Technology". In the ads of Citröen, considering a technology assuming a life of its own remains an exploited founding-concept.

Prior to the "Skater Movie", Citröen commissioned the “Breakdancer Movie” (2006) spot to the The Mill studio. Here the anthropomorphic massive robot would be completely matching the ones of the "mecha" type featured in anime. The early moment of the ad was marked by a Citröen C4 automobile standing parked, and then suddenly it starts dancing break-dance in the parking-lot until it jumps and falls back on the ground in its original form. The “Breakdancer Movie” was very awarded, since it was mainly an official launching video for the C4, including with the slogan: "New Citröen C4: Alive With Technology". The full version of this ad showed a robot standing upright, stretching up in the parking-lot behind a "pay parking" sign.

In other ads, yet where the transforming robots aesthetic is present too, one confirms a straight close approach to “mecha”. In the "Double A Paper’s Copier Transformer Commercial ", a Julien Vanhoenacker’s advert, we surely have a work conceived to aim at both TV and the Internet, where the final target-audience is the Japanese market, even if western young people might likewise enjoy this ad. It all starts when a young Japanese girl heading for a photocopier machine, which displays the error message: "Paper Jam". Upset, the girl hits it with a pile of A4 paper sheets, and in reaction the machine shapeshifts into a robot, retrieves the copy paper sheets out of the girl’s hand and tears them apart right in front of her. In a satirical way, and making fun of advs made by private creatives lacking imagination, we see in the end the robot’s hand pointing at the slogan: "Change Your Copy Paper. Double A: Double Quality Paper!"

The widely acknowledged clothing brand GAP, in one of its ads, the "Daft Punk – GAP Commercial" (2005), presents under a promotional music video

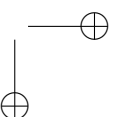
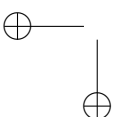
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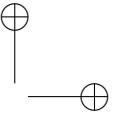
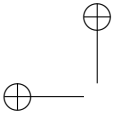


aesthetic the French musicians duo Daft Punk, in front of the camera, dancing and wearing GAP jeans. The ad is based on a "close-up" image of their pants. The stars wear helmets on which remain their own robotic branding image inspired in the 80s robots. The choreography of the duo is completed with the camera "zooming out" shot, the moment when Juliette Lewis walks in the "stage" by sideways, heading for the center as the Daft Punk music sound plays in the back. She smiles to the camera, something triggering the display of hearts and messages as "Girl!" in the Daft Punk's led helmets. The ad ends up with the slogan that is by the way URL address of the brand: "Denim: gap.com". A compression phenomenon is noticeable also in the slogan, which is so typical in the videoclip, as it merges in one single line with the Web address.

Not anymore in the "street wear" (casual style clothes), the ad transmitted in Japan, by the time the Microsoft Xbox 360 gaming console launch in 2006, aimed too for the younger audience, the one mesmerized by digital images and/or robotics. In one of the most creative exercises ever done in advertising, designed for the Japanese, with the "xb360\_jp\_tv3" (2006) ad, super-sized Japanese characters are shown while hovering by Tokyo city. A subjective perspective enabled camera shows us the action in the first person. The real video-image of a garden with ancient Japanese temples is accompanied by Xbox 360's typefaces and logotypes, which are seen rising up like helium-fueled air balloons. In truth, this advert continues the Xbox 360 launching campaign aesthetic in Japan, already evident in the "xb360\_jp\_t2" (2006) ad, following a more provocative way, since it positions the viewer in the subjective point of view too: a car driver exiting a Tokyo tunnel. As soon as he leaves the tunnel the landscape is welcoming, the camera records the sky and only the commentaries of astonished passengers of the vehicle are heard. Highly above, a giant three-dimensional logotype and Japanese writing over city skyscrapers as if alien spaceships were flying above the city. The constellations of gray and green characters spread the Xbox 360 visual language in a fascinating and appealing way.

Another ad reconfigured, still related to the North-American videogame company, henceforth targeting the general audience, but mainly the western one, is concerning online gaming. By promoting the multiplayer game mode via Xbox 360, this "Banned TV Commercial" (2007) pretends to simulate the massive group gaming concept. Every individual standing in a public

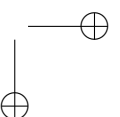
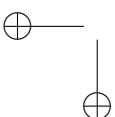




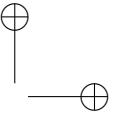
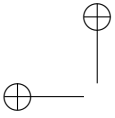
transportation terminal starts playing like he would know the rules of online gaming. It all starts as boy walks in as little bit later the other potential players are already identified. The "game" begins when all individuals start making gestures, pretending to play in a mimic form as they are pointing weapons, inexistent, though against each other. It is very much present the simulation concept. There is a serious suspense in early moments but soon the action ends up in a sort of "virtual" gunfight. The rhapsody music is introduced when everybody says "bang!", a little sooner than the conclusive "Jump in" slogan shows up. In itself the "ending" "Jump in" slogan is sufficiently inviting as it asks for players to jump the participation game universe.

Aside the videogames' universe, yet still related to the "mecha" genre, which the otaku fans find fascinating, the Motorola company, one of the pioneer cell phone manufacturers, made an entirely "transformer" ad for launching its V3 Razr model. In "V3 Razr Advert" (2003), the slogan is mistaken with the "Hello Motto" maxim is the abbreviation of "Hello Motorola", in the first place, a compliment made by a machine entity to the viewer. It is as if the ad would be attempting to teach us how to refer "Motorola" as "Moto". This strategy mirrors a certain "Japanization" of the brand through equipment design and the text "Moto", whose phonetics sounds like an Asian term. From the narrative point of view the ad starts with a girl standing in her living-room, holding a notebook on her lap which she closes. As she gets up, the whole house, from furniture to the walls, folds back on to itself like the cell phone flipping cover. The idea is to have the viewer capable of associating the open-and-close mechanism of the cell phone cover to the Motorola Vr Razr; a mechanism that, much like the ad, lies everywhere, spreading around as a virus for key-chains, cameras and screens to television sets, tables and rugs. Finally, the floor, the ceiling and the walls fold next until everything ends up on the cell phone, the last thing to fold back. The protagonist girl picks up a call, while the music tune played in the back keeps up with the short narrative of this ad. The end is signed by the "Moto, Most. Moto, Least. Moto, Razr" slogan.

There are increasingly more examples of ads inspired on videogames, once that the first ones demand a ludic-ness component that the second ones hold and their advertising aspires to unravel. Nevertheless, there is also advertising on videogames, establishing communication by means of real footage. The advertisement "MarioKart\_DS\_TV" (2005), for TV and the Web, mar-



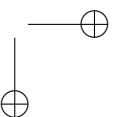
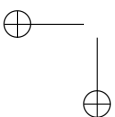
keting the Nintendo DS videogame *Mario Kart DS* (2005), manifests such strategy of taking the player onto the real when all things said are related to the videogame. We see several people attending to a “stock car” race of NASCAR; once they begin to be upset with the race, they decide to throw objects against the screen. And once again we have images about machines. It is a surprise after all that all things thrown to the screen emerge in the race, damaging the pilots themselves (objects like ketchup bottles, golf clubs, bags, trash and lamps). The viewer perceives these individuals got somehow addicted to *Mario Kart DS*, because they got used to the double touch-screen enabled in this gaming console. As they see the race on TV and they realize they do not control action, they start negatively reacting, like the TV screen would be not interactive. The ad ends with the sentence “Nintendo DS: Touching is Good”. In fact, touching digital images is impossible, unless it’s done through a touch-screen. Instead of mis-enjoying passive images, videogame players worship them without spending too much time with them. What drives them is the attempt to control the image, the immersion. But if eventually they watch adverts in which the image seems to have features identical to the computer image, to which they are used to, then such type of advertising is most dear to them. That is the case for the ads of Nissan, an automaker, namely the ad about its 4x4 vehicle range, the “Naturally Capable” (2007) commercial that shows us an all-terrain vehicle reaching a road blocked. The driver’s only option is shapeshift into a metal tiger, a “transformer” changing the all-terrain vehicle shape to the quadruped animal shape, in order to overcome obstacles. In this way he becomes valid to escalate a rocky mountain. In another shot one sees the metal tiger running across the snow, returning to its initial form, the one of a 4x4 vehicle, right after passing by the top of the mountain, descending on it in its regular configuration. When he comes across with a terrain full of rocky obstructions this time he shapeshifts into an arachnid, climbing down a cliff with the help of his many legs standing on the ground and enabling him a strong traction. Again, the “transformer” beast passes by the downside, already returned to the all-terrain vehicle form. Nevertheless, when he touches the water of a stream he immediately assumes the figure of a gigantic machine-like crocodile, submerging and resurfacing as an automobile. In the last transformation sequence, the vehicle is challenged by an agglomerate of loose rocks which requires shapeshifting to a serpent. Ultimately, the vehicle re-enter the tarmac road, as if all the restrictions along the



way meant the slightest thing in its "off road" adventure. The most interesting feature in this ad is that every time there is a transformation procedure from animal to machine, the return to the all-terrain vehicle's configuration always works onto a different 4x4 model, despite being in the same Nissan range. The transformation process one identifies in this ad, made by Mikros Image, is recurring to "morphing" technology so to make the mutation from vehicles to animals come true. The commercial ends when, beneath a black background, we are able to see the Nissan Patrol, X-Trail, Pathfinder and Murano vehicles shapeshifting between themselves. The commercial ends when the slogan "SHIFT\_capabilities", appears, addressing us to a double interpretation of the term "shift", meaning at the same time "gear", as in the "gear box" context, and "change", in the consumer perspective; meaning "changing" from product to another, given that Nissan's products have "other" abilities.

Still in the reconfigurations' advertising, which was strongly inspired by Michael Bay's film (as its executive producer was Steven Spielberg), we have interesting examples where robots or automobiles are again radically shifting their looks. Digital Domain, a computer graphics firm owned by James Cameron created the "Transformer" (2006) commercial for the client SAAB. In this work directed by Joseph Kahn we see a jet-fighter pilot (a SAAB warplane) pushing one button that causes the transformation of his warplane while on the hangar. The plane turns to a SAAB SUV station wagon. When the pilot looks at the side mirror he does not look like a jet-fighter pilot as Tom Cruise in the *Top Gun* (Tony Scott, 1986) film. The goal of this SAAB campaign entitled "Born From Jets" was to force the average consumer to feel special, hence appealing to the "pilot" concept in the double sense. Here one would see the "pilot" as a racing car pilot or as a military pilot. It is because of this motive that in the end the SAAB jet-fighter pilot was visually shapeshifting to a SAAB sports vehicle pilot. What we are told in the voice-over is elucidative of the advertising message at stake here, being in sum: "SAAB was founded by 16 aircraft engineers. Their spirit lives on: introducing the all new SAAB 97X. When you are used to build jets you just don't build another vehicle. SAAB: Born From jets". Other approaches, even more ludic ones are even more attached to the machine and videogame relation and they disregard the realism in the "transformed" image, as the SAAB commercial assures us. *Jak X: Combat Racing* (2005), a Sony Computer Entertainment videogame, had truly a ludic expression in the TV commercial "Jakx\_tv" (2005). Regarded as

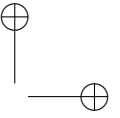
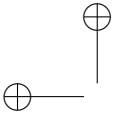
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an amusing critique to the robotic adverts of Citroën, but no less aggressive, this ad for the *Jak X* videogame starts with showing a car dancing. Yet an armed-vehicle of the *Jak X* game makes its appearance and destroys the robot dancer, after this, the text "The Killer-Racing Game" ends the commercial as a signature.

Besides the aggressive-holding image, the sympathetic ad "LocoRoco Japanese Commercial #3 PSP Long" (2007), related to the equally sympathetic videogame *LocoRoco* available for Sony PlayStation Portable, bets on a more colorful and pretty image. With no great effects or robotics appeal, but standing in symbiosis with the very plastic aesthetic of the videogame, the ad is supposed to please us. *LocoRoco* is assumed as a funny game, and the ad begins that way, with entertaining and rounded elastic figures of the game, posed as restless. During the ad, even in this one matching the version of bigger length, the satirical music keeps side by side with the images. It is evident the Asian-styled videoclip aesthetic is revealed in a compact of 'toy-images'; in the end, the whole ad is assembled with puzzles and platforms from this puerile, colored and animate videogame. Nearly, who ever knows the videogame recognizes the ad, which is articulated as a song for children turned into a short-length commercial movie. Trees, flowers and little balls, seeds and characters are stretching and splitting up in plasticity only possible in the digital image.

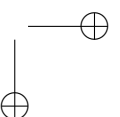
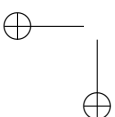
Pretending to be bolder, Sony PlayStation's ad went further and shows what is likely to be the next PlayStation gaming console. The futurist advert "PS9\_tv" (2007) present us images of a future city, identical to *Blade Runner's* Los Angeles, but endowed with daylight. We see somebody holding a transparent sphere on his hand, which contains a "PS9", the PlayStation from the future, Generation 9. Next, this boy, who was just showing us his hand, opens up the sphere in two halves on a rooftop releasing bubbles. In turn, these bubbles penetrate his body and wander around his body, changing is behavior. One sees the boy then jumping off the edge of the building. Thus the "bio link" message is displayed. By the time he lands on the ground he already assimilated abilities out of the game, for he appears calmly fighting passersby like he would have stepped into a digital simulation. Every following situations show the young man immersed in cinematic-quality simulations such as escaping from an underwater giant octopus. At the end, as the boy wakes up, he is standing a futuristic car chase in Tokyo streets in "full HD". A sexy



voice finishes the ad by adding: "PS2: The beginning!" In the beginning of Sony Computer Entertainment advertising, Sony PlayStation adverts were not so much creative. Thus, they were fantasizing the present time, what would come out of PlayStation 2 released in current videogames culture. That is the case of the ad known as "PS2 Mountain 75" (2007), divulged when the console hit the market. Before showing the slogan "Fun Anyone? PlayStation 2" we can see a young man perched on a rooftop, while all images were illustrating the funny old background music. The mass of people appearing on the advert seems to be a single object, a human mass heading for place where though one does not know the content or the place. The music has the refrain: "Go Get on-Board", and that is what individuals do: they try to stay on-board the PlayStation 2. The human mass keeps increasing in a non-ordinary way and piles of people; finally they are covering the outline of a skyscraper. What the sky perspective presents us is what seems to be a mountain of humans, since all individuals are fighting and dethroning each other on the top, in a seemingly "ultimate game".

As for the ads reconfigured concept, the creatives running Sony Computer Entertainment's corporate image have been increasingly more irreverent in their proposals. Marketing the Sony PlayStation Portable console demanded a new audiovisual language closer to the one of videogames and videoclips. In this path, the "PSP Ad" (2006) was the most revolutionary ad; transformation is an exploited concept on it. Robotics and logotypes are easily mistaken for each other in this work. This ad is in short an accelerated story with a percussion pace playback. On an art gallery lays a red bizarre sculpture staring a constant metamorphosis. One notices that there is a player standing next to a wall, and the sculpture runs away, in some point, like a wild animal. Once on the street it jumps to the rooftop of a wagon of a moving train. Right after it gets inside the tunnel and it breaks down into pieces in icons representative of the console's multimedia features (quaver, photographic camera, film tape and game pad). In the street, the robotic sculpture climbs on top of a cab rooftop, inside the car there is a girl playing PSP too. What the ad suggests is that the PlayStation robot only pursues its players, or that it may be controlled by them. While losing parts of it the sculpture goes into a shopping mall and plays with a dog, and then it climbs down the escalator stairs. On a bus a boy is playing PSP and the red sculpture, tuned to the music beats, tries to lean to a vehicle's window. The final duel starts when another similar sculpture

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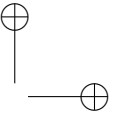
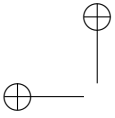


shows up. The "one-vs-one" combat occurs as if it would be a videogame. The two figures climb up a crane and then fall down in pieces, disassembling in the many logotypes which composed them until message "PSP: Easy End!" shows on the screen.

### Amateur Videoclips - Anime Music Video

Regarding the amateur-made videos, some of them are obsessively focused on certain fiction universes. In one of the AMVs we had the opportunity to examine the title is the same as in the re-edited images: "DragonBall Z" (1990), where the "My Way" (2000) music track from Limp Bizkit completes the graphic violence of the images with its rock energy. For a start, its protagonist is the Vegeta character from the *Dragon Ball Z* (1990) anime series. This AMV is between the abrupt ending and the accelerated beginning a compact of fights of glossy spiky-haired giants. The original series sequences, featuring fully-powered heroes that are apparently more than just adult strong bodied boys, are extensively re-edited. Similarly to what we verify in most AMVs, aggressiveness and violent outbreaks establish a rule. Blasts are part of a first scream which blends up with the distortion in the rock music of Limp Bizkit. The legacy of the nuclear image is reflected in the AMVs, and the powerful music is easily mixing with the enormous force coming from the gestures of the Sungoku celebrity. In this sense, no matter how awkward it may seem the gigantic and monstrous beasts engage in confrontation with young people, because the battles, resembling those of "beat'em up" videogame genre, require always a couple of characters from which one would expect a impetuous disclosure. Despite the body-building and the encasing suits, the ludic aggressiveness, evident also in the regular rock music videoclip, is exploited in this AMV. We are watching fights in *Dragonball Z* in the brink of post-holocaust animation, and they are happening in arid deserts and ravaged cities, as the ending is the apocalypse.

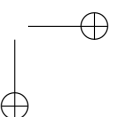
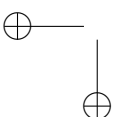
Another AMV where the edited images are imported too from the *Dragonball Z* series plays "Come Out Swinging" (2000), a music track from Offspring. The authors are a group named Dragonball Utopia. Rock music is used more than once to fill the battling stage of the footage and play along the chase across the Grand Canyon cliffs. Like there is no other way, the fights leave behind a trail of incandescent destruction skywards. In this AMV,



raging-eyed characters wearing organic suits and the mega-blast are marked by punk rock music. With wind-weaving hair, and holding protection shields, the protagonists are revealed in music shouts and "graphic screams", bursts of oblique lines. To sum up, the AMV is communicating in the same language as the regular videoclip, besides the 'graphic-plastic' aspects, disclosing a life-force shaped as accelerated and syncopated images. In the center of the AMV remains the controlled apocalypse topic; the strength fist, the punch, is translated in power of the blows. The final scream causes a biblical separation of waters, which are dispersed as half-spheres. The fans of *Dragonball Z* transform AMV into media extensions of their own imaginary and preferences in 'The Anime Galaxy'. The infantile and aggressive looks of *Dragonball Z* make it a universe in which the younger people are immediately identified with. In the AMV "They Might Be Giants", the music played along is entitled "Particle Man" (1990) and is inspired on the album "They Might Be Giants", from the band with the same name, and the images introduced become also redundant in focusing the fights; combats of a young man against giants (a juvenile perspective of confrontation towards adults?), who eats disproportionately without never losing its comical aspect. Adversaries in this AMV are beasts, being the fan-made videoclip in short a fighting comedy between western looking characters and oriental ones. There is a moment when clumsy and funny characters are running away from an avalanche, though, generally speaking, that satirical looks of images as carriers of a re-edited fiction is never lost. All characters look like children, except the green enemies with an alien complexion. Unlike the best AMVs, this one is but a supersonic rhapsody of childish struggles.

By appealing to the joviality image the fiction characters of the *Final Fantasy* videogame series, the AMV "Final Fantasy 9" displays 3D images of the game, and they are not two-dimensional images, as it happens in most AMVs. Under the Linkin Park music, namely the romantic track "In the End" (2001), this AMV stands out as one of the few signed down by amateur authors, the AtomX Production, whose "videoclip" shows a girl lost in a Venice-like fantasized city. The place at stake is fully occupied by gigantic statues and flying boats, electric storms scaring children and knights activating the total fragmentation of the apocalypse. The holocaust image re-emerges in this AMV, beginning the "Judgment Day" in a sizzling manner in the sea before ending in the destroyed city. Characters resembling corsairs are introduced as "toy

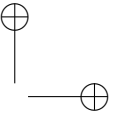
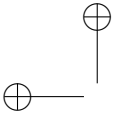
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lead soldiers" marching up in shiny battleships. Colorful explosions light up the sky whenever supernatural entities are summoned, as it happens in the *Final Fantasy* videogames series, which inspired this AMV. One notices passion between the young couple, as the final result is an epic romance. The young lady lost in the early moments says farewell to her loved one in her flying boat.

Distant from the most "catchy" names of 'The Anime Galaxy' the AMV "Flame of Recca" presents images from this Japanese animation series along with playback of the Skid Row's rock music "Youth Gone Wild" (1989). It is true that rock music remains a powerful component of the AMVs, just the electronic dance music. However, the rock energy gets into an easy symbiosis with anime's cataclysmic screams. This AMV, for instance, denotes a thoughtful selection of images from combats, tunnel video sequences, gunshots and leisure moments, as even these are strongly accelerated, something one verifies in how fast the young people are eating, in the school playground breaks or in the contends existing between each other. When a character holding a gun appears, he is as grotesque as those of videogames. Same thing happens in the way fans re-edit this AMV, by juxtaposing overpowered children, as featured in special effects films, and massive monsters in baroque architectures. Tendentiously similar to other already reviewed AMVs, this one presents Asian and North-American characters, something that is typical regarding the kind of audience at stake here (*otaku*). In the majority of sequences of AMVs, much as in manga or anime series, there is an exotic excess that remains tied to the fighters and shoot outs scenes; protagonists are, in great part, body-building young man and violent, maternal or naïf "fashion" girls, yet they are always dramatic.

Globally known in the anime genre, the *Full Metal Alchemist 1 – The Curse* series is also a choice for AMV fans to re-edit. By recurring to the "Faint" (2003) music track from Linkin Park, in one of the AMVs made by the Elric Brothers (CL), it is quite full of magic symbols, armies and giant robots, cannon blasts and bullet bursts. The war image is a constant, while hecatomb won't detach from 'The Anime Galaxy', something that renders understandable the reason "why" so many buildings in flames, girl reconfigures in gothic scenarios and an energetic young man who cannot control his enthusiasm. Like anime in general, AMVs also fall unfortunately into the stereotypes of the issues they pick. Death, life and cataclysm, fear and bold-

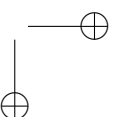
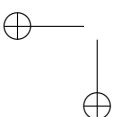


ness, heroes against evil creatures are only a few of the most common issues. This AMV presents specifically unarmed fighters and armies of omnipotent individuals, bright fire blasts stand as menaces, androids and tribal tattooed-wrestlers. The aesthetic scheme of “beat’em up” videogames, of recreating combats between bad over-humans, sexy girls and good-looking heroes is a constant fact in some AMVs, as it is in this one.

If there are anime-derivative AMVs, of course there would have to be some about the *Gundam* universe, the famous epic series on giant robots. The footage of this AMV, whose title is “Gundam Wing”, when watched altogether with the “Feuer Frei” (2002) music track by Rammstein assumes another meaning. Because AMVs are re-editions, they somehow tell another story of the anime film or anime series they are quoting. In fact, AMVs are a personal version of MTV Asia and Anime Network, artistic quotations in the post-historical era. Usual arguments of the AMVs always demand the presence of a boy and of a girl in an angelical garden. The ‘graphic aggressiveness’ is triggered from the moment on he pulls the trigger of a detonator, destroying a “Blade Runnered” city. In space, *Gundam* robots cause stellar explosions, smoke columns and luminous rays are what is left. Back on Earth we see the Tokyo skyline thriving with nightlife. Again the protagonists piloting “mech” robots are struggling against fulminating projectiles. Endless fire comes out of the aggression featured between the characters, much as in the high-grade laser cannon rays. Swords are mirroring the cold look of military young men, laser sights and paradisiacal clouds, snapshots of an inexistent naïf reality. Like an inseparable sister, the rock songs complete the AMV, the ‘image-track’ for wrecked cities, romantic solitude and single company: the weapons here represented by gigantic anthropomorphic robots of angelical wings. Among cyborgs and gods, these *Gundam*’s cybernetic Phoenixes glow unceasingly in the dark and cold space, moving the images tuned to the rhythmic editing. Finally, lights are cast out of the darkness as evidences of the re-edited apocalypse.

Fitting in the greatest topics of ‘The Anime Galaxy,’ an AMV is posted online based on the Japanese animation artworks of *Serial Experiments Lain* (Ryūtarō Nakamura, 1998), *Akira* and *Ghost in The Shell*. It is coupled with the “The Becoming” (1994) song performed by industrial rock band Nine Inch Nails. The authorship of the AMV belongs to Kysoyaro Productions, while the title shows “Transformation”. By resorting to images from *Lain*, and to

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other cult anime films like *Akira* and *Ghost in The Shell* as well, this AMV visually the tunnels displayed in a hypnotic manner and typical sceneries in cyberpunk videos. We are witnessing to a montage of bodies and machines, young men observing their own hands. The song by Nine Inch Nails completes the robotic aggressiveness of the AMV, making the Kusanagi character a present as she raises her gun, and right after that the racing shots from *Akira*, or the hand scenes from *Lain* are inserted. On top of the volatile graphics of the video (quick-cut editing) the scenes of the disturbed and gifted boy from *Akira* are pretty much stuck on. Outlines from outlaw figures and from *Akira* himself transforming, with wires coming out of his body, appear in this AMV, in which screams and affliction of young men are violently combining with the digital image.

Different approaches are tried in AMVs as “Maboroshi (Perfect Blue)”, which, despite recurring to the song “The Perfect Drug” (1997), also performed by Nine Inch Nails, carries the signature from another studio, the Maboroshi Studio. It is called “Maboroshi (Perfect Blue)” because it is inspired in the *Perfect Blue* (Satoshi Kon, 1997) anime and above all it starts with a technical crosshair countdown of old black-and-white films. Its speed is exaggerated, and the rhythm of changing shots matches to the one of the animated image, as the shots illustrating industrial rock music were carefully chosen. This work excels for having many flashes and a rhythmic editing, already a feature of the AMV style inherited from MTV. What illustrate the music are images of girl running away from bright screens, standing in contrast with a non-spoken boy amidst the crowd, in-between sequences of a pop concert. One realizes she seems to be chased by him until she throws herself out of the window. Rather than finding death, there seems to be hiccup, but the stalker gets away, so the girl appears then on the screens. Now he is always watching her. It is noticeable in this type of sequences how the authors demonstrate a certain preference for *hentai*'s erotic anime aesthetic, something obvious in the way celebrities are posing in an exotic and provocative strip-tease place. This is a “star system” portrayed in animation form what we are seeing here; cameras are surrounding a choir, capturing images from their sexy clothes until the moment she is ran over by a car. The energetic nature of the music is naturally allied to the violent intermittency of the animated images, still when the naked girl attempts to kill a person, which comes behind her back holding a knife on one hand, trying to rape her. Among the many

AMVs, this stands as one of those showing more anger, both because of the footage and the selected music.

No less violent, the “Neon Genesis Evangelion” AMV, based on the homonymous anime, brings together the images from *Evangelion*’s super-sized biomechanical robots and White Zombie’s heavy metal. The music functioning as a soundtrack for *Evangelion*’s Eva combat robot units, is the track “More Human Than Human” (1995). The underlying narrative reports an urban future where mankind expects salvation from its Eva robots against alien strikes. From the form point of view, this AMV exploits also the flood of “hypnagogic” (Gibson, 1988) images as a method to force the viewer to rapidly get to know the narrative background of the *Evangelion* series. In this series, the biomechanical Eva is controlled by children who are fighting back the extraterrestrial Angels in cities on the verge of total destruction. The strong influence from action films and science fiction artworks is evident, such as the *War of Worlds* (Steven Spielberg, 2005) film inspired on H. G. Wells’ artwork. The affliction of mankind having its destiny deposited in the hands of young men, which were separated from their mother, and who are piloting Evas to beat extraterrestrial menaces, is most present in this AMV. Since this AMV is a videoclip, it tells the story which it is based on in a very brief way. War and biomechanical anthropomorphic massive robots are the key-points in this AMV, in the same trend the images of destruction, blasts and blood pools are enforcing a certain type of ‘graphic aggression’. The viewer is left to a reflection state as topics like “struggle”, “massacre”, “revenge” and “hope” remain in-between the lines.

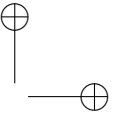
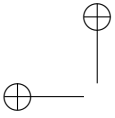
Deprived of that much violence, and returning to the neo-romantic style, the AMV named “Rurouni Kenshin”, referring to the *Samurai X: Trust And Betrayal* (1999) animation, makes use of music from the Cutting Crew, a celebrity pop music band back in the 80s, “Died in Your Arms Tonight (I Just)” (1986). By putting in action the *samurai* warrior historical figure, and the most classic anime enabling manga comics to be moving comics, this AMV functions more like a compact of fights between characters of the Japanese pre-modern feudal period. The editing anachronically brings together several narratives, sometimes showing a boy fighting against an adversary, while other times one sees a girl in combat with another one. The romantic music turns the video into a nostalgic piece, along with images about the *Edo* Period in Japan. Nonetheless, this is a violent music video, and it

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tells the story of someone teaching a child how to fight. A major part of the images are from *samurai* warriors challenging each other, yet ultimately the boy and the girl are fighting each other until they get exhausted. Under the image perspective, the graphics chosen for the opening scenes of this AMV begin with a soft thunder until the sequences become more hypnotic in the end, mainly when she dies and says "I'm sorry". This is one of the analyzed AMVs whose characters experience their fate reaching tragically its end.

Still endorsing the energetic 'MTV-aesthetic' and its musical brother, rock music, the "Rurouni Kenshin" (*Samurai X*) AMV recurring to sequences of the homonymous anime, is completed by the music "Wait And Bleed" (1999), from the Slipknot band. Instead of having music to adjust to images, there seems to happen otherwise, given that it is the images that attempt to illustrate the music. In narrative terms, this AMV starts with images of a crestfallen girl in a snowy landscape and, right after that, we are pushed in to the shot of a blinking eye. The nearly cubic logic of juxtaposing sequences, some after another, with different style shots, leads us to believe that re-editing this AMV somehow implies becoming closer to a short-length film re-editing. After the opposite shots, the AMV shows us the image of a girl posing in front of us, which is then seen covering the rest of her naked breasts with the neckband of the *kimono*. What stands here vehemently depicted is the narrative being remade regarding the moment when the girl walks on a pathway and finds a blood-stained cloak. From this moment on we get to know another man provokes her. As she is *en route* as she comes across with a *ninja* who shoots her with a poisoned arrow. There is a fight with the man first appearing on the scene, and later we see crosses painted on every cloak similar to the ones found in middle of the video, the second girl harms the first one. Aside from violence, the present aesthetic envisions to graphically illustrate the music of Slipknot.

Starting from the original *Trigun* (Satoshi Nishimura, 1998) anime, and entitled with the name of the music "The Beer Song", from Weird Al Yankovic, this AMV shows the signature of the artist Hakura. *Trigun's* Japanese animation is played by a blond cyberpunk young man wearing a red raincoat, round mirror shades and a huge weapon. The desert wasteland scenario picked for *Trigun* represents a new version of the North-American Wild West, this time happening on a faraway planet. In short, the message of this AMV is all about this: "What you got when you cross a day of anime with a 6 pack...".

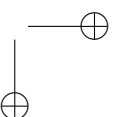
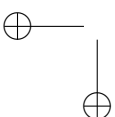


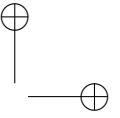
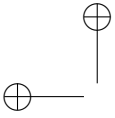
This is why the narrative of this AMV starts in a sequence in which one sees a party bar, as every scene of amusement is taken from the *Trigun* series. Closing down all the colorful images this text is displayed: “Now remember kids, if you watch anime do not drink”. *Trigun* is an anime artwork drawing an enormous amount of fans behind itself, with countless videos available online. In “Trigger Happy”, the re-editing is made by Japan-a-Maniac, but the language of this AMV turns it most poor in terms of image selection and the music options as well. In the footage selected by the amateur editors, characters appear to be happy for pulling the trigger, like anyone pushing buttons in videogame pads. The single point of interest, and which turns this AMV almost an autonomous *Trigun* by-product, is how it shows in a few images, following the trailer form, *Trigun*’s ‘imaginary demography’. And thus one watches beings of the biomechanical desert attacking cyberpunk cowboys in funny villages. The places, those seem to be imported from “Japanized” “western” films, and reaching the comic relief with a music similar to the “surf rock” played by Beach Boys.

Enemy soldiers seem to wear special ops suits with helmets like those of metal diving suits, which is already an incursion into *Trigun*’s fiction universe, as interesting as the situation in which one of the characters possesses a giant crucifix, out of which he gets additional weapons to protect himself. The *Trigun* universe does not end here. In another AMVs, such as the “Tsuneo Imahori” playing back the “H.T.” (s.d.) music, the red-scarlet blond cowboy wearing a raincoat appears again, showing off a bright weapon. Shigeki Komatsu and Masao Maruyama, the authors behind this amateur AMV, have tried to faithfully rely on the manga made by Yasuhiro Nightow that causes the *Trigun* animation to surface. The only point in which this AMV gets more unusual is the one in which a cat looking like a *kawaii* icon comes up, right before we see in great detail the *Trigun* warrior in the extraterrestrial Wild West. Many images also were imported straight from the opening scene of the second season of *Trigun*, produced by Mad House, which became famous for animating young figures with Japanese looks holding guns and wearing “western-styled” clothes.

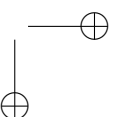
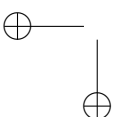
The greatest highlight is provided to the “Wanted Dead or Alive” (s.d.) AMV, another focusing *Trigun*’s world, dedicating however its footage to the song “Wanted Dead or Alive” (1986), performed by Bon Jovi. Monkey God Productions, the authors, managed to tell a “western story” in just a few shots,

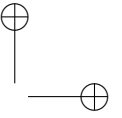
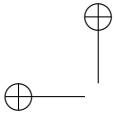
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as they have chosen thus the images of a purple desert full of cloaks twisted by the wind and guns hold in a "cinematic style". In just a short time, the full moon in the sky, the trees with dark cyberpunk characters in the Wild West and a saloon lost in outer space start becoming common for the viewer of this AMV. The real hallmark moment is the one where the visionary hero wearing mirror shades and a red raincoat, challenges us with the shiny reflection of his eyes. Closer to the end of this short story, the whole town is surrendered, and relaxation returns in the sequence when everybody is celebrating in the bar with drinks. The bottom line is, this AMV is a "Japanized" version of "western spaghetti" movies played by Clint Eastwood, where close-ups on the revolver chamber reloading bullets are high moments to keep in mind, as straight ahead the hero is obliged to fight arachnid robots in the desert, setting on a gun as huge as the sword of the heroes from *Final Fantasy VII* or de *Devil May Cry*. And to avoid oblivion, the most symbolic images are actually introduced in the end, while one sees the hero against the light. Images of skyscrapers and battleship command towers remaining twisted in the dried and decaying landscape are anticipated by triple moon twilight.

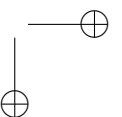
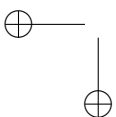


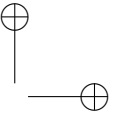
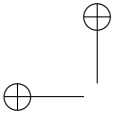


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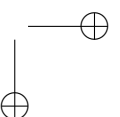
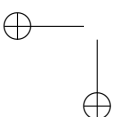
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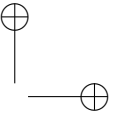
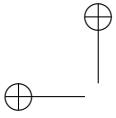
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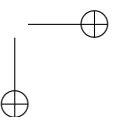
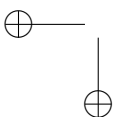
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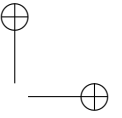
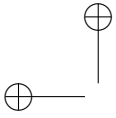




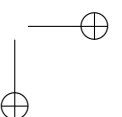
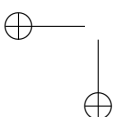
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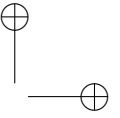
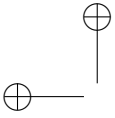




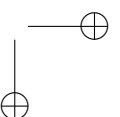
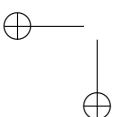
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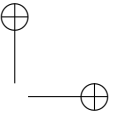
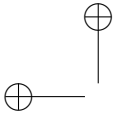


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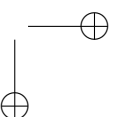
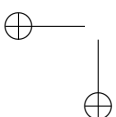


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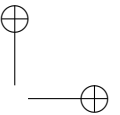
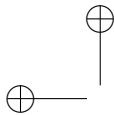
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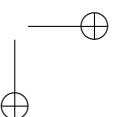
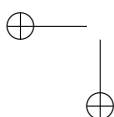
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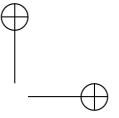
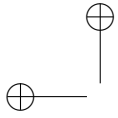
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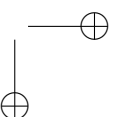
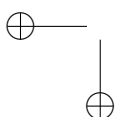
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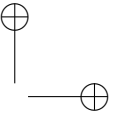
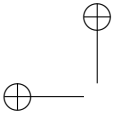
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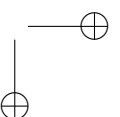
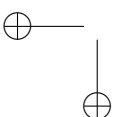
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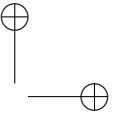
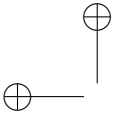
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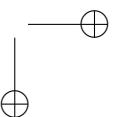
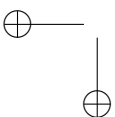
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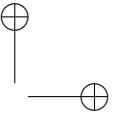
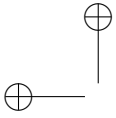
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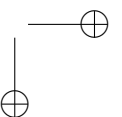
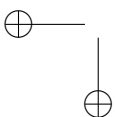




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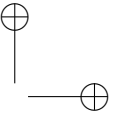
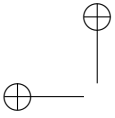
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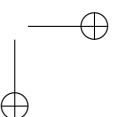
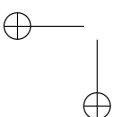
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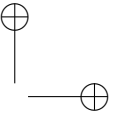
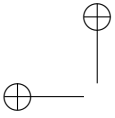
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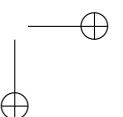
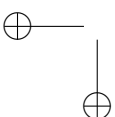
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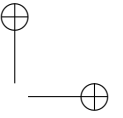
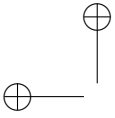
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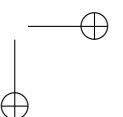
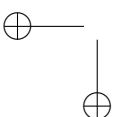
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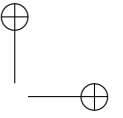
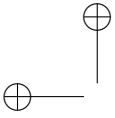
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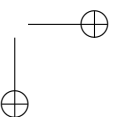
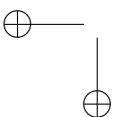
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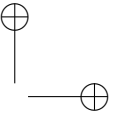
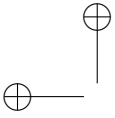




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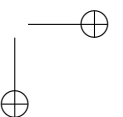
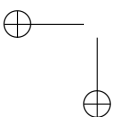
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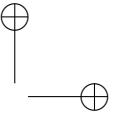
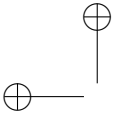




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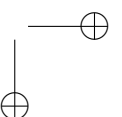
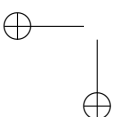
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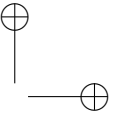
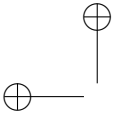




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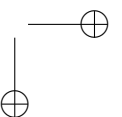
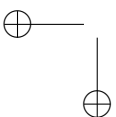
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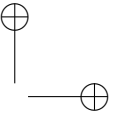
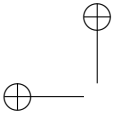




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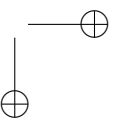
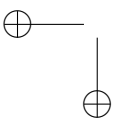
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2001: A Space Odyssey (Stanley KUBRICK, 1968)

Aeon Flux [DVD] (Karyn KUSAMA, 2005)

A.I. [DVD] (Steven SPIELBERG, 2001)

Aliens (James CAMERON, 1986)

Battlestar Galactica [DVD] (Michael RYMER, 2003)

Bicentennial Man (Chris COLUMBUS, 1999)

Black Rain (Ridley SCOTT, 1989)

Blade Runner [DVD] (Ridley SCOTT, 1982)

Caprica [TV show], Season 1, Episode 08: "Ghosts in The Machine" (Glen A. LARSON, 2010)

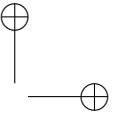
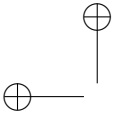
Casshern [DVD] [JPN] (Kazuaki KIRIYA, 2004)

Chungking Express (Wong KAR-WAI, 1994)

Children of Men (Alfonso CUARÓN, 2006)

Chronicles of Riddick, The (David N. TWOHY, 2004)

- Cyborg [DVD] (Albert PYUN, 1989)
- Cyborg 2 [DVD] (Michael SCHROEDER, 1993)
- Daft Punk's Electroma [DVD] (Thomas BANGALTER & Guy-Manuel de  
HOMEM-CHRISTO, 2006)
- D.A.R.Y.L. [DVD] (Simon WINCER, 1985)
- District 9 [DVD] (Neil BLOMKAMP, 2009)
- Dragonball Evolution [DVD] (James WONG, 2009)
- Empire of The Sun [DVD] (Steven SPIELBERG, 1987)
- Fifth Element, The (Luc BÉSSON, 1997)
- Flash Forward: Season 1 [TV show] (NBC, 2009)
- Forbidden Planet [DVD] (Fred WILCOX, 1956)
- Gamer [DVD] (Mark NEVELDINE, 2009)
- Godzilla - King of Monsters [DVD] (Terrell O. MORSE, 1954)
- Guyver, The [DVD] (Screaming Mad GEORGE, Steve WANG, 1991)
- Guyver, The: Dark Hero [DVD] (Pegasus Entertainment, Steve WANG, 1994)
- Guyver, The: Dark Hero 2 [DVD] (Lighthouse, Steve WANG, 2006)
- Guyver, The: The Biobooster Armor [Anime Series] (Steve WANG, 2005)
- I, Robot (Alex PROYAS, 2004)
- Iron Man [DVD] (John FAVREAU, 2008)
- Iron Man 2 [BRD] (John FAVREAU, 2010)
- Island, The (Michael BAY, 2005)
- James Cameron's Avatar [BRD] (2009)



Johnny Mnemonic (Robert LONGO, 1995)

Judge Dredd (Danny CANON, 1995)

Kill Bill Vol.1 (Quentin TARANTINO, 2003)

Kill Bill Vol.2 (Quentin TARANTINO, 2004)

Last Samurai, The (Edward ZWICK, 2003)

Liquid Sky [DVD] (Slava TSUKERMAN, 1982)

Matrix, The [DVD] (Larry & Andy WACHOWSKY, 1999)

Matrix Reloaded [DVD] (Larry & Andy WACHOWSKY, 2003)

Matrix Revolutions [DVD] (Larry & Andy WACHOWSKY, 2004)

Metal Gear Solid Philantropy [On-Line] (Hive Division, Giacomo TALAMINI, 2009)

Metropia [DVD] (Tarik Saleh, 2009)

Metropolis (Fritz LANG, 1927)

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie [TV show] (Bryan SPICER, 1995)

Minority Report [DVD] (Steven SPIELBERG, 2003)

Natural City [DVD] [JPN] (Min BYEONG-CHEON, 2003)

Next (Lee TAMAHORI, 2007)

Platoon (Oliver STONE, 1986)

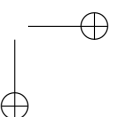
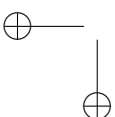
Power Rangers S.p. D. (2005)

Returner, The [DVD] [JPN] (Takashi YAMAZAKI, 2002)

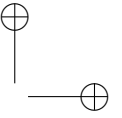
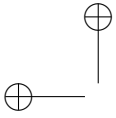
Robocop (Paul VERHOEVEN, 1987)

Robocop 3 (Fred DEKKER, 1992)

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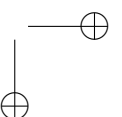
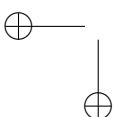


Saving Private Ryan (Steven SPIELBERG, 1998)  
Serenity (Joss WEHDON, 2005)  
Short Circuit [DVD] (John BADHAM, 1986)  
Silent Running (Douglas TRUMBULL, 1971)  
Sky Captain And The World of Tomorrow (Kerry CONRAN, 2004)  
Sleeper (Woody ALLEN, 1973)  
Sleep Dealer (Alex RIVERA, 2008)  
Speed Racer [BRD] (Larry & Andy WACHOWSKY, 2008)  
Star Trek: First Contact (Jonathan FRAKES, 1996)  
Star Wars: I: The Phantom Menace (George LUCAS, 1999)  
Star Wars: III: The Revenge of The Syth (George LUCAS, 2005)  
Star Wars: VI: Return of The Jedi (Richard MARQUAND, 1983)  
Star Wars: V: The Empire Strikes Back (Irvin KERSHNER, 1980)  
Star Wars: IV: A New Hope (George LUCAS, 1977)  
Star Wars: II: Attack of The Clones (George LUCAS, 2002)  
Stealth (Rob COHEN, 2005)  
Surrogates (Jonathan MOSTOW, 2009)  
Tekken [DVD] (Dwight H. LITTLE, 2010)  
Teknoman: Collection 1 [DVD] [JPN] (Anime Works, 1996)  
Terminator, The (James CAMERON, 1984)  
Terminator 2 - 3D: Battle Across Time (Digital Domain, James CAMERON, 1996)



- Terminator 2 – Judgment Day (James CAMERON, 1991)
- Terminator 3 – Rise of The Machines (Jonathan MOSTOW, 2003)
- Terminator (4) Salvation (McG, 2009)
- Terror of Mechagodzilla [DVD] (Ishiro HONDA, 1975)
- Tetsuo: The Iron Man (Shinya TSUKAMOTO, 1989)
- Tetsuo II: Body Hammer [DVD] [JPN] (Shinya TSUKAMOTO, 1992)
- THX: 1138 [DVD] (George LUCAS, 1971)
- Tomb Raider (Simon WEST, 2001)
- Top Gun (Tony SCOTT, 1986)
- Total Recall (Paul VERHOEVEN, 1990)
- Total Recall 2070: Season 1 (1999) [TV show] (Mario AZZOPARDI, 1999)
- Transformers [BRD] (Michael BAY, 2007)
- Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen [BRD] (Michael BAY, 2009)
- Tron [DVD] (Steven LISBERGER, 1982)
- Tron 2 – Legacy (Joseph KOSINKSI, 2010)
- Turbo: A Power Rangers Movie [TV show] (Shuki LEVY, David WINNING 1997)
- Virus (John BRUNO, 1999)
- WarGames [DVD] (John BADHAM, 1983)
- War of The Worlds (Steven SPIELBERG, 2005)
- Watchmen [BRD] (Zack SNYDER, 2009)
- Wild Wild West (Barry SONNENFELD, 1999)
- Wizard of OZ, The (Victor FLEMMING, 1939)
- XXX2 – State of The Union [DVD] (Lee TAMAHORI, 2005)

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## **Animation (Cartoons And Anime)**

Artwork, Type, Region (Director, Year)

009-1 [Anime Series] (ADV Films, 2007)

A.D. Police - Bad Blood [Anime Series] (Manga Entertainment, 2004)

Action Force [DVD] (Don JURWICH, 1986)

Adieu Galaxy Express 999 [JPN] [DVD] (RINTARO, 1981)

Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The [Anime Series] (Nippon Animation, 1980)

Akira [DVD] (Katsuhiro OTOMO, 1988)

Animatrix, The (Mahiro MAEDA, et al., 2003)

Appleseed (Kazuyoshi KATAYAMA, 1988)

Appleseed [DVD] (Shinki ARAMAKI, 2004)

Appleseed: EX Machina [DVD] (Shinki ARAMAKI, 2007)

Armitage III: Dual Matrix [DVD] (Geneon, Katsuhito AKIYAMA, 2002)

Armitage III: Poly-Matrix [DVD] (Geneon, Takuya SATO, 1994)

Astro Boy - Mighty Atom [Anime Series] (1980)

Astro Boy (David BOWERS, 2009)

Astro Boy [DVD] (Manga Video, Eiichi YAMAMOTO, RINTARO, Fuyunori GOBU, 2006)

Barefoot Gen [DVD] (Masaru MORI, 1983)

Batman: Gotham Knight (Yoshiaki KAWAJIRI, Yasuhiro AOKI, et al., 2008)

Battle Angel Alita [Anime Series] (Hiroshi FUKUTOMI, 1993)

Battle Arena Toshinden [DVD] (Masami OBARI, 1997)

- Beast Wars Transformers: Season1 [DVD] (Rhino Home Video, Ezekiel NORTON, et al, 2003)
- Betty Boop – Barnacle Bill [DVD] (Dave FLEISCHER, 1930)
- Bleach The Movie - Memories of Nobody [JPN] [DVD] (2006, Manga Ent.)
- Bubblegum Crisis Collection Vol. 3 [DVD] (MVM, Takayami FUMIHIKO, Gooda HIROAKI, 1987)
- Bubblegum Crisis: Tokyo 2040 [DVD] (ADV Films, Hiroki HAYASHI, 1998)
- Candy, Candy [Anime Series] (Toei Animation, Shun-ichi YUKIMURO, 1979)
- Castle of Cagliostro, The [DVD] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 1980)
- Chronicles of Riddick, The: Dark Fury [DVD] (Peter CHUNG, 2004)
- Cockpit: Kamikaze Stories [JPN] [DVD] (Osamu DEZAKI, 1993)
- Code Hunters [On-line] (Ben HIBBON, 2006)
- Cowboy Bebop (Shinichiro WATANABE, 2001)
- Cowboy Bebop: Ballad of Fallen Angels [DVD] (Shinichiro WATANABE, 1998)
- Cyber City Oedo 808 Vol1-3 [DVD] (DVD LTD, 1999)
- Cyborg 009 – Ep. 2 - Escape [Anime Series] (Best Film & Video Corp, 1980)
- Daicon IV Opening Animation (Hiroyuki YAMAGA, 1983)
- Dead Space: Downfall (Chuck PATTON, 2008)
- Digimon: The Movie (1999)
- Doraemon: Nobita to Midori no Kyojinten (Ayumu WATANABE, 2008)
- Dragonball Z (Funimation PROD, 1990)

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- Dragonball Z: Season 1 – Vegeta Saga [Anime Series] (Funimation PROD, 2006)
- Escawlowne The Movie: A Girl in Gaia (Kazuki AKANE, 2000)
- Evangelion 1.0: You Are (Not) Alone [Anime Series] (Hideaki ANNO, et al, 2007)
- Evangelion 1.11: You Are (Not) Alone [Anime Series] (Hideaki ANNO, 2009)
- Evangelion 2.0: You Can (Not) Advance [Anime Series] (Hideaki ANNO, 2009)
- Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children [DVD] (Tetsuya NOMURA & Takeshi NOZUE, 2005)
- Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within [DVD] (Hironobu SAKAGUCHI, et al., 2001)
- Full Metal Alchemist 1 – The Curse [Anime Series] (MVM, Seiji MIZUSHIMA, 2005)
- Full Metal Panic! [Anime Series] (ADV Films, Kôichi CHIGIRA, 2005)
- Full Metal Panic! TSR [The Second Raid] [DVD] (Funimation Prod, Yasuhiro TAKEMOTO, 2006)
- Future Boy Conan [Anime Series] [JPN] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 1978)
- G.I.Joe: The Movie [DVD] (Don JURWICH, 1986)
- Galaxy Express 999, The [Ginga Tetsudo] [JPN] [DVD] (RINTARO, 1982)
- Galaxy Express 999, The [Ginga Tetsudo] [JPN] [Anime Series] (RINTARO, 1982b)
- Ghost in The Shell (Mamoru OSHII, 1996)
- Ghost in The Shell 2: Innocence [DVD] (Mamoru OSHII, 2004)

- Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex [Anime Series] (Kenji KAMIYAMA, 2002)
- Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex 2nd Gig [Anime Series] (2005)
- Ghost in The Shell: Solid State Society [DVD] (Kenji KAMIYAMA, 2007)
- Gravion, Vol.1 [Anime Series] (ADV Films, Masami OBARI, 2005)
- Gundam [Anime Series] (Yoshiyuki TOMINO “Hajime Yatate”, 1979)
- Gundam Seed Destiny [DVD] (Pinnacle Vision, Mitsuo FUKUDA, 2006)
- Gundam Wing: Endless Waltz (2005)
- Gunhed [DVD] (Alan SMITHEE & Masato HARADA, 1989)
- Gunparade March: Operation One [DVD] (Anime Works, Katsushi SAKURABI, e tal, 2004)
- Halo Legends [BRD] (2010)
- Howl’s Moving Castle [DVD] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 2004)
- Interstella 5555: The Story of The Secret Star System [DVD] (Kasuhisa TAKENOUCHI, 2003)
- Invincible Iron Man, The [DVD] (Marvel, Patrick ARCHIBALD & Jay OLIVA, 2007)
- Iron Giant [DVD] (Brad BIRD, 1999)
- Kimba: The White Lion [DVD] [Jungle Taitei] (Osamu TEZUKA, 1965)
- Laputa - Castle in The Sky [DVD] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 1986)
- Les Mystérieuses Cités D’Or [TV show] (Jean CHALOPIN & Bernard DEYRIÈS, 1982)
- Lion King, The [DVD] (Disney, 1994)
- Macross 7 [JPN] [Anime Series] (1994)

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- Macross 7 Encore [JPN] [Anime Series] (1995)
- Macross Dynamite 7 [JPN] [Anime Series] (1997)
- Macross Plus: The Movie [DVD] (Manga Entertainment, Noboru ISHIGURO, Shôji KAWAMORI, 1994)
- Mazinger Z (Toei Animation, Gô NAGAI 1972-74)
- Mega Man Vol.2: Battle For The Future [Anime Series] (ADV Films, 2003)
- Memories [DVD] (Koji MORIMOTO, e tal., 1996)
- Metropolis [DVD] (RINTARO, 2001)
- Mickey Mouse [DVD] (Disney, 1950)
- Mobile Suit Gundam Wing Double Pack Vol. 1 [DVD] (Pinnacle Vision, 2006)
- Mobile Suit Gundam Wing: Operation 3 (BANDAI, 2000)
- My Neighbor Totoro [DVD] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 1988)
- Neo Tokyo [Anime Series] (RINTARO, et al., 2004)
- Neon Genesis Evangelion [DVD] (Hideaki ANNO, 1995b)
- Neon Genesis Evangelion [Anime Series] (Hideaki ANNO, 1995)
- Ninja Scroll [DVD] (Manga Entertainment, 1986)
- Noir, Vol.1 [DVD] (ADV Films, Kouichi MASHIMO, 2003)
- Patlabor [DVD] (Studio Image, Mamoru OSHII, 1989)
- Perfect Blue (Satoshi KON, 1997)
- Place Promised in Our Early Days, The [JPN] [DVD] (Makoto SHINKAI, 2004)
- Pokémon: The First Movie [DVD] (Kunihiko YUYAMA, 1998)

- Ponyo on The Cliff by The Sea [DVD] (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 2008)
- Popeye: The Sailor [TV show] (Dave FLEISCHER, 1933)
- Princess Mononoke (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 1997)
- Reboot [DVD] (A.D.V. FILMS, 2001)
- Reboot [Anime Series] (ADV Films, Ezekiel NORTON et al, 1995)
- Resident Evil: Degeneration (Makoto KAMIYA, 2008)
- Robot Wars (Albert & Charles BAND, 1993)
- Robotech: The Macross Saga [Anime Series] (Manga Entertainment, 2006)
- Robotech: The Shadow Chronicles [DVD] (Manga Entertainment, Dong-  
Wook LEE, Tommy YUNE, 2006)
- Robots (Chris WEDGE & Carlos SALDANHA, 2005)
- Samurai X: Trust And Betrayal [Anime Series] (1999)
- Serial Experiments Lain [Anime Series] (Ryūtarō NAKAMURA, 1998)
- Sin - The Movie [DVD] (ADV Films, Yasunori URATA, 1999)
- Sky Crawlers, The [DVD] (Sony, 2009)
- Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs [DVD] (Disney, William COTTREL,  
1937)
- Space Battleship Yamato [Anime Series] (Academy Prod, Leiji MATSUMO-  
TO, 1975)
- Speed Racer [Mach Go Go Go] (Tatsuo YOSHIDA, 1967)
- Spirited Away (Hayao MIYAZAKI, 2003)
- Steamboy [DVD] (Katshiro OTOMO, 2004)
- Street Fighter II: The Animated Movie [DVD] (Gisaburo SUGII, 1995)

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Transformers Armada [DVD] (Universal Pictures UK, Hidehito UEDA, 2007)

Transformers Beast Machines Vol1 [DVD] (Rhino Home Video, Gino NICHELE et al, 2006)

Transformers, The [DVD] (Nelson SHIN, 1986)

Trigun [DVD] (Satoshi NISHIMURA, 1998)

Ulysses 31 [DVD] (Contender Entertainment, Bernard DEYRIÈS et al, 2004)

Ulysses 31 [Anime Series] (Jean CHALOPIN, 1981)

Vexille [DVD] (Fumihiko SORI, 2007)

Vision of Escaflowne, The [Anime Series] (Kazuki AKANE, 2000)

Voices of a Distant Star [Hoshi No Koe] [DVD] (ADV Films, Makoto SHINKAI, 2002)

Wall-E (Andrew STANTON, 2008)

Wonderful Days [Sky Blue] [DVD] (Sunmin PARK & Kim MUN-SAENG, 2003)

Zone of The Enders [Anime Series] (Tetsuya WATANABE, 2001)

Zone of The Enders: 2167 IDOLO [Anime Series] (2002)

## **Documentary**

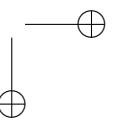
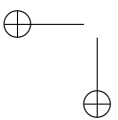
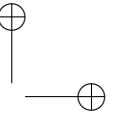
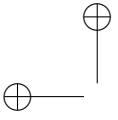
Artwork, Producer, Publisher, Type (Director, Year)

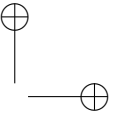
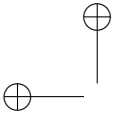
Clash of The Gods, History Channel, KPI, A&E Home Video [On-Line] (Christopher CASSEL, 2009)

DAFTPUNK: A Story About Dogs, Androids, Firemen, And Tomatoes [DVD] (Michel GONDRY et al, 1999)

- Lost Treasures of The Ancient World - The Seven Wonders, Vol.2, BBC4 (CROMWELL Productions, 2006).
- History of The Samurai, History Channel (2007)
- I, Videogame, Discovery Channel (Robert CURRAN, 2007)
- Incredible Robots – Extreme Machines, Pioneer Productions TLC/Discovery Com. Inc., Stephen MARSH, 1999)
- Japan's Atomic Bomb, AmerImage Productions, Inc./The History Channel (David HASH, 2005)
- Jeff Han on Ted Talks, Ted Talks [On-Line] (2006)
- Jonathan Ross's Asian Invasion, Hot Sauce/BBC 4, (Rod EDGE, 2006)
- Jonathan Ross's Japanorama: Hot Sauce/BBC Choice, (Peter Boyd MacLEAN, 2002-2007)
- Megacities – Hong Kong, BASE Prods./National Geographic Channel (Mickey STERN, 2007)
- No Maps For These Territories [2000] - William GIBSON [DVD] (Mark NEALE, 2003)
- On The Edge of Blade Runner (Andrew ABBOTT, 2000)
- Pilot Guides – Japan, Pilot Productions/Travel Channel (Brian HILL, 2004)
- Pilot Guides – Tokyo, Pilot Productions/Travel Channel (Peter MacPHERSON, 2004)
- The Samurai Sword - Decisive Weapons, BBC/The History Channel (Martin DAVIDSON, 1997)
- Tokyo-Ga [DVD] (Wim WENDERS, 1985)
- Trinity And Beyond – The Atomic Bomb Movie, Visual Concept Entertainment/Documentary Film Works (Peter KURAN, 1995)

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# VIDEOGRAPHY

## Videogames

Title (Editor, Publisher, Year: Platform)

Ace Combat 2 (Namco, Namco, 1997: PSX)

Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere (Namco, Namco, 2000: PSX)

Ace Combat 4: Distant Thunder (Shattered Skies) (Namco, Namco, 2001: PS2)

Ace Combat 5: The Unsung War (Bandai Namco Games America, 2004: PS2)

Ace Combat 6: Fires of Liberation (Bandai Namco Games America, 2007: 360)

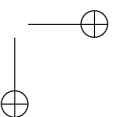
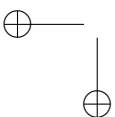
Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception (Bandai Namco Games America, 2006: PSP)

Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War (Bandai Namco Games America, 2006: PS2)

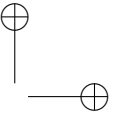
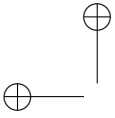
Afro Samurai (Surge, Namco Bandai, 2009: PS3)

After Burner II (SEGA Japan, SEGA America, 1985: ARCADE)

After Burner: Black Falcon (Planet Moon Studios, SEGA America, 2007: PSP)



- Akira (Ice, 1994: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Alien Syndrome (Totally Games, SEGA America, 2007: PSP)
- Armored Core (FromSoftware Inc., SCEA, 1997: PSX)
- Armored Core 2 (FromSoftware Inc., Agetec, Inc., 2000: PS2)
- Armored Core 3 (FromSoftware Inc., Agetec, Inc., 2002: PS2)
- Armored Core 3 Portable (FromSoftware Inc., FromSoftware Inc., 2009: PSP)
- Armored Core 4 (FromSoftware Inc., SEGA America, Inc., 2007: 360)
- Armored Core Formula Front Extreme Battle [JPN] (From Software, 505 Game Street, 2006: PSP)
- Astro Boy: The Videogame (High Voltage Software, D3, 2009: PSP)
- Atomic Robo-Kid (Activision, Inc., 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Battlefield 2142 (Digital Illusions, EA Games, 2006: PC)
- Beneath A Steel Sky (Virgin Interactive, 1994: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Bionic Commando (Go/Capcom, 1988: CBM C64)
- Blade Runner (Westwood Studios, 1997: PC)
- Blast Factor: Advanced Research (Bluepoint Games, SCEA, 2007: PSN)
- BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger (Arc, Aksys, 2009: PS3)
- Bleach: Heat The Soul [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2005: PSP)
- Bleach: Heat The Soul 2 [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2005: PSP)
- Bleach: Heat The Soul 3 [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2006: PSP)
- Bleach: Heat The Soul 4 [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2007: PSP)
- Bleach: Heat The Soul 5 [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2008: PSP)



Bleach: Heat The Soul 6 [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2009: PSP)

Bleach: Soul Carnival [JPN] (SCEJ, SCEJ, 2008: PSP)

Bomberman (Hudson Soft, Konami, 2006: PSP)

Bouncer, The (DreamFactory, Square Electronic Arts L.L.C., 2001: PS2)

Brave Story - New Traveler [JPN] (Games Republic, XSeed Games, 2007: PSP)

Breakdown (Namco, 2004: XBOX)

Bubble Bobble [JPN] (Taito, Taito Japan: 1986: ARCADE)

Bubble Bobble (Taito, Taito Japan: 1994: ARCADE)

Burnout (Criterion, Acclaim, 2001: PS2)

Bushido Blade (Lightweight Co, Square Soft, 1997: PSX)

Chaos Engine, The (The Bitmap Brothers, Renegade, 1993: CBM AMIGA 500)

Chaos Engine 2, The (The Bitmap Brothers, Renegade, 1996: CBM AMIGA 500)

Chrome Hounds (From Software, SEGA, 2006: 360)

Comix Zone (SEGA, SEGA, 1995: Genesis)

Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII [JPN] (Square Enix, 2008: PSP)

Crysis (Crytek Studios, EA Games, 2007: PC)

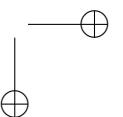
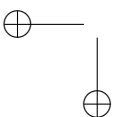
Cyber Cop (Impressions, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)

Dead Space (EA Redwood Shores, Electronic Arts, 2008: PS3)

Devil May Cry (Capcom, 2001: PS2)

Devil May Cry 2 (Capcom, 2003: PS2)

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- Devil May Cry 3 (Capcom, 2005: PS2)
- Devil May Cry 4 (Capcom, 2008: PS3)
- Disgaea - Afternoon of Darkness [JPN] (Nippon Ichi Software, Koei, 2007: PSP)
- Dissidia: Final Fantasy [JPN] (Square Enix, 2009: PSP)
- Dragoneer's Aria [JPN] (Hitmaker, NIS America, 2007: PSP)
- Dynasty Warriors (CAPCOM USA, 1989: ARCADE)
- Dynasty Warriors Gundam (Omega Force, Bandai Namco, 2007: PS3)
- Dynasty Warriors Vol. 2 [JPN] (Omega Force, Koei, 2006: PSP)
- Earth Defense Force 2017 (Slandsoft, D3 Publisher of America, 2007: 360)
- Enter The Matrix (Shiny Entertainment, Ataric, 2003: PC)
- Escape From Cybercity (Fathom Pictures, Philips Inter.Media, 1992: CD-I)
- Escape From The Planet of The Robot Monsters (Domark, 1990: CBM AMI-GA 500)
- Eternal Sonata (Namco Bandai, Namco Bandai, 2008: PS3)
- Final Fantasy IX (Square Co, Square Electronic Arts LLC, 2000: PSX)
- Final Fantasy VII (Square Co, SCEA, 1997: PSX)
- Final Fantasy VIII (Square Co, Square Electronic Arts LLC, 1999: PSX)
- Final Fantasy X (Square Co, Square Electronic Arts LLC, 2001: PS2)
- Final Fantasy XI Online (Square Enix Co, Square Enix USA, 2006: 360)
- Final Fantasy X-II (Square Co, Square Enix USA, 2003: PS2)
- Final Fantasy XII (Square Soft, SCEJ, 2006: PS2)
- Final Fantasy XIII (Square Co, Square Enix USA, 2010: 360)

Front Mission (Square-Enix, 2007: DS)  
G-Police (Psygnosis, Psygnosis, 1997: PSX)  
Ghost in The Shell (Exact/Ultra, THQ, 1997: PSX)  
Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex (SCEJ, Bandai, 2004: PS2)  
Ghost Recon Future Soldier (UbiSoft Paris, UbiSoft, 2010: PS3)  
Gradius Collection - Gradius Gaiden (Konami, Konami, 2006: PSP)  
Guilty Gear Judgment [JPN] (Arc, Majesco, 2006: PSP)  
Guilty Gear XX Accent Core Plus [JPN] (Arc, Aksys GAMES, 2009: PSP)  
Gundam [JPN] (Banpresto, 1993: ARCADE)  
Gundam Battle Royale [JPN] (Artdink, Bandai Namco, 2006: PSP)  
Gundam Battle Universe [JPN] (Bandai Namco Japan, 2008: PSP)  
Gundam Musou (Bandai Namco, Koei, 2007: PS3)  
Half Minute Hero [JPN] (Opus, XSeed Games, 2006: PSP)  
Half-Life 2 (Valve Software/Sierra, 2004: PC)  
Half-Life 2: Episode I (Valve Software/EA, 2006: PC)  
Half-Life 2: Episode II (Valve Software, 2007: PC)  
Half-Life 2: Episode III (Valve Software, 2007: PC)  
Hammerin Hero [JPN] (Irem Soft, Atlus USA, 2009: PSP)  
Hang On [JPN] (AM2, SEGA America, 1985: ARCADE)  
Heavy Gear (Activision, Inc., 1998: PC)  
Heavy Gear 2 (Activision, Inc., 1999: PC)  
Ico (SCEJ, SCEE, 2002: PS2)

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Ikaruga (Treasure, ESP, 2002: DC)

Iron Man (SEGA, 2008b: 360)

Iron Man (SEGA, 2010b: 360)

Jak X: Combat Racing (Naughty Dog, SCEA, 2005: PS2)

James Cameron's Avatar: The Game (Ubi Soft, Ubi Soft, 2009b: PS3)

James Pond 2: Codename RoboCod (Millenium, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)

Jet Set Radio (Smilebit, SEGA Japan, 2000: DC)

Judge Dredd (Virgin Mastertronic, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

Key of Heaven [JPN] (Climax, SCEE, 2006: PSP)

Kidou Senshi Gundam: Gundam Vs Gundam [JPN] (Bandai Namco, Banprest, 2008: PSP)

Killer 7 [JPN] (Capcom, Production Studio 4, 2005: GC)

Killing Game Show, The (Psygnosis, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

Killzone: Liberation (Guerrilla Games, SCEE, 2006: PSP)

Kingdom Hearts (Square, Square Electronic Arts, 2002: PS2)

Kingdom of Paradise [JPN] (Climax, SCEA, 2005: PSP)

Kurushi Final (SCEE, 1999: PSX)

Last Ninja 2, The (System 3, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

Last Ninja 3, The (System 3, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)

Last Ninja, The (System 3, 1988: CBM AMIGA 500)

Last Resort (SNK of America, 1992: Arcade)

Legend of Heroes, The [JPN] (Bandai, Nihon Falcom, 2005: PSP)

- Locoroco (SCEJ, SCEA, 2006: PSP)
- Locoroco 2 (SCEJ, SCEA, 2009: PSP)
- Lost Planet: Extreme Condition (Capcom, 2007: 360)
- Macross Ace Frontier [JPN] (Bandai Namco, Artdink, 2008: PSP)
- Mario Kart DS (Nintendo, Nintendo of America, 2005: DS)
- Me And My Katamari [JPN] (Namco, Namco Hometek, 2006: PSP)
- Mech Assault (Day 1 Studios LLC, Microsoft Game Studios, 2002: XBOX)
- Mech Assault 2: Lone Wolf (Day 1 Studios LLC, Microsoft Game Studios, 2004: XBOX)
- Mech Commander 2 (Microsoft, 2001: PC)
- Mech Platoon (KEMCO, KEMCO USA; Inc., 2001: GBA)
- Mechwarrior (Dynamix, Inc., Activision, Inc., 1989: PC)
- Mechwarrior 2 (Activision, Inc., 1995: PC)
- Mechwarrior 3 (Zipper Interactive, Microprose, 1999: PC)
- Mechwarrior 4: Mercenaries (Cyberlore Studios, Inc., Microsoft Game Studios, 2002: PC)
- Mechwarrior 4: Vengeance (Cyberlore Studios, Inc., Microsoft Game Studios, 2000: PC)
- Mega Man (Capcom, 1987: NES)
- Mega Man 2 (Capcom, 1989: NES)
- Mega Man 3 (Hit Tech Expressions, Capcom, 1992: PC)
- Mega Man 4 (Capcom, 1992: NES)
- Mercs (US Gold, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)

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- Metal Fatigue (Zono Inc., Psygnosis, 2000: PC)
- Metal Gear (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 1987: MSX2)
- Metal Gear Solid (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 1998: PSX)
- Metal Gear Solid 2: Solid Snake (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 1990: MSX2)
- Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2002: PS2)
- Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2004: PS2)
- Metal Gear Solid 3: Substance (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2006: PS2)
- Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2008: PS3)
- Metal Gear Solid Digital Graphic Novel (Kojima Productions, Konami of America, Inc., 2006: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: Ac!d (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 2005: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: Ac!d 2 (Konami of America, Konami Japan, 2006: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker (Konami, Konami, 2010: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops (Kojima Productions, Konami of America, Inc., 2006: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops Plus (Kojima Productions, Konami of America, Inc., 2007: PSP)
- Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes (Silicon Knights, Konami of America, 2004: GC)
- Metal Gear Solid: VR Missions (Konami Japan, Konami of America, 1999: PSX)

- Metal Masters (Infogrames, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Metal Slug Anthology [1-6] (SNK Playmore USA, Ignition Entertainment, 2007: PSP)
- Metal: A Robot Combat Simulation (ECP, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Metroid Prime 3: Corruption (Retro Studios, Nintendo of America, 2007: WII)
- Mobile Suit Gundam: Encounters In Space (Bandai Co., Bandai America Inc., 2003: PS2)
- Mobile Suit Gundam: Gundam Vs Gundam [JPN] (Bandai Namco Co., 2008: PSP)
- Mortal Kombat (Sculptured Software Inc., Acclaim, 1993: SUPER NES)
- Naruto Ultimate Ninja Heroes (CyberConnect 2, Namco Bandai Europe, 2007: PSP)
- Neuromancer (Interplay Productions, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)
- New Zealand Story [JPN] (Taito, 1988: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 (Tecmo, Team Ninja, 2009: PS3)
- Ninja Warriors, The (Virgin, Mastertronic, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Nintendogs (Nintendo, Co, Nintendo America, 2005: DS)
- Okami [JPN] (Clover Studio, Capcom, 2006: PS2)
- Onimusha 1: Warlords (Capcom, Co., Capcom USA, 2001: PS2)
- Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny (Capcom, Co., Capcom USA, 2002: PS2)
- Onimusha 3: Demon Siege (Capcom, Co., Capcom USA, 2004: PS2)
- Out Run (AM2, SEGA America, 1986: ARCADE)
- Paradroid (Hewson, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

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Parasol Stars [JPN] (Taito, Taito Japan: 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Patapon (SCEA, SCEJ, 2008: PSP)  
Patapon 2 (SCEA, SCEJ, 2009: PSP)  
Phantasy Star Online (Sonic Team, SEGA America, 2001: DC)  
Phantasy Star Portable [JPN] (Alpha System, SEGA America, 2009: PSP)  
Pikmin (Nintendo Co, Nintendo of America, 2001: GC)  
PoPoLoCrois [JPN] (SCEJ, Agetec, 2005: PSP)  
Project Sylpheed (GameArt, Microsoft Game Studios, 2007: XBOX 360)  
Puzzle Bobble Pocket [JPN] (Taito, 2004: PSP)  
Rainbow Islands (Taito, Taito America, 1991: NES)  
Rez (UGC, SEGA, 2001: PS2)  
Rise 2: Resurrection (Acclaim, 1996: PSX)  
Rise of The Robots (Acclaim, 1994: GENESIS)  
Riviera: The Promised Land [JPN] (Atlus USA, Sting, 2007: PSP)  
Robocop (Ocean, Data East, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Robocop II (Ocean, Data East, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Robocop III (Ocean, Data East, 1992: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Robozone (Image Works, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Rocket Ranger (Cinemaware, 1988: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Rod Land (Jaleco, Sales Curve, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)  
Rogue Galaxy (Level 5, SCEA, 2007: PS2)  
R-Type Delta (Irem Software, Agetec, Inc., 1999: PSX)

Saboteur (Durell Software, Durell Software, 1984: 48K)

Shadow of The Colossus (SCEA, 2005: PS2)

Shenmue (AM2, SEGA America, 2000: Dreamcast)

Shenmue 2 (AM2, SEGA America, 2001: Dreamcast)

Shin MegamiTensei – Persona 4 (Atlus, Square Enix, 2008: PS2)

Shinobi (Overworks, SEGA America, 2002: PS2)

Shogo: Mobile Armor Division (Monolith Productions Inc., 1998: PC)

Sin (Ritual Entertainment, Activision, 1998: PC)

Sky Crawlers – Innocent Aces, The (Namco Bandai, XSeed, 2010: Wii)

Sonic: The Edgehog (Sonic team, SEGA America, 1991: GENESIS)

Space Ace (ReadySoft, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)

Space Channel 5 (SEGA of Japan, SEGA Japan, 1999: DC)

Space Harrier (SEGA America, Inc., 1985: ARCADE)

Space Harrier 2 (Grandslam, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)

Space Harrier: Return to The Fantasy Zone (Elite, 1989: CBM AMIGA 500)

Space Hulk (Electronic Arts, 1993: CBM AMIGA 500)

Space Invaders (Taito Corp, Taito America, 1978: ARCADE)

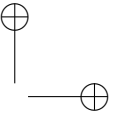
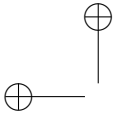
Spectral Souls: Resurrection of The Ethereal Souls [JPN] (Idea Factory, NIS America, 2006: PSP)

Speedball (The Bitmap Brothers, Spotlight Software, 1988: CBM AMIGA 500)

Speedball 2: Brutal Deluxe (The Bitmap Brothers, Image Works, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

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- Star Ocean: Second Evolution [JPN] (Square Enix, TOSE, 2009: PSP)
- Street Fighter Alpha 3 Max (Capcom, Capcom USA, 2006: PSP)
- Syndicate (Electronic Arts, 1993: CBM AMIGA 500)
- T2: The Arcade Game (Virgin Interactive, 1993: ARCADE)
- Takeru: Letter of The Law (Sunsoft, Infogrames, 1998: PC)
- Tales of Eternia [JPN] (Namco, 2005: PSP)
- Tales of The World: Radiant Mythology [JPN] (Namco Bandai, Namco Bandai, 2006: PSP)
- Tamagotchi (Bandai, Bandai America, 1997: GB)
- TechnoCop (Gremlin Graphics, 1988: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Tekken: Dark Ressurrection (Bandai Namco, 2006: PSP)
- Tenchu: Shadow Assassins (Acquire, Ubi Soft, 2009: PSP)
- Terminator 2 - Judgment Day (Ocean, 1991b: CBM AMIGA 500)
- Time Crisis 2 (Namco, Namco America, 2001: PS2)
- Timeshift (Saber, Sierra, 2007: PC)
- Tokobot (Tecmo, Tecmo, 2005: PSP)
- Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell (Ubi Soft, Ubi Soft, 2002: PC)
- Transformers 2 – Revenge of The Fallen - The Game (Activision, Inc., Traveller's Tales, 2009b: PS3)
- Transformers - The Game (Activision, Inc., Traveller's Tales, 2007: 360)
- Transformers: War For Cybertron (High Moon Studios, Activision, 2010: PS3)
- Tron 2.0 (Monolith Productions/Buena Vista Games, Inc., 2003: PC)



Tron Evolution (Disney Interactive/Propaganda Games, 2010: PS3)

Turrican I (Rainbow Arts, 1990: CBM AMIGA 500)

Turrican II: The Final Fight (Rainbow Arts, 1991: CBM AMIGA 500)

Turrican III (Softgold, 1993: CBM AMIGA 500)

U.N. Squadron (Capcom USA, Capcom Co., 1991: Super NES)

Valhalla Knights [JPN] (Marvelous Interactive, XSeed Games, 2007: PSP)

Viewtiful Joe: Red Hot Rumble (Clover Studio, Capcom USA, 2006: PSP)

Walker, The (Psygnosis, 1993: CBM AMIGA 500)

World of Warcraft (Blizzard, 2005: PC)

Yakuza 3 (Amusement Vision, SEGA, 2010: PS3)

Yakuza 4 [JPN] (Amusement Vision, SEGA, 2009: PS3)

Zero Divide (Zoom, Inc., Time Warner Interactive, 1995: PSX)

Zoids Alternative (Takara, Tomy, 2007: 360)

Zoids: Battle Legends (Tomy, Atari, 2004: GC)

Zone of The Enders (Konami Japan, Konami America, 2001: PS2)

**Caption:**

ARCADE – Public videogame parlors

GB – Nintendo Game Boy

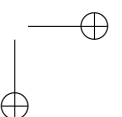
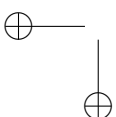
CBM – Commodore Business Machines

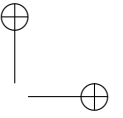
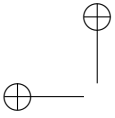
DC – Sega Dreamcast

DS – Nintendo DS (Dual Screen)

GBA – Nintendo Game Boy Advance

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GC – Nintendo Game Cube

GENESIS – Sega Genesis

MSX – Philips MSX Computer

MSX2 - Philips MSX 2 Computer

NES – Nintendo Entertainment System

PC – Personal Computer

PHILIPS CD-I – Philips Compact Disc Interactive

PSN – Sony PlayStation Network

PSP – Sony PlayStation Portable

PSX – Sony PlayStation

PS2 – Sony PlayStation 2

PS3 – Sony PlayStation 3

SUPER NES – Super Nintendo Entertainment System

WII – Nintendo Wii

XBOX – Microsoft Xbox

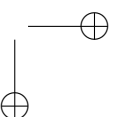
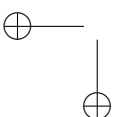
360 – Microsoft Xbox 360

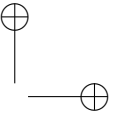
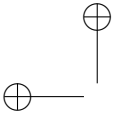
ZX Spectrum 48K – Sinclair ZX Spectrum 48k

## **Videoclips – Anime Music Video**

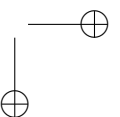
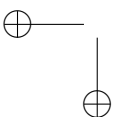
### **Amateurs**

Anime, Artist, Music (Year)





DragonBall Z, Limp Bizkit, My Way (s.d)  
DragonBall Z, Offspring, Come Out Swinging (s.d)  
DragonBall Z, They Might be Giants, Particle Man (s.d)  
Final Fantasy 9, Linkin Park, In the End (s.d)  
Flame of Recca, Skid Row, Youth Gone Wild (s.d)  
Full Metal Alchemist, Linkin Park, Faint (s.d)  
Gundam Wing, Rammstein, Feuer Frei (s.d)  
Lain, Akira & Ghost in The Shell, Nine Inch Nails, The Becoming (s.d)  
Maboroshi (Perfect Blue), Nine Inch Nails, The Perfect Drug (s.d)  
Neon Genesis Evangelion, White Zombie, More Human Than Human (s.d)  
Neon Genesis Evangelion, Rammstein, Engel (s.d)  
Rurouni Kenshin, Cutting Crew, Died in Your Arms Tonight (s.d)  
Rurouni Kenshin, Slipknot, Wait And Bleed (s.d)  
SR-71, Right Now (Love Hina), MayDay (s.d)  
Trigun, Weird Al Yankovic, The Beer Song (s.d)  
Trigun, Trigger Happy (s.d)  
Trigun, Tsuneo Imahori, H.T ((s.d)  
Trigun, Bon Jovi, Wanted Dead or Alive (s.d)



**Professionals (Single And Collective)****Singles**

Artist (Year). Album, Track

Alice in Chains (1992). Dirt, Them Bones

Amon Tobim (2002). Out From Outwhere, Verbal

Kasuhisa Takenouchi (2003). Interstella 5555: The 5tory of The 5ecret 5tar System [Daft Punk]

Madonna (2005), Confessions on a Dance Floor, Jump

Wamdue Project (1999). Program Yourself, King of My Castle

**Collective**

Artist, Track, DVD Titile, Editor (Director, Year)

Björk, All is Full of Love, The Work of Chris Cunningham, Director's Label (Chris Cunningham, 2003)

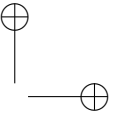
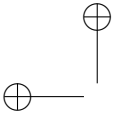
Björk, Joga, The Work of Michel Gondry, Director's Label (Michel Gondry, 2003)

Daft Punk, Around The World, The Work of Michel Gondry, Director's Label (Michel Gondry, 2003)

Daft Punk, Da Funk, The Work of Spike Jonze, Director's Label (Spike Jonze, 2003)

Massive Attack, Sly, The Work of Stéphane Sednaoui, Director's Label (Stéphane Sednaoui, 2005)

Mirwais, Disco Science, The Work of Stéphane Sednaoui, Director's Label (Stéphane Sednaoui, 2005)



Mirwais, I Can't Wait, The Work of Stéphane Sednaoui, Director's Label  
(Stéphane Sednaoui, 2005)

## **Commercial Spots**

CLIENT, Product, "Commercial Title" (Year)

BLIZZARD, World Of Warcraft, "Wow\_China\_TV" (2006)

CITRÖEN, C3, "Anime AD" (2005)

CITRÖEN, C4, "Breakdancer Movie" (2006)

CITRÖEN, C4, "Picasso VisoVan Commercial" (2007)

CITRÖEN, C4, "Skater Movie" (2006)

DOUBLE A, Double A, "Double Commercial" (2007)

GAP, "DAFT PUNK - GAP COMMERCIAL" (2005)

MICROSOFT, Xbox 360, "Banned Tv Commercial" (2007)

MICROSOFT, Xbox 360, "xb360\_jp\_tv2" (2006)

MICROSOFT, Xbox 360, "xb360\_jp\_tv3" (2006)

MICROSOFT/BUNGEE STUDIOS, Halo 3, "Halo 3\_combat\_pt2" (2007)

MOTOROLA, Hello Motto, "V3 Razr Advert" (2003)

NINTENDO, Mario Kart DS, "MarioKart\_DS\_TV" (2005)

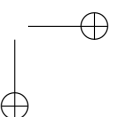
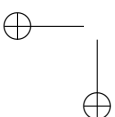
NISSAN, 4x4, "Naturally Capable" (2007)

NISSAN, Primera, "Engine" (2007)

SAAB, Saab 97X, "Transformer" (2006)

SIERRA, Timeshift, "Timeshift\_Convenience\_Store" (2007)

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SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Jakx, "Jakx\_tv" (2005)

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, LocoRoco, "LocoRoco Japanese Commercial #3 PSP Long" (2007)

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Sony PlayStation, "Mental Wealth" (2000)

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Sony PlayStation, "PS9\_tv" (2007)

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Sony PlayStation 2, "PS2 Mountain 75" (2007)

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, Sony PlayStation Portable, "PSP Ad" (2006)

VODAFONE, Dulpex ADSL, "Casa a Mexer 1" (2007)

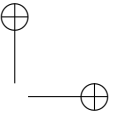
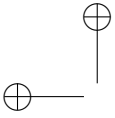
VODAFONE, Dulpex ADSL, "Casa a Mexer 2" (2007)

VODAFONE, Dulpex ADSL, "Casa a Mexer 3" (2007)

## **Idents**

Clip – Studio, Director, Date[URL] (Year)

“Organic” - Umeric (Ash Bolland, 2008) [<http://vimeo.com/18101111>] (2010)



## Acknowledgments

David Gorjão Silva, Anabela Gradim, Sonia Alves, Marisa Alexandra Alves Elias, Joaquim Paulo Serra, António Fidalgo, António Fernando Cascais, DCA-UBI, José A. Bragança de Miranda, Catarina Campino, Júlio Semião Elias, Tito Cardoso e Cunha, Sony Computer Entertainment Portugal, Roger Malina, Eduardo Camilo, Fernando, Nuno Barata, Erik Davis, Revista Dance Club, Revista MediaXXI, Paulo Ferreira, Paulo Faustino, BOCC, LABCOM, Luís Nogueira, Francisco Merino, Mário Caeiro, Ivan Pinheiro, José Luís Carvalhosa, Dimitris Charitos, Tara Carrigy, Stephan Powell, Mariana Mota, Mónica Carvalho, Barbara Nati, Sander Veenhof, Zhu Hui, James Charlton, Russel Pensyl, Paula Ellen Ann Blair, Dave Lynch, Jay Needham, Marco Oliveira, Filomena Matos.

