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## The cover image

### *Imagem da capa*

Gabriel Filipe Santiago Cruz<sup>1</sup> 



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Source: photo by André Barroso.  
Rosana Urbes in her studio.

Animator, illustrator and storyartist Rosana Urbes brings us the cover illustration for this edition. Rosana has an impressive animation career: eight years working abroad, six of them at Walt Disney Animation Studios, in which she had the opportunity to animate in films such as *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, and *Lilo and Stich*.

In the documentary *Luz, Anima, Ação* by Eduardo Calvet, Rosana narrates her arrival at the Disney studios during the production of *Mulan*. When responding to the question about what she would like to work on, she mentioned that she likes animating female characters. And with that answer, she received the mission of animating the film's protagonist.

Perhaps for many students or animation enthusiasts, working at a large studio like Disney could be considered the pinnacle of a professional's career. Rosana Urbes breaks this logic by returning to Brazil, opening her own animation studio and releasing, in 2014, the short film *Guida*<sup>1</sup>, which won several awards both in Brazil and around the world, including the Annecy International Animation Festival, in France, with two highlights: the Jean-Luc Xiberras award, given to the best first animated film, and an honorable mention from the International Federation of Film Critics. The sepia tone pencil lines and watercolor scenes in *Guida* present to the world much more of Rosana's artistic identity than in the industrial, adapted and equalized lines of Disney Studios. Therefore, in *Guida*, one may find important advice to future animators and, especially, female ones: being one name among 400 in an important work is cool, but being a protagonist in your own work is unparalleled!

1 Available at <https://youtu.be/RenFPqH2CEw?si=QzL9B0U4hFRUq4k1> . Cited on Oct 02, 2023.



Rosana visiting FAAP with Eliseu and his students.

In her illustration, Rosana pays homage to another very beloved name in the Brazilian animation world: Eliseu Lopes Filho, animator, animation professor and researcher who, unfortunately, left us in October 2021. Founder of the FAAP animation course in São Paulo, Eliseu was a true promoter, enthusiast, and supporter of Brazilian animation. Those who attended Anima Mundi in both Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo always found him surrounded by his students, encouraging them to join professional animators, without being afraid to introduce themselves and build their respective networks. On these occasions, animators would always run to hug him and sit at a cafe table to exchange experiences and ideas. And his generosity towards everyone was incredible. Soon he would bring something the following year that he had commented on the previous year (such as acetates from his personal collection, a photography scheme he developed in college for animation classes and many other unforgettable conversations). In a memorial video organized by the International Animation Day team<sup>2</sup>, César Coelho, one of the directors of Anima Mundi, defines Eliseu Lopes Filho well: “Eliseu is a symbol of what Brazilian animation is: talent, love, passion for art, generosity, and persistence to get things done.”

Rosana chose the pencil with its delicate movements, a very striking symbol of animation, to represent our Brazilian Fred Flintstone of Animation (a character he loved to dress up as).

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://youtu.be/7\\_K5GXUYSrg?si=wEyp14AHD2t1kE3I](https://youtu.be/7_K5GXUYSrg?si=wEyp14AHD2t1kE3I). Cited on: Oct 14, 2023.



The cover image



Illustration by Rosana Urbes and Eliseu dressed as Fred Flintstone.

And so, we conclude the first of a number of tributes to the world of Brazilian sequential arts brought by this edition of the journal *Diálogo com a Economia Criativa*.



Rosana Urbes and Eliseu Lopes Filho  
*Long live Rosana Urbes! Long live Eliseu! Long live Brazilian animation!*

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## Editorial

### *Editorial*

Gabriel Filipe Santiago Cruz<sup>1</sup> , Raphael Argento de Souza<sup>II</sup> 

In a recent controversy involving the elections for the Brazilian Academy of Letters, journalist James Akel<sup>1</sup>, when defending his candidacy in relation to Mauricio de Souza, creator of *Monica's Gang*, caused an uproar through the media and social networks with the statement "Comics are not literature." Despite the controversy, the episode raised a series of debates on the networks between fans, meddlers and, of course, scholars on the topic.

And one of the debates that caught attention was a wing that said that it was not necessary for comics to have to ask permission from literature to be worthy of becoming a field of study. Despite using common platforms and supports when appreciated, both have their own characteristics and, in many cases, end up dialoguing and having their intercessions in other fields.

This discussion made us think that animation is no different. In general, animation may be thought of as part of the field of cinema and as one of its genres, as it is commonly known, but this is not the only space in which it progresses. Books can carry animations (as in flipbooks), electronic games carry animations between one level and another (when the game is not, in itself, an animation), the return of long-plays (also known as vinyl records) can allow us to watch zoetrope animations while listening to our favorite bands and singers. Ultimately, animation, with its own style and signs, does not need to be any of these other forms of interaction with human beings to have its own field of study.

It is based on this reflection that this new edition of *Diálogo com a Economia Criativa* brings another dossier, the third, with complete works, presented at the most recent Brazilian Seminar on Studies in Animation (*Seminário Brasileiro de Estudos em Animação – SEANIMA*) and which demonstrate, once again, the richness and diversity of areas with which animation can dialogue.

In this edition, animation dialogues with history and anthropology in the work entitled "Japanese animation and its mark of distinction in the West". In it, Gustavo de Melo França addresses how the understanding of Japanese animation in the North American market was constructed through a stereotypical and orientalist vision, even creating a reinterpretation of the term "anime" in relation to the country of origin itself.

The encounter between the areas of animation and education is presented in two other works: by Daniel Grizando de Andrade, who discusses the presence of animated

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<sup>1</sup> News report "Comics are not Literature.", by James Akel, who is competing for a place in ABL. Available from <https://veja.abril.com.br/cultura/gibi-nao-e-literatura-diz-james-akel-que-disputa-vaga-na-abl>. Cited on Oct 2, 2023

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language in museums in “Impressions of reality in the museum: the use of animations for memory spaces”, and by Jean Cerqueira, who will address the very issue of teaching animation in cinema courses during the pandemic in a case study carried out at Universidade Federal de Sergipe.

The relationship between animation and illustration is represented in the work of Antônio Fialho, who addresses the relationship between cartoon language and the representation of movement based on the principles of animation by Thomas and Johnston and Williams’ structure in the work “ANIMATED FORMS: the movement drawn in cartoon animation”.

There will be no shortage of representatives of the cinema and animation dialogue: Maria Luiza Correa da Silva provides a film analysis of the production *Blood Tea and Red String*, from 2006, providing a perspective on the female vision in horror animation characters. Eliane Muniz Gordeeff will address the similarities and differences between animation and real-life cinema and their implications.

Journalism, especially in the field of criticism, comes to carry out its dialogue with animation in the work of Celbi Pergoraro, who addresses the need for the importance of knowledge of animated techniques for a critical approach to animated films in essays and journalistic criticism on the subject.

The texts on animation end with a tribute interview: an unpublished interview carried out in 2014 with Pedro Ernesto Stilpen, also known as Stil, an independent animator who belonged to the groups Fotograma and NOS between the 1960s and 1980s, and who worked on projects such as “Pluft Plact Zoom” and “Armação Ilimitada”, on Rede Globo. On this occasion, along with Luiz Felipe Vasques and Gabriel Cruz, there was also the screenwriter and comic book artist Carlos Eugênio Baptista, known as Patati (who passed away in 2018), an occasion that was the opportunity for a meeting and a rich dialogue between two great professionals in comics and animation. The publication of this interview then becomes not only a great example of contribution between these areas, but also a great tribute to these two geniuses who left us a few years ago (Stil passed away a year after Patati, in 2019).

Finally, the journal ends with two free articles in the field of creative economy: “Cultural exchange in creative economy: weak and strong ties in agroecological fair”, in which the importance of these ties is presented in a case study of rural-urban exchange between producers and consumers of a fair in Várzea (peripheral neighborhood of Recife, Pernambuco), and “Creative cities and innovation through the co-production of public services: an analysis based on the theory of location”, in which an analysis is carried out on the possibility of creative cities are more likely to innovate in the public sector by promoting the co-production of public services.

Thus, unpretentiously, *Diálogo* seeks to present in this edition the multiple facets of this crystal, still in the polishing phase, which is animation, each with a characteristic: language, criticism, creativity, dialogues with other fields of knowledge, distance and closer to real life. At the same time, it allows the brightness of the lights to shine, which despite having gone out of our lives, are still present through this history that is continually built and rebuilt. To our dear Stil, Eliseu, and Carlos Patati, our tribute.

## REFERENCE

PECHY, A. "Gibi não é literatura". Diz James Akel, que disputa vaga na ABL. Revista **VEJA**, São Paulo (online), abr. 2023. Available from <https://veja.abril.com.br/cultura/gibi-nao-e-literatura-diz-james-akel-que-disputa-vaga-na-abl>. Cited on: Oct 02, 2023.

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# Japanese animation and its mark of distinction in the West

## *A animação japonesa e a sua marca de distinção no Ocidente*

Gustavo de Melo França<sup>1</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

This article discusses how Japanese animation acquired a distinctive mark in the West based on a historical construction. Therefore, it is discussed how the understanding of Japanese animation in the West was influenced by the images constructed and propagated from a pre-existing limiting and orientalist vision about Japan, since stereotyped constructions can challenge the way in which populations from different localities interpreted the productions of this country. Then, the trajectory of the reception and distribution of Japanese animation in western contexts is outlined, using the United States as the central point of analysis, which is historically the largest consumer of Japanese animation in the western bloc. With this, we emphasize that the term anime has been consolidated in the West as a label that represents a series of added values related to the notion of difference, but that in recent years, with the increase in animations produced outside Japan that incorporate stylistic schemes that for a long time were related to productions in this country, this notion established around Japanese animation is being strained.

**Keywords:** Orientalism. Distinction. Japanese animation.

### RESUMO

*Este artigo aborda o modo como a animação japonesa adquiriu uma marca distintiva no Ocidente a partir de toda uma construção histórica. Assim, é discutido como a compreensão sobre a animação japonesa no Ocidente foi influenciada pelas imagens construídas e propagadas a partir de uma visão limitadora e orientalista preexistente acerca do Japão, uma vez que construções estereotipadas podem interpelar o modo como as populações de diferentes localidades interpretaram as produções desse país. Em seguida, é delineada a trajetória da recepção e da distribuição da animação japonesa em contextos ocidentais, utilizando como ponto central de análise os Estados Unidos, que é historicamente o maior consumidor de animação japonesa do bloco ocidental. Com isso, destacamos que o termo “anime” se consolidou no Ocidente como um rótulo que representa uma série de valores agregados relacionados à noção de diferença, mas que, nos últimos anos, com o aumento de animações produzidas fora do Japão que incorporam esquemas estilísticos que durante muito tempo foram relacionados às produções desse país, essa noção estabelecida em torno da animação japonesa está sendo tensionada.*

**Palavras-chave:** Orientalismo. Distinção. Animação japonesa.

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## INTRODUCTION

The construction of a perception about Japan made up of narratives and signs by Westerners can be observed as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the first contact between Western and Japanese culture occurred. Written records from that time highlighted the enormous difference between Europeans and Japanese (ORTIZ, 2000). This way of looking at the people of the East in search of differences was an element that was part of the consolidated repertoire of the perspective of Western countries during this period. Because there was an entire literature built on the history of experiences with the Near East and the Far East, composed of a restricted number of typical condensations that constituted lenses through which the East was experienced and that shaped the perception of it (SAID, 2007). This type of image was reinforced in the Western imagination over time through later works, which continued to corroborate the notion of Japanese culture as a culture inverse to European culture (ORTIZ, 2000).

This tradition of thinking and viewing the culture of others was built from a limiting point of view, which reinforces an orientalist view of control and conformity about what can or cannot be considered as part of a given culture. Thus, Western countries normalized the perception of Eastern countries through a lens, configured from a history of stereotypical preconceptions, labeling them as mystical, exotic, among other reductionist markers. In the case of studies about Japan by Westerners, John Whittier Treat comments that an approach called stagnant historicity has become conventional, in which European and American scholars tend to construct the image of Japan as being a cultural counterpart or rival (CONDY, 2013), maintaining a perspective rooted in the legacy of orientalism.

However, orientalism not only generated stereotypes in the eyes of Westerners, but also in the way Easterners would see themselves. This opposite movement was called westernism, and, unlike orientalism, "it sought not to define the other, but to define itself under the social, political, economic, technological, and cultural paradigm of the West" (HOBO, 2015, p. 173, our translation). In this way, Japan and other Eastern countries built their own image based on stereotypes that Westerners had about them. Therefore, the Western orientalist gaze became a source of identity for non-Western countries, which became subjects in their relations with this gaze (HU, 2010). For the Japanese, positioning themselves in relation to the West became part of the self-affirmation of their own Japaneseness (HOBO, 2015).

This series of pre-established stereotypes about Japan and its culture often plays a mediating role in the way individuals perceive and understand Japanese cultural production as being typically Japanese, which interferes in the way Japanese animation has been approached (FRANÇA, 2022). Furthermore, foreign researchers seem more willing to embrace Japanese animation as a subject worthy of investigation than the Japanese themselves. "Arguably, this points to a sense of auto-orientalism, in which Japanese editors appeal to external authorities for validation of their own research interests in what some might still regard as an unworthy field of study" (CLEMENTS, 2014, p. 14).

Japanese animation was only consolidated as a valid research topic in Japan after the enormous growth of the local animation industry at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, resulting from the expansion of consumption in foreign markets and the qualitative recognition of the country's commercial animation (KOIDE, 2014). However, academic animation research is still in its initial stages, with studies that present little theoretical depth (KOIDE, 2014). This also happens because a relevant part of Japanese researchers who study animation are not interested in the theoretical approach to the object, focusing on the practical side of animation (IKEDA, 2014).

This low adherence to theoretical research on Japanese animation produced in Japan may have contributed to the perception rooted in orientalism, since few counterpoints to this type of approach have been developed. From this tradition of thought, Japanese animation acquired, for many people around the world, a status as a symbol that represents the image of modern Japan, and by representing Japan, Japanese animation also incorporated the fascination, strangeness, and prejudices commonly related to Eastern cultures by Western people, who often label as exotic what is not immediately understood (FRANÇA, 2020). Thus, the specificities of Japanese animation biased the West toward developing a way of looking at this type of production as a genre separate from the universe of animation, constantly related to graphic violence, science fiction and explicit sexual material (LEONG, 2011).

Finally, Japanese animation was treated by many Western writers as a type of production that appeared abruptly at the end of the 1980s, ignoring a history of constant presence of this type of production during previous decades on television in Western countries (CLEMENTS, 2014). By ignoring the participation of Japanese animations on foreign television before the 1990s, the influence of these works in the Western context prior to that period ends up being neglected (DALIOT-BUL, 2014). Thus, approaching the way Japanese animation was received in the West from a historicizing perspective can help us better understand the dynamics surrounding the perception of this type of production over time by Westerners, thus avoiding reductionists and essentialists.

### **The distinction surrounding Japanese animation in the Western context**

Japanese animation has mostly been discussed in the West with a focus on its classification as a distinct animation genre. Japanese animation, popularly known by the term "anime", over time has formed an audience largely different from that formed by North American productions, which since its consolidation, in the 1960s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, have targeted children. Japanese cartoons, on the other hand, were not limited to a children's audience, with productions aimed at a variety of audiences, ranging from works for children and adults, to works that have a specific target audience, such as women. Thus, an industry was created that demonstrates a certain diversity in its commercial productions (NOGUEIRA, 2010).

In the West, the idea of animation, especially the cartoon category as a type of artistic and media production often stigmatized as children's production, reinforced a rupture in expectations regarding Japanese animation, as it did not fully adhere to previous schemes of a cartoon aimed at Western children, such as the absence of scenes with explicit graphic violence and the presence of simpler plots focused on humor (LEONG, 2011).

This rupture can be observed in the way the term "anime" was appropriated and used by Westerners. In Japan, this term is used to refer to any global production of the animation genre, regardless of the nationality of origin (NESTERIUK, 2011). However, abroad, especially in the West, the term "anime" has become a specific synonym for animations that present a set of stylistic characteristics defined as Japanese (SATO, 2007).

Such characteristics present in Japanese animations functioned for Western audiences as distinctive features that differentiated Japanese productions from productions frequently broadcast commercially in the West. From the moment Japanese animation became a recognizable category, it was considered a new form of animation outside of Japan (DENISON, 2015). As observed by Bourdieu (2007, p. 11), "the distinctive features are the aesthetic dispositions required by the productions of a field of production that has reached a high degree of autonomy inseparable from a specific cultural competence". In this way, the characteristics of the specific Japanese context, in which Japanese animation is inserted, meant that the animation produced in that country presented characteristics and logic of organization of its materiality that were different from Western productions (BORGES, 2008). If it is possible to say that Japanese cartoons are different from North American ones, it is because they draw on different traditions (ORTIZ, 2000).

The first academic works in the West on Japanese animation, between the 1990s and 2000s, were largely interested in explaining this type of animation through its difference with commercial North American animation, mapping Japanese animation through controversial features, such as the relationship with graphic violence and sexual exposure, and emphasizing distinct types of difference compared to hegemonic Western animation (DENISON, 2015).

Thus, the study of Japanese animation emerged in the West from formal content analyses, neglecting the complexity of the historical context behind these productions (DENISON, 2015). This form of approach conceived a reductionism to anime, as it generalized characteristics that are present in only a few works, failing to encompass the entirety of Japanese animation, thus carrying, in this segregation, an orientalist tendency to relate a different cultural base as strange, focusing on different characteristics and reducing attention to similar ones.

Such stigmatization of Japanese animation originated, in part, from the limited amount of material that reached the West, which represented only a fraction of the enormous volume of production in that animation industry (IZAWA, 2000). The arrival of these animations in the West was mediated by individuals both in distribution companies (initially) and in fansubs (in a second moment), who selected the animations based on the public's supposed taste and on their personal taste.



Regarding this perspective, it is important to note that taste, according to Bourdieu, is the propensity and aptitude for the material or symbolic appropriation of a certain class of objects or classified and classifying practices, being the generating formula that lies at the origin of “style of life” (BOURDIEU, 2007, p. 165). It is through taste that the set of choices that constitute the “lifestyle” acquires meaning and value, based on the properties inscribed in a position, in a system of oppositions and correlations with other conditions and material situations of existence present in the social structure (BOURDIEU, 1996, 2007). In this way, it was through a prescribed taste in a Western context that Japanese animations were selected by those responsible behind the fansubs and distribution companies.

### **The context of consolidation of the animation consumption market in the United States**

The context behind the formation of animation consumption in the United States is noteworthy, since the country will be one of the main mediators in the relationship with Japanese animation in the West. According to Paul Wells, Japanese television animation considered the possibility of a maturing audience, while American television animation aimed its audience as essentially childish, without there being the possibility of transgressing this established notion (WELLS, 2001). In the 1960s, the consolidation of the cartoon block on Saturday mornings on television channels in the United States was responsible for this type of work becoming practically synonymous with children’s productions (MITTELL, 2001).

However, until the development of this schedule segment, animations were watched by a more varied audience, as was the case with productions intended for cinema; however, in the 1950s, many of the animated works produced in previous decades were unable to be broadcast in full on television because of a stricter censorship system. Thus, “The censorious practices of the television industry helped redefine the cultural content and associations of the pre-existing film cartoon genre” (WELLS, 2001, p. 37). It is worth highlighting that during the post-Second World War period, mainly in the 1950s, the North American government began a campaign against subversion in all aspects of American life, known as McCarthyism, promoting “American values” and consolidating an official culture of social compliance (KARNAL *et al.*, 2007). This government movement that spread throughout social institutions led to greater control over media content, especially that broadcast on television, a growing medium that was becoming the main source of entertainment for North Americans. As a result, based on the discourse surrounding the danger of communism for the “American way of life”, ideological homogenization occurred in the country’s cultural industries through the promotion of the myth about the family nucleus in popular culture and the reproduction of strong “moral” values (STABILE; HARRISON, 2001).

In Hanna-Barbera’s first television works, in the 1950s, the audience for the studio’s animations was not yet predominantly children. The animation *The Huckleberry Hound Show* (1958) had more than 40% of the consumer audience

made up of adults (MITTELL, 2001). Adults were interested in the animation due to the dialogue and verbal humor, while children were attracted to the visuals. However, for reasons of commercial viability, the animations were concentrated on Saturday morning, a cheaper time slot for advertisers of toys and products aimed at children, a segment that was establishing itself during the period. Because of this, animation was consolidated in the United States as a cultural category labeled as something exclusively for children due to the alienation of the adult audience, since adults practically did not watch television on Saturday mornings (MITTELL, 2001). The few attempts to launch animated series in prime time on North American television in the 1960s were not well-accepted commercially, with *The Flintstones* (1961–1966) being the only one of these animated series that was relatively successful — which reinforced the isolation of cartoons in television programming and its definition as a genre for children from that period onward. It was within this context, of a cartoon market aimed at children through television, that Japanese animation began to have greater visibility in the West.

### **Japanese animation in the West and the tensions in its trajectory**

Due to their connection to children, animations were considered a minor artistic production. Japanese animation experienced even greater marginalization as a result of its production value, considered low, and its national origin (NAPIER, 2005).

Japan, since 1963, with the debut of *Tetsuwan Atomu*, began to present an increasing number of productions in the field of commercial animation due to the rapid expansion of the country's television market (TSUGATA, 2005). Unlike what happened in the United States, the most popular animations in Japan were shown at the beginning of prime time, as in this country it was children who often chose what the family would watch at that time, making Japanese animations, from the beginning, not aimed exclusively at children and to have sponsors who also intended to reach adult audiences through animation (CLEMENTS, 2014). Furthermore, in the same year that *Tetsuwan Atomu* debuted, Fuji Television premiered, at 11:40 pm, the animated series *Sennin Bunraku* (1963), the first erotic Japanese animation series in history, showing that animation in Japan, already in the early years of consolidation of the production field, was perceived as a means that could reach different audiences. And with the aging of the first generation of children who watched anime on television, Japanese producers further expanded the local animation consumer audience, making anime a mainstream phenomenon, allowing the creation of animated works of diverse television genres and subgenres, reaching from young to the aged (DALIOT-BUL, 2014; OTMAZGIN, 2014).

In the 1960s, Japanese animations such as *Tetsuwan Atomu*, renamed *Astro Boy*, and *Kimba* (1965) crossed the Pacific Ocean and debuted on North American soil through imports carried out by the syndication market. In this first entry into the North American market, Japanese animation was differentiated from local

productions due to its form, often associated with low-quality animation production, as it was considered limited animation and with stylized drawings considered inferior (LÓPEZ, 2013). Nevertheless, Japanese animation quickly established itself as a cheap product and, therefore, advantageous for some television stations in the United States (NESTERIUK, 2011).

It is because of this last characteristic that Japanese animation also entered other Western television markets, such as the Italian and the French. According to Clements (2014), Japanese animations had their first excursions in Italy in the 1970s, as they filled the schedule of new Italian commercial broadcasters. There, animations produced in Japan were quickly labeled as dangerous works, capable of promoting everything from fascism to violence, with this criticism aimed at animations that fit the stereotypical definition they had of Japanese cartoons, such as animations from the subgenre of giant robots, while other Japanese works, such as *Heidi* (1974), which did not fully fit into Western preconceptions of what constituted a work from Japan, ended up going unnoticed by these same critics who generalized Japanese production (CLEMMENTS, 2014). This type of reaction also happened in France, with Japanese animation being associated with negative aspects such as violence and a threat to national culture (CLEMMENTS, 2014). Such approaches, focused only on characteristics considered negative in Japanese animation, will be repeated in several Western countries, highlighting how much the legacy of orientalist thought still persists in these locations.

In the case of Brazil, the first Japanese animations broadcast in the country arrived through North American distribution and licensing companies at the end of the 1960s<sup>1</sup>, being acquired by national broadcasters because they were cheap (MONTE, 2011). However, as it is home to the largest community of Japanese descendants outside of Japan in the world, several Japanese animations circulated alternatively in Brazil before the popularization of anime in the 1990s. The sending of television material recorded on tapes from Japan to Brazil was a recurring practice, as it was used alongside manga as a way of providing immigrants and their descendants with contact with the Japanese culture of the time. In the 1980s, it was already possible to notice the influence of Japanese cartoons on Japanese-Brazilian artists (LUYTEN, 2012).

Returning to the North American context, despite the circulation on television channels in the country in the 1960s and 1970s, favored by the low acquisition cost, most television networks had a lack of interest in Japanese productions as they considered that Japanese conventions present in these productions were unattractive to North American children, used to “North American values” (ALLISON, 2000). As early as the 1960s “[...] there was a palpable sense that the Japanese animation market did not align with its US counterpart, and that content permissible in Japan was simply unacceptable to US broadcasters” (DENISON, 2015, p 82).

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1 According to Sandra Monte (2011), *Eightman* (1963) was the first anime broadcast alone, without being part of a specific block, on Brazilian television, being shown for the first time on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1968, at 6 pm, on Globo channel.

In this way, Japanese animations that were broadcast in the United States had elements of their national origin erased, and were often altered by local licensors, reworking them to adapt to the current values of acceptability of children's content for children in that country. country, changing the names of the characters, locations and specific elements of the work (ALLISON, 2006). This occurred because there was a consensus that foreign elements, mainly from the East, did not correspond to the American taste, making it necessary to Americanize such productions, and it was believed that the degree of Americanization was proportional to the success of Japanese animations in the United States (ALLISON, 2000). Thus, the presence of Japanese animation in this context operated by means of transformation through the North American lens, meaning that the public in that country had no real contact with Japanese productions, only with modified versions, which reached the point of mixing several series as if they were one, as in the case of the series *Robotech* (1985), the product of editing, cutting and joining parts of the Japanese animated series *Fang of the Sun Dougram* (1981), *The Super Dimension Fortress Macross* (1982), and *Super Dimension Century Orguss* (1983) (DALIOT-BUL, 2014).

As a result of these changes produced in the United States, Japanese animation, shown on North American soil and in other countries that had contact with the North American edited version, lost easily recognizable Japanese cultural elements in its content, being, in these first decades, clearly distinct from North American animations due to its formal dimension, such as technical characteristics, an example of the dynamics of the scenes caused by a variety of frames and plans used. The animation *Speed Racer* (1967) made an impact in the United States precisely because of these differences in the organization of visual properties and editing, having a language close to that used in action films, thus standing out from other North American cartoons aired in the same period (SATO, 2007).

A more evident distinction in the content of Japanese animation in the United States arose from the attention given to this type of production by an older audience. This greater attention enabled, in two moments, a greater awareness of the differences between Japanese animated productions and North American productions, and, consequently, the establishment of the term "anime" as a distinctive label.

The first moment occurred with the emergence and popularization of fan-sub. In the 1970s, Western scholars became interested in studying Japan, seeking to understand how in a short period of time the country had become the third largest economy in the world and the nation with the highest rate of economic growth (HENSHALL, 2017). One of the ways to understand Japan was through studies on the country's artistic and cultural productions. This study model was inspired by the research of anthropologist Ruth Benedict in her book *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (2014). The author carried out her research during the period of the Second World War, studying, from a distance, Japanese society and culture through the artistic and media productions of that nation, with the objective of understanding the way of acting and thinking of the then enemy country. Following the model



stipulated by Benedict, North American students began to study Japan through local cultural products, such as current television programs, which reached Western universities through video tapes for domestic audiences (VHS and Betamax).

Through these videotapes, university students in the United States had access to Japanese animations that were not broadcast on television networks in the country. Without the presence of changes made by local licensors, they were able to visualize the stylistic schemes of Japanese animation in full. It was in this context that student Fred Patten, who had been attracted when he was younger by the different technical characteristics in *Astro Boy* and *Speed Racer*, founded, in 1977, the first club dedicated to Japanese animation in the United States, the *Cartoon/Fantasy Organization*, which gave rise to the alternative sharing of anime in the West (URBANO, 2013). These clubs and groups dedicated to Japanese animation functioned as a way to store and circulate this type of content that was not found on local television networks. Furthermore, these groups performed an active and collective enterprise, from collecting tapes coming from Japan in an alternative way to the subtitling and consumption process (URBANO, 2013).

The second moment of the evident perception of distinctive characteristics of Japanese animation in the United States was marked at the end of the 1980s, with the release of *Akira* (1988), a Japanese animated film that acquired the status of director Otomo Katsuhiro's masterpiece, becoming revered by established directors in the international film industry (SATO, 2007). *Akira* debuted in Japan in 1988, a time when the country had reached its peak of post-war international influence, and many developed nations felt threatened by the Asian country's emerging superpower status during that period (NAPIER, 2005).

The Japanese became the target of criticism among Western countries, being labeled as economic animals that had no value other than the greed to make money, from their perspective (HENSHALL, 2017). These countries once again attributed comments from an orientalist view, reducing Japan to an incomprehensible nation that is different from other countries considered to be first world. These negative reactions were caused by discomfort related to the threat that Japan represented to the dominant Eurocentric cultural tradition of economic prosperity, denoting a possible rupture in the pre-established models following the rise of the country among the largest economies on the planet. Japan had become, by the end of the 1980s, the second largest economy in the world, and in terms of *per capita* income, the country had the richest population on the globe, and the threat it posed to Western countries was noted in the constitution of its market relations, in which the import of products of North American origin decreased, while the export of Japanese products to the United States market increased (HENSHALL, 2017).

Thus, as in the case that led to the emergence of fansubs a decade earlier, Japan's economic conditions and its position on an international scene helped the dissemination of *Akira* in the West. *Akira* became, in its year of release, the most watched film in the history of Japanese cinemas until then (NAPIER, 2005). The success of the film in its homeland quickly had repercussions in Western countries,

which were observing the events and cultural trends in Japan. Consequently, the animation did not take long to debut in the Western market, and from 1989, in Europe, in the United States and in Canada, the exhibition sparked the emergence of a horde of fans that gave rise to the first generation of *otakus* outside of Japan (SATO, 2007).

Due to this repercussion, *Akira* was able to present to a wider audience the possibility of explicit graphic violence in a cartoon, and, consequently, the glimpse that animations with approaches and themes beyond children's could exist. The film, as it was distributed in a traditional means of communication, movie theaters, reached a larger audience than fansubs, as, during this period, they were still restricted to select groups. *Akira* instantly became a cult phenomenon, hitting the North American video store market in 1989, and the addition of its cyberpunk plot in a Japanese context to the exquisite animation technique immediately gave rise to a cult of Japanese animation in the United States, which led to the creation of a section in rental stores for this type of production (DENISON, 2015). It was at this moment that the term "anime" was introduced and consolidated in the West.

This work also helped to weaken the label of a lower quality product related to Japanese animation, as *Akira* did not present the technical limitations that were commonly linked to productions of Japanese origin broadcast on television stations, demonstrating precisely the opposite. The popularity of *Akira* in the early 1990s generated a demand in the Western market for works with themes and approaches similar to those of the 1988 film, without the presence of the edits that were the rule in Japanese productions broadcast in the region until then. Thus, these Western anime fans were attracted by a type of fetishism of cultural differences, seeking content different from what was commercially offered on traditional local media channels (JENKINS; GREEN; FORD, 2014).

In the mid-1980s, in Japan, the advent of the original video animation (OVA) market made it possible to produce animated series aimed exclusively at an adult audience (HU, 2010). With the consolidation of a home video market outside the Japanese territory in the early 1990s, the existing demand for animations different from those found on local television in Western countries could be met by these productions aimed at the Japanese OVA market, which already had, at that time, a great number of works produced. Thus, other cyberpunk-themed anime, such as the *Bubblegum Crisis* series (1987) and its sequel *Bubblegum Crash* (1991), were released outside Japan through this new audiovisual production consumer market, legally and without edits. This scenario also made it possible to expand the reach of fansubs, which were no longer restricted to university clubs, as videocassette players became more common in homes in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Many of these animations that reached the West, both through fansubs and through distribution by the home video market, had thematic and visual characteristics that differentiated them from North American cartoons, being marked by explicitly adult content and an apparent obsession with science fiction, graphic violence, and sexual appeal (IZAWA, 2000). The presence of elements considered

pornographic in Japanese animations selected for distribution in these countries became a crucial part for this foreign audience to differentiate animes from animations produced commercially in the West.

This selection of works that circulated constructed the stereotypical view of Japanese production, motivated by the attraction to what is different, in part, because fans of this type of production tried to legitimize their taste as being part of an adult dimension, opposing the traditional Western commercial cartoons, which were commonly disseminated as a type of production aimed exclusively at children, or with a focus on humor. Thus, the entrepreneurs who became involved with the distribution of Japanese animation in the 1990s built, through effective marketing, the notion of the term “anime” as a label that symbolized a specific type of animation, a coherent grouping, which operated as opposed to animations aimed at children (DALIOT-BUL, 2014).

However, although Japanese animation works with science fiction and fantasy themes, according to the type of approach mentioned above, dominate the Western market, this did not represent the reality of the Japanese animation market, which displayed a more varied range of offers (LEVI, 2006). Since the 1980s, Japanese animations about everyday life, known as *slice of life*, have become quite popular in Japan (RUSCA, 2016). This type of work, which presents stories that take place in a recognizable, everyday Japanese setting, such as schools, and focuses on the relationships between characters, which may or may not be romantic, was neglected by those responsible for selection and distribution in the West, as well as Japanese sports drama animations, which has been a consolidated genre since the mid-1960s in Japan, presenting several releases per year steadily over the decades.

Furthermore, the perception of the thematic approaches in Japanese animation also included variations between different Western countries, precisely because of the different tastes of those responsible for fan clubs and distribution companies for this type of production in each location. As an example, there is the case of the United Kingdom, in which the interest in works starring “cute” female characters was a predominant element in the selection of works debated and commented on in this region, which differed from the interest seen in the United States: sci-fi works starring male characters (DENISON, 2015). In the United Kingdom, even in science fiction, preference was given to those starring female characters. This happened because fans there realized that, in Japanese animation, there was a constant presence of female protagonists who played heroine roles, and who did not disappoint the male heroes, which was also a characteristic that differentiated Japanese animation from Western animated productions, mostly led, in that period, by male characters and with female characters, mostly, destined for passive or secondary roles.

Therefore, anime, as a category, was understood differently, depending on the region and the productions that fans from each location had contact with, but maintaining the relationship of difference and opposition to commercial Western animated production, mainly based on an inclination toward reject conventions present in Disney animations, such as the happy ending.

Through its broad presence on the global stage, characteristics of Japanese animation entered the international lexicon (CRAIG, 2000). The entrance of Japanese animation and its success in the United States introduced a set of different narrative possibilities in the construction of more complex storyboards that became an integral part of the repertoire of those responsible for creating animations in the country (OTMAZGIN, 2014). Furthermore, this increasing exposure of North American animators and producers to Japanese animation played an important role in changing the perception of cartooning, thus expanding the possibilities surrounding North American commercial animation, which resulted in productions of animated films aimed at an adult audience that escape both the consolidated structure of the sitcom and the focus on humor, as is the case with *Invincible* (2021).

Finally, Western animators, by incorporating elements that were previously considered characteristic of Japanese animation into their practice, ensure that the aspects that differentiated Japanese animation are also present in works from other countries, as can be seen in *Castlevania* (2018), an American production that is categorized as anime by Netflix. Thus, the distinctive notion of the term “anime” ends up transcending the place of origin of production, since works that are not Japanese end up being labeled in this way, depending on the distributor’s interest in the marketing involved in promoting the works. At the same time, consumption of Japanese animation is becoming increasingly greater in the West, through the growth of the streaming market, reaching unprecedented levels (HIROMICHI *et al.*, 2022). Due to greater and plural contact with works produced in Japan and the increased popularity of various genres of Japanese animation, such as slice of life and sports dramas in Western countries, the understanding surrounding Japanese commercial animation becomes more broad, which tensions the stereotypical notion linked to the term “anime” in the 1990s, since elements that were intrinsically attributed to Japanese animation can now be perceived as existing in only a fraction of the total commercial animated production in Japan .

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

From this brief historicization of the relationships surrounding Japanese animation in the West, it becomes visible that aspects that popularized the view on anime in the early 1990s, in the United States and other Western countries, were present in only a portion of Japanese productions. However, nowadays, with the facilitated access through the fast and ubiquitous internet, and a wider distribution of content through official streaming and the proliferation of different fansubs, different locations around the world can have a broader and more complete notion of the Japanese animation production field. Furthermore, international fans of this type of production acquired greater informational capital about anime over time from the accumulation of information, enhanced by the advancement of digital technologies, which allowed the sharing of materials about Japanese animation among fans of different countries.



Therefore, when observing Japanese animation productions more broadly, it becomes evident that anime is not restricted to the traditional conception of genre, as Japanese animations deal with a variety of genres, types of narrative and approaches, despite exhibiting recognizable characteristics in most of the works (SUAN, 2017). Some authors such as Rayna Denison will expose the idea that Japanese animation incorporates a variety of pre-existing media genres into its representational system and constantly mixes and hybridizes these categories while creating new ones, reinforcing that animes must be understood more broadly, as a cultural phenomenon whose meanings depend on the context (DENISON, 2015).

Furthermore, authors such as Antônio López (2013) will highlight that anime is something more than a peculiar style of animation, it is mainly a powerful social phenomenon that has rapidly expanded throughout the world. Ian Condry (2013) reinforces this thought by considering that Japanese animation should be understood at a greater level of refinement of detail than just as a specific genre or simply as a reflection of Japan. Instead, he suggests that Japanese animation needs to be studied more broadly, as a communicational cultural form that emerges from social practices and competition.

Furthermore, the fact that Japanese culture generates a certain strangeness in the predisposed eyes of some observers, should not constitute an impediment to a deeper understanding, since different does not mean incomprehensible. From a systematic process of contextualizing the sociocultural, political, economic aspects and historical processes of the place and specific production space, it is possible to understand the other more broadly, their approximations and particularities, in addition to the game of forces in dispute in the imposition of categories of perception. Therefore, it is necessary to expand studies on Japanese animation that aim to break with the orientalist tradition, seeking to avoid an essentialist and reductionist logic. To achieve this, it is necessary to further scrutinize in future studies the competitive dynamics that exist in the social space in which Japanese animations are produced and consumed.

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## Impressions of reality in the museum: the use of animations by memory spaces

### *Impressões da realidade no museu: o uso de animações por espaços de memória*

Daniel Grizante de Andrade<sup>1</sup> 

#### **ABSTRACT**

The language of animation has been occupying more and more places outside its usual universe. Among them, the museum is one of the spaces where it appears in growing prominence. Its use in exhibition design projects brings reflection on what role it plays, since its production has always been associated with fantasy and the media universe. This research seeks to discuss animation as a documentary form produced by memory spaces from the analysis a production made by a Brazilian institution called Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo. To this end, the idea of animation and animated documentary will be discussed and its problematic involving the relationship between fantasy and reality. Also, it will be discussed the authority of museums as social institutions, guardians of memories and discourses about them, as well as issues involving the design of exhibitions and the use of technologies and languages to mediate their collections.

**Keywords:** Animation. Exhibition. Exhibition design. Animated documentary. Memory.

#### **RESUMO**

*A linguagem da animação vem ocupando, cada vez mais, locais fora de seu universo usual. Entre eles, o museu é um dos espaços onde ela aparece com destaque crescente. Seu uso em projetos de design de exposições traz a reflexão de qual é o seu papel desempenhado, já que sua produção está, normalmente, associada à fantasia e ao universo do entretenimento. Esta pesquisa procura discutir a animação como forma documental produzida por espaços de memória a partir da análise de uma produção realizada por uma instituição brasileira, o Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo. Para tal, será discutido o conceito de animação e do documentário animado, a partir de sua problemática envolvendo a relação entre fantasia e realidade; a autoridade dos museus como instituições sociais, guardiãs de memórias e discursos sobre elas; e questões envolvendo o design de exposições e o uso de tecnologias e linguagens para mediar as suas coleções.*

**Palavras-chave:** Animação. Exposições. Design de exposição. Documentário animado. Memória.

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## INTRODUCTION

The space in museums and exhibitions is one of the places where current animation production is present, mainly those related to science, technology, history or specific cultures. This article does not address recognized animations, as art, or of historical value, which could be selected, exhibited and celebrated in collective or historical exhibitions, but rather animations created especially for the exhibition projects, and which will be part of the curatorial discourse.

The problem at hand is, therefore, understanding how these animations relate to reality, since they are made in a language that is classically associated with fantasy, illusion, and playfulness. From this relationship, the intention here was to understand how they are used in exhibitions that, in themselves, already have a discourse and a commitment to direct reflection on reality, in the documentary field, associated with the authoritative role of museums in society throughout the decades.

In relation to the type of exhibitions studied in this article, there is a lot of discussion about different aspects, whether observing these exhibitions as a spectacle, media event, entertainment, cultural tourism or business marketing. Something smaller, internal to these exhibitions, will be observed. The intention here is to look only at the use of animations included in these exhibition projects, not seeking to delve deeper into the purposes of exhibitions as a whole, a subject that will be developed on other occasions.

To discuss the subject, the research was carried out with the help of the analysis of an animation of historical characteristics produced in a Brazilian memory center, the São Paulo Resistance Memorial (*Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo*). An animation in motion design was selected, which was part of the permanent exhibition, about the dead and the missing during the period of Brazilian military dictatorship.

This is a qualitative research with audiovisual image analysis of the animation. The focus of the research was on how the language of animation works to develop the content selected for production, as well as on reflecting on the role of this animation in the design of the museum space and its relationship with factual reality. The analysis of the animation was based on the bibliography selected and discussed below.

## MUSEUMS: AUTHORITY AND MEMORY IN EXHIBITIONS

Museums emerged as pragmatic institutions designed to collect, preserve, and safeguard objects that were affected by the changes of modernity (HUYSSSEN, 1994). These changes refer to the criticisms imposed by modernity on the role of the art museum as a conservative institution, followed by a demand for the repositioning of museums as a place for new art, which ended up triggering the emergence of museums such as the Museum of Modern Art, in 1929, for instance. Dialectical in nature, museums play a double role: on the one hand, it works as a kind of funerary chamber that stores the past, in which objects are affected by decay, erosion and oblivion; on

the other hand, it serves as a space for possible resurrections. Throughout history, museums have had and still have legitimizing functions. Upon examining the origin and history of the collections, museums, from Napoleon to Hitler, have been notably benefited from imperialist plunder and nationalist expansion (HUYSSSEN, 1994). In this way, European museums, for example, protect collections that represent the imperialist victory over subjugated peoples and propagate a culture of possession and national and racial superiority among their own, in addition to reinforcing their history of victories and hegemony before thousands of tourists that overflow their galleries every year, even though there are recent disputes over collections occurred in recent years between colonized and imperialist nations.

Museums have changed over the years — despite their apparent immobility — and even though, since their origins, they have been transformed by the present, something seems to have never changed:

Over the last three centuries [...] museums have become the privileged institutional location for the “*querelle des anciens et des modernes*”. It withstood the blind eye of the hurricane of progress by promoting the articulation between nation and tradition, heritage and canon, in addition to providing the main blueprint for the construction of cultural legitimacy in both the national and universal sense (HUYSSSEN, 1994, p. 35, our translation).

Museums are, therefore, in constant dispute. It is a place and a field for reflections on issues such as temporality, subjectivity, identity, and alterity. But, by the public, they are essentially seen as places of authority, that is, places for answers rather than questions (MACDONALD, 2002). In a complex world full of uncertainty about who to trust, in a world of invented news, false truths and the overlap of science with commerce and advertising, museums are still seen under this status, perhaps due to their generally strong and reliable architecture — which contributes to this impression —, in addition to the fact that a large part of their exhibitions appear unsigned or have diluted authorship, as if they were products of a superhuman authority. Their exposures are still predominantly based on objects that, in themselves, are real and consistent, based on facts, in addition to having their cultural role of authority inherited from the historical tradition of these institutions, acting as guardians of the future (MACDONALD, 2002). Thus, museums must be aware of the responsibility invested in them by society and need to understand how to respond to this. In the interview given to András Szántó (2022), Victoria Noorthoorn, director of the Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art, suggests that it is a matter of language: “a language that presupposes that you are in a position of wisdom and the other is not”. For her, it is paramount that today’s museums become an active part of people’s daily lives, rather than to be placed in a pedestal of higher authority. This way, museums would be able to engage in open debate, something that causes fear among the ruling classes, with the possibility of a desire for a new world arising. Koyo Kouoh, executive director and chief curator of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, adds that museums are just one of the forces of social

change, with significant strength to expand horizons and understanding, to activate curiosity and questioning realities, though they are not capable of making changes based solely on their authority (KOUOH *apud* SZÁNTÓ, 2022).

Practically throughout the world, but especially in countries that have suffered from their histories of mass extermination, apartheid, military dictatorships, and totalitarianism, museums have emerged that represent the struggles of these nations to create democratic politics while facing the task of ensuring legitimacy and the future of their emerging policies, seeking ways to commemorate and evaluate the mistakes of the past (HUYSSSEN, 2000). These museums clearly have a pedagogical dimension present, in the foreground, in the structuring of the exhibitions held and in the very foundation of the institution, as this process of reflection on the past and of construction of the future is an educational process, which seeks the development of visitors based on the clash with a past that they often did not experience, but whose understanding is essential for the construction of a future. An example of this type of space is the object of study in this research: the São Paulo Resistance Memorial (*Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo*), in São Paulo.

The museum institution, including museums of art, science, technique and technology, among others, developed simultaneously with the emergence of a visual culture in Western society, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, resulting from mass consumption and urbanization from the industrial revolution, where the proliferation of images became one of the main characteristics of the social organization of the time (JULIER, 2006). It is about the growth of department stores, shopping catalogues, product design, advertising communication, mass tourism, spectacle culture as entertainment and, one cannot forget, this is the period of the emergence of image technologies such as photography, cinema, and animation. The so-called visual culture would, then, be the time when the perception of visual becomes common, something casual (JULIER, 2006). These museums, therefore, are contemporary with this culture and developed as a result of the visual demands of this society. Visual culture goes beyond the limits of theories of visibility that start from studies on History of Art and also consider photography, cinema, television, design and advertising as part of itself, for example, expanding the field of interests (JULIER, 2006) in the same way that, little by little, museums also do.

It was in this context that, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the field of Art, there was a proliferation of supports, formats, and modes of works, from land art, installation, happenings and performances, body art, conceptual art, video art, in addition to the traditional ones: painting, sculpture, engraving, photography. Artistic experiences, concerned with space, introduced the use of various resources to enable the exhibition of works in institutional spaces, such as the use of photographic or filmic images as evidence or records, thus opening up a range of new possibilities, in which “the insertion of the image as a vehicle for breaking the physical limits of both the object and the context” is highlighted (CASTILLO, 2003, p. 184, our translation). This proliferation, in a way, was the result of the questioning of the institutional space of art and is configured as a search for new means of dissemination,

circulation, and exhibition (CASTILLO, 2003), going against the already established logic of the white cube in the exhibition design. In practical terms, the white cube refers to an exhibition space that features white walls, high ceilings, uniform natural light, and a simplistic layout, often with the objects on display placed on modest stands. This type of space is designed to be a neutral environment that allows the artwork to stand on its own without visual or contextual interference. The white cube, little by little, begins to be inoperative and inadequate in the face of these new artistic and technological manifestations, due to their complexities. Art became ephemeral and transitory, and each proposal needed a peculiar space, thus invalidating the ideal space provided by the white cube (CASTILLO, 2003). At the same time, science centers emerged in the wake of the change from mechanical to electrical technology and, later, to communication technologies; physics moved toward electromagnetics, relativity and quantum mechanics, which naturally meant that these museums gradually began to fulfill their role, no longer only based on the material culture of their collections, but also began to produce collections that could work with the immateriality of the new technologies that emerged, becoming less and less visible. As a result, they ceased to be essentially places for scientific research and were reoriented to accommodate visitors with less knowledge, such as children (MACDONALD, 2002). This profound change in techniques and physics directly affected the way exhibitions are thought about. They have gone from a development that privileged technical imagination to one that reaches and touches science fiction. Science centers help to understand how the world and nature work, acting as supports for mediation, whether through animated models or through interactive devices and the manipulation of objects and microsystems. They work with what Sharon MacDonald (2002) calls “orchestrated discovery”, in which visitors themselves discover a scientific concept based on an exhibition proposal designed for this purpose.

Finally, with the advent of information society, collections based on information emerged or, in existing ones, the informational aspects of their objects were increasingly valued, such as their paths and contextualizations. As Flusser (2017) well observes, in the past what was highlighted was the ordering of the apparent world of matter, and today, what stands out is making apparent a world encoded in information that multiplies in an uncontrollable way. One can clearly see, for example, the shift in interest in acquiring things in favor of acquiring services based on information, its organization and flow. This is what the author identifies, in the economic context, as a transfer of values (Flusser, 2017), from things to information. Therefore, museums become centers for the preservation, ordering, and dissemination of information which, due to their immateriality, is easily modified and can be shaped, or “formed”, as Flusser would say.

Since an exhibition in a museum is carried out in a space/time relationship, in order to give visibility to an intangible collection — such as those made up of information — it is necessary to use exhibition resources that materialize the collection in the exhibition space. One of the most common modes of materialization

is undoubtedly the image. The use of imagery, scenography and documentary resources is always requested when it is impossible to present the exposed object itself, whether due to its existence in the intangible field, its absence, or even its inadequacy to the exhibition space. For example, an exhibition about a people's language has an intangible theme. An exhibition about an artist whose work has been lost or cannot leave its place of origin is determined by the absence of the originals. In an exhibition about a monumental work, such as a work of land art, it is not possible to take it into the museum space. In these three examples, scenographic, imagery, and documentary resources are invoked to account for the exposure of the work. It is clear, however, that these examples are extreme, for the purpose of clarifying ideas, but what happens, in most cases, are exhibitions that use these resources together with the presentation of real objects, which can be first or second background in relation to the resources mentioned. What comes to exist in exhibition design is the articulation between different exhibition resources with different qualities and origins, which will make up a totality. The need to give form to information, materiality to the immaterial, is perhaps the main reason why design emerged as a transformative discipline in the practice of planning and producing exhibitions at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It was from the 1980s onward that museums increasingly approached the culture of entertainment and leisure, manifested by the presence of audiovisual languages inserted in the design of exhibitions and related to the institutions' collections, in an attempt to approach new audiences, far from the elite space of museums. It is in this context that the place studied in this research approaches the language of animation to work on its collection and get closer to an audience that needs to get in touch with the history of the nation. What we attempt to understand, however, is how animation is used within authoritative institutions with intense social responsibility that work with historical and political themes, since the language's notable characteristic is the creation of fantastic universes, which, at first, would seem to us to be of inappropriate use due to the very distance from the factual, true reality.

## **ANIMATION BETWEEN FANTASY AND REALITY**

Animation was, for a large part of its existence, directly associated with illusion, largely due to its opposition to the photographic realism of the live action movie image, with regard to quality as a clearly manipulated image. In some cases, also associated with its quality as movement, in which in live action movies the movement is always natural, and in animation it can be fanciful or even artificial.

Live action movies bring time as a missing element in the photographic image and enables the (re)creation of reality. Animation places time in manipulated reality, in the creation of new worlds different from ours, with the possibility of giving them credibility due to the impression of reality it offers. But animation also reaches other levels of the moving image. Walter Benjamin (1994 [1936]), for example, states that characters like Mickey would be a "collective dream", thus placing these

new credible worlds of animation within the scope of individual mental images of dreams, hallucinations and psychoses, that is, images as real as those produced by collective perception witnessed in the clash with the physical world. For him, animation image would transport typically individualized images to the collective. This is what Professor Sébastien Denis (2010) seems to agree with when he states that animation produces a subjective representation of reality and, therefore, would be closer to the imaginary. One of the examples he brings is the frequent use of the sequence shot in animation, which reproduces a kind of chain of mental images in flow, as in an interior monologue, something like a stream of consciousness, something that in live action movies is extremely difficult to be accomplished, but not in animation (DENIS, 2010).

The movement created in animation goes beyond the limits of physical reality, freeing the moving image from photographic reference. Therefore, it is possible to work on impossible movements and transformations in the immediacy of human perception, in the updated movement of its image nature. Animated moving images enable the creation of fantasy and materialized imagination, of bodies and actions that are impossible to exist in reality. "Animation can defy the laws of gravity, challenge our perceived view of space and time, and endow lifeless things with dynamic and vibrant properties" (WELLS, 1998, p. 11). It is because of these specificities that animated images have always expressed magical or miraculous qualities. From the first experiments with pre-cinema optical-mechanical devices, such as Plateau's Phenachistoscope (1831), Horner's Zootroscope (1834), or Reynaud's Praxinoscope (1861), through *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937, Disney) and arriving today in augmented realities, the sensation in the spectator is always one of wonder, comparable to witnessing an inexplicable magic act. For Wells (1998, p. 20) "...the tension between belief and disbelief is integral to the achievement and effect of animation as a form.""

Even though animation has its own distinct characteristics from live action movies, which bring it closer to fantasy, dreams, imagination, magic and illusion, it shares the impression of reality and inspires credibility in the viewer's perception. Considering what Goethe and physiologists postulate, there is no optical illusion, as any visual experience of a healthy eye can be considered an optical truth (CRARY, 2012) and, therefore, the movement observed in the animation is not illusory. Deleuze (1985, p. 14, our translation) agrees that animation "[...] would no longer be the perfected apparatus of the oldest illusion, but, on the contrary, the organ of the new reality to be perfected." It should be highlighted, in the idea proposed by Deleuze, that animation is not a machine for creating illusions, but rather for projecting realities, contrary to what Disney's thought preached — certainly the most important reference in the area of animation — that it would be the "illusion of life", which can be attested by the thesis in *The Illusion of Life: Disney Animation* (1981), the company's official book written by animators Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas, where the central concept is that of "deceiving" the viewer with strategies that give the animation the desired credibility.



But it is not just fantasy that the language of animation is made up of. Throughout its history, approaches and distances from reality have occurred. Animators, for generations, have been trying to get closer to photographic reality and the movements captured by the cinema camera. Whether using the camera in multiplanes to create parallax movements and depth of field, or using techniques such as rotoscoping or motion capture, realism and fantasy intertwine in animation, always in search of the supposed credibility. With the advent of digital technology in animation processes, the line between realism and fantasy has become blurred, as photorealism is made possible through computer graphics (increasingly with better quality) and retouching, image by image, is common in the images captured by the camera machine. Denis (2010, p. 14) even suggests a kind of “derealization” of live action cinema. This approach is based on the principle that animation approaches reality by imitating initial photographic qualities, that is, it is an approximation that takes place through image. However, other approaches can be observed throughout the history of animation, such as animated documentaries.

As we know, documentary is an audiovisual modality in which, at first glance, there is a close connection with the indexical image of reference to the historical world, as a kind of historical evidence. This image brings a sense of credibility of optical truth. It stands out, however, in the research by Jennifer Serra (2011) based on her readings of Fernão Pessoa Ramos and Bill Nichols, that, in documentaries, the presence of a spectator is necessary to receive this audiovisual image as an assertion of reality, more than in the quality of the image itself and its similarities with reality. She therefore understands that “...the definition of a film as a documentary is based on the commitment or relationship that the film establishes with the world when it claims an approach to the historical world” (SERRA, 2011, p. 247, our translation). It is not the image’s responsibility the understanding of a given audiovisual work as a documentary, but rather the director’s intentions in creating assertions about the historical world, at the same time that viewers understand it as such. This consciousness allows us to affirm that animations also allow working with the concept of the document as director and spectator are aligned regarding references to the historical world. Now, choosing animation as a moving image language to deal with issues in this modality is a choice that must be analyzed. For what reasons is this choice made? The most obvious one is that it is a stylistic choice, or yet, the possibility of giving visibility to situations that were not recorded by the camera. For Serra (SERRA, 2011), however, this is a rhetorical choice. After all, through animation, it is possible to work on forms that are only possible from it, such as the representation of sensations and the establishment of relationships between visible and invisible situations, within the scope of the historical world represented in the work. As seen previously, animation has peculiar characteristics, which allow the representations of flows of thought, the representation of imagination, distances from the possibilities of reality and the visual materialization of things not observable to the naked eye. It is possible, in animated documentaries, “...to visually represent mental states or feelings of the characters [...], to highlight data or things that are in the atmosphere

of a situation experienced and that can only be felt, and not visualized, because they are subjective aspects of this reality” (SERRA, 2011, p. 250, our translation).

In addition to all the aspects exposed as motivation for the use of animation in documentary works, one of them seems extremely important for our study on the presence and use of animations by museum institutions. This is the undeniably present characteristic of every work of this type, which is what Serra (2011, p. 255) will call “self-evidence”, where the construction or manipulation of that narrative becomes evident to the viewer. This occurs because animation is interventionist (SERRA, 2011, p. 251). The presence of the self-author is clear, as is their ethical commitment to the subject or theme represented, which results in assuming a subjective interpretation of reality. There is no sort of confusion between reality and an impression of reality, which can occur with the captured image, with the exception of animated images created for this purpose, such as images known as deep-fakes.

For Denis (2010, p. 11), there is a kind of “lag with reality”, resulting from the choice of animation language, as it moves away from images known to refer directly to reality and opens gaps and passages through which the universe known to the viewer is discussed. This potential, which brings animation to documentaries, is the possibility of giving visibility to the emotions and thoughts of represented characters, materializing events that are impossible to be recorded by the camera, treating subjects that are difficult to discuss with more subtlety, as well as simplifying complex data and information into a language that allows historical narratives to be updated to the present, all based on subjective aspects of reality. The choice of animation as the language of such audiovisual works, concludes Serra (2011), forces the viewer to reflect on authorship and present subjectivity. Unlike what frequently occurs in works of photographic images, what seems to us to be in accordance with the understanding that all memory is virtual, in the sense established by Huyssen (2000), in which every lived or imagined memory has the same nature, being, therefore, transitory and subject to forgetting and, consequently, human and social. The animated documentary seems to highlight this understanding of memory.

## **AN ANIMATION PRODUCED BY MEMORIAL DA RESISTÊNCIA DE SÃO PAULO**

This article presented a look at an animation produced by a museum, in light of the concepts raised so far, seeking to understand how it operates within the social dimension of this authoritative institution that deals with the memory belonging to its collection. This is an animation presented as part of the permanent exhibition at *Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo*, an institution that occupies the former headquarters of the Department of Political and Social Order (*Departamento de Ordem Política e Social – DEOPS*), responsible for the repression of civilians during the Brazilian dictatorial period from 1964 to 1985. The museum, as known today, was reopened in 2009 and works on the memory of this period based on extensive documentation from the time, in temporary and permanent exhibitions, in addition to promoting events related to the theme, with the participation of former

prisoners of the regime, and to having a Reference Center, which can be consulted by the public to obtain information from documentation on repression and political resistance in Brazil (MEMORIAL DA RESISTÊNCIA DE SÃO PAULO, 2023).

The permanent exhibition occupies a large part of the institution's space, including four cells, the main corridor, and the sunbathing corridor, original from the period when people were imprisoned there. Today, the cells, although maintained with original features, are staged within the exhibition project. The animation we are referring to is in Cell 2, empty and dark, where in its center hangs a semi-transparent square acrylic, with approximate dimensions of 50 x 50 cm, which serves as a support for the projection of the animation, lasting 4 minutes and 23 seconds, with sound.

The animation is produced from photographic images from DEOPS files and records (Figure 1). These are the files of metal drawers and their contents, which consist of files of people arrested by the regime and documents relating to them, including portraits. The animation begins with the following text: "In this building, one of the countless political prisons from the period of the military dictatorship [1964–1985]. Thousands of people were arrested as a result of the systematic and exacerbated surveillance and control actions carried out by different repression bodies, including DEOPS/SP. Many remain missing to this day and others died as a result of torture." The text, presented on a black background, is accompanied by the sound of a leak, as if it were a pipe leak, which creates an atmosphere in the cell that contains, at its background, an area that served as an indoor toilet.

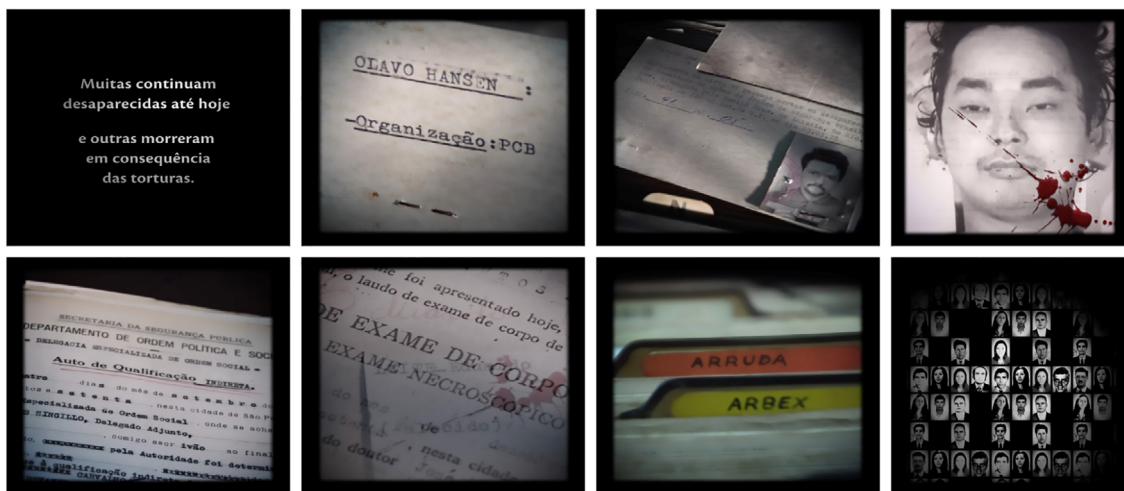


Source: *Museu da Resistência de São Paulo* (2023)/photography: Levi Fanan.

Figure 1. Cell 2 with the animation being projected onto a central acrylic piece.

The animation continues with intense editing of images, interspersed with other moments in which they are animated in light or sudden movements, and moments of stopmotion animation, where drawers open and cards come out.

The images appear in the shadows, sometimes shadowed or out of focus, as if they were being revealed to us. Sometimes, photographic flashes appear. Sound effects accompany all the movements of the images and editing and resemble tones of suspense, with sharp, harsh and sudden noises. The texts written on the cards, originally typed, now appear as if they were being written at the moment: letter by letter appear, pressed on an invisible typewriter, accompanied by its characteristic mechanical sound. Ballpoint pen lines are drawn highlighting parts of the texts written on the cards. Words such as: missing, dead, organization, dead people, death, deceased, subversive, terrorist, executed, arrested are written and marked, as well as the names of some prisoners and dates (Figure 2).



Source: *Estúdio Preto e Branco*.

Figure 2. Some images of the animation in Cell 2

This animation therefore consists of the documentary presentation of the records made by the repression organization itself on the prisoners held there. The thousands of cards that are part of the institution's collection, despite their remarkably indisputable historical value, have low exhibition value. This is because they are documents that are difficult to display within the time and space of a visit to a place like this. The use of animation, in this case, makes it possible to give visibility to an important part of the collection, so that visitors have brief knowledge of the contents that form part of the documentation of the period to which the museum is dedicated. Furthermore, the very nature of the animation leads to a feeling of participation, as it occurs by updating this collection in the present of the movement carried out by the image at the time of the visit, in front of the visitor. The movement of the cards and letters, typed in stopmotion, update and personify the documents, making it clear through the movement that there were individuals behind the capture, imprisonment, torture, and murder of these people, even though they are not identified singularly but rather as something bigger, like the repression organization, for instance.

The animation, projected in the center of the cell in a floating position, on a semi-transparent surface, also evokes the virtual quality of memory, associated

with the image of dreams (or nightmares, in this case) that the animated image can provide, even though, in this case, composed exclusively of photographic images. Furthermore, the tense sound effects, added to the sudden movements and alternations between shadows, flashes, blurs and the presence of graphic blood splashed in climactic moments, dramatize the documents presented, bringing clear “self-evidence” of the existence of authorship in the creation of this piece, while the impression of reality is maintained, as is naturally also characteristic of animations. For visitors, there is no doubt that this animation presents a specific focus on these documents. It is an official and assumed vision of authorship, by the museum, from the point of view in which it established itself in relation to its own collection, different, for example, from that established by the repressive organization and, consequently, the dictatorial regime itself.

As seen, the use of animation in museum spaces allows, among other things, the materialization of intangible collections (information) or, as in the case of *Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo*, it allowed giving visibility to a part of its collection that, without the animation, would have difficulty presenting itself to the visiting public, due to its complex visualization. In addition to this aspect more related to the exhibition value, documentary animation makes it possible to make clear the presence of authorship and, therefore, the voice of the curator or the museum itself, since in animation the impression of reality is not confused, in the vast majority of cases, with the perception of reality. Animations can create new realities, just like live action movies, but the displacement it provides opens up space for a more accurate awareness of the human construction present in the articulation of the work, while allowing participation based on its quality of updated movement in the present.

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## Female narrative in horror animation: a case study on “Blood Tea and Red String” (2006)

### *A narrativa feminina na animação de horror: um estudo de caso sobre “Chá de sangue e fio vermelho” (2006)*

Maria Luiza Correa da Silva<sup>1</sup> 

#### ABSTRACT

This work aims to analyze the film “Blood Tea and Red String”, from 2006, directed by Christiane Cegavske, and understand how it broke with stereotyped patterns of female characters in animated films. Considering that animated films were, for a long time, written and directed by men, the women’s representation in these narratives was at the mercy of the male perspective, which most often portrayed them as subservient figures waiting for their prince charming. With feminism and the search for new characters gaining space among the public, it is acknowledged that women have been conquering this place and guaranteeing a different and better representation for these characters. Furthermore, the paper also intends to understand how horror is represented in animation and how Christiane Cegavske managed to build a horror story with puppets, taking inspiration from fairy tales to criticize this historically significant place for women.

**Keywords:** Animation. Horror. Women in Cinema. Blood tea and red string.

#### RESUMO

*Este trabalho tem a intenção de analisar o filme “Chá de sangue e fio vermelho”, de 2006, dirigido por Christiane Cegavske, e entender como ele quebrou com padrões estereotipados das personagens femininas em filmes de animação. Levando em consideração que os filmes animados foram, por muito tempo, escritos e dirigidos por homens, a representação das mulheres nessas narrativas ficou à mercê da ótica masculina, que na maioria das vezes as retratava como figuras subservientes à espera de seu príncipe encantado. Com o feminismo e a busca por novas personagens ganhando espaço entre o público, é de se reconhecer que as mulheres vêm conquistando esse lugar e garantindo uma distinta e melhor representação para essas personagens. Além disso, o trabalho também objetiva entender como o horror é representado na animação e como Christiane Cegavske conseguiu construir uma história de horror com bonecos, inspirando-se nos contos de fadas para criticar esse lugar historicamente destinado às mulheres.*

**Palavras-chave:** Animação. Horror. Mulheres no Cinema. Chá de sangue e fio vermelho.

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## INTRODUCTION

Stephen King once wrote that “we make up horrors to help us cope with real ones.” This brings up a discussion about how the horror genre does not exist only with the intention of scaring people and making them sleep with the lights on for a few nights, but also to wonder about the horrors that surrounds us and to explicitly criticize an inhumanity contained in the social context.

The objective of this work was to analyze the scarcity of animation productions made by women and also to understand horror animation and how it is viewed within a film industry that insists on classifying animated films as being exclusively children’s works. Finally, the film “Blood Tea and Red String” from 2004, directed by Christiane Cegavske, was observed as to how it managed to break with female stereotypes in cinema and, especially, in animated cinema.

The research was committed to analyzing how the lack of representation of women behind the camera in cinema and, consequently, in animation, resulted in the propagation of labels associated with women in these works that objectified, sexualized or diminished them, transforming their existence, even as protagonists of the stories, in an eternal wait for a prince charming.

This work was based on interviews with female animators and data from recent years to assess the number of women in animation, especially Henry Giroux’s research on Disney princesses and the prominence that the company had in the field of animation, in addition to the responsibility for having culminated in such stereotypes and how they have been trying to break this stigma.

From this, an overview was drawn about how animation is seen in society and how animations that are not aimed at children end up being targets of a certain amount of fear on the part of the viewer. Finally, violence within animations and horror in specific were approached. Furthermore, there was also an effort to analyze the stereotypes portrayed in horror stories and how the genre was also responsible for propagating ideals contained in a male perspective.

With this basis, the intention was to analyze Cegavske’s film and understand how it managed to break these rules in cinema and become a film that aimed to criticize the position of women not only in society, but also in how they are seen in cinema, always from a patriarchal point of view.

## THE SCARCE PRODUCTION OF ANIMATED CONTENT MADE BY WOMEN

Since the beginning of what is today considered the seventh art, women have been left out of a historiography that would value them and praise their work. Thus, even though many of them had led productions, writing, directing or producing, these works ended up being undervalued within a culture grounded in patriarchy and masculine ideals.

This reality resulted in a hegemonic cinema, which is characterized by the male perspective as the correct one. Therefore, the majority of cinematographic

productions with an economic appeal or that achieved great positions in the history of cinema are exclusive to men in script and direction.

*Variety* magazine, one of the greatest in the entertainment industry in the United States, made a survey of the one hundred best films of all time in the history of cinema. Among the one hundred films chosen, only five were directed by women.<sup>1</sup> In Brazil, this reality is no different either. If analyzing, for example, the list of the Brazilian Association of Film Critics in relation to the hundred best Brazilian films, there is only a total of seven films directed by women.<sup>2</sup>

Neusa Barbosa (2019), in her article entitled "Pioneers in cinematographic production in Brazil" (our translation), makes an observation about the delay of women, according to current historiography, in entering the cinematographic market. According to the author:

The first film made in Brazil (of which, according to reports, nothing remains) was shot on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1898, by the Italian Afonso Segreto. (...) The first film signed by a woman was made exactly 22 years after this inaugural milestone. History records the name of Cléo de Verberena (1909-1972) as the first director of Brazilian cinema with the silent film *The Mystery of the Black Domino*, a police intrigue involving the murder of a woman during Carnival, released in 1930 (BARBOSA, 2019, p. 18, our translation).

Animated cinema, as well as cinema in general, was also affected by this reality. In the book "*Animações Brasileiras: 100 filmes essenciais*", organized by Gabriel Carneiro and Paulo Henrique Silva (2018), only nine works are exclusively written by women. Laryssa Prado and Erika Savernini (2018) address this lack of women in the animation field in their research and state that:

It is noteworthy that the absence of women in these commemorative texts does not seem to be just an option of those who produce them, of those who choose to address animations of male predominance, but it is rather a reflection of the state of the art in national production: a majority male environment both due to the predominance of men in management and key creative roles and due to representation (PRADO; SAVERNINI, 2018, p. 12, our translation).

Even though the passage of time and the debate about representation both in front of and behind the camera have contributed to bringing more women to cinema and, consequently, also to animation, the number of women in this area is still worryingly smaller than that of men.

According to a survey carried out by the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, with the group Women in Animation in 2019, considering the last 12 years, only 3% of animations had a woman in the director position. Most of the stories,

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1 Available from: <https://variety.com/lists/best-movies-of-all-time/all-about-eve-1950/> Cited on Jun. 05, 2023

2 Available from: [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lista\\_dos\\_100\\_melhores\\_filmes\\_brasileiros\\_segundo\\_a\\_ABRACCINE](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lista_dos_100_melhores_filmes_brasileiros_segundo_a_ABRACCINE) Cited on Jun. 05, 2023

as well as the animation itself, end up being scripted, animated, directed and produced by a massive majority of men, which also influences the themes and representations that these works come to have, mostly from the perspective of men. Kitty Turley, executive producer of *Strange Beast*, criticizes in an interview that in an animation studio “women are there to facilitate men’s creative voice and vision”.<sup>3</sup>

The result of this lack of female protagonism in film production resulted in countless narratives that concurred with stereotypes of female characters being propagated in cinema, especially for children, who are still the target audience for most animated films.

It is impossible to talk about animation without also talking about Disney. Since the best animated film category was created at the Oscars in 2002, the company has taken home a total of 16 statuettes. Furthermore, it is clear that most of the successful animations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that influenced thousands of children were also the company’s products.

Therefore, one must also address the fact that Disney had a huge role in spreading female stereotypes. Most of their stories reinforced an image of women as a fragile princess, whose only goal in life was to wait or fight for a prince charming. These princesses followed a socially well-developed formula of what was considered “being a woman”. Michelle Cechin (2014) questions this idea:

The first Disney princesses were inscribed in an ideal of behavior considered civilized, noble, showing special care to the rules of etiquette, decorum and hygiene. This “social distinction” was expressed by “noble feelings”, and was expressed as being beautiful, docile, polite, passive, industrious and controlled (CECHIN, 2014, p. 135, our translation).

Films such as “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” (1937), “Cinderella” (1950), and “Beauty and the Beast” (1991) were directly responsible for Disney’s commercial success. They all start from the principle that the salvation of the princess only occurs through the arrival of a man and the love expressed by him. This ends up resulting in a concrete influence on girls’ vision of themselves and their intended future, which is limited to the idea that “happily ever after” can only come through a romantic relationship or marriage. Henry Giroux (1995) debates the influence of Disney on children and adds:

Given the influence of Disney ideology on children, it is imperative that fathers, mothers, teachers, and other adults understand how these films attract the attention and shape the values of the children who watch and purchase them [...] As one of the main institutions charged with building childhood in the United States, it should deserve healthy suspicion and critical debate. This debate should not be limited to the home but should be a central element of school and any other important public place of learning (GIROUX, 1995, p. 58, our translation).

<sup>3</sup> Available from: <https://garotasdomotion.com/por-que-existem-poucas-mulheres-na-animacao-e-o-que-nos-podemos-fazer> Cited on Jun. 03, 2023.

It is also important to recognize that this scenario has been changing over the last few years. With the production of content on the internet and feminism taking up more space, there was a reality check with the search for animated content, whether children's or not, that in its construction did not portray women in a passive place in the plot, in addition to asking for princesses who would not meet with a romantic partner as the end of the story.

At Disney itself it was possible to observe these changes. Female characters began to gain a new role within animations, now also as heroines. "*Brave*" (2012) is a great example of this new scenario. Jéssica Dombrowski Netto (2013), in an analysis of the role of women in Disney films, states that "what Merida shows is that it is not necessary to dress like a man, hide from your parents or even want to be someone you are not in order to have your happily ever after. And that happily ever after is not linked to marriage" (our translation).

### **HORROR ANIMATION: DOES IT EXIST?**

At the 2023 Oscars, Guillermo del Toro<sup>4</sup>, winner of the best animation category with "*Pinocchio*", addressed in his speech that "Animation is cinema. Animation is not a genre for kids, it's a medium for art."

The discussion that animation is not a genre for children has been expanding in recent years. It is widely believed that animated films, or even those that mix animation, are exclusively for children. This mistaken idea ends up devaluing animation as cinema itself, as it tries to place it on a "not so serious" level and also results in reaching a completely different audience than what is intended when animation tries to break out of this stereotype.

An example of this is the famous "*Sausage Party*" (2016), an animation dedicated to an adult audience that was involved in a controversy in Brazilian territory, when a candidate for councilor recorded a video repudiating the film and saying that "if it isn't intended for children, why is it a children's animation?".<sup>5</sup>

Even though it is a caricatured and extreme example, it is common for the viewer to associate animations with an audience made up entirely of parents and children. Therefore, when an animated film sets out to break out of this niche, it ends up facing a main challenge: winning over viewers who don't normally consume it.

Horror animation has already conquered a considerable space when it comes to fans of the genre. Even though they are specific works named after famous directors that have gained a greater space in the industry, it is clear that these films had enormous public appeal.

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4 Available from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TASL0ZwXw80&ab\\_channel=NBC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TASL0ZwXw80&ab_channel=NBC) Cited on Jun. 05, 2023.

5 Available at: <https://pipocamoderna.com.br/2017/08/esuíta-de-festa-da-salsicha-na-hbo-vira-causa-de-gente-desinformada/> Cited on Jun. 05, 2023.

When considering, for example, the numbers collected in movie theaters, “The Nightmare Before Christmas” (1993) and “The Corpse Bride” (2005), both with Tim Burton at the helm of their productions, had, respectively, 18 and 40 million dollars in budget and earned an amount of 91 and 118 million dollars at the box office, a profit three times greater than the amount spent.

To get started discussing horror animation, it is also important to consider how the themes covered in the genre are represented in animation. Sébastien Denis (2010) explains the concept of *hurt gags*, saying that most animated films, even the ones made especially for kids, contained violence in their narrative.

However, this violence was usually caricatured and exaggerated, and never had any real consequences for the person who suffered it. Victoria Farina Meyer (2019) exemplifies this concept with the famous cartoon “Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner”:

Wile E. Coyote and the Road Runner (1949) is probably one of the most recognized works for using this type of physical comedy. The plot always revolves around Coyote chasing the Road Runner to devour him. He creates the most outrageous plans, but he never succeeds and always ends up in trouble. Despite this, Coyote never gives up and, with just one editing cut, he is already “as good as new” (MEYER, 2019, p. 26, our translation).

Another animation that became popular in Brazil and also used hurt gags was “Tom and Jerry” (1940). The endless cat and mouse chase always ended in something bad happening to Tom, but the cat recovered in moments and soon after was ready to go after the mouse again.

To talk about horror itself, we first need to characterize what horror would actually be. Horror and terror, etymologically, are distinct concepts. Carlos Primati (2010) defines terror as the sensation of something that comes from what terrifies us, from suspense, from tension, while horror comes from the grotesque, from contact with something that causes us a certain repulsion.

It is unanimous that there is no ideal formula for defining a horror story. Writers such as Noël Carroll, Stephen King, and Ann Radcliffe tried to understand what horror actually consisted of, however, even though there is a consensus that there are certain themes that are commonly associated with horror, such as ghosts, monsters, killers, and violence in general, this, in itself, is not limited to a film of the genre.

H. P. Lovecraft (2020), writer of horror and science fiction in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and currently called the father of cosmic horror, defines the fear of something unknown as being the narrative driving force for many of these stories:

Man’s strongest and oldest emotion is fear, and the strongest and oldest kind of fear is fear of the unknown. Few psychologists will dispute these facts, and their admitted truth should forever establish the authenticity and dignity of fantastic horror narratives as a literary form (LOVECRAFT, 2020, p. 1, our translation).



Therefore, a horror film does not necessarily need to have extreme violence, to be full of jumpscare<sup>6</sup> or to have an extremely characterized monster, but rather have in its essence embedded fear, even if not directly causing this fear to the viewer.

Horror in animated cinema can transition into horror subgenres as much as possible. If in "Paranorman" (2012) there is a not-so-explicit aesthetic about a boy who talks to the dead, in "Mad God" (2021) the audience is presented with a gore<sup>7</sup> delirium about the end of the world.

## **STEREOTYPES ASSOCIATED WITH WOMEN IN HORROR**

In addition to the classic standards to which Disney fitted its female characters and which became embedded in the social imagination and had a huge influence on children, especially girls, the horror genre was also responsible for propagating ideas that defiled the image of women and naturalized certain behaviors associated with female characters.

One of these ideas was born in literature, with writers like Edgar Allan Poe, who often wrote about female characters who were dead or who died during the story. Grace Bellin (2010) analyzes some of Poe's characters, comparing how women were portrayed in his work and those of Ann Radcliffe, observing the differences between the two:

Poe's female figures are also different from Radcliffe's. There is no interest in portraying such characters as noble and virtuous beings, but rather as fragile beings, who get sick and go crazy in different ways. The representation of the feminine in Poe's stories always brings an aspect of horror associated with beauty and youth, so that Poe himself believed that the death of his beloved woman was the most poetic subject in the world (BELLIN, 2010, p. 54, our translation).

Now regarding cinema, one of the most famous stereotypes spread in horror stories was that of the final girls. Carol J. Clover (2015) coined the term in her most famous work "Men, Women, and Chainsaws" and defined final girls as those characters who survive at the end of horror films.

However, these characters have a very well-constructed personality, in contrast to the others who die during the narrative. While the women who do not survive are always shown with a boyfriend, having an active sex life, doing drugs or going to parties, the final girls are those who don't go out, don't drink, are always at home or working and are constantly worried about their friends' lives.

In other words, the idea built in these narratives ends up propagating an ideal of a woman who "deserves" to survive an attack or persecution, while placing the responsibility for the others' deaths on their "inappropriate" behavior for a woman, as if they deserved the end they had. André Campos Silva (2014) questions this thought:

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6 Jumpscare, is a technique used in horror films and games that consists of an abrupt change in image or sound, with the aim of surprising and frightening the viewer.

7 Gore is considered one of the cinematographic subgenres of horror, which consists of films that contain extremely violent and graphic scenes, with a lot of use of blood and body remains.

They (the final girls) are built to create an identification with the public, inviting them right at the beginning of the story to look at the world through their eyes. This may help to explain why they do not have sexual relations during the film, do not use drugs or have attitudes that a large portion of the population morally condemns. It seems that the public has very conservative conceptions about sex, as well as the way a woman behaves (SILVA, 2014, p. 94, our translation).

Furthermore, another idea that also spread throughout horror films was that of monstrous women. Unlike the other concept that literally kills characters who do not behave in a certain passive and subservient way, here the narratives transform them into monsters or the villain of the story.

Bárbara Creed (1993) questions the idea of monstrous women and states that much research is done on characters in the role of victims, but little is said about them in the role of monster. But even so, these women have similar characteristics that make them fall into one category or the other.

Furthermore, the author also mentions that many fairy tales also use the figure of the monstrous woman, who always contrasts with the princess. In "Snow White", for example, there is the stepmother, considered a villain for her vanity and incessant search for beauty, differentiating herself from the princess, who doesn't seem to care about her appearance.

The representation of the witch is very common in several tales. During the Middle Ages, the Church associated witchcraft directly with the female gender, calling for the idea that it was easier for women to be led by this sin and provoke what came from it. Creed (1993) addresses this idea of witches also represented in the stories:

The witch, of course, is a familiar female monster; she is invariably represented as an old, ugly crone who is capable of monstrous acts. During the European witch trials of recent history she was accused of the most hideous crimes: cannibalism, murder, castration of male victims, and the advent of natural disasters such as storms, fires and the plague (CREED, 1993, p. 2).

Another stereotype appropriated by horror, although not limited to it, was that of motherhood. There is a lot of talk about women in the narrative who die or survive in the face of certain behaviors, but those who are written to have solely the role of mother within the narrative are also noteworthy and, often, they become the ones to be sacrificed. Their lives completely revolve around their children, and this sacrifice can come in different forms, whether it be giving up their personality or literally giving their life.

Placing the woman as a support for the protagonist, whether as a romantic partner or as a mother, is an old role in the history of cinema. However, some horror films also ended up constructing this in an even more explicit way, showing women who have completely lost themselves in search of a child or their salvation.

Sarah Arnold (2016) discusses motherhood in horror films, stating that these mothers end up having only two roles in these stories: that of a good mother or that

of a bad mother. These roles are also normally defined depending on the size of the sacrifice made for the child, with those women who reject motherhood in some way or who are not seen as exemplary mothers being bad.

### **"BLOOD TEA AND RED STRING": AN ANIMATED REVIEW**

It is in this context that Christiane Cegavske's feature film, entitled "Tea of Blood and Red String", from 2006, appears, which seeks to approach a kind of fairy tale for adults, mixing children's narratives with horror cinema to tell a story of a female character who is fought over by rival tribes and who breaks with the standards constructed by men in most animated films, in their aesthetics and in their narrative.

Based on the methodology of film analysis replicated by Francis Vanoye and Anne Goliot-Lété (1994), the film is observed from an active perspective, no longer aiming only at the entertainment of the story, but with the aim of seeking and repairing the issues that are intended to be analyzed.

Analytical reading of the film presupposes some questions of method. Analyzing a film is not watching it, but reviewing it and, even more, examining it technically by taking another attitude toward it, dismantling it, extending its perceptual register and making it "move", stir in its meanings, its impact (VANOYE; GOLIOT-LÉTÉ, 1994, p. 12).

The synopsis of the film, according to Prime Video streaming, is that it "tells the story of the struggle between aristocratic white mice and the rustic creatures who live under the oak tree as they fight to possess the doll of their heart's desire". In other words, the narrative will show a doll as the center of attention of two groups made up of men and how they will go to extreme lengths for their woman who is considered "perfect".

The film begins with the construction of a doll by a tribe of creatures. The doll, which was initially supposed to be given to another group, the rats, ends up becoming an object of obsession for the creatures, who fall in love with it and decide to take it for themselves. However, the rats, not satisfied with this attitude, kidnap the doll, which leads the creatures on a journey to try to recover it.

As already mentioned, in most children's stories, the desired female figure is actually perfect in the eyes of society: beautiful, feminine, kind. Here, the doll makes an analogy to what is seen as perfect to men: an apathetic, lifeless figure, only aesthetically beautiful. There is no real reason for the passion of the creatures and mice other than the representation of the doll, which appears to be beautiful in their eyes.

Cegavske seeks, during the narrative, to build numerous parallels about women within society, who are not only seen as an object of possession, but also created to serve male desires and an already established destiny, which is motherhood. Even though the doll shows no trace of life or humanity, they transform her, at the end of the film, into a mother.

The director also seeks to incorporate many elements from horror films to create a work that is not limited to showing only the delicacy of fairy tales. It uses not-so-common places portrayed in the animation to create a horror story. For example, the creatures falling into a trap that leaves them completely drugged and encountering a figure of a spider on the way who is also interested in the doll but has his own personal motives, which are distinct from those of the two tribes.

Although some viewers consider it essential, as already mentioned, jumpscars are not mandatory to categorize a film in the horror genre. Therefore, the film ends up being a unique representation of the genre within animation.

Tzvetan Todorov says that the feeling of fear or the fright caused by a work does not define horror and adds: "looking for the feeling of fear in the characters does not allow us to define the genre either: firstly, fairy tales can be horror stories" (TODOROV, 2010, p. 21). In other words, "Blood Tea and Red String" may be considered an example of a fairy tale that is also a horror story.

Furthermore, the film is constructed in a way that fear and horror are placed from a feminist perspective within the animation. Cegavske uses references to aristocracy, childbirth, gore, playfulness, expressing the oppression suffered by women using rag dolls and creativity. The director seeks to connect all these elements to bring to life a dark and sensitive tale, which breaks directly with the pattern of animation themes and establishes itself by showing the reality of a fairy tale.

## CONCLUSION

Horror is a fluid genre that can change and is not limited to one subject or format. Although blood, monsters and death are often present, it is mainly defined by representing the fears of a person or character, which may or may not reflect on the viewer. Therefore, a day at home can become a horror film, just as a fairy tale can too.

This work did not intend to state the characteristics of a horror film, but to present new perspectives that can be engendered in it. Furthermore, this article also sought to provide an overview of the conditions of women on and off camera and how, in recent years, based on feminist studies and women gaining a greater space in these places, narratives about women have been changing their desires and their destinies, no longer limited to a man and a marriage, but also and, mainly, to self-knowledge and their own discoveries.

It was also necessary to understand the audience for animated stories and how horror can be fitted into these films, explaining that animations of this genre end up having a popular appeal, whether by horror fans, or by people looking for stories in animation that are not so aimed at children.

Therefore, Christiane Cegavske's film becomes a rarity in an environment that obstructs female entry in every way, since, in this specific niche, women were even more invisible, since horror had, for a long time, a perspective

and a majority male spectator, while animation also excluded women from its productions.

It is important to understand the film as a criticism of society and the role of women within it. Furthermore, it is interesting to observe the aesthetic used by the director and how it differs in every way from those often used in animation as well as from what the public would consider an exclusively feminine aesthetic.

Furthermore, the research was intended to promote studies on horror animations directed by women and bring to light films like Cegavske's, which did not reach a wide audience, and which deserve more visibility. Only in this way can these stories and these directors guarantee the opportunity to continue producing films that are not limited to hegemonic animated cinema, bedtime stories, and a completely masculine vision of the figure of women.

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# Review of animation and live-action cinema: similarities and differences<sup>1</sup>

## *Avaliação sobre Animação e Cinema de vida real: semelhanças e diferenças*

Eliane Muniz Gordeeff<sup>1</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

This article aimed to present a survey on the similarities and inconsistencies between an animated work and one made in live-action. The article considered relevant questions about the characteristics of Animation and the direct photographic capture of images (in live-action), which challenge the canons of Film Studies: presenting movement as a fundamental element of Animation and not of Live-Action Cinema. Animated techniques and their differences were also analyzed, as well as the relationship between Animation and photorealistic image (according to Roland Barthes, André Bazin, and Edgar Morin), considering the sense of illusion. The studies of Edmond Couchot and Jean Baudrillard are fundamental for the analysis of Audiovisual simulation, as well as the works of Christian Metz and Jacques Aumont, for the evaluations of verisimilitude, the impression of reality and the suspension of disbelief, for these two types of images. The sense of “fiction” of the naturalistic and connotative images is also evaluated, both by Animation and Live-action Cinema, also considering the studies of Norman McLaren and Andrei Tarkovsky. In the end, the article concludes that the animated image is more untrue than the filmed image, always linked to the sense of everyday materiality. It evaluates the way of obtaining both images, the power of Animation, and the historical contradiction of the photorealistic image of what is known as 3D Animation. The text also ends with a summary of the entire analytical process through a framework of the characteristics of the animated and filmed images.

**Keywords:** Animated image. Filmed image. Moving image. Animated techniques. Digital image.

### RESUMO

*O objetivo deste artigo é apresentar um levantamento sobre as similaridades e incongruências entre uma obra animada e uma realizada em live-action. No artigo, são consideradas questões relevantes sobre as características da animação e da captura fotográfica direta das imagens (no live-action) que contestam os cânones dos Film Studies: o movimento como elemento fundamental da Animação, e não do Cinema Live-Action. Também são analisadas as técnicas animadas e suas diferenças, a relação da animação com a imagem fotorrealista (segundo Roland Barthes, André Bazin e Edgar Morin), considerando o sentido de ilusão. Os estudos de Edmond Couchot e Jean Baudrillard são basilares para as análises sobre a simulação no Audiovisual, assim como os trabalhos de Christian Metz e Jacques Aumont para as avaliações sobre a verossimilhança, a impressão da realidade e a suspensão da descrença, para esses dois tipos de imagens. Ainda são avaliados o sentido de “ficção” das imagens naturalista e conotativa, tanto pela Animação como pelo Cinema Live-Action, observando também os estudos de Norman McLaren e Andrei Tarkovski. Ao final, o artigo conclui que a imagem animada é mais falsa do que a imagem filmada, sempre ligada ao sentido da materialidade cotidiana. Avaliando a forma de se obter uma e outra imagem, a potência da Animação e a contradição histórica da imagem fotorrealista ligada à conhecida como Animação 3D. O texto também finaliza com um resumo de todo o processo analítico, por meio de um enquadramento das características das imagens animadas e filmadas.*

**Palavras-chave:** Imagem animada. Imagem filmada. Imagem em movimento. Técnicas animadas. Imagem digital.

<sup>1</sup> This evaluation was literally fundamental for the thesis (and is a part of it) *The Representation of the Diegetic Imaginarium in Animation in Live-Action Cinema* (2018) — with the guidance of Prof. Dr. João Paulo Queiroz, from the School of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon, in Portugal, with a scholarship from CNPq/Brazil, and from the University of Lisbon (European mobility program Erasmus+, at Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis /France) — where the relationship between animated and filmed images was studied in a live-action production. The text of this article was also published for the first time in English, at CONFIA 2016, 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Illustration and Animation, in Barcelos, Portugal, with the title “*The creation of the animated and filmed images*”.

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>2</sup>

Animation is an art form that has developed and expanded its field of activity over time. It is currently used in several areas, such as Media, Education, Engineering, and Computing, among others. However, when images, whether filmed or animated, merge completely, with no noticeable differences in production methods for Cinema, it is important to analyze the diverse and divergent aspects between these two ways of creating moving images. The objective of this article was to understand more explicitly its possibilities and visual results (mixed or not), once that, although they are not the same, Animation and Live-Action Cinema, despite sharing the same medium (Audiovisual), run the risk of losing their individuality traits in image creation, both being considered as just “Cinema”. Many often mistakenly consider Animation as nothing more than a “Cinema” genre (DENIS, 2007, p. 7).

Yes, nowadays, both support digital file formats. Sébastien Denis (2007, p. 7) states that “animated cinema is, first and foremost, cinema” while Manovich (2001, p. 295) observes that, “as cinema enters the digital age [...]. Consequently, cinema can no longer be clearly distinguished from animation.” However, it is understood that although results may be coded in the same way, this does not mean that the processes or technical characteristics are exactly the same. Furthermore, it must be considered that Denis points out the potential of Animated Cinema as equal to that of Live-Action Cinema and that Manovich (2001, p. 295) states that the meaning of reality, the photorealism of animation/3D effects and filmed images, is the same; while “the manual construction of images in digital cinema represents a return to the pre-cinematic practice of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when images were painted and animated by hand”<sup>3</sup>. None of them claim that Animation and Live-Action Cinema are the same thing. However, they are part of the industry known as “Cinema”, and it is precisely Cinema productions that this article focuses on.

To this end, Animation is analyzed as a set of ways of creating images through various animated techniques, observing their formal, visual, technical, and representation characteristics, and making a comparison with filmed images (Live-Action Cinema), which by convention are considered antagonistic — real image (shot) *versus* animated image. However, other differences are also observed.

The study aimed to analyze the various divergent aspects between these two ways of creating moving images in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their possibilities and understand what they result in. To this end, aspects of integrity, reproduction, aura, representation, fiction, and virtuality of the image are explored, considering several works, such as those by André Bazin, Christian Metz, Edgar Morin, Jacques Aumont, Edmond Couchot, Roland Barthes, Norman McLaren, and Andrei Tarkovsky.

The methodology that guided this analysis refers to Animation as a way of creating images, as a technical-creative process.

<sup>2</sup> All quotations were freely translated by the author, except for English originals.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Cholodenko (2007, p. 41) also comments on animation being ignored, for a long time, by Film Studies.

## **HISTORICAL ISSUES AND RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS**

Animation is an art form that predates what we know as Cinema. Its origins date back to the optical studies of Joseph Plateau (WILLOUGHBY, 2009) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Dominique Willoughby (2009) observed, it was a scientific, technical, and aesthetic creation. While Painting was dedicated to illusionistic visual representation by creating images with paint on a surface (canvas, wall); Sculpture, by sculpting materials; and Engraving and Drawing created images through lines on a surface, Animation emerged as a more complex form of image creation, with the fundamental difference of being moving images.

In fact, animation is an optical illusion<sup>4</sup>: movements do not actually occur but are “visible” when interpreted by the optical system, of the human brain. The static images of a character, with some variations, are interpreted in succession and perceived as if they were in motion.

At the time, this creation was considered merely a curiosity: an optical study that became a form of mass entertainment (with the advent of French *cafés* and American Vaudevilles<sup>5</sup>). The nature of the image was very different from what existed until then (static images, as in Engraving and Painting). Unsurprisingly, futurists considered moving images a kind of artistic avant-garde, like Impressionism and Cubism (LESLIE, 2004), reflecting the productive urban existence and kinetic machines of Modernity. And, in a way, indeed, they were.

The ability to effectively create animations arises when humans understand how to deceive their own vision, through the segmented representation of movement. Two important topics played a fundamental role in creating the animations: illusion and the division of movement into multiple images. Live-Action Cinema emerged later as the result of the development of these two topics, with advances in theatrical staging and Photography. That resulted in capturing images of a scenario directly onto a sensitive support surface (film).

Therefore, although several renowned theorists claim that the fundamental element of Cinema is movement (METZ, 1972; IRZYKOWSKI, 2008), observing some of the fundamental characteristics of these two forms of image creation is crucial. Live-Action Cinema does not create movement, but captures it — the movements are real, as are the actors and the elements of the scene (mostly). When the film is projected at speed, the illusion of movement is created, like when screening an animated film.

Another art form that creates movement and places it as its cornerstone is Dance<sup>6</sup>. Movement is also the cornerstone of Animation, making it what it is, but animation itself only creates the illusion of movement. Another evidence of the importance of movement in Animation is the fact that codes were established to

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4 Phy Effect and Retinal Resistance (AUMONT, 2001).

5 “A type of variety theater, where the public could drink and chat, with its origins in curiosity halls” (MASCARELLO, 2006, p. 20).

6 Just like other Arts whose basis is movement: Mime, Performance.

create it: the “Fundamental Principles of Animation”<sup>7</sup> developed by Walt Disney. Likewise, Cinema presents specific taxonomies for different types of montages, raccords, and cuts (AUMONT, 2008). Therefore, it is more coherent to say that what sets Cinema apart is the *montage*<sup>8</sup>. The Koulechov effect (2008) contains the spark of the entire understanding of narrative films, including raccords, the succession of shots, cuts, and any editing work, that is, cinematographic language itself. This language was developed over time with technological advances, such as smaller and more flexible cameras, moving cameras, cranes, editing equipment, etc.

Much of the “language” was also “absorbed” by the animators, who already used it instinctively and naturally, as in the basic sequence of comic books. However, without the taxonomy or awareness of film construction. This subsequent understanding allowed the industrialization and standardization of audiovisual production.

## **CONSTRUCTION OF ANIMATED IMAGE AND FILMED IMAGE AND THEIR VISUALITIES**

The construction of an image in Animation and Live-Action Cinema are very different. In general, Cinema obtains its images by capturing a real scene, which can be a performance with actors and scene elements following a script. However, the scene unfolds like a theatrical farce on a stage. Since the image results from photographic capture, cinema “demands” its connection with reality, regardless of the absurd representation. Simply put, it is impossible to separate the element of reality that the photographic image absorbs (BARTHES, 1984). The actor’s presence and movements create the impression of reality as the scene develops (BAZIN, 1991), generating empathy and similarity with the material world. Witnessing history happening before our eyes turns the screen into a window, as Bazin (1967) argues, allowing us to play the role of *voyeur*.

On the other hand, in Animation, there are several ways to build images, depending on the technique used. That may include Cartoon (drawing on any type of support, including Rotoscoping, drawing/painting on film and 2D — digital drawing); Stop Motion (using sand, modeling clay, dolls, objects, cutouts, painting on glass, pixilation, pin screen or strata-cut); or 3D Animation, through three-dimensional computer graphics.

The verb “build” is used because, in reality, everything is built from nothing (drawing is also a form of construction): sets, scene elements, props, and characters. While in Cinema, characters are “incarnated” by actors who need to be characterized and “play their role” (Dramatic Art), in Animation, they are drawn, painted, sculpted, cut, constructed, or modeled to “embody” the characters’ personality traits and design.

<sup>7</sup> Which were developed and disseminated by Walt Disney and his collaborators but had already been conceptualized in books and periodicals from the 1920s (CRAFTON, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> “Montage is the principle that governs the organization of visual and sound filmic elements, or groups of such elements, juxtaposing them, linking them and/or organizing their duration” (this is the “expanded definition of montage”, by Aumont (2008, p.62).

It is worth mentioning that pixilation is a particular case, as it also involves actors and, among all animated techniques, it is the one that most resemble the look of a live-action film, working with real-world dimensions and all production apparatuses, such as clothing, makeup, scenery, and lighting. However, the actors have no autonomy and are manipulated like puppets. Each technique has its own specific characteristics.

## Cartoons (Animated Drawings)

This technique results from a succession of drawings in which positions are slightly modified to create the illusion of movement. As in any drawing, this technique records the animators' work, their own movement (GRAÇA, 2006). Drawings are photographed or digitized to create film-like continuity, usually at a rate of 24 to 30 drawings per second. If the work is drawn directly on a digital tablet<sup>9</sup>, it is considered a computer file (thus called *2D Animation*<sup>10</sup>). If the drawings are made directly on the film<sup>11</sup>, this is in turn, the record of the work itself (the so-called *Animation Without a Camera*). In *Rotoscopy*<sup>12</sup>, the drawings are made based on a previously filmed image.

In Cartoons, the line determines the shapes and delimits areas, creating objects, backgrounds, props, and characters based on basic concepts of "figure and background" (ARNHEIM, 2009). By recognizing what you see (and what you already know), it is possible to identify the lines and stains as "something." This technique is fluid and flexible in nature, allowing for quick and easy adaptation and transformation. The choice of color influences the emotional impact and energizes the shapes (ARNHEIM, 2009). Although it is a basic technique — in general, animators learn animation by drawing — it is very rich in possibilities. The line works in the X and Y (two-dimensional) planes, but, since the Renaissance, it has been possible to create the illusion of three-dimensionality — this being the paradox of the two-dimensional image (AUMONT, 2001). It is also possible to simulate the impression of three-dimensionality, for example, by applying layers in the working process of the animated image, like the famous multi-plane camera from Disney studios (FURNISS, 2008)<sup>13</sup>.

## Stop Motion

This technique does not classify as a cartoon but rather as an animated film. It does not leave paper records or editable digital files (as with 2D Animation), but

9 For example: *Thought of You* (2011), by Ryan Woodward. <https://vimeo.com/14803194>.

10 Generally, it works like a hybrid of cut-out animation and a cartoon: the character's body is created in sets that are joined along the axes of the body, like a paper "puppet". This then moves via the timeline motion controls in the animation software.

11 As an example, the short *Two Sisters* (1991), by Caroline Leaf: [https://www.nfb.ca/film/two\\_sisters](https://www.nfb.ca/film/two_sisters).

12 Like *Waltz With Bashir* (2008), by Ari Folman. Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/24745755>.

13 Positioning characters and backgrounds on different layers. The same principle was also used by Oskar Fischinger (1900-1967), in *Optical Poem* (1937), allowing the inclusion of depth of field in the two-dimensional image.

photographic images captured frame by frame<sup>14</sup>. It can be considered an “active” technique, as it involves an “autophagic” animation process, in which after each image capture, the scene is modified to create the next one, leaving only the last image at the end<sup>15</sup>. Animations with sand, cutting, painting, or modeling clay on glass are generally produced on a table with layers of glass, where the image is photographed from the top position over the image plane.

Animations with puppets, objects, and pixilation are physically three-dimensional and require the same care as a live-action film, adapted to the scale of the production, such as lighting, photography, scenery, and, in the case of puppets and pixilation, costumes. The film’s set, as do the puppets themselves, need to be built. Although it is an industrial production<sup>16</sup>, it always involves an element of artisanal work, such as sculpting, modeling, and sewing, to create a small-scale fictional world.

In Stop Motion, in the case of *Sand Animation*<sup>17</sup> and *Glass Painting*<sup>18</sup>, images are more fluid, transparent, and with relief, resembling a painting in which the materials are sensitive to the animator’s touch, and the lines and stains mix. Working with these techniques involves considering the layers of work to be illuminated to give depth to the image, making light a fundamental element, not only to highlight the image but also to allow the perception of another important characteristic: texture.

Cut-out animation<sup>19</sup>, typically made of paper, can be folded, torn or cut despite the lack of flexibility. That offers other paths and means for artistic, technical, and aesthetic achievement, as seen in Garri Bardin’s *Adagio* (2000)<sup>20</sup>.

Puppet Animation has the appearance of a theatrical performance, a puppet theater without manipulators, in which they behave as if they were alive and were the characters themselves<sup>21</sup>. There is a seduction involved in this animated image, as movement grants the dolls a sense of reality and credibility, like the fulfillment of children’s (and some adults’) fantasies, allowing them to see what was previously just a fantasy with their eyes.

Object Animation, like pixilation, despite incorporating elements from the real world, such as filmed images, can create deeply provocative images, as in *Street of Crocodiles*<sup>22</sup> (1986), by the Quay Brothers, or surrealistic ones, as in *Luminaris*<sup>23</sup> (2011), by Juan Pablo Zaramella.

14 Which can be manipulated one by one digitally.

15 Light Animation is not considered a type of stop motion, as there is no “stop-motion” movement but rather one that is captured with a time-lapse camera.

16 As in the production of *Coraline* (2009), by Henry Selick, in which the characters’ mouths were physically modeled on a 3D digital printer, based on a handmade model (GRUNEWALD, 2014).

17 For example: *The Owl Who Married a Goose: An Eskimo Legend* (1974), by Caroline Leaf: [https://www.nfb.ca/film/owl\\_who\\_married\\_goose/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/owl_who_married_goose/).

18 For example: *Black Soul* (2000), by Martine Chartrand: [https://www.nfb.ca/film/black\\_soul](https://www.nfb.ca/film/black_soul).

19 For example: *Fado Lusitano* (1995), by Abi Feijó: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IIQkTr-cmAl>.

20 This is a short film made with paper dolls, like animated origami: <https://vimeo.com/157777379>.

21 For example: *Tchaikovsky An Elegy* (2011), by Barry Purves: <https://vimeo.com/80935923>.

22 <https://vimeo.com/13348494>.

23 <https://vimeo.com/24051768>.



On the other hand, the pin screen<sup>24</sup> works with the shadows created by the heights of moving pins at the base of a screen. The visual effect is similar to that created with sand, but the movements are even smoother and more fluid, resembling smoke, a kind of “animated engraving.” By pushing and pulling the pins in a particular way, the image is “engraved” onto the screen by the shadows created by the movement of the pins.

Strata-cut, in turn, is the Stop Motion technique that requires more careful preparation on the part of the animator. It develops through successive photos obtained from cutting material, such as a fruit, or it can be extremely sophisticated, as shown by the mass modeling work in *ABC*<sup>25</sup> (1988), by David Daniels, for the film *MoonWalker* (1988), by Jerry Kramer. Its images result from the internal organization of the colors of modeling clay obtained by slicing the block of dough.

### 3D Animation

*3D Animation* creates environments, objects, and characters modeled in a virtual computer environment with X, Y, and Z axes, using vector structures, just as in *2D Animation*. It is a combination of construction, modeling, and sculpting that involves the creation of structures by manipulating simple pre-designed software elements, such as circles and cubes, or using drawing tools, resulting in a new structure, be it an object, environment, or character. Images are applied to the surface of these elements to add color, to define shapes and textures, using what are called “materials”, which can have different characteristics, such as brightness, reflection, transparency, etc. Movement control is carried out through a timeline, similar to editing software. Furthermore, through scripts and plug-ins<sup>26</sup>, it is possible to automate movements and create various effects, including crowds (BECK, 2004), as seen in productions such as *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* (2010), directed by David Yates.

In *The Revenant*<sup>27</sup> (2015), directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu, the visual “reality” potential of 3D Animation is impressive, making it difficult to differentiate, just by observation, what was filmed from what was animated. Furthermore, 3D offers the ability to achieve different visual effects, as seen in The Tale of the Three Brothers<sup>28</sup> scene in the same Harry Potter film.

It is essential to highlight that 3D Animation has several distinct characteristics concerning the previously mentioned animation methods. One of them is that the entire process takes place “at a distance” from the animator, as it involves using

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24 For example: *Here and the Great Elsewhere* (2012), by Michèle Lemieux: [https://www.nfb.ca/film/here\\_and\\_the\\_great\\_elsewhere](https://www.nfb.ca/film/here_and_the_great_elsewhere). The pin screen was a technique created and developed by Alexander Alexeieff (WILLOUGHBY, 2009) – strata-cut was developed by David Daniels (FURNISS, 1998).

25 <https://vimeo.com/39368085>.

26 These are small software programs that work together with other programs to create image effects.

27 Which used a 3D animated bear. *The Revenant* won the 2015 Annie Awards (Character Animation in a Live Action Production, <https://annieawards.org/legacy/43rd-annie-awards>). The bear sequence: <https://vimeo.com/150120476>.

28 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bN1\\_h\\_eGitE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bN1_h_eGitE)



specific equipment and resources for modeling and sculpting in an environment that only exists mathematically. To apply color to a character — and this also applies to 2D — the animator does not use pencils or paints but software tools to fill in the areas delimited by vector (mathematical) lines. Modeling is done by manipulating a virtual mesh using a mouse or digital pen, eliminating the need for direct physical contact and avoiding dirty hands. In this relationship, whether physical or codified, the intermediate factor differs significantly from traditional figurative techniques.

[...] they replace the real “raw” origin — the reality(s) that an optical image seeks to represent — with a secondary reality, refined, purified in the crucible of calculations and shaping operations. [...] It is no longer about deciding to discover what is visible: it is about discovering what is possible to model (COUCHOT, 1991, p. 58).

If, on the one hand, technology was developed to improve the living and working conditions of humanity, on the other hand, it creates total dependence in this relationship context. Actions are encoded and converted into numbers, then processed to create the images displayed on the screen, playing a significant role in image production today. As Edmond Couchot (1991, p. 58) explained, this has become another reality,

a synthesized, artificial reality, without material substrate from the electronic fog of billions of micro-impulses that run through the computer's electronic circuits. Line reality that exists only virtually. In this sense, we can say that the image-matrix synthesis no longer attaches to reality: it liberates it. Brings the logic of representation into the era of simulation.

Such mathematical logic underlying this approach also does not allow for improvisation. The “errors” common in manually created animations, which give “life” to the work and constitute a “special defect” of the scene, such as the loss of natural movement, are typical of Stop Motion animations. The computer executes what is ordered precisely, but in the dynamics of the animator's actions, there is room for more spontaneous elements to emerge.

## **THE ISSUE OF AURA AND SIMULATION**

As Walter Benjamin (1987, p. 168) observes, “what atrophies in the era of technical reproducibility of the work of art is its aura”. In other words, when images are reproduced, they lose their uniqueness and authenticity.

Both the filmed image and animated images do not have the aura of a unique work of art endowed with the authenticity of being original, as they exist only as a kind of reproduction. Although, like drawings, painted or engraved images, before being “reproduced,” have to a certain extent the aura of the original and authentic image. For example, we have the plasterboards left over from the film *A Noite* (1999) by Regina Pessoa.

The fact that Stop Motion animation “loses” its original (unlike Cartoons) brings it closer to a theatrical performance, in which each performance is unique

despite being of the same play. Each manipulation of the puppet is a unique movement. If another take is necessary, it is another manipulation at another time, just like in another take in Live-Action Cinema. In other words, in Stop Motion (as in Live-Action Cinema), there is only the photographic record of “being here,” according to Barthes (2009, p. 40) — what does not happen with cartoons, which always generates drawings or digital files for future editions.

While in Animation there is direct control by the animator over the character, whether in the drawing or the manipulation of materials, in the case of a live-action film, directors depend heavily on the talent and concentration of the actors to obtain the desired effect, and on other professionals for other technical aspects, as well as in animation.

Animation and Live-Action Cinema are different ways of creating moving images. In the latter, the actors’ movements are observed as they happen and then captured with the camera. However, in the case of animation, it is planned and built gradually.

In fact, there is no animation without simulation. The movement, scenery, drawings, drawn characters or dolls, everything simulates something. However, in the case of 3D animation, it is a simulation of a simulation because the animation itself already has a degree of simulation. When trying to recreate the “real,” a hyper-reality is created, both in the sense of being art and from the point of view of Jean Baudrillard (1991). “Digital” is the technological, productive, and reproductive arm in the field of image representation.

## **FICTION AND NATURALIST AND CONNOTATIVE IMAGES**

Fiction films aim to present something someone imagined, consisting of two non-realities: the fiction itself and the way it is represented (images, objects, and actors) (AUMONT, 2008). Animation, however, consists of three non-realities: the story’s fiction, its representation, and the life its elements seem to have — the artificiality of movement.

Filmed images can portray an action, a real record (such as a documentary), and even a non-narrative film. Animation can also tell a story, and it can be a documentary — such as *Waltz With Bashir*<sup>29</sup> (2009), by Ari Forman — and a non-narrative image — when the objective is to create movement, simply visual, such as *Color Box*<sup>30</sup> (1937), by Len Lye.

However, it is worth highlighting that, according to Aumont and Marie, it is necessary to exclude the possibility of representation (AUMONT, MARIE, 2003) so that no one “can understand the relationships of time, succession, cause or consequence of plans and elements” (AUMONT, 2008, p. 93), that is, it is not possible to identify any narrative.

Therefore, it can be concluded that, in most animation works, the representation of some narrative is almost always likely, even if it is unintentional. The audience

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29 The animation tells the story of former combatants from the 1982 Lebanon War. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak\\_2NWhr\\_g4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak_2NWhr_g4)

30 [https://archive.org/details/A\\_Colour\\_Box](https://archive.org/details/A_Colour_Box)

can create some kind of narrative, based on shapes and the sequence of their movements over time — for example, simple spots may look like character circles, as in *Boogie-Doodle*<sup>31</sup> (1941), by Norman McLaren.

Live-action and animated films can be connected to naturalistic imagery. Classic Disney animations<sup>32</sup> and *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*<sup>33</sup> (2001), by Hironobu Sakaguchi, are examples; just like Martin Scorsese's films, such as *Taxi Driver*<sup>34</sup> (1977) and *Raging Bull* (1980) — but they are different degrees of "reality". They can also provide fantasy images, such as Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away*<sup>35</sup> (2001) and George Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon*<sup>36</sup> (1902).

The point is that the filmed image is linked to capturing something that happened at the level of reality (even if it is a staging) serves as an anchor. There is no way to escape the impositions of real materiality. Animation does not suffer from this association, and it is possible to create and invent any situation, environment, or story, as its characters can explode and come to life soon after.

Two highly regarded directors, Norman McLaren and Andrei Tarkovsky, stated the same thing differently, each about their own art forms. According to McLaren (*apud* AUMONT, 2012, p. 21), "what happens between each image is more important than what exists in each image. Animation is, therefore, the art of manipulating the invisible interstices that lie between frames." While Tarkovsky (2002, p. 77) observed: "The image [...] becomes truly cinematic when (among other things) it not only lives in real time but rather when time is also alive within it, even within each frame."

In other words, what is important is what is "between" the frames, just like in writing, where what really matters is what is between the lines. It is understood that they refer to a visual aesthetic issue. However, there is also a semiotic component: "images are not the things they represent, but they use things to talk about other things" (JOLY, 1996, p. 84). What is out of the picture (often) is what is actually being expressed. This statement applies to both Animation and Live-Action Cinema — as in films such as *The Hand*<sup>37</sup> (1965), by Jiri Trnka, and *The Great Dictator*<sup>38</sup> (1940), by Charles Chaplin.

However, Animation is less linked to reality than Live-Action Cinema, so it manages to transcend this characteristic much more easily. Moreover, if, although connected to "reality", the filmed image is the form of art that is most connected to the imagination of humanity (MORIN, 1956), Animation — which does not have this requirement — is the connection with the imagination itself. What is seen, and

31 <https://www.nfb.ca/film/boogie-doodle>

32 Like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), by David Hand. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sxbZ70VRsg>

33 *Trailer*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnE64DbnUzY>

34 *Trailer*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUxD4-dEzn0>

35 *Trailer*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByXuk9QqQkk>

36 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5dG3Skdq6U>

37 <https://vimeo.com/60337657>

38 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jj-PaqFrBc>

known not to be “real”, is naturally abstracted from reality but finds a connection with emotions and ideas, as what is seen is not real but continues to talk about things that exist. In other words, it is possible through Animation to present absolutely convincing concepts, feelings, suffering, and experiences — as in *Aria*<sup>39</sup> (2001), a puppet animation by Piotr Sapegin, in which the character from Giacomo Puccini’s opera, Madame Butterfly, commits suicide by dismantling himself.

## CONCLUSION

Table 1 presents a final summary of the comparisons mentioned throughout the text.

Table 1. Characteristics: Animated image vs. Live-Action image.

Characteristics	Animated image	Live-action image
Fundamental basis	Movement	Montage
It is the result of	Optics + technique + aesthetics	Optical + Photography + Dramaturgy
The movement	It is simulated, created frame by frame (captured, scanned or photographed)	It is real, captured by camera
Works with	Still images	Real action
Image construction	Everything is created	Uses things and actors
Its fiction is	In representation + in narrative + in movement	In representation + in narrative
Possible genres	Fiction, Documentary and Experimental (abstract)	Fiction, Documentary and Experimental
Degree of reality	As a representation (drawings), it is relative. But as a 3D image, it can achieve photorealistic aesthetics	As a photographic image linked to reality, it is direct and strong
Degree of connotation	As a representation, it can be more direct, less restrictive (by logical thinking) and therefore broader	As a photorealistic image linked to reality, it is more indirect and censored by the sense of reality

The movement seen in live-action films is a recording of real action. In animation, this is a simulation, and in itself a kind of virtualization, in which, according to Pierre Lévy (2007, p. 17), “it is not a *déréalisation* [...], but a change of identity, a displacement of the ontological center of gravity of the object considered [...]”, noting that “the invention of new speeds is the first degree of virtualization” (2007, p. 23).

Regarding image construction, it is undeniable that the possibility of managing this process is deeper and more complete in Animation than in Live-Action Cinema. As an image, the animated form allows for more outstanding visual and aesthetic integrity, resulting from total creation and construction. In Live-Action Cinema, it is necessary to incorporate other elements outside the director’s control. Hitchcock

<sup>39</sup> [https://www.n®.ca/lm/aria\\_en](https://www.n®.ca/lm/aria_en)

said that, as a director, he needed to wait for the actor's performance to proceed with the scene — but he preferred not to wait (TRUFFAUT, 1974). In Animation, this dependency does not exist.

Every time you need to represent something outside the limits of material reality, Animation is used as a special effect — which is nothing new, a tactic having been relied upon since the times of George Méliès. And it is widely used, as in the case of the Harry Potter series, Lord of the Rings, among many others. It is also used as a matter of practical and production economy<sup>40</sup>, as in Ang Lee's *Life of Pi* (2012). In fact, Manovich (as mentioned) is correct. Furthermore, in this context, using 3D to create naturalistic environments and characters has historically created two critical and contradictory situations. If in the past, Arts pursued the faithful representation of reality, mimesis, which was broken with the advent of Photography, today, the main objective of developing the virtual representation of "reality" is the hyper-reality of the image for cinematic images — considering that the Seventh Art is a consequence of the advancement of the Arts and Technology of Modernity — and as a result, we seem to have returned to the past.

If through Photography, an art technique that allows reproduction, the "aura" was lost, with the digital image, the snapshot is lost since the original no longer exists. At that time, this was a light-sensitized emulsion, whereas today, it is a digital record (of files with "zeros" and "ones"). There is a mathematical coding of the captured image (the quality depends on the size and capacity of the device's sensor) — which can be digitally manipulated indefinitely, generating another image in each instance. As François Soulages (2009) states, "To plagiarize Koyré, we can say that we have gone again from a closed world (an image closed in on itself) to the infinite universe (an infinitely explorable and modifiable image): this is a new Copernican revolution."

This observation applies to both Animation and Live-Action Cinema. Logically, such advances allow for savings and agility in production, which is essential in any profitable business. However, we must be aware of this process and how it happens.

Benjamin (1987) declares Photography as the seed of Cinema. While Morin said that Cinema is the seed of the virtual, taking into account the entire "cinematic apparatus" — the screen, the cinematographic camera, and the projection. And in 1956, he had already developed a conclusion applicable to both means of creating a moving image, even today:

We are at the very moment in history when reciprocally, the machine involves and determines, or rather, realizes, the essence of man. [...] The cinema is the mother-machine, the imaginary generator, and, reciprocally, the imaginary determined by the machine. It came to settle in the heart of aesthetics, which was considered to be reserved for individual hand-made creations: the division of labor, rationalization, and standardization command the production of films. Even the very word production has replaced creation (MORIN, 1956, p. 241).

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40 In the case of films involving actor interaction with wild animals and risky scenarios, 3D Animation offers safety and savings in time and money, training, and creating or accessing real scenarios.

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# Animated Shapes: the movement drawn in cartoon animation

## *Formas Animadas: o movimento desenhado na animação cartunesca*

Antonio Fialho<sup>1</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

This research proposes an investigative clipping on the constitution of the shape of certain cartoon characters, selected from the functionality of drawing for animation, with the purpose of arguing how the visual project of certain figures exacerbates the creative variation between their poses to establish consecutive changes to the drawn movement, suggesting spontaneity to cartoon animation. Through a brief historical overview of the dynamic relationships that were established between shape and movement in American cartoons, mainly from the 1910s to the 1940s, the research delimits how certain variations in the external and internal structure of the figure were decisive in influencing this qualitative construction in character animation. From there, the research unfolds to analyze the configuration of some contemporary characters of cartoon animation in relation to the peculiarities of the movement performed by them, proposing to highlight the attributes of the qualitative result of these animations. Thus, we seek to reflect on how the shapes of these characters are reorganized to represent the animated movement, based on the practice of specific fundamental principles, conceptually analyzed, in its constructive structure, in this research.

**Keywords:** Animated cartoon. Cartoon animation. Shape. Change. Movement.

### RESUMO

*Esta pesquisa propõe um recorte investigativo sobre a constituição da forma de determinados personagens caricatos, selecionados a partir da funcionalidade do desenho para animação, com o propósito de argumentar como o projeto visual de certas figuras exacerbam a variação criativa entre suas poses para estabelecer mudanças consecutivas ao movimento desenhado, sugerindo espontaneidade à animação cartunesca. Por meio de um breve panorama histórico sobre as relações dinâmicas que se estabeleceram entre forma e movimento no desenho animado estadunidense, principalmente nas décadas de 1910 a 1940, a pesquisa delimita como certas variações na estrutura externa e interna da figura foram decisivas para influenciar essa construção qualitativa na animação de personagens. A partir daí, a pesquisa se desdobra para analisar a forma de alguns personagens contemporâneos da animação cartunesca em relação às peculiaridades do movimento realizado por eles, propondo destacar os atributos do resultado qualitativo dessas animações. Assim, busca-se refletir como as formas destes personagens se reorganizam para representar o movimento animado, tomando por base a prática de princípios fundamentais específicos, discutidos conceitualmente e analisados, em sua estrutura construtiva, nesta pesquisa.*

**Palavras-chave:** Desenho animado. Animação cartunesca. Forma. Mudança. Movimento.

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## INTRODUCTION

The functionality of animation drawing involves specific characteristics in the organization of the shapes that make up the visual project of a character to be animated, precisely because this figure is designed to materialize a perception of apparent movement. In the meantime, there are important aspects to consider for the visual construction of a character designed for animation, mainly in the formal contrast established by the external points of articulation between its limbs compared to the capacity for internal manipulation of its volume. These aspects summarize the object of investigation of this research, animated shapes, in order to address a brief historical overview of the formal variation of American cartoons from the 1910s to the 1940s. The aim was, therefore, to analyze how some contemporary characters were designed to highlight the quality of their movements, such as the bird with long, articulated legs in the short film *Bird Karma* (William Salazar, 2018), from the American producer DreamWorks, or the protagonist with a balloon-shaped head and spherical external eyes, from the British independent short film *The Last Belle* (Neil Boyle, 2011).

The object of analysis of this research addressed how the simple — though efficient — construction of these characters was designed based on the ability of changing their shapes to suggest the movement intended in the animation. This research focuses specifically on the figurative shapes of cartoons, originally the Animated Cartoon conceptualized by Edwin Lutz when: “[...] comic graphic artists began to turn their attention to the making of drawings for animated screen pictures, [...] bringing into usage the expression ‘animated cartoons’” (LUTZ, 1920, p. 10). In other words, after this material support (cartoon) — “related to [...] paper, card, or pasteboard” (LUTZ, 1920, p. 8) — became the vehicle for posting the caricature drawings of American cartoonists: “[...] a printed picture [...] in which notabilities [...] are generally caricatured” (LUTZ, 1920, p. 10). We thus witness the genesis of cartoon animation: the *exaggeration*<sup>1</sup> of the contrast between shapes and facial expressions to imprint extravagant personalities and burlesque tones, with “references coming from cartoon or humorous printed pictures” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 79).

It is this movement recorded in still pictures of a character, but in sequential positions of the figure, and constituted by exaggerated forms, that expands the illusory concept of animated, suggesting an autonomous kinetic perception for its (the character’s) actions when projected for display. By defining animation as “[...] the art of movements that are drawn” (MCLAREN *apud* DENIS, 2010, p. 57), Scotsman Norman McLaren differentiates the essence that sustains the meaning of this illusion, although he himself was not a cartoonist. In other words, within this conceptual perspective of drawing for animation, the shapes drawn by animators are subordinated to the movement that their successive

1 “The principles of exaggeration allude here to the precise staging to visually represent the subjectivity of emotion, just as mime actors seek to enhance both their body and facial attitudinal poses” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 78, translated by the author).

positions evoke. It is its unified construction — and prone to constant changes in stages — that synthesizes the movement represented in the cartoon animation investigated here.

Based on the theoretical framework enunciated by Thomas and Johnston (1981) to guide principles developed in Disney animation in the 1930s, also supported by the *timing*<sup>2</sup> discussed by Whitaker and Halas (2009), essential precepts are noted for constructing the illusion of movement through gradual formal change of parts of a character. Among them, the principle called by Thomas and Johnston (1981, p. 59-62) as *overlapping action* stands out, adapted by this author (FIALHO, 2013, p. 55-57; 61-64) as *ações sobrepostas*, which would only be structured — in elucidating constructive stages — in the analytical processes disseminated by Williams (2001, p. 231-243) and, later, in examples analyzed by Goldberg (2008).

### Shapes in American cartoon animation: brief history

With the emergence of direct filming equipment at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, thanks to the inventive machinery disseminated by Lumière in France and also by Edson in the United States, the mechanism for capturing and projecting images will attract the interest of cartoonists and press comic artists. The illusion of apparent movement materialized by this machinery fascinated these artists to try to suggest life to their static drawings.

Initially, these cartoonists are attracted by the record of optical trickery caused by the photographic capture of quick pictures, made by cartoonists with chalk on a blackboard. In the United States, the first experiments are with “the process of capturing chalk talks or lightning sketches, these ‘lightning-drawings’ carried out in real time in front of the public (and which Méliès already practiced in cinema)” (DENIS, 2010, p 46). In this country, Englishman James Stuart Blackton is one of the pioneering cartoonists in this process, with the short film *The Enchanted Drawing* (1900), which does not materialize the meaning of illusory movement based on fixed drawings, but rather the magical effect of modifying the caricature drawing (created by assembling frames).

With the American comic artist and illustrator Winsor McCay, the term *animated cartoon* will in fact express *anima*<sup>3</sup> to cartoon characters, directing “the

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2 According to Whitaker and Halas (2009, p. 2), it is the rhythmic planning that gives *meaning* to the movement to be animated, as it alludes to the creative manipulation of the intervals of action that a character must perform to suggest a certain variation in impulse and weight (WHITAKER; HALAS, 2009, p. 25), according to the motivations of the emotional state to be represented by it in the animation. Thus, the term refers to regulating the timing of characters’ actions before animating them, which will condition the number of drawings to be created — and the distance between them — to emulate the rhythm intended for each movement constructed by the animator.

3 The characters’ motivation that suggests the illusion of life and singularizes animated movement: the illusionism that emulates the “‘soul’ (*anima*) of inert drawings” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 1). This action with *anima* — animation — is what differentiates it from an ordinary, mechanical action that does not consider the suggestion of natural forces to propel it, because, without taking this dynamic into account, “the result on the screen will be movement, but it will not be animation” (WHITAKER; HALAS, 2009, p. 2).

animation towards unbridled and surreal imagination" (DENIS, 2010, p. 47), already present in his work published in comics. Although his first experiments were with lightning drawings made in public, McCay inaugurated, with *Little Nemo* (1911), a sequence of drawn movements that suggest rotation and metamorphoses of his well-known comic book characters.

However, it was with his next short film, *How a Mosquito Operates* (1912), that this artist innovated in the technique of drawn movement, by materializing the convincing illusion in the animation of his character's paws, as analyzed below.

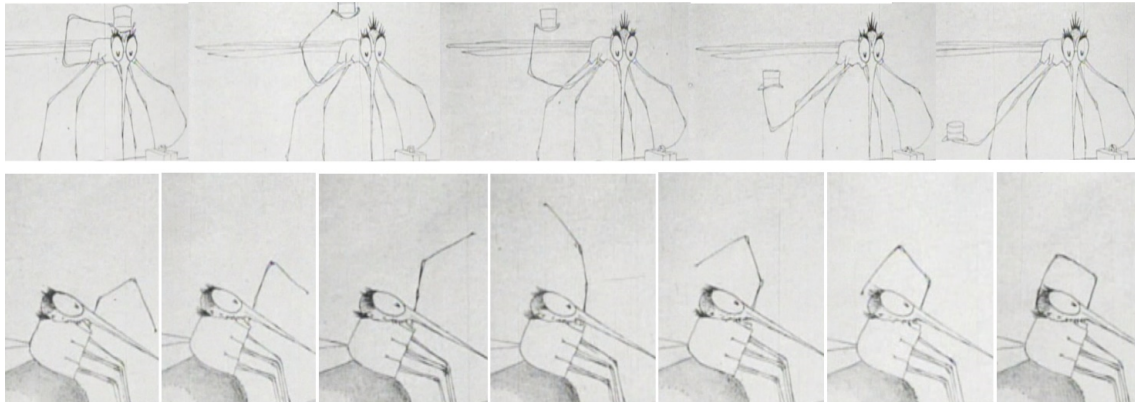
### *1910s: McCay builds movement through articulated shapes*

Cartoonist Winsor McCay's mastery of caricature drawing, although adorned by textures and graphics from his comics, results in formal characteristics that would influence the design of cartoon characters for animation. The shapes of his figures display a clear silhouette and suggest volume in the two-dimensional space of the paper's proportions, graphic qualities that were unprecedented in the representation of the beginnings of American cartoons, during the 1910s.

Still, what seems to differentiate his graphic work from others of his generation is that these shapes convincingly go beyond conventional drawing to constitute a hybrid image composed of a solid structure with anatomical bases that supports the marked *exaggeration* of the schematic caricature representation. This figurative quality permeates his images with a certain formal *appeal*<sup>4</sup> (THOMAS; JOHNSTON, 1981) and magnetism in the eyes of the viewer, who are immediately attracted by the design of his figures.

But what differentiates this cartoonist's contribution to the genesis of more sophisticated character animation is how he crafted his shapes to enhance drawn movement. In *How a Mosquito Operates* (1912), McCay introduces an animated movement that appears flexible due to the juxtaposition of the compound shape that structure the legs of his insect protagonist. By projecting the mosquito's legs through three external joints connecting the straight parts of its structure, the artist appears to have observed the natural movement of insects. With this strategy, McCay performs actions with the insect's legs that evoke the real anatomical structure of a mosquito. This results, for example, in an action with the paw that is revealed by its articulated parts, such as the gesture of the insect removing the top hat from its head or scratching it, before stinging its sleeping victim (Figure 1). The mechanism carried out by the animator was to gradually unfold the straight shapes of the leg through their joints, resulting in an overlapping movement of their parts, highly effective for the animation proposal and consistent with the structure of the insect.

4 "This principle is conditioned to summarize the power and magnetism that a simple main character pose should exert on the viewer, regardless of the quality of the movement in the animation" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 76).



Source: short film *How a Mosquito Operates* (Winsor McCay, 1912).

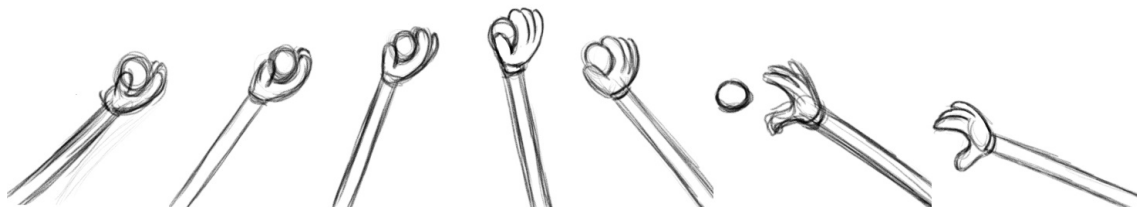
Figure 1. Shape of the legs suggests gradual movement of their articulated parts.

From the example analyzed, it can be seen that this mechanism elaborated by McCay was a precursor to the animation principle called “overlapping actions” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 55-57; 61-64)<sup>5</sup> — stated by Thomas and Johnston (1981) —, when used by Disney to systematize the articulated movement in the studio’s characters (which happened at least 20 years after the release of *How a Mosquito Operates*).

### *1920s: the industry simplifies shape*

But when the production of cartoons in the United States was industrialized in the 1920s, the visual projects of characters chose to unify this external joint of their parts, simplifying arms and legs to straight tubes, in order to accelerate the creation of intermediate positions (drawings) in cartoon animation. The introduction of this type of simplistic design formula will result in rigid movements for the characters’ actions, meaning in a clear regression to the shapes proposed by Winsor McCay for his insect protagonist in *How a Mosquito Operates*.

An obvious example of rigid actions in the animation of cartoon characters is in the short film *Felix Saves the Day* (Pat Sullivan, 1922), in which the notorious cat Felix throws a ball in a baseball game with two boys. While getting ready and throwing the ball, the character’s animation is represented by sequential positions of his arm dragging in an extended and rectilinear fashion, similar to the illustration made by the author in Figure 2.



Source: Animation frames drawn by the author.

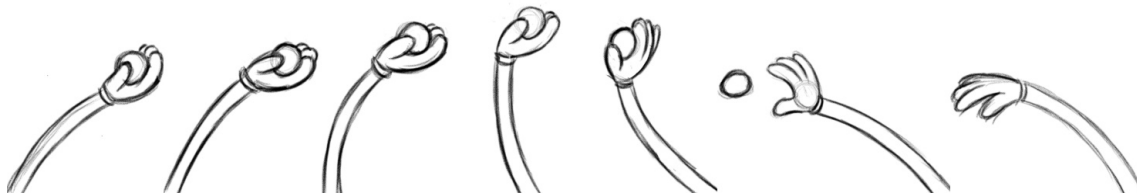
Figure 2. Rectilinear arm shape suggests rigid movement.

<sup>5</sup> “Articulated limbs of the body must overlap, progressively, to suggest *flexibility* in movement. Ex: arms moving freely” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 57, translated by the author). This term is also conceptualized in a similar way by Whitaker and Halas, when they maintain that, in animation, it is usual “[...] to have a time lag between the movements of different parts of the figure. This is called overlapping action” (2009, p. 61).



However, still in that decade, American animator Bill Nolan is credited with rescuing flexible movement in cartoon animation, through the introduction of limbs made up of curved tubes to the visual projects of characters. The change proposed by Nolan, curving the rectilinear shape of the tubes that represented arms and legs, became popular in cartoon characters in the 1920s and the method became known as “[...] ‘rubber hose’ animation. It was novel and funny since nobody had any bones and everything flowed with endless curving actions [...]” (WILLIAMS, 2001, p. 232). The new curvilinear structure of the characters’ external shapes “facilitated and supported flexible, wave-like movement in the animation” (FIALHO, 2013, p. 63).

Figure 3 depicts the same ball throwing positions in Figure 2, which allows comparing the changes in arm shape, remaining curved during the throw and then changing direction when throwing it, suggesting a wave motion and, therefore, flexible for animation. The lack of a bone structure to support the parts of the arm — wrist, forearm, and upper arm — characterizes the uniform design proposal, precisely to simplify the creation of intermediate positions in the animation process stimulated by the American industry of the period (which demanded the production of a short film every two weeks).



Source: Animation frames drawn by the author.

Figure 3. Curved arm shape suggests flexible movement.

### *1930s: analysis of the movement sophisticates the relationship between shapes*

This decade is characterized by the maturation of the American cartoon industry, with the release of the first feature films for cinema, in a production dynamic that until then had focused on short films. This feat, previously considered inappropriate for an expanding market (as it was believed that cartoon comedy would not survive more than six minutes to entertain a cinema audience), proved to be commercially successful in the face of the enormous box office success of the 83-minute production *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Disney, 1937).

This victorious result, which established the animation industry for cinema in the United States, was only possible thanks to experiments with animation processes that advanced the representation of constructed movement, making this illusion more convincing under the effect of natural forces for the actions of people, animals, and special effects (water, fire, smoke). In particular, Disney Studios used short film productions from the *Silly Symphonies* series (1929-1939) to reach new aesthetic heights in cartoon animation, including experiments with animation more based on the naturalism of the human figure.

These qualitative results materialized in the feature film *Snow White* and were only possible thanks to constant studies of animal and human anatomy, introducing movement

adaptations based on filmic observation. This more technical and analytical strategy for animation made it possible to evaluate the changes that occur in external shapes during movement and their impact on the variation in the internal shape of an animal, person or object. Figure 4 illustrates photographic sequences of trotting and jumping positions of a cat at a gallop, taken from boards produced for scientific research by English photographer Eadweard Muybridge, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible to observe how the external joint of the legs articulates to support the cat's weight, as well as the clear distension of the internal shape of the feline's body when changing from trot to gallop.



Source: Muybridge (1979). Cat; trotting; change to galloping, 1872-1885. Available from: <<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/cat-trotting-change-to-galloping>>.

Figure 4. Articulated shape of a cat's paws supports the malleable shape of its body.

Examples like these, which enabled the analysis of animal movement by animators, distinguished important aspects of feline malleability, involving the ability to "squash and stretch" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 18-19; 26-27; 61-65) of its internal shape — another principle praised by Thomas and Johnston (1981, p. 47-51).

However, this analytical research also triggered adaptations for a *bone* structure in animated characters, which advanced to more anatomical arm shapes, simulating curves by juxtaposing rectilinear parts of their components (wrist, forearm, and upper arm). Figure 5 illustrates this modification of the structure, using the same positions to throw the ball as in Figure 3 for comparative purposes. It is, therefore, a return to the articulated movement suggested with spontaneity by McCay in the 1920s, reiterating this mechanism now as a tool to be mastered by animators to design superimposed actions in animation, using a term coined by American animator Art Babbitt in the 1930s: "successive breaking of joints" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 62)<sup>6</sup>.



Source: Animation frames drawn by the author.

Figure 5. Shape composed of articulated arm parts suggests flexible movement.

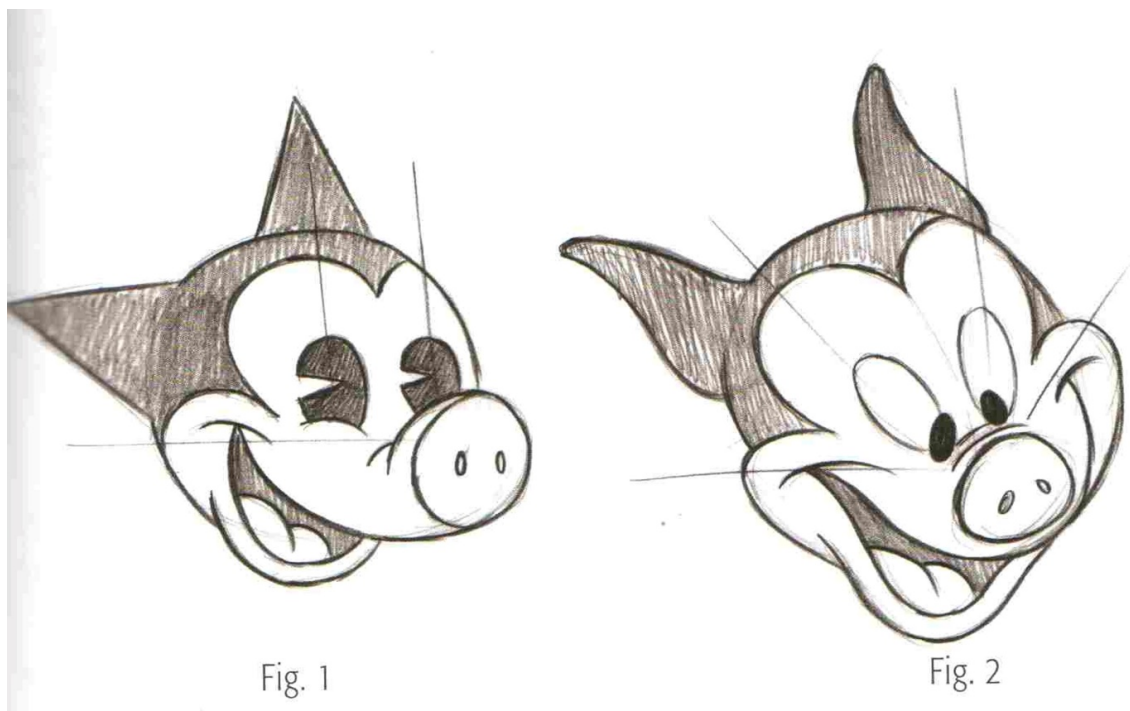
### *1940s: dynamic poses readjust internal and external shapes*

In this panoramic view of shape modification in animated characters in the United States, animator Fred Moore was considered a vital reference in the mid-1930s, when his design for cartoon characters, with dynamic lines and postures, became popular at the Disney studio in the 1940s.

<sup>6</sup> (GOLDBERG, 2008, p. 21).



With a drawing that naturally suggested movement in static poses, with the insertion of diagonal and concentric lines in the construction of the face (Figure 6), Moore's sketches expand the malleability of the figure's internal shapes, a characteristic that will define Disney cartoon characters in the 1940s. The result is a certain plasticity of shape, which was *animatable* because it already expressed dynamics before it even moved. In other words, a design that was easily manipulated by animators: "We used the term 'plastic', and just the definition of the word seemed to convey the feeling of potential activity in the drawing: 'Capable of being shaped or formed, pliable'" (THOMAS; JOHNSTON, 1981, p. 68).



Source: Goldberg (2008, p. 51).

Figure 6. Dynamic shape of cartoonish face (on the right) suggests movement in static pose (on the left).

This ability of shapes to distend and compress internally to represent the exaggerated emotions of the caricatured characters concerns the materiality of the figure, when using the *squash and stretch* principle in specific parts of the body. In this sense, postures and gestures are extended to define a clear silhouette that expresses this emotional state, also resulting in a transformation of its external shape, by streamlining the construction of the poses of cartoon characters.

Figure 7 illustrates Goldberg's (2008) demonstration, when drawing his character *Phil* (*Hercules*, Disney, 1997) from a basic construction structure — based on visual projects from the 1940s — to then expand its shape into a sketch, with the intention of redefining the same posture and gesture, only now exaggerated enough in a clear silhouette (external shape) to synthesize his explosive mannerisms in cartoon animation.



Source: Goldberg (2008, p. 55), Copyright of Disney Enterprises, Inc.

Figure 7. Shape stretched by exaggeration (on the right) evidences the character's emotional state.

This step-by-step animation mechanism of the character's shapes, whose precursor was comic book artist McCay, will become a basis for study by animators interested in the technical mastery of movement. The examples selected below seek to discuss how the construction of basic shapes for contemporary cartoon characters can emulate movements with varied artistic results, which are also categorized in the research.

### **Shapes in contemporary cartoon animation: Bird Karma and The Last Belle**

Excerpts from two animated short films were selected for analysis of the drawn movement, with the intention of discussing their kinetic results, considered the following methodological criteria:

- Authorial films made by animators with professional experience in industry productions and, therefore, with a broad command of the animation principles discussed here (*overlapping actions* in external shapes, *squash and stretch* in internal shapes);
- Design of characters with an emphasis on a cartoonish structure, with the arrangement of shapes through contrast and using the modeling of a clear silhouette, to suggest *volume* in the two-dimensional space and *exaggeration* in its constitution, without losing its formal *appeal*. The objective is to discuss examples of animation by *overlapping actions* and by *squash and stretch*, enhanced by the formal conception of these cartoon figures.

In this sense, the choice of *Bird Karma* (William Salazar, 2018) is justified by highlighting flexible movement: it has a formal structure reminiscent of McCay's mosquito, with long, exaggeratedly thin and straight legs, bendable at the joints. Its body is held high in the shape of a small sphere, from which the head

emerges with its long beak, balancing the silhouette of the figure. The intention is to demonstrate how its shape is efficient in the construction of movements that emphasize flexibility, speed, and eccentricity through animation by *overlapping actions*.

On the other hand, the selection of the female protagonist of *The Last Belle* (Neil Boyle, 2011) intends to highlight the movement of her malleable constitution, also emphasizing speed and internal change through anticipation and the character's cyclical actions. Her head, with the distinct shape of an inflatable balloon, is constructed into a caricature that resembles the structure of a frog, highlighting the spherical eyes above her forehead. Its curvilinear silhouette, which recalls the rounded lines of visual projects from the 1940s, is distributed in a hybrid shape that positions her eyes almost in a two-dimensional space, referencing the design of cartoonish figures from 1970s animation. This formal structure works to construct simple movements with creativity, modifying shape in sequential positions that emphasize the internal malleability of the figure.

### *Shape emphasizes articulated movement*

Animator William Salazar, also director of the short *Bird Karma*, uses his bird's long legs with precision to create a controlled walk between pause and movement, while the character carefully follows a fish under the waters of a swamp. The prey does not notice the bird's predatory intentions and appears to play with it, jumping out of the water in quick parabolas that are accompanied by the character with subtle step movements, stealthily controlled with small rests of the paws in the air, out of the water. The bird's intention is not to make noise and organize its leg control during pauses to follow the lurking fish.

Salazar achieves this effect of controlling each step of the bird by changing the direction of the joints of the leg as it descends into the water, contrasting its folded and straight shapes, exactly through the juxtaposition of its articulated parts (similar to the structure of McCay's mosquito). To suggest this flexible movement of the legs during the bird's steps, the walk is constructed by the successive change of its external joints, like a stick with three bending points that changes in the animation due to the formal contrast of its structure (Figure 8).



Source: *Bird Karma* (Storyboard, William Salazar, 2018).

Figure 8. Long shape of the legs juxtaposes articulated parts to suggest flexible movement.

### *Shape emphasizes swift movement*

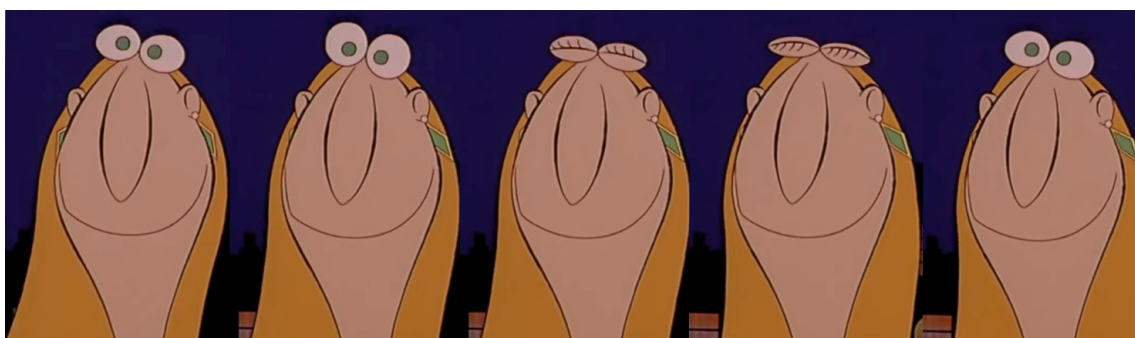
The legs of Salazar's bird, although long, are also articulated to convey fast actions that show the character hunting. Now he assumes the intentions of a predator and makes clear his intention to catch the fish, after realizing that this prey is a special animal. Without hesitation, the bird starts to move its long legs with extreme agility, moving quickly through all parts of the swamp, while pausing to remove objects from the water, in the hope of hooking the fish (Figure 9). There is no deformation in these positions that represent agile movement, but only successive folds and straightness of the parts that constitute the external shape of the bird's legs (joints).



Source: *Bird Karma* (Storyboard, William Salazar, 2018).  
Figure 9. Leg shape changes successively to suggest agile movement.

In counterpoint to the articulated movement of the external shape of the bird in *Bird Karma* through *overlapping actions*, the variation in the rounded internal shape of the protagonist's eyes in *The Last Belle* is used by the short's animator and director, Neil Boyle, to also represent an agile blink. The action is performed three successive times to suggest that the character is anxious and attentive, as she enters a bar for a scheduled date of couples online. She is also visibly nervous, as she hopes the date will become a possible relationship.

To demonstrate the protagonist's vivacity, both happy and nervous for the date, Boyle contrasts a malleable variation between the spherical and elliptical shapes of the eyes highlighted in silhouette (Figure 10). The formal change works perfectly to express a state of excitement to the character, keeping her focused to look around. This change through *squashing and stretching* of the shape of the eyes drives the creative strategy used by the animator to represent a simple movement, but here constructed in a surprising way (without intermediate positions between open and closed eyes) to express the effect of a rapid blink that conveys the entire character's motivation.



Source: *The Last Belle* (Neil Boyle, 2011).  
Figure 10. Malleable eyes shape suggests agile movement.



### *Shape emphasizes eccentric movement*

To perform a ritualistic dance, with the aim of stimulating hunting to the sound of Indian music, Salazar's bird performs imaginary movements between synthetic poses that vibrate with excitement, extending the observation time of these actions for the spectator. These connecting movements — with the vibratory synthesis-poses of the character standing upright on the water — are quick and constructed with just one or two creative intermediate positions and at unpredictable angles (Figure 11). There is an inventive register due to the intermediate positioning of the character, added to the creative path between these positions, which is more angular, "instead of the traditional wave-like and curved path" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 293, translated by the author). Again, the change perceived in this movement away from its naturalistic bases is highlighted by the constant change between extreme positions, through the contrast between folds and straight lines in the stick shapes of the bird's legs.



Source: *Bird Karma* (William Salazar, 2018).

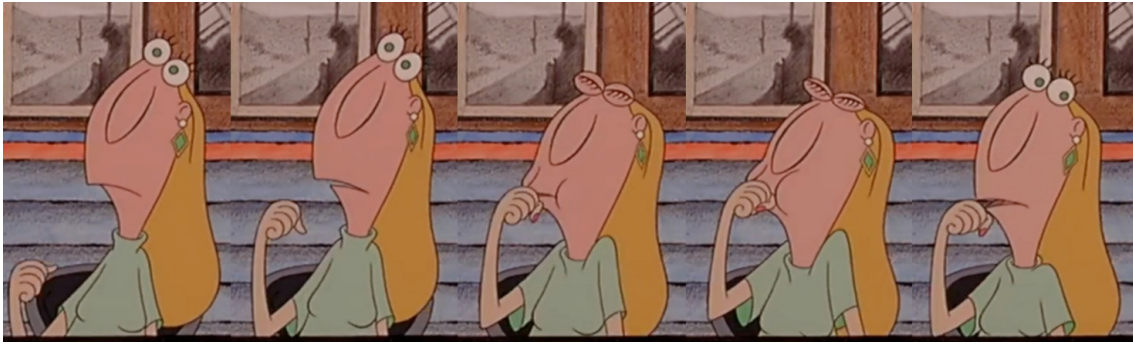
Figure 11. Leg shape overlaps to emphasize eccentric movement.

### *Shape emphasizes anticipatory movement*

The change in the internal shape of the protagonist of *The Last Belle* records the movement of anticipation performed by her as she coughs, disconcerted, before asking the bar attendant for a drink, still embarrassed after having lost her balance in her high heels and almost fallen to the floor. By designing a head in the shape of an inflated balloon that explains the internal variation of her face, Boyle manages to suggest the character's malleable and subtle movement when she bends down slightly to cough, clear her throat, and ask the attendant for her order. The design summarized by the protagonist's curved lines highlights the small inflation of the internal shape of her head, highlighting the rounded and full cheeks, in the anticipatory pose that registers the protagonist's cough. Her eyes are also compressed in the pose of anticipation, highlighting their elliptical shape for longer than in the protagonist's agile blinks. Figure 12 illustrates the extreme poses of the character, before bending down in her alert state with her head extended, during the anticipatory pose of slight squashing of the face and, soon after, when recomposing her malleable face to place her order.

### *Shape emphasizes cyclical movement*

The curved and continuous silhouette of the external shape of the protagonist of *The Last Belle* facilitates the conception of synthetic poses that express



Source: *The Last Belle* (Neil Boyle, 2011).

Figure 12. Malleable face shape highlights anticipatory movement.

her emotional state directly to the viewer. In this sense, the change in the internal shape of the eyes complements her posture, reinforcing the contrast between the character's different performances, during the secondary action of her hands and fingers cyclical movements. As a narrative synthesis, the character's pensive posture — waiting for her date —, contrasted with her frustrated posture — realizing that he will never arrive —, is outlined by the accentuated curvature of the shoulders and the distinct silhouette of the figure.

However, the internal shape of the character's eyes is what most reinforces and complements the cyclical movement of her hands, circling her finger around the edges of the glass cup, in her thoughtful posture and, in opposition, tapping her fingers sequentially on the table, in a frustrated posture. Functionally, Boyle chooses to relate the protagonist's blinking, maintaining its spherical shape in the pensive posture, but changing it to the shape of a sphere cut in half in the frustrated posture, transforming it into a two-dimensional geometric shape with closed and irritated eyes (Figure 13). Still, in both contrasting shapes, the closed eyes during the blink reinforce the ellipse form as a representation of the compressed state, materializing yet another creative strategy by the animator for simple movements of the character's component parts.



Source: *The Last Belle* (Neil Boyle, 2011).

Figure 13. Malleable eyes shape distinguishes the character's emotional state.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Constituting a theoretical reflection matured by professional practical experience with cartoons, this text proposed to complement a more comprehensive

research developed on the creative movement in animation, begun in a doctoral thesis (2013) and continued in subsequent academic articles, which address the symbiotic relationships between shape and movement to result in the much-desired *anima*<sup>7</sup> action in cartoon characters.

As we have tried to demonstrate, these shapes — external and internal — first express themselves to suggest movement. In other words, the contrast between a character's shapes alters or changes the perception of movement in the cartoon. In this sense, knowledge and full mastery of the "*fundamental principles of animation* by Thomas & Johnston" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 82)<sup>8</sup> are vital to enhance artistic expression in the work carried out by animators. And, in this research, they are the "Principles that reinforce visuality in animation design: - Appeal; - Solid Drawing [volume]; - Exaggeration" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 27), the most relevant to highlight the unique constitution of the animated shape of a cartoon character.

However, this formal constitution through *appeal*, *volume*, and *exaggeration* between articulated limbs and internal variations of a character's body must be designed to build the apparent movement of animation through successive changes, both in its external shape through "overlapping actions" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 55-57; 61-64), as well as internally due to "squash and stretch" (FIALHO, 2013, p. 18-19; 26-27; 61-65). Thus, shapes are reorganized to represent cartoonish movement in animation through a mechanism of constant change, seeking to emphasize the external contrast — through the compound shape of flexible joints that synthesizes the articulated silhouette of the character — opposed to the internal — through the malleable shape that indicates the elasticity degree of a character's volume.

The result of designing this animated shape — to highlight the movement constructed by drawings (in sequential positions) — expresses qualitative attributes to the animation. This drawn movement appears to have flexibility and malleability, depending on the degree of motivation planned for the cartoon character, which produces an animation of spontaneous perception and can enhance the personification of the animated figure in a creative and captivating way for the viewer.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. note 36.

<sup>8</sup> (THOMAS; JOHNSTON, 1981, p. 47).



Animated Shapes: the movement drawn in cartoon animation

LAST Belle, The. Direção: Neil Boyle. Produção: Neil Boyle, Rebecca Neville. Roteiro: Neil Boyle, Jim Maguire. Animação e Cenários: Neil Boyle, Mark Naisbitt. Animação Assistente: Bella Bremner. Reino Unido: Hysteria Ltd., 2011 (19'37" min.), son. cor. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ja1sjfnfjg0>. Cited on: Nov. 02, 18.

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## Animation criticism: debates and approaches in journalism and specialized literature

### *Crítica da animação: debates e abordagens no jornalismo e na literatura especializada*

Celbi Vagner Melo Pegoraro<sup>1</sup> 

#### **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to examine the structure of critical analysis of animation across various audiovisual platforms, focusing on understanding the role of criticism, its presence, the creators or producers of the animation, and the significance of grasping technical advancements and dialogue between languages. The objective is to investigate the progressive perspectives of critical thinking and its impact on the dissemination and public comprehension of animation. It offers a comprehensive analysis with a literature review of criticism in journalism and academia, with the subsequent intention of conducting an in-depth study on the interplay of languages and arts in animation.

**Keywords:** Animation. Criticism. Journalism.

#### **RESUMO**

*Este trabalho propõe analisar como se estrutura a análise crítica da animação em suas diferentes plataformas audiovisuais a partir da compreensão da função da crítica e onde ela aparece, quem são os criadores ou produtores da animação, e a importância do entendimento da evolução técnica e do diálogo entre linguagens. O objetivo é entender em qual perspectiva evoluiu o pensamento crítico e como isso influi na divulgação e no melhor entendimento público sobre animação. Trata-se de uma análise panorâmica com revisão da literatura sobre a crítica no jornalismo e no campo acadêmico, visando posteriormente aprofundar e desenvolver um estudo sobre o diálogo entre linguagens e artes na animação.*

**Palavras-chave:** Animação. Crítica. Jornalismo.

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## INTRODUCTION

Animated cinema and productions aimed at television, internet, and streaming have been, for a long time, topics of discussions about narrative, style, and aesthetics. However, little progress has been made in understanding animation itself and its potential for critical training and the creation of advanced projects addressing the most diverse application variables. This work initially addressed the existing characteristics of animation film criticism in the press in dialogue with the academic thought in specialized literature from an international perspective. The objective was to understand from which perspective critical thinking has evolved and how this influences the dissemination and better public understanding of animation. The methodology uses bibliographic and documentary research from books and specialized (more academic) magazines and a comparative analysis with some examples recorded in traditional press.

From this perspective, some important facts take place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as the massification of television and the development of norms and moral codes. In the United States, the code became difficult to be applied following the massification of television in the 1960s. Television networks urgently needed content and the first solution was to explore the film studios' vast film collection. Animated short films were sold in packages to television networks in the international market. However, this content became the target of criticism as soon as television began to be seen as the "electronic babysitter" (KLEIN, 1993).

Millions of children spent hours watching animations or, in the more popular term, cartoons, and there was in fact no standardized control over what was broadcast. Animation was hit hard when the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDAA) created "The Motion Picture Production code" (or Hays Code) as a guide to moral rules to prevent a direct attempt by the United States government and to satisfy a public demand for productions that avoided sexual content and a high level of violence, very present in short films from the 1920s and 1930s (CRAFTON, 1982). Betty Boop was one of the characters most affected by the Hays Code, with subsequent short films softening or eliminating more adult situations from the previous period.

The code preached the defense of ethical standards, the provision of correct life conduct subject to drama and entertainment, and there could be no ridicule or expression of sympathy for illegal activities. Although its application was optional, the major Hollywood studios applied the standards, which influenced productions between the 1930s and 1960s (BARRIER, 1999). Moral codes were equally applied in other countries, especially when productions were State investments.

In the case of the popularization of animation on television, the largest television networks in the United States and other countries created their own ethics committees, analyzing the content in terms of the values and customs explored in their scripts and images. This created a self-censorship mechanism, eased only when a production was distributed to independent broadcasters. These norms helped to establish certain limitations on production and consumption, resulting in animation

becoming what common sense labeled as a “children’s genre” or the euphemism of “family films”. This is a mistaken view, as any historical consultation (BENDAZZI, 2016) will result in many examples of animation productions for different age groups and applications around the world.

## OPINION AND CRITICISM

The classification proposals for journalistic genres are based on two different perspectives: information and opinion. José Marques de Mello (2003) developed a classification based on the source and intentionality of journalistic texts. Manuel Chaparro (1998), in turn, when publishing a comparative study between the journalism practiced in Portugal and Brazil, questions the paradigm that has historically become the basis of the discussion about the characteristics of the genres of journalistic texts — in this case, the separation between opinion and information. “This is a false paradigm because journalism is not divided by, but rather built with information and opinion” (CHAPARRO, 1998, p. 100).

The structure of informative genres is described based on references outside the journalistic institution. Firstly, it depends on a fact and evolution of events, and on the way in which journalism professionals establish dialogue with organizations and celebrities. In the case of opinionated genres, “the structure of the message is determined by variables controlled by the journalistic institution, and which takes on two features: authorship (who issues the opinion) and angle (temporal or spatial perspective that gives meaning to the opinion)” (MARQUES DE MELLO *apud* CHAPARRO, 1998, p. 107, translated by the author).

Manuel Chaparro (1998) contests Marques de Mello’s classification proposal, stating that the investigation and verification of information with the aim of resulting in news texts, constitute evaluative interventions influenced by established assumptions, judgements, interests and points of view. In short, it would be impossible to comment — or issue an opinion — without being based on facts and data collected by journalists.

Another nomenclature was defined by Martínez Albertos (2001), with the division of information and opinion replaced by reports and comments. According to this explanation, the fundamental issue associated with the notion of genre is expressed more broadly in the news text. “News is a raw material on which journalistic communication professionals can work from three perspectives: information, interpretation, and opinion” (ALBERTOS, 2001, p. 56). The interpretative character occurs from the focus on primary and related facts, being inseparable from the informative part. Interpretative reports and the chronicles are examples of this interpretative aspect. There is argumentative analysis (interpretation) combined with opinion (persuasion).

There is also the utilitarian genre, widely used to inform indicators, quotes, scripts, and services — information that is of interest to users of public services and consumers of industrial products and private services. It is in this space that one generally finds locations, dates and times of audiovisual entertainment programming in media outlets.

In the field of opinionated text, including what Albertos (2001) calls “interpretive”, an important discursive language is criticism. It is an intellectual, public activity that is part of a society’s mode of artistic production. It acts on aesthetic consciousness. The differences in the genre include digests, a detailed description of something; critical reviews, a text with value judgment; chronicles, a historical narration; and critiques, aesthetic appreciation linked to the opinionated genre.

Among the functions of criticism are: informing readers; raising cultural levels; reinforcing community identification; encouraging artists; defining what is new; documenting History; building the historicity of the work, of the artistic genre, bringing up its past and pointing out its future. Criticism also helps in forming an audience, opening up space for works of art (not just those with marketing content), doubling the meanings of the work, improving aesthetic awareness by leading people to “think aesthetically”, valuing journalism as an activity, relating it to human knowledge, and sharpening in men a critical and inquisitive view of the world.

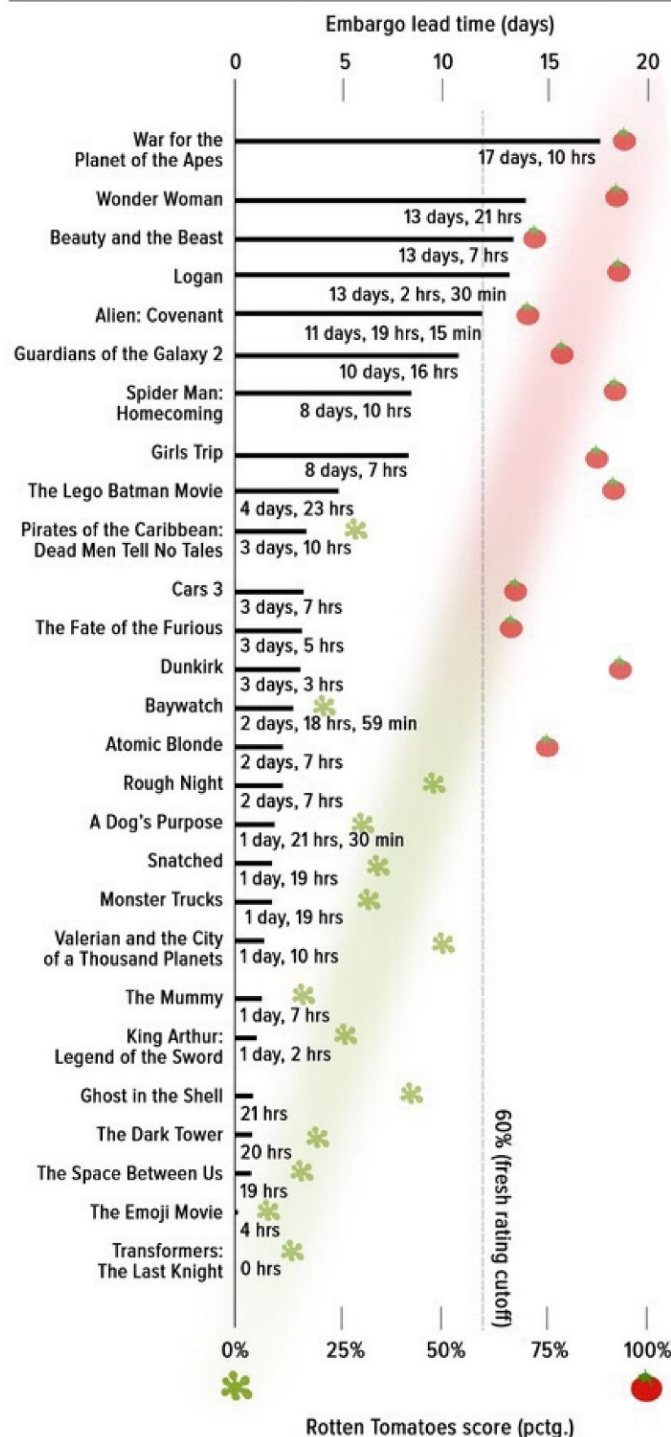
The film industry tries to control the effects of criticism so as not to compromise financial results with box office sales and ticket pre-sales. One of the tools used is the embargo imposed by the film’s publicity team and not exactly by the press office. The journalist (critic) signs a term of commitment in which he agrees to publish his review only on a certain date. This date may vary from weeks, days, and even hours before the release in theaters. One of the fads has been to allow journalists to say that they were invited to check out the screening and publish what is called “first impressions” without, however, passing judgment on the merits or listing details of the film (DICKEY, 2017). This is clearly intended to “hype” the public’s desire to check out the new film.

Journalists are not the only ones affected by the embargo. The so-called “digital influencers”, people with engagement profiles on social media, are coveted by press offices in order to promote a release. Most of the time, without any condition to pass critical judgment, influencers provide more of a service of informing a launch than actually analyzing it. It should be noted that the renewal of the business models of journalistic vehicles has forced the migration of professionals qualified in criticism to the creation of profiles and channels on social media. Although they are few in relation to the set of channels that call themselves “critical”, these professionals try to adapt the content that in the past was basically in print media to a more dynamic and visual language.

A recurring question is whether the control of information imposed by the embargo results in a change in the perception of criticism. The answer is usually no. A survey carried out by the website Mashable (DICKEY, 2017) compiled 27 films with different embargo dates and average rating (Figure 1). Data shows that the longer studios try to delay the publication of a review, the greater the number of negative reviews. The exception occurs when there are films whose franchises (brands) are very strong and the studios know that the box office depends much less on reviews. An animation like “The Emoji Movie” from 2017 had the embargo lifted just 4 hours before its premiere and the reviews published were, for the most part, negative.

## Rotten Embargoes

There's a direct and undeniable correlation between a film's Rotten Tomatoes score and the amount of time a studio allows between its review embargo lift and its public release. Below, we've charted 27 of the year's biggest releases, with embargo time overlaid on their final RT scores.



Source: Dickey (2017).

Figure 1. Survey of the compilation of criticisms in relation to the embargo period. There is a direct and undeniable correlation between a film's score on the Rotten Tomatoes website (review compiler) and the amount of time a studio allows between the end of the review embargo and its release to the public. The figure shows 27 of the biggest releases of 2017 with the embargo time superimposed on the final scores from the website Rotten Tomatoes. The embargo is used as a strategy to control criticism and delay any negative reviews at the release of films, which could affect production revenue.



There is, therefore, a perception that extending the embargo time may be hiding problematic aspects of a production. On the other hand, when a studio does not establish an embargo, it is because it needs the work of critics to help promote a new film. It is not uncommon for the embargo to also serve to guarantee exclusivity for a journalistic vehicle.

Unfortunately, many journalists, critics, and influencers adopt procedures to please the entertainment industry so as not to lose the future right to interview cast and production members, including: relying on press releases, focusing greater attention on blockbusters and productions that studio judges priorities, and exaggerate the use of positive adjectives and simplistic analyses expressed with commonplaces. The important thing is that the public and especially the artistic world and the industry lack a critical eye. It is important for the development of future films and helps with creative strategies. Journalist Daniel Piza (2003) prepared a summary of the characteristics that a good critical text must have:

First, all the characteristics of a good journalistic text: clarity, coherence, agility. Second, it must inform the reader what the debated work or topic is, summarizing its story, its general lines, who the author is, etc. Third, one must analyze the work in a synthetic but subtle way, clarifying the relative weight of qualities and defects, avoiding the tone of "accounting balance" or the mere attribution of adjectives. So far, it's a good review. But there is a fourth requirement, more common among great critics, which is the ability to go beyond the analyzed object, to use it to read some aspect of reality, to be oneself, the critic, an author, an interpreter of the world (PIZA, 2003, p. 70).

There are several types of criticism; as for the style adopted for theater criticism we have Roland Barthes and the structuralist one, Bernard Dort and the dialectic one, Bakhtin and the polyphonic one, and even the criticism described by Oscar Wilde, who sees the critic as a creator (GARCIA, 2004). Now more focused on audiovisual, there are criticisms that can be content, psychological, sociological, psychoanalytic, and formalistic. Animated cinema and all its derivative productions in other media can take advantage of any of them. Each of them provides us with instruments for analysis based on different approaches and needs, which also contributes to different visions finding support among a diverse audience. Although an animated film may perfectly fit into the same parameters used for live-action films, the proposal below brings complementary elements to qualify the exercise of critical analysis.

## **ANIMATION CRITICISM: THE ISSUE OF AUTHORSHIP**

The proposal is to offer complementary elements to those who analyze animation only from the theoretical framework of live-action cinema. This work's intention is not to suggest, for now, that animation deserves its own parameters, but that animation is a complex form of audiovisual production, capable of creatively adapting elements from different arts and languages. This dialogue is important for us to critically understand how production works, the aesthetic evolution, and even the audience's preferences. Let us first address the issue of authorship.

The authorship thesis in cinema can be divided into two poles, as described by Pegoraro (2016). One of them is the authorial, the romantic narrative that denotes a relevant individual contribution — be it from the director, screenwriter or producer, resulting in credit as the author of the work, despite their limited control. The second pole is the materialist/collectivist explanation that considers a certain apparatus, a set of industrial conditions or even a group of talents as the functional equivalent of an individual author (CHRISTENSEN, 2012).

There are several theorists who try to classify the role of creation in the film industry. In a more functionalist perspective, there is the author John Thornton Caldwell (2008), whose book *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television* presents an ethnographic study developing what is called an “industrial authorial theory”. The author divides the authorial group into three groups: the first would be linked to creative professionals responsible for idealizing, acting, and directing a film; the second would be made up of professionals who only execute ideas — studio workers; a third group is made up of those who make decisions — the executives — who consider the scripts elements that are part of a business plan, in which the author describes a theory of industrial identity.

Peter Bogdovich (1997), director and historian, states in his work that directors have a fundamental influence on the identity of films. Without a doubt, the role of directors such as Chuck Jones, at Warner Bros., or Tex Avery, at MGM cannot be underestimated. Directors are responsible for monitoring and approving all daily operational work on a production. Although there are many behind-the-scenes films showing different animators and screenwriters, directors have an important role in the studio in the Hollywood industrial scheme, especially if they have the necessary qualifications to obtain a certain creative autonomy, which can yield positive results. There is increasing interest in learning about directors’ work processes, especially those of 20<sup>th</sup> century productions.

Producers and studio heads are figures with great decision-making power. Thomas Schatz (1991) states that the producer is the “chief architect” of a studio’s style. In mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, a period when studios did not yet have equivalent financial conditions, several producers were studio heads with decision-making power over directors in creative matters even greater than what is seen in the 21st century. In the case of animation, Walt Disney was both owner and producer, and as such, he signed in the credits as creative responsible for short and feature films.

Although Hollywood is full of influential producers, one cannot state that they control the big studios. So how can we explain certain aesthetic standards and cultural identities that span decades in studios such as Warner Bros., Disney, Pixar, the former Hanna-Barbera, DreamWorks, Sony Animation, Laika, among others? Jerome Christensen (2012) has a thesis which highlights the segregation that exists between film criticism and the economic history of cinema. He points to an alternative to identify the author — not a real person, but an entity that qualifies for the intended author status: the corporate studio itself. In this case, the hypothesis is that studios, and not the director, screenwriter or even the producer, can be considered the authors of Hollywood films.

In the last chapter of his book, Christensen (2012) analyzes the merger between Disney and Pixar in 2006 as the execution of a significant revision of the corporate way of asserting “cultural authorship”. This is a relevant analysis, as Disney publicly speaks of “Disney culture”, “Pixar culture”, “Marvel culture”, to explain the strategies that lead to the production of films and their derivative products. If from a strictly economic point of view Disney is said to bet on franchises, from the point of view of cultural production we are talking about “cultural assumptions” that lead to certain choices — if the intention is, as is the case, to analyze the complex issue of productions nowadays.

From an authorship point of view, some counterpoints should be highlighted that are most prominent in the production of animated films. The main difference between commercial productions (regardless of the size of the production company) and more artistic ones is that it is much easier to find more original productions in short films — these productions are concentrated at international film festivals. This happens because it is possible for just one animator to produce all of his material without external interference, which is highly unlikely in a complex and collective production of a feature film.

There are also mainstream productions, that originate from large studios or commercial production centers, such as Hollywood in the United States, or centers that receive State subsidies for animation productions (for example, France and Canada). And there are independent animation studios that work in isolation and with much fewer resources compared to those located in large production hubs. Many of which, as in the case of Brazil, benefit from public policy notices aimed at audiovisual production.

Within a country, there may be many differences between centers located in metropolises or richer regions and centers on the outskirts. In Brazil, for example, although much of the production is carried out in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, from the 2010s onward the Northeast region became a hub for animation production. There are production hubs also responsible for secondary phases or for taking on the bulk of production from a parent studio located in a “metropolis” — what we can call outsourced production. A Hollywood studio may outsource its production to studios in Canada or South Korea.

There are cases in which two “metropolises” may try to compete for the production market. A classic case in the United States is New York, whose studios have never managed to surpass those located in Los Angeles (Hollywood) in economic power. However, in Russia, the cities of Moscow and Saint Petersburg have a large feature film and short film production company in each city. From 2020 onward, home productions have expanded, in which it is possible for a studio to outsource production phases not to foreign producers, but to individual professionals or small studios located in different countries.

When it comes to professional training, it is important to keep in mind that there are different types of training. Many animators may have a degree in specific technical courses. Others come from undergraduate courses in the fields of

audiovisual, arts, and graphic design, where animation disciplines may not exist, or their presence may be no more than a satellite discipline. And there are those who manage to graduate from specific courses or specialized colleges or higher education schools, such as CalArts, in the United States, and Gobelins, in France. In Brazil, we have undergraduate courses focused on animation at Faculdade Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP), at Universidade Federal de Belo Horizonte (UFMG), at Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing (ESPM Rio), at Universidade Veiga de Almeida (RJ), at Universidade Federal de Pelotas (RS), at Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná (UTFPR), at Faculdade Méliès (SP), among others.

Due to differences in training and market needs, especially in peripheral centers, it is very common for there to be generalist professionals — those capable of moving between scriptwriting, visual development, animation and direction — and not just the so-called specialists, who dedicate a large part of their careers in a single role in the studio.

To conclude, there is the role of applying animation. In audiovisuals, animation is not just an entertainment in the form of short and feature films. There can be documentaries that use animation techniques for the most diverse themes (ROE, 2013; SERRA, 2019). There is also a functional application through technical films that aim to instruct people for the purposes of propaganda, education, military application (KORNHABER, 2020), and technical education. There is also extensive use of animations in video games and in the development of smartphone applications.

Advertising is a very important application and, in many countries — such as Brazil —, it has become the school of many professionals who today work in large international studios. Working with advertising provides the experience of producing under pressure, under short deadlines, respecting agency guides and briefings, in addition to experimenting with the most different animation techniques (COOK; THOMPSON, 2019). Two great exponents of advertising animation are producers and animators Daniel Messias, in Brazil, and Richard Williams, in England.

Animation is also used as a secondary application in live-action productions. This involves storyboarding, production design, visual effects (computer generated), effects animation, among others. These are works that take into account deadline and budget dynamics that are different from what normally occurs with animations. In Brazil, it has been common for animation to be included in public notices in the form of this secondary application. It needs maturing in relation to primary applications, taking into account the fact that animation takes much longer to produce.

## **SUGGESTED LITERATURE WITH EMPHASIS ON HISTORY AND LANGUAGE**

Even the most knowledgeable film critics have some knowledge gap when it comes to animation. What is offered here is a compilation of reference works that serve as suggested reading for anyone interested in delving deeper into research or understanding techniques aimed at preparing critical analyses.

From a language point of view, animation primarily fits within what we understand about cinema. It is treated here as audiovisual, as we understand that animation was designed for other media platforms such as television, video games, the internet, etc. However, animation cannot be analyzed in isolation within the parameters of cinema. Over the decades, an intense dialogue with other arts and languages has been built. For example, comic books served as one of the earliest sources of narrative adaptation. Literature, with an emphasis on fairy tales, also contributed to the development of films. With the emergence of sound cinema, sound became a fundamental part of an animated production with the development of new techniques for creating sound effects, recording voices/dubbing and music. And there are also dialogues with theater, photography, and illustration.

The dialogue between languages and arts, therefore, is fundamental to understanding the complex dimension that animations are. In the essay *O Manifesto das Sete Artes* (CANUDO, 1927), the expression “seventh art” was mentioned for the first time, the then newly emerging cinema. For Riccioto Canudo, the cinematographic work was made up of elements of other expressions such as sound, music; movement, dance; color, painting; volume, sculpture; setting, architecture; representation, of theater; and the word of poetry.

There are other authors who deal with animation within discussions about the language of cinema. Lewis Jacobs (1972), Sergei Eisenstein (2018), and George Sadoul (1963) produced essays respectively in 1939, 1941, and 1963 about Disney production essentially from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the controversial discussion about what we can call art in animation — with the exception of actual authorial works — it is not possible to escape the discussions about the work of art in the era of its technical reproducibility by Walter Benjamin (1994) and the cultural industry by Theodor Adorno (1989). Both mention Mickey Mouse when discussing the topic.

Still on the discussion about art, there is a book by Robert D. Feild (1947), then an assistant professor at Harvard University in the 1930s, who raised controversy in the academic field by equating the artistic qualities of Disney production with works of the so-called noble arts. He believed that Disney films pioneered a new type of creative expression, overcoming the notion that only music, painting, sculpture, and architecture were arts. “By combining many of these old forms and transporting them to a timeless and spatially unlimited domain we would have the most powerful form of artistic expression ever invented” (WATTS, 1997, p. 101, translated by the author). Feild states that comic books were important in bringing subtlety to graphics previously seen as sophistication, and their appeal was aimed at the common man. Cinema was another force, whose rising power was related to the common man’s desire for straightforward entertainment.

Cartoons (animations) were experimented with for generations long before the creation of the camera and became a form of entertainment thanks to its interaction with photography. But, as Feild concludes, hand-drawing was never taken seriously as art. It was considered a series of resources used to entertain children’s minds with absurd comical situations. But the

technique evolved, the process became more complex, and cartoons became part of the cinema repertoire, generally preceding (along with newsreels) major productions. (PEGORARO, 2016, p. 84).

A film like *Fantasia*, from 1940, bringing together animation and classical music, is a great source of analysis for critics and intellectuals, even those who, for some reason, have rejected other Disney productions. In the United States, critics received the film with great skepticism. They accused Disney of a certain arrogance with his new production. The more serious ones used devastating phrases in their reviews such as “A detriment to good music and the art of animation”, “An endless bore”, or even “Wake me up when it’s over”<sup>1</sup>.

In Brazil, some critics also considered Disney’s attempt to mix two distinct forms of art — music and cinema — to be pretentious. The screening of the film in Brazil in 1941 caught the attention of intellectual exponents. *Clima* magazine was published between 1941 and 1944 and featured long essays with literary, theater, and film criticism (PEGORARO, 2012). Issue No. 5, published in October 1941, is almost entirely dedicated to the study and criticism of *Fantasia*, with works by Rui Coelho, Sergio Milliet, Oswald de Andrade, Paulo Emílio de Sales Gomes, Francisco Luis de Almeida Sales, Flavio de Carvalho, and Plínio Sussekind Rocha. Mário de Andrade, however, has written in favor of Disney’s first experiments.

In Europe, there are pioneering works that address language and production processes. These are the cases of *Le Dessin Animé* by Lo Duca (1948), *How to Cartoon* by John Halas (1958) and *The Animated film* by Roger Manvell (1954), the latter basically behind the scenes of the British animation *Animal Farm*.

There are several handbooks on computer animation, which become outdated as soon as the technology becomes obsolete. The present work will be focused on the fundamental basis of drawn animation. In the United States, there are two works considered the “bibles” of animation. *The Illusion of Life: Disney Animation*, by animators Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston (1995), whose first edition is from 1981, presented to professionals from all over the world several techniques and details of the Disney production process that were previously unknown. The animation handbook by animator Richard Williams (2012), *The Animator’s Survival Kit*, is an essentially technical work, which makes it the basic reference for those who wish to know the techniques of drawn animation, with material taken from animator Art Babbit’s old courses.

There are many books with a historiographical and sociological bias dealing with animations. However, the one that presents the best panoramic view of the different faces of animation and its relationship with advertising, propaganda, ideology, television, language, and *avant-garde* is *Animation Cinema* by French researcher Sébastien Denis (2010). This is about filling a gap in academic production on the subject and can help in deepening animation studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Phrases quoted in the 1982 documentary *Walt Disney – One Man’s Dream*.



Regarding innovations, any critical analysis must take into account aesthetic and technical evolution. In cultural journalism, it is important to dedicate considerable time to readings that teach you to reflect on broader theoretical issues such as the matter of taste, artistic nationalism, understanding the consumption of cultural production, conservative critical thinking, and the importance of the *avant-garde* (COELHO, 2006). This helps us understand why animation “schools” with such unique styles are so important to the history of animation. The experimental productions of Norman McLaren from the National Film Board of Canada, the alleged simplification of the films of the United Productions of America (U.P.A.), the aesthetic diversity of the Zagreb school, and the creative explosion of Japanese anime and Russian productions form a valuable set of important creations with strong economic, political, and aesthetic influences.

From the point of view of historical revisionism, there are important works that seek to bring women who worked in animation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century out of the shadows. This is the case of *The Queens of Animation: The Untold Story of the Women Who Transformed the World of Disney and Made Cinematic History*, by Nathalia Holt (2019), which presents an overview of the presence of women in Hollywood animation. Researcher Mindy Johnson (2017) has not only written about women who have been omitted from the official historiography of the Disney studios but is also researching the first decades of Hollywood production in general. In 2022, she released the first information about a pioneering woman — Bessie Mae Kelley, whose career began in 1917. In Brazil, we have the *Mulher Anima* project (SCHNEIDER et al., 2021) with the purpose of presenting the presence of women in the history of Brazilian animation.

In this section with literary suggestions, it is essential to list some general and specific historiographical works. The three volumes with the historical overview of world animation by Italian researcher Giannalberto Bendazzi (2016) present basic information about animation data in the most different countries. In relation to local historiographies, two publications by the British Film Institute have been highlighted: *The Story of British Animation* (STEWART, 2021) and *Anime: A History* (CLEMENTS, 2013), which deal with British and Japanese productions. The books by L’Harmattan written by Sébastien Roffat (2005, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, 2020, 2021, 2023) introduce us to the history of Les Gêmeaux studios, a creation by Paul Grimault and Émile Reynaud, French aesthetics and production between 1936 and 1944 with discussion about State policies regarding culture, and the relationship between animation and propaganda. Each country has its own production whose scale and importance must be assessed according to the need for criticism. The Belgian production (MAESLTAF, 1976), for example, shows us that there is an entire aesthetically diverse collection that surprises those who only know Tintin and The Smurfs. In another example, the production of Toonder studios (DE VRIES, 2012) presents us with the graphic sophistication of one of the largest producers in the Netherlands with experimental projects, advertising and very popular films — with a link to comic books. We could continue with examples from Argentina, Canada, China, the Czech

Republic, Russia, among others. Two more countries were highlighted in this search for greater understanding of these productions.

Japan needs to be analyzed due to its importance in the dissemination of anime in the popular culture of so many countries and the commercial impact generated from Asia. There are dozens of good Western authors with works that classify and present to us the narrative and aesthetic characteristics of anime. Instead of citing general works, two works are initially highlighted that analyze the production of Hayao Miyazaki, one of the greatest exponents of Japanese animation. Frenchman Emmanuel Trouillard (2019), for example, makes a retrospective analysis of Miyazaki's films based on the elements seen in the animation *Lives in the Wind*. Spaniard Raúl Fortes Guerrero (2019) wrote a denser monograph with an analysis of the ethics and aesthetics of Miyazaki's films and why, according to the author, he surpasses other Japanese animation directors in importance.

The best way to understand anime — and manga — is to learn about the works of Japanese theorists. A seminal article is authored by Eiji Otsuka and Marc Steinberg (2010) with English translation and complements by Professor Marc Steinberg. We are introduced to the fandom (fan culture) of manga and anime in Japan. With an ethnographic view of Japanese production, Otsuka introduces us to a reflection on the reproduction and consumption of narrative. Their main academic interlocutor were researchers Lamarre *et al.* (2007), a philosopher and cultural critic who became an exponent in Japan in the analysis of representation, narrative structure and otaku subculture, a term already widespread among manga and anime consumers in Brazil. The two articles are good starting points to begin understanding Japanese animation from the cultural point of view of its country of origin.

In the case of Brazil, not only the production and volume of titles since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has accelerated, a solid group of researchers is also being built, who work on building the critical formation of the public, and of the different technical aspects, of the history of Brazilian production and market issues and cultural policy formulations. The works already published range from the analysis of technical aspects — *The Art of Animation: Technique and aesthetics through history*, by Alberto Lucena Barbosa Junior (2002) — to the compilation of interviews with independent animators (LEITE, 2015), overview presentation on the diversity of techniques prepared by the organizing committee of the Anima Mundi International Festival (WIEDEMANN, 2007) and the films considered essential by the Brazilian Animation Cinema Association (*Associação Brasileira do Cinema de Animação* – ABCA) and the Brazilian Association of Film Critics (*Associação Brasileira de Críticos de Cinema* – ABRACINE) — Brazilian Animation – 100 films essential (SILVA; CARNEIRO, 2018). The Northeast Region has stood out for becoming a hotbed of new talent and a new hub for Brazilian animation, escaping the common sense of the Rio-São Paulo axis. Professor Marcos Buccini (2017) did relevant research on the history of animated cinema in Pernambuco.

For a history of animation in the world cinema period, the best reference is the book by Donald Crafton (1982), focused on productions released between 1898

and 1928. Robin Allan's doctoral thesis (1999) on Disney productions and artistic inspirations in Europe is an example of research on dialogue between languages. Other essays on this dialogue with European references can be read in the book by Bruno Girveau (2007).

For a historical overview of classic Hollywood animation, in order, the book *Hollywood Cartoons*, by Michael Barrier (1999), is the one that best presents in detail the evolution of production at the different studios. With a less dry text, but maintaining research rigor, *Of Mice and Magic*, by Leonard Maltin (1980), is usually the ideal introduction for beginning researchers. The same goes for Charles Solomon's *Enchanted Drawings: The History of Animation* (1994). Any book by animator and researcher John Canemaker (2018) is a reference for those who study the history of animation, so here we highlight *Winsor McCay: His Life and Art* about one of the greatest icons of comics and animation.

In addition to the Hollywood mainstream known for productions by Disney, Warner, MGM — and currently by studios such as DreamWorks, Pixar, Sony Animation, among others —, we cannot ignore the *avant-garde*. There are at least three worthy of note in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: firstly, Norman McLaren's experimentalism in his animations for the National Film Board of Canada (DOBSON, 2007). Secondly, Disney's "communist" dissidence that formed the U.P.A., innovating by exchanging the realistic style for the "flat" one, avoiding anthropomorphized animals for human protagonism, and investing in what became known as "limited animation" — an efficient animation technique with fewer drawings and which would later be explored on television by the Hanna-Barbera studio and its competitors (ABRAHAM, 2012). Mr. Magoo may be U.P.A.'s most popular character, but its collection is full of experimental animations for cinema and television. And finally, we have the "Zagreb School" in Yugoslavia (current Croatia), also exploring stylization rather than realism, but with elements of cynicism, self-irony, manipulation, and an adult-centered worldview (HOLLOWAY, 1972). The most important animator of this studio (Zagreb Film) was Dušan Vukotić.

Regarding the study of language, Croatia had an important critic, journalist and theorist called Ranko Munitić (2007). Not only has he helped preserve Zagreb's animation history, but he has also authored a series of articles on criticism and a book on animation aesthetics. For him, animation is a system of morphological values whose meaning and significance become legible through the analysis of certain morphological forms and characteristics. He valued the visual parts (the trace, the space, and the volume) and the kinesthetic (the animation itself, the filming, the sound, the music, and the editing). As most of his writings are in the Serbo-Croatian language, the suggested work in English is the book *Understanding Animation*, by the British Paul Wells (1998). This is a suitable introduction for anyone who wants to understand animation in its cinematic form, how to interpret its different methods and technical elements, it presents narrative strategies for animation and discusses a little about representation, focusing on race and gender. Wells uses case studies taking advantage of productions by famous names in animation, such as Chuck Jones, Tex Avery

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This work presented at the Animation Studies Seminar (*Seminário de Estudos de Animação – SeAnima 2021*) was a contribution to discussions on proposals to expand academic dissemination, promote more meetings, encourage new researchers, and assist in the search for bibliographic references.

The bibliography published in Brazil still lacks titles and there are few international scientific journals with space for works that discuss animation. The Society of Animation Studies is one of the leading academic journal research forums available. Criticism appears in articles and issues of magazines and catalogs, such as those from *Siggraph*, or in special dossiers, such as those offered by scientific journals in different fields. *American Music*, for example, a periodical from the University of Illinois, had a specific dossier on Disney music.

What we hope is that this article will help journalists access documentary and bibliographic material, and that they will be encouraged to develop in-depth research on the language, history, theory, aesthetics, and techniques of animation. It is also expected that researchers and teachers who deal with themes related to animation will have more support to deepen future research in the area. Criticism is essential so that the public, the market, and the State really know what animation is, beyond generalizations and childish labels, and so that public policies and production strategies take into account all its creative and communication potential.

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## Teaching animation remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic: a case study on the experience in the Cinema and Audiovisual course at the Federal University of Sergipe in the 2020.1 academic period

*O ensino de animação na modalidade remota durante a pandemia COVID-19: um estudo de caso sobre a experiência no curso de Cinema e Audiovisual da Universidade Federal de Sergipe no período acadêmico 2020.1*

Jean Cerqueira<sup>1</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

This work is an experience report on the offering of the Animation I discipline in the Cinema and Audiovisual course at the Federal University of Sergipe (UFS), during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its objective is to understand the remote offer in the period 2020.1 and the developments in carrying out the proposed activities. Despite the numerous uncertainties, this context proved to be challenging, coupled with the unavailability of laboratory space and several obstacles to complying with the course's syllabus and workload. The offer of Animation I was claimed by the students themselves, and the classes took place remotely, demanding greater protagonism from them: half of the course load involved asynchronous activities on a virtual learning platform aimed at reading related texts, discussing animated films and exercises for application of animation principles. In this first remote experience, the available places were doubled to 50 students in each class: class 01 had 45 students, the majority from the Graphic Design course (51%), class 02 had 50 students, 62% from the course of Cinema and Audiovisual. As a final assessment, the students produced short "animated films". Evidently, several productions manifested technical limitations, such as difficulty in stabilizing the camera, lack of supports (rigs) for objects, low image quality, insufficient number of frames for fluid movements, in addition to the students' own inexperience and insecurity. However, several demonstrated resourcefulness in applying the principles of animation, expressing them through aesthetic choices and creative narratives, with potential for future forays.

**Keywords:** Teaching animation. COVID-19 pandemic. UFS. Cinema and Audiovisual.

### RESUMO

*Este trabalho é um relato de experiência da oferta da disciplina Animação I no curso de Cinema e Audiovisual da Universidade Federal de Sergipe (UFS), durante a pandemia de COVID-19. Seu objetivo é compreender a oferta remota no período 2020.1 e os desdobramentos na realização das atividades propostas. Em meio às inúmeras incertezas, esse contexto se mostrou desafiador, somando-se à indisponibilidade de espaço laboratorial e vários entraves para o cumprimento da ementa*

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*e da carga horária da disciplina. A oferta de Animação I foi reivindicada pelos próprios discentes, e as aulas ocorreram de forma remota, exigindo maior protagonismo deles: metade da carga horária envolveu atividades assíncronas em plataforma virtual de aprendizagem visando à leitura de textos relacionados, discussão de filmes animados e exercícios para aplicação dos princípios da animação. Nesta primeira experiência remota, o número de vagas foi duplicado para 50 alunos em cada turma: a turma 01 contou com 45 alunos, a maioria do curso de Design Gráfico (51%), a turma 02 contou com 50 alunos, sendo 62% do curso de Cinema e Audiovisual. Como avaliação final, os discentes produziram “filmes animados” de curta duração. Evidentemente, diversas produções manifestaram limitações técnicas, como dificuldade na estabilização da câmera, ausência de suportes (rigs) para os objetos, baixa qualidade de imagem, quantidade de quadros insuficientes para fluidez dos movimentos, além da própria inexperiência e insegurança dos discentes. Contudo, vários demonstraram desenvoltura na aplicação dos princípios da animação, manifestando-os a partir de escolhas estéticas e narrativas criativas, com potencial para incursões futuras.*

**Palavras-chave:** Ensino de animação. Pandemia COVID-19. UFS. Cinema e Audiovisual.

## INTRODUCTION

The general objective of this work was to present the experience of offering the Animation I subject in the 2020.1 academic period by the Cinema and Audiovisual course of the Department of Social Communication (*Departamento de Comunicação Social – DCOS*) of Universidade Federal de Sergipe (UFS), in remote mode, due to the pandemic of COVID-19.

In general terms, this work was an experience report configured as a case study of a qualitative, exploratory, and documentary nature, assuming the virtual classrooms of related classes, made available through Google Classroom, as the locus of investigation. Based on this delimitation, the guiding elements of the adopted course plan were analyzed, such as the reference bibliography, the systematization and distribution of content throughout the classes, as well as the asynchronous activities and proposed assessments.

Evidently, the students' responses to such activities were considered in a privileged way to understand the resulting interactions and discussions, both on a theoretical level and on practice itself. Although the research is predominantly of a qualitative nature, specific quantitative data were also considered, especially regarding the quantification of classes available, activities carried out, student responses, and productions presented, in addition to data relating to the evolution of enrollments at throughout the class offerings focused on teaching animation at DCOS.

It is important to highlight that, as this is an exploratory study, no specific hypotheses or research problems were formulated. Instead, this article is focused on understanding the theoretical-methodological perspective adopted in the subject, especially its developments, in light of the context of remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, translated here not only as a limiting moment, but which claimed creativity and student involvement. In this way, the aim was to socialize the experience on screen, in order to aggregate information that allows

expanding knowledge about strategies adopted to facilitate practical disciplines, specifically related to the teaching of animation within the scope of public higher education institutions.

The work was divided into two parts. In the first, a general contextualization of animation teaching in the Department of Communication at UFS was carried out, from its “subversive” genesis to its effective insertion in the curriculum and subsequent accommodation, revealing methodological aspects and emphasizing the dynamics of evolution in enrollments as an indicator of interest by it. The second part consists of the presentation and discussion of the main aspects of the offer carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Teaching animation at the Department of Social Communication/ Universidade Federal de Sergipe: a brief historical trajectory**

According to the Pedagogical Project of the UFS Undergraduate Course in Cinema and Audiovisual, approved by Resolution No. 18/2017/CONEPE, the Animation I discipline emerges as the only mandatory discipline dedicated exclusively to animated cinema within the scope of DCOS, and possibly at UFS itself, since related courses such as Graphic Design and Visual Arts do not present related subjects in their curricula. Under the code COMSO0165, it is currently offered in the 6<sup>th</sup> period of the curriculum, comprising two classes capable of housing 25 students each, and their total workload is 60 hours: 15 of which dedicated to theoretical debate; 45 focused on practical activities. The course curriculum also provides Animation II, an optional subject that can be offered to students who are interested in continuing their experiences from Animation I.

It is worth noting that animation was already emerging as a mandatory subject in the old Audiovisual qualification of the Social Communication course at DCOS. According to Resolution No. 60/2008/CONEPE, its nomenclature was “Animation and Infography I” (COMSO0230), which included animation in a historical trajectory, but still used as a journalistic tool in the infographic aspect, for example. In fact, the discipline moved between video art, computer graphics, and animation. In any case, the existence of a mandatory subject related to animated cinema in the context of DCOS represented a recognition of its expressive value, its consolidation in the audiovisual field, its relevance as a cultural product and, above all, the need to situate it as a field of research at UFS and work for future graduates. It is important though to consider that despite the massification of animation throughout the 1990s, it took 16 years, since the emergence of the degree in Social Communication at UFS, in 1992, for its curricular internalization.

The Department of Social Communication at UFS currently consists of undergraduate courses in Journalism, Advertising, and Cinema and Audiovisual. Until 2008 there was a single degree with three qualifications in Social Communication, which coexisted with the degree course in Visual Arts in the same department, the Department of Arts and Social Communication (*Departamento de Artes e*

*Comunicação Social* – DAC). With the approval of the Graphic Design course, in 2009, the qualifications in Communication were brought together at DCOS, while Design, together with Visual Arts, became part of the Arts and Design Center (*Núcleo de Artes e Design* – NAD), in 2010, finally becoming the Department of Design Visual Arts (*Departamento de Artes Visuais de Design* — DAVD) in 2013.

In historical terms, animation teaching at DCOS went through three moments: 1) the “subversive” offer, when it was covered through loopholes in subjects with flexible syllabuses in Radio and Television qualifications; 2) the moment of curricular internalization in the pedagogical project of the Audiovisual qualification, as an effective subject; 3) the period of maturity with the curricular reform that resulted in the bachelor’s degree in Cinema and Audiovisual, remaining a mandatory subject with a more robust syllabus.

Animation teaching was introduced at DAC in 2004, during the offering of the optional subject “Special Topics in Digital Media” (COMSO0063), in the second period of that year. Belonging to the curriculum of the extinct Radio and Television qualification, it had a workload of 60 hours and was offered to complement the workload of temporary teachers, a kind of “contractual joker”. However, the 2004.2 offer had a subversive character. Taking advantage of loopholes in a generalist syllabus that aimed to develop “Study of specific themes in the area of digital media.”, the professor author of this work, then responsible for the discipline, aligned his professional experience<sup>1</sup> with the students’ desires, and throughout that semester, the class embarked on theoretical discussions about animated cinema and practice in this field. Immediately after this initial offer, the subject “Special Topics in Digital Media” became, among DAC students, synonymous with Animation, being regularly offered<sup>2</sup> in all academic periods until 2009; the subject attracted not only students from courses from DAC, but also from several other UFS courses.

From a didactic-pedagogical point of view, the discipline followed the following path:

1. Initially, a historical review of Western animated cinema was undertaken, based on the work “History of Animation: technique and aesthetics through History”, written by Alberto Lucena Junior, and on the Brazilian context, based on the “Brazilian Experience in Animation Cinema”, by the late Antônio Moreno, in order to establish an understanding of the genesis and basic principles of animation, as well as its plastic and technical heterogeneity.
2. Expository classes were interspersed with screenings and debates of related films, aiming to expand the students’ repertoire, with emphasis on experimental animators who were then unknown to them.

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1 At the time, the professor was a partner in an audiovisual production company specializing in computer graphics, where he worked on art design in animation and advertising video projects, especially in 3D.

2 In 2016, the professor became part of the permanent faculty at DCOS. Since then, he has worked to defend the inclusion of animated films in the courses offered.

3. After discussing basic bibliography, which comprised half of the course workload, aspects of the production itself were considered, based on the text “The Animation Book: A Complete Guide to Animated Filmmaking: From Flip-Books to Sound Cartoons to 3D Animation”, by Kit Laybourne. Thus, the second half of the discipline was focused on experience in creating animations, starting with the construction of optical toys and progressing to organic techniques, such as cut-out animation, including silhouettes, of characters with improvised armor and “animation without a camera”.

In fact, structural limitations, such as computer labs shared with several disciplines and the unavailability of a studio to create sets and characters, defined the balance between technique and aesthetics adopted in classroom work — a situation that persists today, despite of some improvements that will be discussed later.

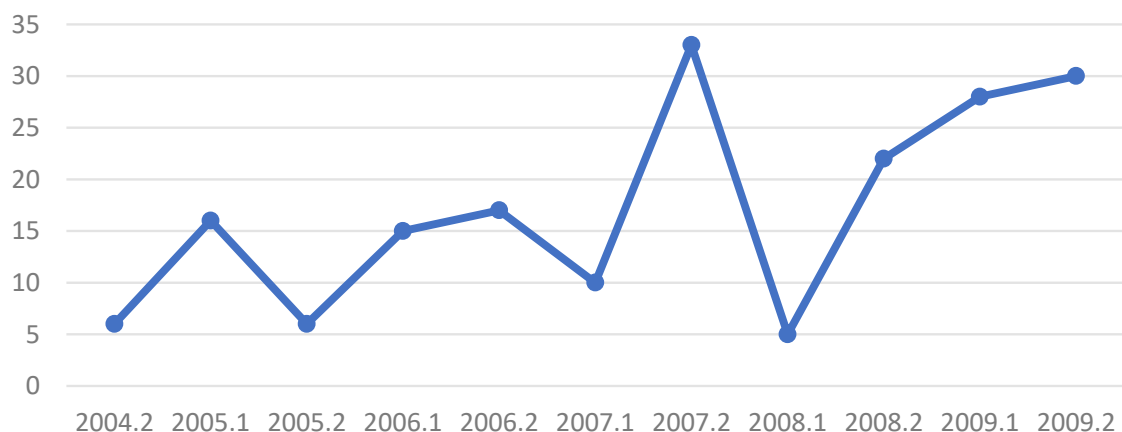
Other specificities of this period deserve to be highlighted: as the subject “Special Topics in Digital Media” was optional, the students enrolled were often those who demonstrated interest and dedication to animated cinema; structural limitations encouraged teamwork, improvisation, and creativity in experiments; aspects of regional popular culture, such as *cordel* literature, were influential in the search for narratives for the final works of the disciplines; as the works were produced in groups, few films were made, but they had the collaboration of several students; there was no practice of creating a collection to remember the course, and several of these works were lost; the adopted books were shared, since the Central Library’s collection on the topic was limited. Emblematic from this period are the stop motion “Mauses”, a parody of the feature film “Mission: Impossible”, in which a group of mice (computer ones!!!) wait for the right moment to take revenge on their “aggressors”, including users who insist on violent and repetitive clicks, handling them with filthy fingers with food and other deplorable organic matter, etc., and the animation in silhouette cutouts “Not everything that shakes falls”, an adaptation of the homonymous *cordel*.

The aspects mentioned reveal, in general terms, the dynamics of the discipline in this initial context. However, the evolution in enrollments in the discipline is also important to the understanding of its relevance in DCOS. The following graphic shows the evolution of enrollments throughout the provision of this first phase of animation teaching, still confined to the subject “Special Topics in Digital Media”.

According to Graphic 1, the number of enrollments did not occur regularly, and the peak of supply occurred in period 2007.2, when the class had 33 students enrolled — possibly due to the imminent extinction of the qualification in Radio Broadcasting and Television, students sought to complete their school records. Disregarding the drop in 2008.1, the offer in the last three semesters was growing, concentrating 80 (42%) of the 188 students who took the subject during the period observed.

In the qualitative aspect, it is important to highlight that the offering of the discipline stimulated interest in animation beyond the classroom, inserting it as an





Graphic 1. Enrolled students (2004.2 to 2009.2).

object of investigation in course completion works, albeit in a timid way. Two significant works from this period were carried out by students Wille Marcel Lima Malheiro<sup>3</sup> and Tiago Almada Dutra<sup>4</sup>, both from the class of 2006.2.

Despite the limitations arising from an extremely limited course load and the lack of appropriate laboratory space, the successive offerings of classes in the subject “Special Topics in Digital Media” allowed students to establish a valuable dialogue with the field of animation. The didactic scheme was guided by the historical understanding of animated cinema, including the Brazilian context, and its technical aspects, also allowing for practical incursions with the development of some experimental productions<sup>5</sup>.

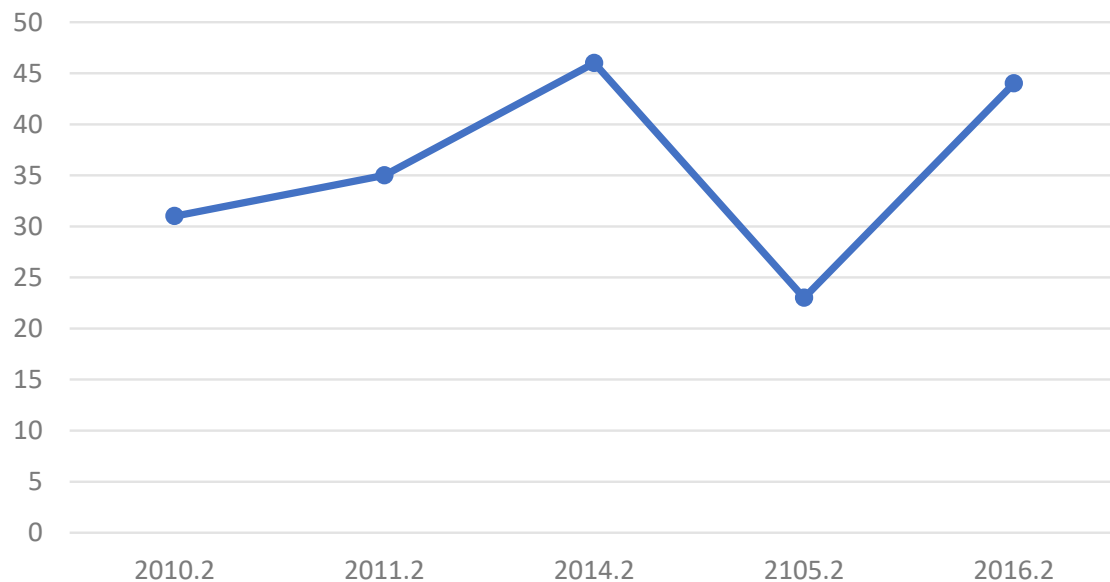
In 2009, with the emergence of qualifications in Audiovisual, animation teaching gained greater visibility, becoming mandatory in the curriculum, specifically in the subject “Animation and Infographics”, with 60 hours, offered in the fourth semester of the course. In this second phase, its syllabus updated the perspective contemplated in “Special Topics in Digital Media”, but, according to its nomenclature, it internalized an instrumental character. The first offer took place in 2010.1 and lasted until 2016, when this qualification gave way to the undergraduate course in Cinema and Audiovisual, which began to be offered in 2017.2. In general, the context proved to be paradoxical: while the syllabus established that most of the course load would be allocated to practical activities, the theoretical scope was too

3 In 2008, he defended his Final Paper “Free software, bazaar and computer graphics: the case of blender”, investigating the contributions of discussion communities to the maturation of the application.

4 In 2010, he defended his Final Paper “Interactive drama: Analysis of the narrative of the game Heavy Rain”, discussing the relationship between narrative and interactive animation in the field of games.

5 As mentioned, one of the main problems regarding the history of DCOS is related to its memory. Over these 30 years of activity, the department has been unable to catalog and gather its productions into a public collection. Recently, two course completion works dealing with the production of animations were identified and were carried out by students on the Visual Arts degree course at UFS. See more in Monteiro (2007) and Silva (2006).

broad, which in practice concentrated most of the classes. In fact, the path to practice was confined to the optional subject Animation and Infographics II, which was never offered. Graphic 2 shows the evolution of enrollments in the Animation and Infographics discipline<sup>6</sup>.



\*Enrollment data in the related discipline, over the 2012.2 and 2013.2 semesters, are not available in the Integrated Academic Activities Management System (*Sistema Integrado de Gestão de Atividades Acadêmicas – SIGAA*). During this period, the subject was taught by temporary professors, since the permanent professor was away for his doctorate.

Graphic 2. Enrolled students (2010.2 to 2016.2)\*.

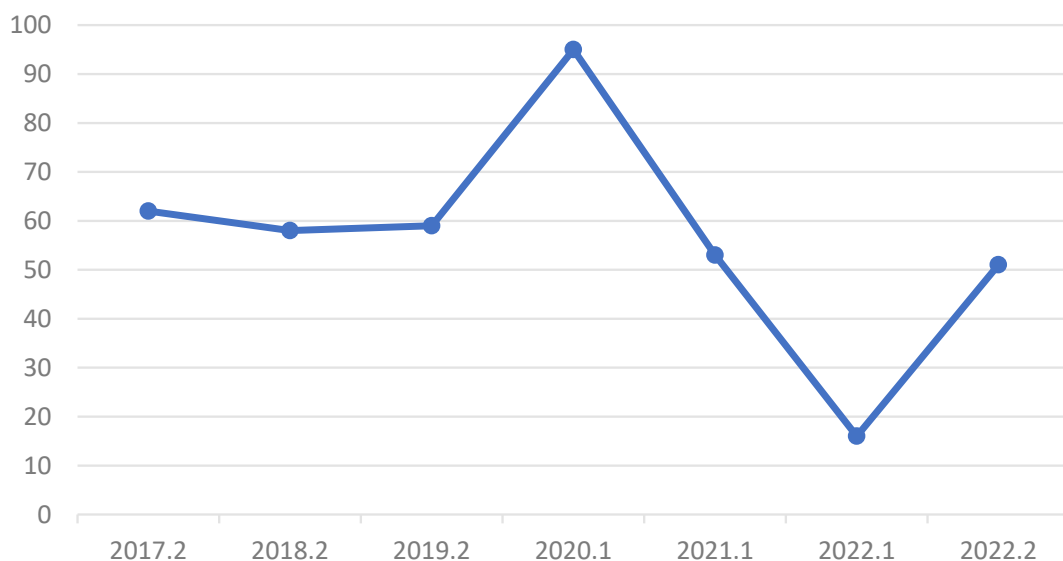
It is important to highlight that the graphic totals the offering of the two classes in each semester, whose regular forecast was 50 students. It is noted that only offers from 2014.2 and 2016.2 came close to this quantity. In relation to the numbers of 2015.2, in which only 23 students enrolled in the subject, it is necessary to consider two factors: 1) to study animation, prior approval in “Cinematic and Audiovisual Language” was necessary, a mandatory prerequisite; 2) this prerequisite was only offered in odd-numbered semesters, so, apparently, this quantitative variation in enrollments can be explained by the high level of failure in the prerequisite taken in the period immediately prior to the offering of Animation.

Regarding the course plan, “Animation and Infographics I” was similar to that adopted in “Special Topics in Digital Media”, but, as previously mentioned, practical work was restricted to just under 1/3 of the total course load. Discussions on

<sup>6</sup> During the two years between 2012.2 and 2013.2, “Animation and Infographics I” was taught by three different teachers. This was due to the permanent professor’s leave to undertake a doctorate. Data relating to such offers are not available in the academic management system, the UFS SIGAA, which explains the absence of this gap in the graphic above.

computer graphics and video graphics were added, the basic bibliography was maintained, with the addition of references on video art and complementary texts aimed at creating special effects, web animation and infographics. Consequently, the final practical works of the discipline were generally produced by students who had reduced practical experience compared to those in the first phase. Furthermore, many of them chose to develop their experiences individually, which resulted in more discreet and limited works. It is worth noting that, at this time, the department already had a more appropriate laboratory structure, and the discipline had computers and software such as the Adobe package, including After Effects, and 3DStudio Max, from Autodesk. In any case, the option for more organic and less computer-dependent techniques was maintained.

With the replacement of the Audiovisual qualification with the Degree in Cinema and Audiovisual, in force since 2017, animation teaching (the third phase at DCOS) began to be viewed with greater autonomy and seriousness compared to other audiovisual products. According to the course's pedagogical project, Resolution No. 18/2017/CONEPE, the mandatory subject "Animation I" guaranteed a greater workload for practical activities (45 of the 60 hours) and "Animation II" was designed as an optional subject capable of meeting particular demands related to animation. The offer was inserted in the sixth semester of the course, a period in which students already arrived with a background in audiovisual language and with some practical experiences, especially in image and video editing. In any case, the discipline did not establish prerequisites, which boosted its search for students from other courses and resulted in relevant contributions, mainly from Graphic Design and Visual Arts students. Graphic 3 reveals the dynamics of enrollment in the discipline from the period of its implementation until its most recent offer.



Graphic 3. Enrolled students (2017.2 to 2022.2).

It is important to consider that in the 2017.2, 2018.2, and 2019.2 offers, carried out before the COVID-19 pandemic, total enrollment was always higher than the 50 places regularly available, including the two classes. As mentioned previously, the absence of prerequisites attracted students from other courses, mainly due to requests for separate inclusion in the discipline. In this context, the first phase course program was resumed and improved. The practice was privileged and began to be interspersed with theoretical discussions of lectures and film screenings. In other words, since the beginning of the discipline, students were able to practice animation. Furthermore, the bibliography was updated, with emphasis on the adoption of the texts "Animation Cinema", by Sébastien Denis, "The Animator Survival Kit", by Richard Williams, and "Between the look and the gesture: Elements for an Animated poetics", by Marina Stela Graça. Another relevant aspect of this context was the valorization of animation research in the discipline, with the alternative of producing a scientific article as the final work of the discipline, for students less interested in the practice. In this regard, the discussions proposed by Denis (2010) about the discursive power of animation, especially in the political and ideological sphere, influenced several works: some articles analyzed gender representations in animation, as was the case with a comparative study of representation of the woman in the 1985 series "She-Ra: The Princess of Power", and in its 2018 update; others observed aesthetic aspects, such as the analysis of the elements that make up the aesthetics of Wes Anderson's work.

In relation to the 2020.1 offer, the subject of this experience report, according to the previous graphic, the peak of 95 students enrolled reflects the strategy adopted which consisted of doubling the number of places for classes in remote mode. In it, it is also possible to notice a reversal in the offering of the discipline, which started to occur at an odd-numbered period, a decision by the course board in response to a student demand and which will be discussed in detail in the following section. Still according to the graphic, in 2021.1, vacancies in animation classes returned to their regular capacity, of 25 students each, but requests for inclusion were also considered. In 2022.1, a special class was offered, given the backlog of students in the subject who avoided taking it remotely. Finally, in 2022.2, the animation discipline resumes its regular offering in even-numbered periods.

In general terms, the consolidation of the Cinema and Audiovisual course and the regularity in the offer of the animation discipline provided greater visibility of animated cinema among students of the course and related courses, resulting in the appreciation of animation as a language, as well as its technical specificities and countless directors who have driven its history. This also contributed to the recognition of animation as a field of investigation and work.

Still timidly, but no less promising, experiences with animated production also became routine in the classes offered. In relation to course completion work, animation also experienced a growing interest. Among these, the experimental short "Insano", an animation produced by Maria Aparecida de Jesus Santos (2019), and the short "Super Crab World", an animation that emulates a gameplay and

addresses environmental communication stand out, both from 2019, carried out by students of the Cinema and Audiovisual course (GODINHO; NASCIMENTO, 2019). Students from the Graphic Design and Visual Arts course have also been guided by the professor responsible for the animation discipline: in 2018, Galvão (2018) made his animated short “Rafa”, dealing with the issue of Gender Identity; this same year, Giberlan Santos (2018) animated a teaser for his short “Vaquejada”; in 2019, students<sup>7</sup> Carvalho and Vasconcelos (2019) evaluated the role of graphic design in an animated film, covering the pre-production stages with the elaboration of character and scenario concepts, the creation of a narrative/script, the production of the animatic and the implementation of some animated scenes.

In view of the above, it is necessary to highlight that, despite relevant achievements, there are several challenges and obstacles that persist in teaching animation in the Cinema and Audiovisual course at UFS. The laboratory structure is not capable of meeting the demands related to animated cinema, both with regard to the availability of specific software, such as Dragon Frame, and in relation to the configuration of available hardware. There are also no appropriate photography cameras, lighting sets, light tables, 3D printers, rigs and armatures, etc. Animation still appears confined to a single mandatory subject, with a single teacher.

As seen, to a large extent, the students’ work is carried out under adverse conditions, requiring dedication, improvisation, and persistence. The context of the COVID-19 pandemic further accentuated these challenges, transforming what was precarious into non-existent. However, it revealed animation teaching in its potential for motivation and coping, and it is this context that will be discussed below.

### **The offer of Animation I during the COVID-19 pandemic: discussion and results**

Offering subjects remotely was the alternative adopted by UFS to continue teaching activities in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. At DCOS, the offer for the 2020.1 semester was resumed in mid-October, six months after the pre-pandemic forecast. This return to classes was preceded by broad departmental discussions, where each course had to adapt its subjects to the pandemic scenario. In this context, the subject “Animation I” was chosen over the subject “Cinema and Video Editing I”, both taught by the same teacher. The decision to prioritize animation was supported by a previous survey carried out by DCOS among the student body, which indicated “Animation I” as the students’ preference, mainly due to its possibilities of being carried out using mobile devices, in the students’ own homes.

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<sup>7</sup> Both submitted the animated short “The Fisherman and the King of Clouds”, the final work of the “Animation I” discipline, to the minute festival. The film is available at <https://www.festival30seconds.com.br/pt-BR/contents/42769>. These students’ course completion work also dealt with animation and was entitled “The role of graphic design in the construction of the narrative of an animated film”. In it, all the stages related to the pre-production of an animated short film were developed, with emphasis on the work of creating the scenarios and characters, culminating in the production of specific scenes. See more in Carvalho and Vasconcelos (2019).

With the approval of the department, the regular offering of the Cinema and Audiovisual course was reversed, and "Animation I" was offered in the odd period. Furthermore, the number of places was doubled in relation to the in-person offer, allowing the subject to be taken by regular students, those who failed in previous semesters, and students from other courses. Therefore, the subject was planned to be taught through virtual classrooms on Google Classroom, with each class having its own room. The teaching plan previously established the content of each of the fifteen classes planned for the semester. In compliance with institutional guidelines for remote provision, half of the course load was allocated to expository classes, held synchronously, in blocks lasting a maximum of 2 hours. The other half was made available asynchronously and, amid the uncertainties, anxieties and expectations of this social scenario, they were focused on carrying out practical activities in line with the exhibitions.

Class 01 consisted of 45 students, while the second class received 50 students. In the first class, students from the Graphic Design course predominated (31 students, 68% of the class), followed by 9 from Cinema and Audiovisual (20% of the class), in addition to students from various courses, such as Theater, Electrical Engineering, Journalism, Advertising, Visual Arts, Psychology, Petroleum Engineering, among others. In class 02, there were 31 Cinema and Audiovisual students (62% of the class), 12 Graphic Design students (24% of the class), as well as History, Advertising, Visual Arts, and International Relations. Considering the demand for the subject and the fact that other optional subjects were offered simultaneously at DCOS, it is reasonable to conclude that studying and practicing animation had great attraction for students during the pandemic.

Regarding subject planning, the virtual classrooms in *Classroom* were configured in a similar way for both classes. According to the Course's Pedagogical Political Project, the "Animation I" syllabus establishes the following discussions:

Origins and evolution of animation. Basic principles. Animation language. Techniques: flat, spatial, camera-less animation, trickery, computerized animation. Photo-film, cartoon, films with plastic dough, titling. American, European, and Brazilian animated cinema. Perspectives of animation in the face of digital technologies. Scenic special effects, holography. Digitized animation.  
(CONEPE, 2017, p. 12).

Therefore, there was an attempt to cover the course syllabus, strictly respecting the division of 15 hours dedicated to theoretical aspects and 45 hours for carrying out practical activities. Thus, the 60 hours of the course were distributed into 15 classes of 4 hours each, according to the following scheme:

- *Class 01*: synchronous section dedicated to the exhibition of an archaeological panorama of animation. Asynchronous section aimed at exemplifying such toys and the application of their principles today, culminating in the development of exercises centered on the creation of a free-choice toy and the creation of "animated" content for them, with subsequent posting on the platform.

- *Class 02:* synchronous section aimed at discussing the contributions of precursors Blackton, McCay, and Émile Cohl. Asynchronous section focused on the appreciation of works created by precursors on screen, the reading of complementary texts, and exercises related to the elaboration of a comparative table of the contributions related to the emergence of animation.
- *Class 03:* synchronous section aimed at discussing the context and process of emergence of the main animation studios in the USA and productions around the world. The asynchronous section consisted of carrying out a brief survey of two Brazilian animation studios and comparing their production structures.
- *Class 04:* synchronous section dedicated to the discussion of anthropomorphism as a recurring strategy in animated cinema, tracing its origins to precursor animations. The asynchronous section aimed to provide complementary material for this discussion and present animations that marked this process.
- *Class 05:* synchronous section dedicated to discussing the consolidation of American industrial animation, its global influence, the canons established by Disney, in addition to the developments in animation after the Second World War. The synchronous section consisted of an activity focused on understanding Disney's contributions.
- *Class 06:* synchronous section was entirely focused on discussing the principles of animation, starting by covering the elementary process of drawing frame-by-frame movement, privileging the use of a cell phone in this process. The asynchronous section consisted of activities dedicated to the animation of an obliquely thrown ball bouncing on the ground, with an emphasis on timing and understanding the emulation of the force of gravity, weight, and elasticity of bodies.
- *Class 07:* synchronous section revisited aspects of animation produced during the Second World War, mainly interested in understanding its educational, persuasive, and commercial aspects. The asynchronous section encouraged watching related films and carrying out a critical activity comparing works from different studios and nationalities.
- *Class 08:* synchronous section discussed general aspects of the animated production that emerged in Europe, more specifically in the east of the continent. The asynchronous section of the class focused on the critical reading of animations related to this context and texts about some of its main directors.
- *Class 09:* synchronous section highlighted the work of animator Norman McLaren, highlighting aspects of experimental and authorial animation. The asynchronous section was dedicated to critical assistance of the main films and the reading of complementary texts.
- *Class 10:* synchronous section dedicated to understanding timing diagrams for organic animations, with an emphasis on stop motion. The asynchronous section was dedicated to carrying out exercises centered on the animation of cycles, such as the movement of clock pendulums, etc.



- *Class 11:* synchronous section dedicated to the discussion of animated production in the context of television. The asynchronous section was dedicated to the modeling clay animation exercise, emphasizing metamorphoses and related exercises.
- *Class 12:* synchronous section dedicated to discussing general aspects of Japanese animation. The asynchronous section was dedicated to performing cut-out exercises, emphasizing everything from the different options for creating joints to their animation, with an emphasis on rotoscoping.
- *Class 13:* synchronous section dedicated to the context of Brazilian animation. Asynchronous section dedicated to building armor for stop motion characters.
- *Class 14:* entirely dedicated to supporting the completion of the final works of the subject.
- *Class 15:* entirely dedicated to supporting the completion of the final works of the subject.

The main basic bibliography adopted for the development of the discipline privileged the text “The Art of Animation: Technique and Technique through history”, written by Alberto Lucena Junior, to the detriment of the book “Animation Cinema”, by Sébastien Denis (2010), which had been systematically adopted in previous classes, guiding the holding of face-to-face seminars. Given the impossibility of such an undertaking, since many students did not have reliable access to the internet, Lucena Junior’s text (2005) was valued for its historical and objective coverage of animation, in its historical perspective. Thus, the topics of the synchronous classes were anchored in the outline presented by the author, but asynchronous discussions aimed to deepen the debate based on several complementary texts, by providing videos and films representing the discussions and by theoretical and practical activities.

As an example of asynchronous activities, according to “class 01” presented previously, the historical recovery of the emergence of animation was explored with an activity aimed at the production of an optical toy of free choice by students. Thus, valuing student protagonism, the offer of “Animation I” sought to intersperse its theoretical approach with practical experimentation in the first remote classes. To this end, complementary texts such as “A Cartilha Anima Escola: Animation technique for teachers and students” and “Fazendo Animação”, a supplement to Raquel Coelho’s book, were decisive in encouraging experimentation so that around 60% of students in both groups developed the activity, considering it to be very relevant. The confidence in animation, from the beginning of the class, seemed right, especially focusing on the animation itself, to the detriment of the emphasis on technology, especially digital animation systems. With the simplicity of optical toys, now available to each student, the production of animated cycles was stimulated with privilege for the zoetrope.

Discussions about the contributions of the three main animators (Blackton, McCay, and Cohl) of the pre-industrial era, in the American context, resulted in the

creation of a comparative table that identified the specificities of each director by the students. Design and Visual Arts students were particularly encouraged to have a more in-depth discussion about McCay's work, based on the text "Winsor McCay: His life and art", written by John Canemaker, in order to understand the influences of his comics in animated work.

In relation to the configuration and consolidation of the first animation studios, this discussion encouraged students to understand the technical particularities of animation and the nature of the division of tasks, with an emphasis on Disney's perspective. In addition to the availability of animated films and complementary texts, the students researched the configuration of work teams in Brazilian studios, comparing this scenario with the works they carried out.

In this context, and also based on the debate about Disney's production in its "Golden Age", technical aspects of animation were inserted and demonstrated, and a series of exercises were proposed, privileged by the use of the "Stop Motion Studio" mobile application<sup>8</sup>. Such exercises aimed to explore the timing of events/movements and resulted in the classic activity of producing an animation of an obliquely thrown ball bouncing on the ground. This understanding was supported by the text "The Animator's Survival Kit", by Richard Williams.

Discussions about animation produced in Eastern Europe also favored the development of practical activities, especially in stop motion, with an emphasis on animation of silhouette cuts, according to Lotte Reiniger. This discussion was expanded by the text "Animation: the pocket Essential", by Mark Whitehead, and by the "annotated" screening (in an asynchronous discussion forum) of several films and interviews with the animators. Some specific experiments with clippings were carried out, with an emphasis on the exploration of animated cycles, or the application of certain principles such as anticipation and secondary movements. One may also note that, amid the imposed social distancing, students researched the most diverse alternatives for creating articulations, given the need to use what was available in their own homes. Furthermore, sharing these searches on the web, especially on YouTube, brought together important collective support material, also incorporated into the virtual rooms.

The second half of the course focused on brief approaches to particular themes, as was the case with the work of Norman McLaren, whose discussion was supported by an annotated screening of several films. In this specific case, the class was provided with software so they could experiment with sound design, according to the animator.

The specificities of animation developed for television, as well as the debate about Japanese animation and Brazilian animation were covered in subsequent classes. In addition to the availability of audiovisual material, additional texts were

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<sup>8</sup> This application was adopted in the discipline due to its versatility, as it can be installed free of charge on Android or IOS smartphones and tablets. In its full version, it has powerful resources for creating animations: the well-known and indispensable "onion skin"; dynamic frame rate adjustments; tools for removing rigs; acceleration curves; allows the design of trajectories and the timing of movements under them; in addition to adding facial expression with lip sync and using chroma key.

discussed, such as the work “Prime Time Animation”, by Carol A. Stabile and Mark Harrison, “Dramaturgia da Série de Animação”, by Sérgio Nesteriuk, “The Brazilian experience in cinema of animation”, by Antonio Moreno, among others. In parallel to these classes, practical activities were developed, with an emphasis on experimentation with timing diagrams and exercises with articulated cuts, also encouraging the use of the “Dragon Frame” software, in the trial version. Finally, a class was dedicated to assembling an armature for stop motion, using accessible materials, such as wire, silicone glue, sponges, and epoxy adhesive.

The evaluations regarding this remote offer also took into account the protagonism of the students. Each student obtained two grades, the first of which related to the total number of individual activities developed over the 15 classes — one for each. In fact, as attendance at synchronous meetings was not mandatory, all lectures were recorded with the help of Google Meet, and later made available in *Classroom*. In this way, the assessment became procedural, allowing each student to explore the content based on their own dynamics, but requiring them to carry out the activities set out. The second note, in turn, consisted of two distinct alternatives: elaboration of a simple and objective animated production, but one that developed a narrative based on the exploration of some animation principles; or the preparation of a scientific article assuming animation as an object of investigation based on various issues, related to social, political, technical, authorial, aesthetic issues, etc.

For short-term animated films, adequate timing of movements, as well as camera stabilization, were primary requirements, with the production platform, technique, and narrative to be explored being a free choice. With regard to scientific articles, models adopted by relevant forums such as the Brazilian Society of Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (*Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação – INTERCOM*) and the Brazilian Cinema and Audiovisual Teaching Forum (*Fórum Brasileiro de Ensino de Cinema e Audiovisual – FORCINE*) were provided, in addition to a general discussion of their structure and of methodological strategies according to specific student demands.

In the case of class 01, 19 students failed (or abandoned the course), 5 interrupted their enrollment, and 21 were approved (around 46% of those initially enrolled). Among those approved, 12 chose to produce an animation experience, while 9 developed an article. In class 02, 34 students were approved (68% of those initially enrolled), 6 interrupted their enrollment, while 10 failed. Among those approved, 18 chose to try developing an animated production, while 16 developed analytical work. It is important to highlight that the percentage of students who failed was significant in class 01, comprising around 48% of students who remained in the class until its closure, while in class 02, the percentage was around 23%. It is important to highlight that many of these students faced difficulties accessing the internet, a fundamental condition for participating in the remote mode. Although UFS has contracted services to facilitate this demand, in practice, the intense use of videos and films for asynchronous content, or even simple participation in synchronous classes, required bandwidth and data allowance beyond institutional estimates.

In general terms, among the practical productions, we observed a plastic heterogeneity that ranged from the use of traditional modeling clay to perishable foods, including paper cutouts, toys, porcelain objects, Lego pieces, etc., all included in stop motion animations. On the other hand, but to a lesser extent, animations were created in a digital environment, in various graphic programs, with emphasis on After Effects and Krita. Only one study involved the application of rotoscoping.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The context imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging for Brazilian universities, especially those of a public nature. Within the scope of UFS, the experience since the implementation of the Remote Higher Education Center (*Centro de Ensino Superior a Distância – CESAD*), in 2007, favored the option for remote teaching as a coping strategy. However, for the Cinema and Audiovisual Course, as well as several others made up of subjects that require laboratory activities, of a practical and experimental nature, the challenges were even more imposing.

The emotional shock that occurred among students and teachers in the face of the tragic development of the pandemic in Brazil, coupled with the precarious structure of internet access then available to a considerable portion of the student community at UFS, required a broad reflection on the offer, when disciplines were then privileged of a theoretical nature. However, in the case of the Cinema and Audiovisual course, laboratory subjects are essential for the progress of the course, and for this reason they also needed to be adapted to the remote context.

In this sense, the offering of the “Animation I” discipline gained prominence, taking into account that, in general, its classes have always faced a scenario of structural precariousness and its production, at a more basic level, does not require robust equipment. Furthermore, authorial animation is recurrent, and its production is usually carried out in a closed environment, sometimes at home. In view of the above, the discipline proved to be relevant to the confrontation, so that two classes were offered in the period 2020.1.

Despite the various obstacles presented, animation gained visibility and interest in DCOS during the pandemic. The high demand for the two “Animation I” classes attests to this context, as does student participation in exercises and related activities. Withdrawals or failures, despite being significant, were within the traditional averages seen in distance learning courses, or less in other subjects offered in this same context.

In relation to approved students, evidently, several of the animations developed as the final work of the course presented technical limitations, mainly due to the precariousness of production conditions. However, several students demonstrated substantial understanding of the principles presented, expressing very creative choices and decisions in the works presented. Nevertheless, it seems that Graphic Design and Visual Arts students are still those with the greatest interest in production processes, while Cinema and Audiovisual students still seem to see animation as a distant product.

In general terms, the context of the pandemic highlighted aspects that deserve attention in the regular offering of the discipline: the appreciation of practice and know-how proved to be stimulating; optical toys, namely the zoetrope, proved to be a very democratic starting point for the technical understanding of animation, in addition to sharpening the curiosity and interest of students, also valuing a magical atmosphere of animation, an oasis in the midst of academic rationality; the provision of a vast complementary bibliography on animated cinema to students allowed them to take a leading role in the search for aspects of particular interest, both in the field of technique and in the field of research on directors, studios, discursive aspects, etc.; sharing experiences through a forum or wall collectively created throughout the course also proved to be crucial for student engagement.

This results in a very significant legacy that has been internalized in the theoretical-methodological delimitation of subsequent offerings, recognizing that even in the face of structural adversities, animated cinema proves to be powerful. In this way, the path of organic animation, less dependent on computing, still emerges as the most promising one for production proposals within the discipline, at least until such limitations are overcome. Amid the ongoing curricular reformulation process, the experience of remote offerings will be valued with a view to greater inclusion of animation in the Cinema and Audiovisual course, accompanied by the intensification of its production through the creation of an infrastructure dedicated to this venture.

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## 71 years have been too little a time for my will to communicate – an interview with Pedro Ernesto Stilpen, “Stil”

*“71 anos foram muito poucos pra minha vontade de comunicar” – Entrevista com Pedro Ernesto Stilpen, o Stil*

Carlos Eugênio Baptista (Patati)<sup>1</sup>, Gabriel Filipe Santiago Cruz<sup>1</sup> , Luiz Felipe Vasques<sup>2</sup> 

The year was 2014, on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Stil welcomed us at his old house, on Rua Real Grandeza, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro. The proposal was to conduct an interview with the aim of producing an animated documentary about his career.

Pedro Ernesto Stilpen, also known as Stil (Figure 1), is a great reference when it comes to Brazilian animation. He was one of the founders of *Grupo Fotograma*, in 1968, in Rio de Janeiro, which carried out several initiatives to promote animation with film shows and even a program specializing in animated cinema for the now extinct *TV Continental*. After the group’s dissolution in 1969, he later funded *Grupo NOS* alongside Rubens Siqueira and Antônio Moreno. In the following decades, in



Figure 1 - Pedro Ernesto Stilpen, Stil. Image captured from the film *Luz, Anima Ação* by Eduardo Calvet.

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addition to numerous short films such as *Batuque*, *ABC* and *O que é que há com seu Peru*, Stil worked with animation for several TV programs such as *Armação ilimitada*, *Satiricon*, *Domingão do Faustão*, among others. One of his last works was the feature film *As Aventuras do Pequeno Colombo*, which had its premiere at the Anima Mundo Festival in 2015, in which he was honored and applauded by everyone. Stil unfortunately passed away exactly 3 years after this interview kindly given to us, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The interview had been previously structured by researchers Gabriel Filipe Santiago Cruz and Luis Felipe Vasques. However, on the day it was held, the possibility of taking Carlos Eugênio Baptista along (Figure 2), known as Patati, a great reference in the world of national comics, was envisaged.

Therefore, in addition to the interview, the occasion also allowed a great exchange between Stil and Patati. It was the first time they met. Stil made a point of showing some original art from comic projects he had worked on in partnership with Arturo Uranga<sup>1</sup>, such as *Zeca Tatu* (Figure 3).



Figure 2 - Carlos Eugenio Baptista, known as Patati



Figure 3 - Art by Zeca Tatu, comic book character created by Stil in partnership with Arturo Uranga.

The documentary project is still looking for support and sponsorship, however, after listening again and rereading the transcript of those days, we felt it was important to publish the contents of that interview, one of the last with Stil talking

1 Arturo Uranga (1936–1985): born in Argentina. Visual artist and designer, set designer, theater and film director, art director and production designer, director of animated films and expert in Visual Effects.

about himself, his struggle and his legacy, which clearly show the truth of his statement after almost a decade: “71 years were too little” for the desire and will that this great artist had to communicate and express.

LFV: Stil, what are your artistic influences?

STIL: The first influence I was born under is Disney. But, as I researched and understood, European influences began to appear, especially from Czechoslovakia — the former Czechoslovakia —, from Poland, some Russian and French artists... in short, I am a mix of influences from everywhere. Including Brazilians, too, I was a collector of Monteiro Lobato’s books.

LFV: Speaking of Monteiro Lobato, can you tell us a little more about your literary references?

STIL: I am a passionate person! Very passionate! I also have a passion for collecting. So, I fell in love with Monteiro Lobato, for example. And I started buying everything from him, reading everything by Monteiro Lobato, including Monteiro Lobato’s letters, not only children’s literature, but also literature for adults, like *Negrinha*<sup>2</sup>, for instance. Then I discovered Machado de Assis, I read everything by Machado de Assis. So we can say that I’m passionate, desperate for Brazilian things. I love Brazil. From the arrival of the first indigenous peoples to colonization. ‘Cause I’m also that, I’m a mixture of Germans, Italians, and Portuguese arriving here and being dazzled by the strength of this country, by the color of this country, by the intelligence of this country, by the power of this country. I also had foreign authors, I used to read a lot: Andersen, Grimm, etc. They influenced the things I wrote. In fact, everything is like that.

PATATI: You are a storyteller through images. Where did this desire come from? What stories do you want to tell the most? We know producing a cartoon is a handful. What was it that motivated you to say “I’m going to work hard, I’m going to make this film”?

STIL: The first time I sat down to make a cartoon, an animation, it was because of music, which I’m also passionate about. I make compositions, I’m Edmundo Souto’s<sup>3</sup> partner. So I thought people needed to listen to *Batuque*, by Lourenço Fernandes<sup>4</sup>, and learn more about Brazilian dance<sup>5</sup>. In short, my first desire to make a cartoon was to spread to the general public the things that Brazil had in terms of music. Then I started to want to tell my own stories. And I started creating my characters: Antunes and Bandeira, which I turned into four short films; *Zeca Tatu*<sup>6</sup>, which I put in the newspapers (Figure 4); *Pinto*, which Ziraldo published... in other words, I myself became a source of ideas and literary production.

2 *Negrinha* (1920), novel by Monteiro Lobato.

3 Edmundo Rosa Souto: Brazilian composer, guitarist, and architect.

4 Oscar Lorenzo Fernández (1897-1948): Brazilian composer.

5 *Dança Brasileira*, by Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993), Brazilian composer and conductor. In 1974, it served as the basis for the short *Reflexos*, by Stil and Antônio Moreno.

6 *Zeca Tatu*, by Pedro Ernesto Stilpen (writer) and Arturo Uranga (drawing). Published in strips in newspapers such as *O Globo* (RJ) and *Zero Hora* (MG), in the 1980s.

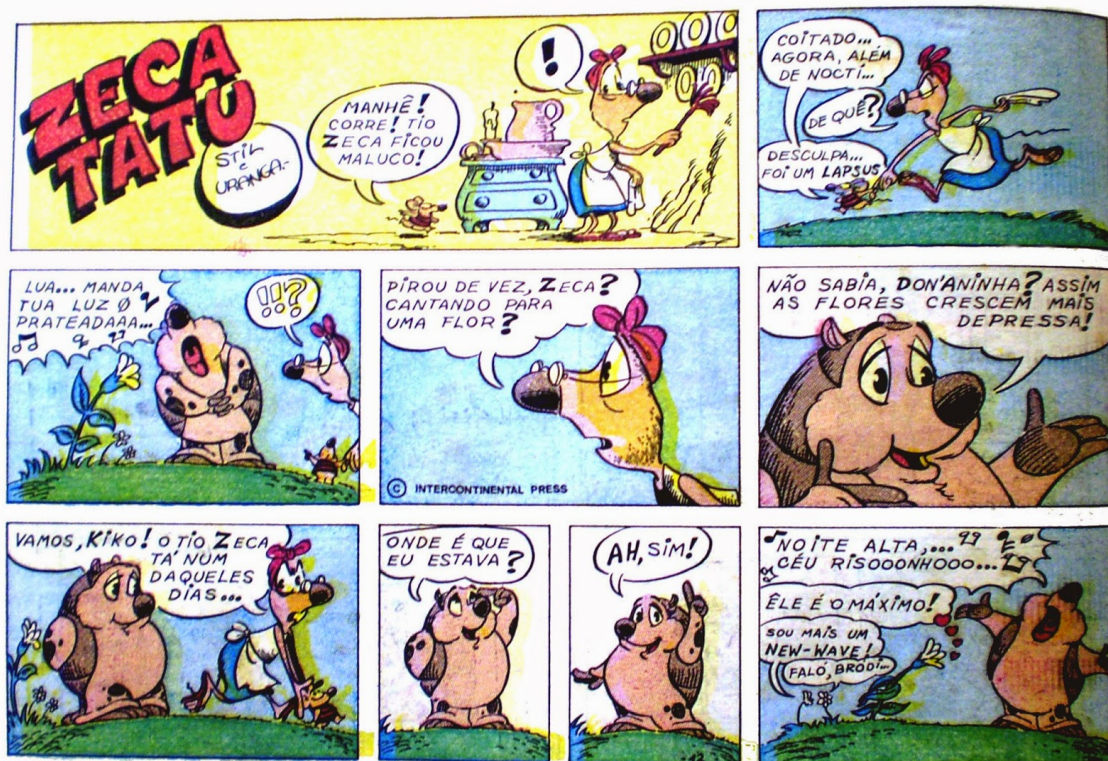


Figura 4 - Zeca Tatu – comic strip by Stil and Uranga Published in the weekly supplement of *Jornal o Globo*

LFV: But what does animation mean to you? The act, the technique, what is it, for you, to animate?

STIL: In theory, animating is exactly that: giving life. Bringing an idea to life, bringing a feeling to life. My films were very poorly behaved: In *Batuque*<sup>7</sup>, for example, what would I do? I'd give life to images that didn't behave properly, that is, they didn't conform to remaining static on the screen. So, they were truly anthropophagic: some swallowed others, some transformed into others. In fact, life is like that.

LFV: How did you plan your 1970s films? Who else did this type of animation?

STIL: I don't, I don't remember having seen anything done the way I used to do it. Let's say I animated "mediumistically", let's put it that way. I would sit down to do the animation and I knew nothing; I didn't have anything planned. I knew that that song would inspire me towards a certain model of things, a certain group of thoughts. But when I sat down at the animation table, I had no idea what would come out.

LFV: Did you use to effectively animate? Wouldn't you use keyframes, or something along those lines?

STIL: Yes, I'd use some keyframes, but these keyframes were also made during my animation process.

PATATI: How did this communicate with the budget issue? Did you have a budget? A deadline? How did the staff deal with that?

7 *Batuque* (1968).



STIL: Budget: this is where the dark side of Stil comes in. The side that Stil didn't learn. So, I started animating *O Batuque* and kept the animation drawings in a plastic bag until, one day, Luiz Fernando da Graça Melo<sup>8</sup> said: "Let's film this". So he sponsored and filmed it. And the film was distributed, I guess, if I'm not mistaken, at the time, it was shown on every screen in the country.

LFV: And what about your "guerrilla animation", with markers and kraft paper? As drawing material. How was it?

STIL: It was the drawing material that I could buy. So it was wrapping paper, which I cut and then punched, I didn't even have the pattern...

LFV: ACME?

STIL: There wasn't an ACME drill, it was just a regular drill.

LFV: The office kind<sup>9</sup>.

STIL: That's right. And then I would place two pins in and film it. No fear of going off the record, or such. Fear is something I've never had, I'm not afraid, no. I do have a lot of hope.

LFV: You started your professional career as an architect. When did Architecture give way to animation?

STIL: When I was at *Colégio Brasil-América*, the subjects were divided into 4 groups: Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, and the X class. And what was the "X class"? It was the group that just wanted the diploma. It wasn't my case, because I was studying with a goal. Since I didn't know how to bandage a cut, I couldn't be a doctor. As I didn't have the mental structure to make a metal or concrete structure, I couldn't be an engineer. So, I was left with the art of Architecture. I loved forms so much, I admired what Oscar Niemeyer had just done with Brazilian Architecture, I found out about this subject and everything was fine. I ended up graduating in Architecture and Urban Planning. Oh! Urbanism for me are the trees that I planted here in Botafogo, they are full of babies. Stil offsprings through the corners. Before I move, I'm still gonna plant some more, there's a little space there in *Real Grandeza*<sup>10</sup>, I'll plant a little tree that I'll buy, as a thank you to the neighborhood of Botafogo.

LFV: And when did you leave Architecture to take up animation? When did you move from the architectural line to the animated line?

STIL: Actually, what happened was that as an architect, I was from the Department of Roads and Highways. Can I really tell my story here?

LFV: Yeah, yeah! That's the idea, sure.

STIL: Yeah, because I don't know...

LFV: No, yeah, do tell!

GC: If necessary, we can edit it later.

<sup>8</sup> Cinema producer.

<sup>9</sup> Stil refers to an office hole punch, a common substitute, if there is no professional ACME record at hand, to keep the sheets on which the drawing is animated in the same position.

<sup>10</sup> Rua Real Grandeza, in Botafogo, a neighborhood in the south of the city of Rio de Janeiro, where the interviewee lived before moving.

STIL: Well then, I’ll tell you. Let it be on record then! I was from a group called *Fotograma*<sup>11</sup>, a group considered subversive. OK? So, I was an architect at DER<sup>12</sup>, I was making blueprints, etc., in the Urban Planning sector of the Department of Roads and Highways. Then I was summoned by my superior who was a military man, Doctor Oto. There was a security guard in the room, and I was fired... Go figure? For no reason, I was doing my job right. And this person, this angel, gave me the opportunity, pushed me towards the opportunity to make films, which was what I wanted to do. I was left without a job, without my steady income, and everything else, but on the path I must have chosen before I was born. I don’t resent him. The guy who fired me, no! I’m even beyond grateful.

LFV: What was the NOS Group like?

STIL: *Grupo Fotograma* had people from various areas. And NOS was a group that decided to make cartoons, within *Grupo Fotograma*. It was an animation group within *Grupo Fotograma*, as *Fotograma* also had people who didn’t do animations. As was the case with Sydney<sup>13</sup>. But others, like Zé Rubens Siqueira<sup>14</sup>, did animation, and then the NOS Group was born, which did very little, and was dissolved quickly.

LFV: Did you end up making short films?

STIL: Yes, of course. If I’m not mistaken, *Super-Tição*<sup>15</sup> (Figure 5).



Figure 5 - Super Tição – Stil’s character in “Faz mal 2 – Introducing Super-Tição” from 1984.

Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NcWtpawXO8>. Accessed on: Oct. 08, 2023.

11 Group of filmmakers, animators and animation fans in general, which lasted between 1968 and 1969.

12 Department of Roads and Highways (Departamento de Estradas e Rodagem, in Portuguese).

13 Sydney Solis: filmmaker.

14 José Rubens Siqueira: author, translator, theater director, set designer, and costume designer.

15 *Super-Tição* (1986): winner of the Brasília Children’s Film Festival, with children’s voting, and the São Saruê Award, from Brazilian film clubs.

LFV: Oh, is *Super-Tição* by *Fotograma*? From Grupo NOS?

STIL: I think so. Zé Rubens' films, who was a wonderful illustrator, also included Antônio Moreno's films...<sup>16</sup>

LFV: And how about *Experiência 68*?

STIL: *Experiência 68* was a cartoon show that we put on TV. It was produced on *TV Continental*<sup>17</sup>, in Laranjeiras (Rio de Janeiro). We also did crazy things, like putting *Chico Batarde*, who would say "*ba' tarde*" ("good afternoon" with a country accent), up there, in *contra-plongée*, instead of straight on<sup>18</sup>. What really mattered were the cartoons that were presented. One fine day we arrived there to do the show and the TV had been closed. So, simple as that.

LFV: How long did the show last?

STIL: 68. Only 68. Even though *Experiência 69* is pornographic. (laughter)

LFV: What was the structure of *Experiência 68* like? Half an hour, an hour...?

STIL: It was a half-hour program, which had 4 girls presenting and talking about festivals and material that was borrowed from the MAM Cinemateca that we were putting on TV for the first time.

LFV: And where did this material come from?

STIL: Lots of European things! And material from the United States like *Felix the Cat*, the first Mickey films, *Betty Boop*, etc.

GC: How often was the show broadcast?

STIL: It was a weekly show. Live.

LFV: Stil, you have already had the opportunity to talk about your life, your career in different places, events, and even documentaries. What do you think remains to be said?

STIL: What remains to be said? That it's all about the short film! Pardon the pun, but I think life is short. Life is too short for everything we have to do. It's short for so much that we have accumulated in life. The Stil of comics, music, plays, shorts, and feature films hasn't even begun! Even the things I have saved that could become pieces of art are also very few compared to the things I can sit down and start writing about. Unfortunately, 71 years have been too little a time for my will to communicate the things I have to say. And even the things I said in 1968 are different from the things I would say now. Because I too am a changing being.

PATATI: What would you say to someone who wants to start drawing, to start dedicating themselves? After all, this is a calling, right? I would say cruelly, a *cachaça*<sup>19</sup>.

STILL: Yeah. It's a divine inspiration

PATATI: It is a divine inspiration. That's it!

STIL: For those who are starting out, my advice is: just start! Things will fall into place.

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16 Antônio Moreno: animator and academic, author of one of the few books on the history of Brazilian animation: *A experiência brasileira no cinema de animação* (1978).

17 Extinct Rio TV channel (channel 9), between 1959 and 1972.

18 Stil refers to the group's inventiveness, which resulted, in this example, in shooting the show from a high point, instead of conventional framing at ground level. It is necessary to take into account the natural difficulty in doing so, with 1968 technology.

19 Popular Brazilian distilled spirit made from fermented sugarcane juice.

GC: Stil, one more question. In 1978 you released the book *Máquinas mágicas do desenho animado*<sup>20</sup>. In it, you focused on a young audience, younger, I mean. Do you think animation is an experience that has everything to do with Education?

STIL: Well certainly yes! Animation is one of the paths of the 300 million branches of culture, and animation could indeed be taught, to anyone who wanted to do it. It's not for everyone. It's for anyone who wants to do it. Just as everyone sings, but some people dedicate themselves to music for real, professionally. So, animation could be taught to anyone who wanted to learn it. In schools, including public schools. This is my last fight, to make culture a subject from the first year until the end of primary school. Because then people already have the ability to choose their destiny. And culture is not just Art. Art is just an element for culture to be disseminated, for culture to disseminate. Culture comes before animation, it comes before Health, it comes before the Economy, it comes before everything; Culture is what makes Brazilians Brazilians, for example. May Brazilians understand who Monteiro Lobato was, whether they like Monteiro Lobato or not. Understand who Caetano Veloso is and whether you like Caetano Veloso or not. But it is necessary that all these artists are introduced to children so that they first know who they are, and that samba does not end up being suffocated by other artistic manifestations such as funk or rap.

PATATI: One attempt: you talked about samba, rap and funk, don't you think there is a lack of things that talk about these cultural manifestations of Brazilian origin?

STIL: I think that, for adults, for adults, the opportunity has been lost. I trust only the children.

GC: You have a recognized career as an authorial animator: your shorts, your independent work, and you also had your time working at Globo, working within the market, as an animator...

STIL: Animator and creator, too.

GC: Is there a difference between this creative author and the corporate animator, let's put it that way?

STIL: Can I compliment *Rede Globo*? Because I worked under the orders of the fantastic being called Augusto César Vanucci<sup>21</sup>. He, for some, was a tyrant, for others he was a father. For me he was a father. Just like Borjalo<sup>22</sup> and Talma<sup>23</sup>. I was lucky. To have people who listened to me. I would get there and say: “Talma, I have an idea”. He ordered everyone to leave the room to hear my idea! When on Earth will I have this again, Gosh? Globo, for me, was a paradise. They paid me well, they paid on time, and the things I suggested were done, the things I designed were published. And every moment in the official meetings, in the creative meetings, everyone could comment on the scripts. For example: when there were children's specials, which was the peak of

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20 *Máquinas Mágicas do Desenho Animado*: book by Stil (1981) on how to assemble optical toys, cut, fold and paste style. Published by the extinct Editora Bloch.

21 Augusto César Vanucci (1934-1992): film actor, director and TV producer, having worked at *Rede Globo de Televisão*.

22 Mauro Borja Lopes (1925-2004): nicknamed Borjalo, was a cartoonist. He worked as a production assistant at *Rede Globo de Televisão*.

23 Roberto Talma (1949-2015): was a film producer and television director.



this creation, he was out of ideas for the title of one of the shows. Then I remembered a song called *Plink, Plank, Plunk*<sup>24</sup>, which was a beautiful song all done in *pizzicato*. And the ship would have this *pizzicato* noise. Plic, plec, plac. Then Augusto said, laughing: “Stil, you’re getting old. This song is from 1930, 1920. But the name of the show will be ‘Pluft, Plact, Zuum!’”<sup>25</sup>. And so, a name was born that represented this special for several years. From an old, silly idea, Augusto turned it into life! He gave it life. This extraordinary person is greatly missed. Extraordinary people like him do.

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24 Instrumental music from 1951, by American composer Leroy Anderson (1908-1975).

25 *Plunct, Plact, Zuum* (1983): children’s musical by *Rede Globo de Televisão*.



# Cultural exchange in creative economy: weak and strong ties in agroecological fair

## *Intercâmbio cultural na economia criativa: laços fracos e fortes em feira agroecológica*

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### ABSTRACT

*This study presents the results of the analysis on the relationships between strong ties and weak ties in the creative economy, focusing on experience. The objective is to describe the existing influences between these types of ties and their possible simultaneous relationships in the context of the local creative economy. The chosen case study is the “urban-rural exchange” between producers and consumers of an agroecological fair in Várzea - a peripheral neighborhood located in the city of Recife/Pernambuco/Brazil. The methodology used is exploratory and descriptive in nature, based on qualitative analysis. Documentaries produced by the Agroecological Space of Várzea (EAV), images available on the Instagram profile, and descriptive texts that highlight the narratives of the study participants were used. The results indicate that the “urban-rural exchange” establishes strong and solid ties, while also strengthening weak ties, boosting the local creative economy of the agroecological fair.*

**Keywords:** Creative economy. Strong ties. Weak ties. Cultural exchange. Agroecological fair.

### RESUMO

*Este estudo apresenta os resultados da análise sobre as relações entre laços fortes e laços fracos na economia criativa, com foco na experiência. O objetivo é descrever as influências existentes entre esses tipos de laços e suas possíveis relações simultâneas na conjuntura da economia criativa local. O estudo de caso escolhido é o “intercâmbio urbano-rural” entre produtores e consumidores de uma feira agroecológica na Várzea, bairro periférico localizado na cidade de Recife, Pernambuco, Brasil. A metodologia utilizada é de natureza exploratória descritiva, baseada em análise qualitativa. Foram utilizados documentários produzidos pelo Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea (EAV), imagens disponíveis no perfil do Instagram e textos descritivos que evidenciam as narrativas dos participantes do estudo. Os resultados indicam que o “intercâmbio urbano-rural” estabelece laços fortes sólidos e fortalece os laços fracos, impulsionando a economia criativa local da feira agroecológica.*

**Palavras-chave:** Economia criativa. Laços fortes. Laços fracos. Intercâmbio cultural. Feira agroecológica.

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## INTRODUCTION

Economic relationships in supermarkets and fairs are brief and economic in nature (BORGES, 2019). However, due to the pandemic and social distancing, these relationships have become more distant. The Várzea agroecological fair, in Recife, Pernambuco, adopts strategies to maintain proximity in commercial transactions.

Agroecological fairs resist agribusiness, which promotes the consumption of food contaminated by pesticides, affecting human and animal health and natural ecosystems (BENINCA; CAMPOS BONATTI, 2020). Thus, agroecology seeks to produce and consume food in a sustainable way, without pesticides, and goes beyond organic or natural agriculture (ALTIERI, 1989; BENINCA; CAMPOS BONATTI, 2020; FEIDEN, 2005).

Creative economy promotes agroecological fairs as commercial spaces aligned with agroecology and sustainability. In addition to meeting the local demand for organic food, these fairs promote interaction between producers and consumers.

The Várzea agroecological fair, in Recife, promotes dialogue and connections, in addition to selling agroecological products. The “Urban-Rural Exchange” program strengthens ties through consumer visits to production sites. Fairs are meeting points that allow us to rediscover ways of living in society through this relationship with space (VIGUELES; MARQUES, 2021).

The study investigated whether this exchange strengthens ties between producers and consumers, promoting trust and proximity. This transformation in economic relations is crucial to strengthening local creative economy.

Agroecological fairs go beyond commerce, being spaces for exchanging knowledge, valuing culture, and encouraging sustainable production. Establishing strong ties, these fairs contribute to a conscious community, committed to health, environment, and sustainable economic development.

Through initiatives such as “Urban-Rural Exchange”, these fairs strengthen ties between producers and consumers, creating a relationship of trust and mutual appreciation. This transformation in economic relations contributes to strengthening local creative economy, turning agroecological fairs into spaces for exchanging knowledge and cultural appreciation.

## THEORETICAL REFERENCE

### Creative economy

The concept of creative economy is based on creative assets to stimulate income generation, job creation, and export of profits/gains, promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity, and human development (UNCTAD, 2010). Initiatives to stimulate creative industries emerged in the 1990s and 2000s, with Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, but the roots of this approach go back to actions taken by left-leaning local governments around 15 years earlier, in industrial cities such as Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Sheffield, and Bradford (CORAZZA, 2013).

In the Brazilian context, the concept of creative economy has undergone an evolution and is currently understood as a set of activities in which creativity plays a fundamental role as a production factor, raw material, and final product. This concept is intrinsically related to the use of technology and the appreciation of intellectual property (IPEA, 2013). Furthermore, contemporary economic and territorial dynamics are increasingly influenced by intangible elements, which demands the construction and study of concepts capable of understanding these new territorial and economic interrelations (DA SILVA DINIZ; MENDES, 2017).

Creativity is the driver of innovation in creative economy. It is recognized that creativity and novelty are essential, and both must be cultivated for a deeper understanding of the concept (DORSA, 2019). Although some people have greater creative ability than others, the “lone genius” view is inconsistent because creative work involves multiple people and the social context can both contribute to and limit creativity (PERRY-SMITH; MANNUCCI, 2017).

Creativity is not limited to artists, it extends to scientists, businesspeople, economists, and other professionals capable of creating something original, personal, meaningful, and concrete (HOWKINS, 2013).

Creativity can be managed in an organizational context through people, procedures, rules, and resources. Furthermore, in the organizational environment, creativity is a social phenomenon built by interactions between individuals, leadership, and culture, all interrelated to promote creative development (MUZZIO, 2017).

Creativity is associated with the generation of ideas, while innovation refers to the commercial application of these ideas (MUZZIO, 2017). Creativity is assessed by originality, appropriateness, usefulness, and value of the answer or solution to a task, especially in heuristic tasks that do not follow rigid algorithms (AMABILE, 1996).

### **Strong ties and weak ties**

In 1973, sociologist Mark Granovetter introduced a new paradigm in the understanding of social relations with his article *The Strength of Weak Ties*. When studying the job market, Granovetter observed that weak ties offer greater opportunities to get a job than strong ones, as weak ties provide new contacts and information (GRANOVETTER, 1973). Although these ties have less frequent contact, they provide access to resources and information beyond those available in nearby social networks.

The analysis of connections between individuals, such as cohesion of networks and flow of resources between them — money, affection, and information —, reveals that individuals make more solid decisions when their social ties are stronger (GRANOVETTER, 1973). During this period, “weak ties” received great attention as they were considered relevant to the dissemination of innovations. However, it was not completely accepted that “weak ties” were directly linked to innovation, since the adoption of innovations required feelings of identification and trust among community members, which was associated with the idea of “strong ties” (GRANOVETTER, 1973).

Weak ties are known as “bridges” between individuals who do not belong to the same social group and are associated with greater reach and exposure to different people (SHALLEY *et al.*, 2015). According to the authors, an important factor that differentiates weak ties from strong ties is that they require more connection time between individuals when seeking advice and generate a need for future reciprocation on the part of those offering advice.

On the other hand, strong ties have an intrinsic motivation for the development of creativity, as individuals are more inclined to help each other in the search for problem solving (TORTORIELLO; KRACKHARDT, 2010). In general terms, strong ties are characterized by closer and more frequent relationships between actors, while weak ties represent more distant relationships and, therefore, result in less frequent interactions (GRANOVETTER, 1985).

The sharing of unique ideas and complex knowledge, which requires trust, is facilitated by positive affect between individuals. These positive affective states are associated with broad mental categorization, which can promote associations and, in turn, induce creativity (SHALLEY *et al.*, 2015).

Collins (2009), for example, demonstrates that many prominent intellectuals in the fields of art and science were often embedded in networks strongly connected to other scientists, researchers and artists, who not only shared ideas, but also competed and collaborated. On the other hand, those who were integrated into weakly connected networks ended up weakening themselves, despite their talent, according to Collins (2009).

Given the complexity of social relationships, the existence of ties makes it possible to build connections between actors, forming the basis for more robust social relationships. In the context of creativity, ties play an important role in helping to understand how actors build a reality based on creativity and close relationships. They offer a pertinent perspective for understanding how social interactions influence creativity and how individuals can benefit from the diversity of social ties (SHALLEY *et al.*, 2015; TORTORIELLO; KRACKHARDT, 2010).

### **Agroecology — social contexto**

The term “agroecology” has been widespread, often associated with ecological, organic, and clean products, as well as a new form of socially fair agriculture that promotes healthier lives. However, it is important to highlight that these reductionist conceptions do not fully encompass the scope of agroecology as a science (CAPORAL; COSTABEBER, 2004).

The mechanistic and reductionist approach adopted in agriculture, in which parts are manipulated and understood in isolation, has brought scientific advances and increased agricultural productivity through technology. However, this approach has also resulted in soil degradation, waste, and excessive use of water, environmental pollution and dependence on external inputs (FEIDEN, 2005).

The agricultural perspectives that emerged after the Second World War sought more sustainable agriculture. However, it is necessary to distinguish that the

mere absence of pesticides or other chemical products does not guarantee the sustainability of agriculture and even the inadequate use of organic inputs can cause imbalances in cultivation (CAPORAL; COSTABEBER, 2004). In that regard:

Agroecology constitutes a theoretical and methodological approach that, drawing on various scientific disciplines, aims to study agricultural activity from an ecological perspective. Thus, agroecology adopts, from a systemic approach, the agroecosystem as a unit of analysis, with the ultimate purpose of providing scientific foundations (principles, concepts, and methodologies) to support the transition process from the current conventional agriculture model to sustainable agricultural models (CAPORAL; COSTABEBER, 2004, p. 11).

Within the scientific disciplines related to agriculture, multidisciplinary approaches have emerged to deal with the challenges faced by traditional agriculture. These approaches included multidisciplinary, in which researchers from different areas sought a comprehensive understanding of the object of study; interdisciplinarity, in which researchers from different disciplines selected the same object of study and established common parameters and analysis methodologies; and transdisciplinarity, which involved the integration of new knowledge beyond existing disciplines (FEIDEN, 2005).

Thus, when seeking to understand the definition under construction of agroecology, one can attribute importance to “agroecological zoning”, which consists of the territorial delimitation of exploration areas suitable for different crops, taking into account the climatic characteristics necessary for their development (FEIDEN, 2005).

The emergence of agroecology as a science encompasses disciplines such as agronomy, ecology, economics, and sociology (ALTIERI, 1989). It has been disseminated in Latin America, including Brazil, as a technical-agronomic model capable of guiding sustainable rural development strategies, evaluating the potential of agricultural systems through a social, economic, and ecological perspective (ALTIERI, 1998).

Agroecology emerges as a sustainable form of production, being an alternative to the traditional model. It is considered a healthier and more sustainable way of life for both consumers and producers, both in the countryside and in the city (BENINCA; CAMPOS BONATTI, 2020). Furthermore, it is also a social movement based on principles, concepts, and theories to strengthen these practices in rural areas (PAULINO; GOMES, 2020).

In addition to the development of sustainable agricultural products and agroecological fairs, movements are also taking place in defense of women’s rights, promoting gender emancipation and encouraging female leadership as an agent of social transformation (FRANCO CÂMARA *et al.*, 2020). However, the reality of some women is still being considered substitutes for their partners in agroecology and in the field. In other words, when men are not present on the property or cannot manage the business, women take on these roles (ANDERSSON *et al.*, 2017).

Besides the aspect of product marketing, agroecological fairs transcend local limits due to the current context of digital media. Therefore, by going beyond the boundaries of the community, greater coordination between those involved in the search for joint solutions and the construction of innovations is possible (FERNANDES *et al.*, 2022).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The main objective of this research was to carry out a descriptive exploratory investigation to understand the dynamics of weak ties and strong ties through the economic strategy used by the organizers of *Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea* (EAV) in the “urban-rural exchange.”

To do so, an analysis of secondary data was carried out, using the documentary videos produced by the event organizers. We opted for a qualitative approach, which allows for a more in-depth analysis of the information collected, aiming to understand the nuances and particularities of the phenomenon studied (STRAUSS, 1987; SUNDLER, 2019).

The simple case study was chosen to carry out a detailed and in-depth analysis of a single case, EAV, considered exemplary for representing a successful initiative to bring producers and consumers closer together through urban-rural exchange.

The Atlas.ti software was used to analyze the collected data, which is widely known in qualitative data analysis. This software made it possible to organize the data into categories, to identify patterns, and to make comparisons between different aspects of the reality studied.

The study was conducted focusing on the Várzea Agroecological Fair, located at Praça Damázio Pinto, Várzea District, in Recife, Pernambuco, from 2018 to 2019. The objective was to analyze the rapprochement between consumers and traders/producers in the context of this relationship of consumption. For this, a qualitative approach was used based on the analysis of secondary data published by EAV on its YouTube channel and Instagram.

The analysis was based on audiovisual records from the “agroeco varzea” channel on YouTube, which document the tours promoted by EAV so that consumers can learn about the cultivation sites. Images and texts on Instagram were also analyzed, exploring the theory of strong ties and weak ties. The qualitative analysis revealed the importance of social ties in bringing consumers and traders/producers together at the Várzea Agroecological Fair. This approach to secondary data has brought significant results in research on innovation in administration (FERNANDES *et al.*, 2022).

In addition to analyzing the narratives, it was decided to include photographic images of the environment in which the subjects were inserted, in order to complement the understanding of the context of weak ties and strong ties. The images were analyzed through codings that were grouped and divided into codes and their descriptions were found in the data analysis. This allowed a more complete and detailed analysis of the studied context.



The results of the coding used in the analysis of the images were presented in Table 1, highlighting the categories of gestures, attitudes, and actions of the subjects identified in the photographs. Furthermore, the results of the image analysis were cross-referenced with the subjects' narratives, providing a more complete understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding weak ties and strong ties. The approach using images complemented the analysis of the narratives, providing a richer and more detailed view of the context of these relationships.

Table 1. Codings for the inauguration of *Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea* and the Urban-Rural Exchange.

Type	Locus of analysis		
Images	People gathered, buying and selling, feminist movement, and culture	Image/context, people gathered and buying and selling	People gathered, buying and selling, feminist movement
Narrative of the subjects	Feminist movement, agroecology and consumer/visitor	Interpersonal relationship, historical context, external incentive to the family, internal incentive to the family and feminist movement	Interpersonal relationship, buying and selling, feminist movement, agroecology, consumer/visitor

Source: elaborated by the authors.

Table 1 presents the coding used in the analysis of data collected during the inauguration of EAV and the urban-rural exchange (AGROECOVÁRZEA, 2018a). The subjects' images, photographs, and narratives were analyzed to identify gestures, attitudes, and actions related to the theory. Furthermore, the analysis of the Instagram profile @agroecovarzea was also considered when preparing the table. The encodings were grouped and divided into codes and descriptions to better understand the different moments in which they occurred.

The images and narratives reveal significant aspects of the studied context. The presence of people gathered, the dynamics of buying and selling, the feminist movement, and cultural expression stand out. The feminist movement, agroecology, consumer profile, and interpersonal relationships are covered. These insights enrich the research, highlighting the importance of social ties and agroecological practices.

## RESULTS

EAV was inaugurated on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. On social media, their Instagram profile (@agroecovarzea) had 924 publications and 5,594 followers, while the YouTube channel (agroeco varzea) had 116 subscribers and 14 videos published. On Facebook/Meta (*Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea*), there were 813 followers. The EAV website (<https://agroecovarzea.wixsite.com/>) was also analyzed, highlighting the relationships between farmer associations.

The first exchange, entitled "Knowledge and Flavors about Agroecology from the Várzea Agroecological Space", was held on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The

event included visits to the site of farmers/traders Maisa and Elivelton from the Mocotó Association, in Vitória de Santo Antão, Pernambuco (AGROECOVÁRZEA, 2019). There was also a horticulture workshop, pick up and pay and a conversation circle between participants. Participation in the meeting required advance registration and payment of R\$ 50.00, which included transfer, welcome coffee, lunch, and workshop.

Three more urban-rural exchanges were then carried out. The second took place on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, heading to the municipality of Belo Jardim, in Pernambuco, where the site linked to the Agroflor Association is located. The investment to participate was also R\$ 50.00, covering transfers, breakfast at the association's headquarters, visits to producer sites, and lunch with local products.

The third urban-rural exchange took place on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in the municipality of Igarassu, in Sítio Sete Estrelas. The event included workshops on gluten-free cooking, vegetable juices and milks, herbal medicine for pets and sacred herbs, all interconnected with the family experience of farmers Camila and Felipe. Registration was made by bank transfer, with a value of R\$ 50.00 for access to the workshops, lunch, welcome coffee, and transfer.

The fourth urban-rural exchange took place on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, in the municipality of Glória de Goitá, on sites linked to *Associação das Amoras*. During the event, workshops on natural pesticides were offered, and participants had the opportunity to visit the family farms of Marluce, Nino, Chico, Nindinaldo, and Walter. Investment and payment method for this exchange were the same as for previous events.

These urban-rural exchanges promoted by EAV provided a closer relationship between consumers, producers, and traders. Participants had the opportunity to get to know production sites up close, to exchange knowledge and experiences about agroecology, and to establish meaningful connections in the context of the fair.

The exchanges also highlighted the importance of partnerships and farmer associations in promoting agroecology and valuing local products. Visiting family farms and participating in workshops provided practical experience of the principles of agroecology, enabling a better understanding of the origin and production of the food at the fair.

In the analysis of the EAV inauguration video (AGROECOVÁRZEA, 2018a), different categories were identified in coding (Table 2). The images reveal moments such as people gathered in stretching activities, talking on chairs arranged in a circle and celebrating the event. The purchase and sale of products was also observed, as well as the presence of the feminist movement, portrayed in group photographs and in the sale of shirts with the slogan "Without feminism there is no agroecology" during the opening fair.

The code "people gathered" shows a stretching activity in a circle in the center of the square, promoting health and well-being, values related to agroecology (RIGOTTO, 2012). The participation of men, women, and children involves different segments of the community in promoting healthy practices.

Table 2. Coded images of the inauguration of *Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea*.

Codes	Description
People gathered	Stretching activity in a circle with men, women, and children.
	Conversations on white circle-shaped chairs.
	Hugs in the center of the square celebrating and applauding.
	Clapping and shouting "Fora Temer".
Buying and selling	Group photography together.
	Woman buying and placing products in an ecological tote bag.
Feminist movement	Book stall called PF - Paulo Freire.
	Shirts with the slogan "Without feminism there is no agroecology" being sold.
Culture	Shirts with the slogan "Without feminism there is no agroecology" being sold.
	Presentation by youth from the Lar Fabiano de Cristo project playing percussion while people watch.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

The "Buying and selling" code highlights a woman purchasing ecological products and using an ecological bag, encouraging conscious consumption and sustainable production (ROMEIRO; GUIMARÃES, 2022). The presence of the book stand named after Paulo Freire indicates the promotion of education and culture, values related to sustainable agriculture.

The sale of shirts with the slogan "Without feminism there is no agroecology" (Figure 1) aimed to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality in sustainable agriculture. The female genetic symbol coined with a clenched fist on the figure represents the empowerment of women in agriculture and society in general.



Source: Agroecovárzea (2018b).

Figure 1. "Without feminism there is no agroecology" logo.

The cultural presentations *carried out* by young people from the Lar Fabiano de Cristo project value local culture and promote cultural diversity associated with agroecology. Specific uniforms identify participants with the project, valuing the work carried out by the organization. The presence of people watching the presentations involves the community in the project activities.

Table 3 presents the coding and descriptions of images from the exchanges held during the inauguration of EAV in 2018. Different groups and movements, such as the Feminist Movement, Yoga, and Agroecology, were present, indicating strong ties and shared values. The message on the t-shirt “Without feminism there is no agroecology” and the discussion about the patriarchal and sexist character of certain agricultural systems emphasize the concern with gender equality and the empowerment of women in agriculture and society. These actions aim to build a fairer and more sustainable agricultural production system.

In this context, it is possible to identify the presence of weak ties in the event. The buying and selling of products in “stalls” indicate a more superficial commercial relationship between sellers and consumers. However, EAV seeks to strengthen ties

Table 3. Images and descriptive texts of the inauguration of *Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea* and the urban-rural exchange on Instagram.

Codes	Inauguration ( <i>Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea</i> , 2018)	
	Image	Descriptive text
People gathered	Features an image with the logo of Yoga representative Clarissa Mendonça	With the participation of a yoga teacher, the text promotes “sharing with those present an energizing practice that will open the activities this coming Saturday”.
	Practice yoga in a large circle	
	Photograph with several people occupying space in Pinto Dâmaso square (EAV location)	
	Cultural presentation of young people (women)	
Buying and selling	A man and a woman hold a basket with products, both smiling	“ <i>Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea</i> aims to be more than just a place to buy and sell.”
	All tents have the same pattern, with green and white striped awnings	
Feminist movement	Banner with information about the inauguration and the symbol of the feminist movement (see Figure 1)	“This month we will bring the debate on Feminism and Agroecology and some cultural activities.” “Without Feminism there is no Agroecology!”
	A woman performs sublimation* on a t-shirt	“Agroecology is based on indigenous culture and peasantry. We know that, historically, these have both been patriarchal and sexist systems.”
	Shirts hanging on a clothesline with the movement’s logo (see Figure 1)	“As long as there is inequality in the distribution of resources, in the division of labor and in the recognition of female contributions, there will be a fight to be fought!”
Agroecology	Farmer harvesting a vegetable	“agroecological fair with lots of good things and no poison”
		“Agroecology is not limited to the production system, this thought of change reaches the social, pedagogical and cultural levels.”

Continue...

Table 3. Continuation.

Codes	Urban-rural Exchange (Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea, 2018)	
	Image	Descriptive text
People gathered	Watch a lecture held by Agroflor	<i>"We had a very useful dialogue circle that helped us understand more about the reality of this family from Sítio Sete Estrelas."</i>
	Sitting listening to a female farmer	
	Go on a trail	
	"Work" at the plow	<i>"Still in the morning, we took a walk to see Marluce and Nino's plantations. After lunch we went to Chico and Lindinaldo's farm, and after a walk through the plantations, we had a Natural Defensives Workshop."</i>
	A joint photograph at the end of the exchange with everyone together.	
	Hear from farmers about their life stories and the place they visit.	
Feminist movement	--x--	<i>"We wanted to highlight the group of women warriors who made a difference in making this visit happen."</i>
Interpersonal relationship	People pose for a photo next to the driver, before the trip	<i>"Get to know a little about the history of Elivelton and Maísa's family that makes up our little corner."</i>
	Farmer welcomes EAV attendee with a smile	<i>"We took a walk through the plantations, lunch was wonderful, and there was even a river bath for those who came prepared."</i>
	EAV attendees hug for the photo	<i>"It was a day of great exchange of knowledge, new friendships and adventure."</i>
	Farmer and EAV attendee hug	
Agroecology	Women photographed with plantations in the background	<i>"We had a very useful round of dialogue that allowed us to better understand the reality of this family from Sítio '7 Estrelas' and also find out more about the organizational issues of the bodies that oversee organic and/or agroecological production ."</i>

\*It is an easy-to-use fabric printing technique capable of supporting a wide variety of colors; EAV: *Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea*.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

between producers and consumers, promoting a connection between consumers and nature. The presence of family farming and vegetable harvesting reinforces the idea of a sustainable system by strengthening these ties between participants and disseminating these practices to society.

Table 4 presents the narratives coded during the inauguration of EAV, reflecting the voices and perspectives of different actors, such as the feminist movement, agroecology, and consumers/visitors. These narratives highlight the importance of bringing women into this space, recognizing their contribution and struggle in agroecology. EAV strengthens cultural activities in the neighborhood and goes beyond

the absence of pesticides in agricultural production. Consumers and visitors express their collective engagement in the construction of this space as resistance, the fight for a better world, food security, and agroecology.

Table 4. Coded narratives of the inauguration of Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea.

Codes	Description
Feminist movement	A woman, without describing her identification, highlights: “for us women and us feminist women this is extremely important, to create, to bring women to this place, a place of contribution, a place of great value that women have, a place of rebellion too, a place of a lot of struggle, because without feminism, there is no agroecology” (AGROECOVARZEA, 2018).
Agroecology	“EAV is very important for the agroecological process and the fight for agroecology” highlights that agroecology is not just the absence of pesticides in the means of production, as it has an important role in “strengthening cultural activities here in the neighborhood”
Consumer/Visitor	A man highlights that he is a resident of the Várzea district and that he and other residents took the initiative to organize themselves “in solidarity, collectively to build a space for aggregation”; he highlights the importance of “social groups engaging in collective causes to reverse this process of disbelief and lack of utopia.” In the same speech, he concludes that “it is possible to be organized based on activism and individual engagement to build a democratic and participatory process to change reality as we are changing the reality of this square” (AGROECOVARZEA, 2018).
	A woman highlights that the agroecological space is more than a fair, “it is a space of resistance and also marking a fight, for a better world, for another production, for food security, for agroecology” (AGROECOVARZEA, 2018).

EAV: Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

Analysis of the participants’ statements reveals the presence of strong bonds in all interactions. Those involved demonstrate a deep commitment and identification with their respective causes, whether in the context of the feminist movement, agroecology or community organization. Agroecology goes beyond pesticide-free production, being a resistance movement and fight for a better world. Women’s knowledge and the role of feminism in promoting agroecology are valued.

Figure 2 depicts the “Urban-Rural Exchange” logo, symbolizing the connection between urban and rural environments. The importance of establishing ties between urban and rural communities is highlighted, promoting the exchange of knowledge and connections between producers and consumers.

Figure 2 reveals symbolic elements that represent weak ties and strong ties between urban and rural environments. The presence of the bridge suggests the connection between these two scenarios, emphasizing the need for exchange and interaction between communities. Strong ties are symbolized by the activities and people involved in food production, valuing those behind what is consumed. On the other hand, weak ties are represented by buildings in the metropolitan city, indicating a more distant and superficial relationship with the rural environment.



Source: Agroecovárzea (2018b).

Figure 2. Logo of the animation produced about urban-rural exchange.

This representation is an invitation to reflect on the importance of strengthening ties between urban and rural environments, recognizing the interdependence between them. Through the exchange and appreciation of knowledge from both spaces, it is possible to promote sustainable and conscious agriculture, respecting the environment and contributing to a fairer and more balanced society.

On the other hand, in the context of urban-rural exchange in agroecology, there are strong bonds between the people visited and the visitors, expressed by hugs and sharing of their life stories. However, there are also weak ties, such as interactions during travel. Purchasing products at EAV fairs generates both strong ties and weak ties.

Table 5 presents the coded narratives of the subjects involved, highlighting the diversity of reports, the role of the historical context, external and internal incentives, and the feminist perspective. The narratives reveal the complexity and richness of the exchanges, highlighting the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and established relationships.

The stories in Table 5 reveal interpersonal relationships based on strong bonds in exchange. These bonds are characterized by emotional closeness, trust, and communication. Participants share common values and goals, committing to help each other. These solid relationships promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Knowledge sharing is essential, as indicated by participants. Farmers learn from each other by sharing farming techniques. This improves product quality and operational efficiency. EAV fair visitors also benefit by better understanding the agroecological process and the products purchased. This exchange strengthens trust between producers and consumers.

The founding stories of the sites and associations with Agroflor show external incentives for organic agriculture. However, internal family encouragement often drives the venture. Women play an important role in this process, initiating organic production and agroforestry practices. This highlights their role as agents of change and innovation.



Table 5. Coded narratives of the subjects of urban-rural exchanges.

Version and location		Codes				
		Interpersonal relationship	Historical context	External encouragement to the family	Internal family encouragement	Feminist movement
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sítio Mocotó – Vitória de Santo Antão, Pernambuco	Camila (EAV) highlights the importance of personal interactions.	Aldenice (farmer) talks about the difficulty of acquiring land by her parents and that she was born and raised in the place.	Erivaldo (a farmer) was encouraged by a friend to have his own "fair". Afterwards, he encouraged the whole family to plant organically.	-x-	-x-
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sítios Barrancos e Camará – Bom Jardim	Agroflor representative highlights the acquisition of knowledge through exchanges.	Maria (farmer) started working with organic products 2 years ago. Before it was just her and her husband, but later her sons and daughter-in-law also participated.	Maria (a farmer) was encouraged to join Agroflor by an acquaintance.	Beatriz (a farmer) encouraged her husband Renato to join Agroflor.	-x-
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sítio 7 Estrelas – Igarassu, Pernambuco	Filipe (farmer) highlights the importance of interactions and exchanges of experiences.	Osidalva (EAV attendee) highlights that the exchange has a nostalgic connotation as she is also the daughter of farmers.	Amadeu (a farmer) discovered the idea of agroforestry through a neighbor.	-x-	Cristina (farmer) highlights the financial autonomy of female farmers and control over money.
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sítio Goitazinho – Glória do Goitá, Pernambuco	Jorge (EAV attendee) highlights learning at the EAV fair and the agroecological process.	José Laurindo (farmer) inherited the farm from his father.	-x-	Marluce (farmer) decided to sell okra in Carpina and expanded her products.	-x-

EAV: Espaço Agroecológico da Várzea.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

Cristina's feminist perspective highlights the importance of female farmers' financial autonomy. It emphasizes control over finances and independence, as well as recognizing the contribution of women in organic farming. This promotes gender equity and female empowerment.

## Results analysis

Agroecology has been used to build local food systems based on local knowledge and food production and consumption practices (GLIESSMAN *et al.*, 2019). EAV, for example, goes beyond a place of purchase and sale, seeking to promote transformations in the social, pedagogical, and cultural spheres (ESPAÇO AGROECOLÓGICO DA VÁRZEA, 2018).

Community, family, and religious ties are important for the security of local social capital. Trust and reciprocity are fundamental to group balance (DE LIMA, 2005). EAV was designed as a space that operates beyond the traditional system, interconnecting different social groups through weak ties, which are the connections between the nodes of the social network (GRANOVETTER, 1973, 1985).

During the inauguration of EAV, the feminist movement had a significant presence, represented by engaged women and speeches that emphasized female protagonism in agriculture (code "feminist movement" in Tables 2 to 5). Studies point to the relationship between agroecology and the feminist movement, highlighting the participation of women in the production of agroecological businesses and family farming (FERREIRA; MATTOS, 2017; PRÉVOST *et al.*, 2014).

Female participation in agroecology seeks to resist the oppressions of heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and colonialism (TREVILLA ESPINAL, 2021). Women like Beatriz, Cristina, Marluce, and others play important roles in conceiving, defending and implementing ideas in family farming.

EAV brings together people with different purposes, such as consumers, producers, cultural artists, and yoga instructors. These groups build bridges between themselves, connecting strong ties and weak ties (code "people gathered" in Tables 2 and 3).

The list of weak ties that encouraged farmers Erivaldo, Maria, Amadeu, and Cristina to invest in agroecology was evident in their speeches (see code "incentive external to the family" in Table 5). For example, Erivaldo received encouragement from a friend to start his own business and later encouraged his family to do the same. Maria was encouraged to join Agroflor, which led her to start selling. Amadeu and Cristina were introduced to the idea of "agroforestry" by a neighbor.

Weak ties allowed an interpersonal relationship between producers and consumers/attendants of EAV, demonstrating a two-way teaching and learning process (see code "interpersonal relationship" in Tables 3 and 5). This perspective highlights the importance of the connection between the protagonists of weak ties, which connect different groups, promoting personal integration that breaks with the configuration of "isolated islands" and assumes a logic of synergy through social networks (DE LIMA, 2005).

The inauguration of the event took place in a historical political context in which the federal executive branch implemented administrative measures considered unpopular, directly affecting rural workers in terms of social protection and pensions (LEITE, 2018). In this sense, the inauguration of EAV also represented a space of struggle and resistance (see code “feminist movement” in Tables 2 to 5, and “consumer/visitor” in Table 4).

During urban-rural exchanges, the stories of overcoming shared by farmers awaken empathy in listeners, especially with regard to the socioeconomic difficulties faced in the context of family farming. These reports unite participants, both EAV attendees and external family farmers (code “historical context” in Table 5), suggesting that strong ties motivate mutual help and involvement with specific problems (SOSA, 2011).

During exchanges, displays of affection, such as hugs, highlight the interpersonal closeness between producers-producers, consumers-producers, and consumers-consumers (codes “people gathered” in Tables 2 and 3, and “interpersonal relationship” in Tables 3 and 5). Strong ties are related to closeness and positive affection between people involved in these interrelationship projects, promoting a feeling of closeness (MADJAR *et al.*, 2002).

Family relationships play an important role in strong ties (GRANOVETTER, 1973) and demonstrate to visitors that there is a connection beyond the commercial transaction, as expressed in the descriptive text on Instagram: “it was a day of a lot of exchange of knowledge, new friendships, and adventure” (code “interpersonal relationship”).

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUTURE WORK**

The present study aimed to understand the context of weak ties and strong ties through the economic strategy adopted by EAV in urban-rural exchange. Unlike previous studies, this study demonstrated that the exchange not only built strong ties, but also strengthened the business, making it long-lasting and sustainable.

The Várzea Agroecological Fair was identified as a space for resistance and political discussions, in which dialogue circles and cultural exchanges promote debates on social issues, such as gender-based violence and public policies. In the creative economy environment, creativity is preserved and reinvented in the relationships between traders, producers, artists, sellers and farmers, whether they are weak ties or strong ties.

EAV’s innovation lies in bringing producers and consumers together, allowing the strengthening of both weak and strong ties, between producers and consumers. Creative economy strengthens weak ties and strong ties, promoting social resistance beyond the commercial limits of the Várzea Agroecological Fair.

Family farming in conjunction with agroecology boosts creative economy and strengthens local economy, especially in the post-pandemic scenario. Agroecology offers an opportunity to rebuild a more sustainable food system and avoid widespread disruptions to the food supply in the future.

It is recommended that future work be carried out to delve deeper into the dynamics of agroecological fairs through expanded ethnography, seeking to understand the relationships between subjects and their impacts on local creative economy.

Further investigations have the opportunity to improve the present research, which was restricted to the analysis of advertising broadcast in documentaries and in publications on EAV's Instagram profile, resulting in a limitation in understanding the complexities underlying this phenomenon. This restriction arises from the fact that the selected research sources are subject to an editorial filter, which, in turn, may restrict the complete representation of the issues involved in this process.

Agroecological fairs play a fundamental role in promoting agroecology, by connecting local producers and consumers and encouraging the production of healthy and sustainable food. Understanding the internal dynamics of these fairs and their impact on the community is essential for developing more effective public policies.

EAV and the Várzea Agroecological Fair demonstrate how creative economy can be a strategy to bring producers and consumers closer by strengthening weak ties and strong ties and promoting the production and consumption of sustainable food. Agroecology emerges as a viable alternative to rebuild a fairer and more sustainable food system, while preserving biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems.

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# Creative cities and innovation through the co-production of public services: an analysis based on location theory

## *Cidades criativas e a inovação pela coprodução de serviços públicos: uma análise a partir da teoria da localização*

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### ABSTRACT

This theoretical essay aims to analyze, in the light of location theory, if creative cities are more likely to innovate in the public sector by promoting the co-production of public services. Based on a seminal and recent literature and on the authors' own analytical procedures, the results of the research indicated that innovation in the public sector can be further stimulated by encouraging the co-production of public services in creative cities. Therefore, creative cities would be places more likely to innovate and develop economically, as they are committed to involving different social actors in this process. This work contributes to understanding a territorial factor (local public management aimed at generating a creative culture) that favors the co-production of public services and their respective impacts (innovation for territorial economic development), which is a theoretical gap in the literature on the subject. Furthermore, the notes in this article show that co-production is a practice that leverages innovation in the public sector and therefore must be encouraged in public management, thus reinforcing the institutional commitment taken on by creative cities.

**Keywords:** Creative cities. Co-production of public services. Public sector innovation. Location theory. Territorial economic development.

### RESUMO

*O presente ensaio teórico tem o objetivo de analisar, à luz da teoria da localização, se as cidades criativas são mais passíveis a inovar no setor público por promover a coprodução de serviços públicos. Partindo de uma literatura seminal e recente e de procedimentos analíticos próprios dos autores, os resultados da pesquisa indicaram que a inovação no setor público pode ser mais estimulada pelo fomento à coprodução de serviços públicos das cidades criativas. Dessa forma, as cidades criativas seriam locais mais propensos a inovar e a se desenvolver economicamente, por ter o compromisso de envolver diferentes atores sociais nesse processo. Este trabalho contribui para compreender um fator territorial (gestão pública local voltada a gerar uma cultura criativa) que favorece a coprodução de serviços públicos e seus respectivos impactos (inovação para o desenvolvimento econômico territorial), que é uma lacuna teórica da literatura sobre o tema. Ademais, os apontamentos deste artigo mostram que a coprodução é uma prática que alavanca a inovação no setor público e, por isso, deve ser fomentada na gestão pública, reforçando assim o compromisso institucional assumido pelas cidades criativas.*

**Palavras-chave:** Cidades criativas. Coprodução de serviços públicos. Inovação no setor público. Teoria da localização. Desenvolvimento econômico territorial.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, public administration has become more and more decentralized and open to social participation, thus leading to a process of transforming the characteristics of public policy construction, especially through the sharing of responsibilities and joint action involving society and government (SALM, 2014). Therefore, public policies would not only be a result of state interference, but also of the influence of several actors, both governmental or not (ALMEIDA, 2023; CHAEDO; MEDEIROS, 2017; WEAVER, 2019).

With that in mind, co-production demonstrates to be an approach that represents this new context, revealing that civil society also works for the constitution of public services (ALMEIDA, 2023; OSTROM, 1996; VERSCHUERE; BRANDSEN; PESTOFF, 2012). More than realizing the influence of non-state actors in public policies, co-production is also seen as a practice that leads to innovation. Edelman and Mergel (2021) and Radnor *et al.* (2014) indicate that co-production facilitates the co-creation of ideas, which can generate innovation in the public sector.

For Emmendoerfer (2019), the co-production of public services brings more legitimacy to innovation in the public sector, due to its ability to be open to new demands and to the propositions of citizens and other stakeholders. However, in a more direct manner, co-production would not be something natural or that happens spontaneously. According to Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012), the citizens need to have concrete opportunities and be motivated to participate in public services. Such a conception indicates that some arrangements of public administration can be more prone to co-production and innovation resulting from social participation than others.

Therefore, this essay highlights creative cities for believing in their ability to promote an environment addressed to co-productive innovation. According to Alsayel, Jong and Fransen (2022) and Landry (2008), creative cities are the ones that encourage creative culture, with mechanisms that interact several local actors and use their diversity of ideas for innovation. These characteristics are related to the requirements cities should fulfill to be recognized as creative, considering the criteria to participate in the creative cities network conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Therefore, it is believed that creative cities can be more prone to innovation for stimulating creativity through a collective effort. Such a consideration started with the location theory, which indicates that territorial factors, both tangible and intangible, can explain the disparities of the economic development of places (DALLABRIDA, 2017), which have a direct relationship with their ability for innovation (AUDY, 2017; SCHUMPETER, 1982). In the case of creative cities, the understanding is that their management model, more directed to collective creativity, can mobilize innovation in the public sector. So, this essay asks the following: under the optics of location theory, are creative cities more prone to innovating in the public sector for institutionally encouraging the co-production of public services?

In this sense, this essay analyzes — using seminal and recent literature, besides the specific analytical procedures of the authors — if creative cities are more likely to innovate in the public sector due to their commitment to involve different social actors in this process. Therefore, this study contributes with the understanding of a spatial peculiarity (local public administration aimed at stimulating creativity) that can facilitate the innovative co-production of public services. This is related to the theoretical gap identified by Gouveia Júnior, Bezerra and Cavalcante (2023), that literature needs to advance in the understanding of the effects of co-production facing its mode of administration.

As a practical implication, this article may reveal, especially to city administrators, that the co-production of public services favors innovation and, therefore, should be stimulated. Besides, it would reinforce the institutional commitment taken on by creative cities — of promoting innovation and the development of the territory based on its actors and its culture (LANDRY, 2008).

## **CREATIVE CITIES**

Aiming at fighting the social and economic crises that are recurrent in the global scenario, cities have adopted strategic optimization resources based on creativity (EMMENDOERFER, 2018). So, they have become dynamic places, in constant adaptation regarding economy, culture and the quality of life of the citizens (FLORIDA, 2011; HOWKINS, 2013; LANDRY, 2013). The concept of creative cities emerges from this context, which composes the core of creative industries (ARCOS-PUMAROLA; PAQUIN; SITGES, 2023). And this is because creative industries are constituted by a “group of leading sectors whose core comprehends specific activities, whose base is creativity and intellectual, artistic and cultural content” (FEDERAÇÃO DAS INDÚSTRIAS DO ESTADO DO RIO DE JANEIRO, 2008, p. 24).

The term “creative industries” is configured as a new productive model that matches economy and culture based on creative practices (FLOREA; SAVA; MARCU, 2022; ROSA, 2021). Such a model includes goods and services that are constituted “in a dynamic of appreciation, protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions”, aiming at ensuring originality, strength and power to local growth (BRASIL, 2011, p. 34). This occurs by the generation of work and income, especially through social inclusion (BASTOS; CARDOSO; OLIVEIRA, 2016).

When discussing the conceptions of creative industries, which are the base for the foundation of creative cities, it is also worth understanding what creativity is as a socio-spatial value. According to Amabile (2012), creativity relates abilities and skills, elevating the idea of doing something new as way towards progress. Creativity, when associated with space, would be an effort for the positive transformation of places (RICHARDS; DUIF, 2018). Complementing this view of positive change, Furtado (2008) indicates that creativity would be a necessary instrument for human organization.

The concept of creative cities began to be discussed more recently, and, in the past decades, has aroused interest of several countries, in different continents

(CERISOLA; PANZERA, 2021; REIS, 2011). Among the factors that contributed with the development of this new model of urban organization, Reis (2011) highlights the “passing the baston” from the socioeconomic industrial paradigm to that of knowledge. Economic competitiveness between cities that depend on innovation has also promoted this process, with the understanding that the more creative a population, the more pulsating its economy (REIS, 2011).

Based on these considerations, what would be a creative city? For Lerner (2009), what makes cities creative is collective commitment. According to the author, this broader commitment would be based on three principles addressed to local quality of life: solidarity, mobility and sustainability. Other reasons worth mentioning are the identity and the feeling of belonging to a place, as well as social diversity, be it of age groups, income range, uses of the territory etc. (LERNER, 2009).

Creative cities are presented by dynamic environments that can produce, through their inhabitants, the integration of several sectors, be them economic, social or cultural (FLORIDA, 2011; LANDRY, 2013; REIS, 2012). According to Cerisola and Panzera (2021, p. 1, our translation), the “[...] creative character of cities is considered as a strategic force and an opportunity that can reverberate, favoring the economic system of all regions where they are located”. In this sense, Alsayel, Jong and Fransen (2022) understand that, despite also depending on the context of administering each of them, creative cities tend to stimulate innovation and, consequently, economic growth.

Lerner (2009) defends that the clearest characteristic of creative cities is the integration between spaces and people, the natural and the built environment, and even between different generations (such as the past, the present and the future). Landry (2008), on the other hand, understands that a common element between these cities is the emphasis on internal culture towards local economic development. This author also considers that these cities promote the participation of citizens, thus producing an environment that stimulates the diversity of ideas regarding innovation.

Another point for discussion in relation to creative cities, besides their concept, is how they are identified as such. Nowadays, one of the main ways to identify creative cities is through the Creative Cities Network (UCCN – UNESCO). The UCCN was created in 2004 aiming at strengthening the cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable development in economic, social, cultural, environmental, political and ethical aspects, both internationally and locally.

The UCCN comprehends seven creative fields: i) crafts and folk art; ii) design; iii) film; iv) gastronomy; v) literature; vi) media arts; and vii) music (UNESCO, 2023). According to UNESCO (2023), UCCN is comprised of 246 cities, from 72 countries. The cities in UCCN are committed to stimulating the participation of several local actors towards innovation, using governance mechanisms. Besides, the cities in UCCN propose to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the 2030 agenda, of the United Nations (UN).

The 2030 Agenda was developed by the UN in 2015, with 193 countries (UN, 2003). It represents the global guidelines for sustainable development, established by 17 SDGs and 169 targets (UN, 2023). The integration of these SDGs with UCCN aims at building efforts considering governance that meets the global socioeconomic needs (GRUPO DE TRABALHO DA SOCIEDADE CIVIL PARA A AGENDA 2030, 2019).

Therefore, regardless of the economic field that is promoted, it is possible to say that creative cities are the ones that mobilize creative culture, including the action of several actors, both governmental or not (LANDRY, 2008). So, the connection between these cities with the co-production of public services becomes clearer, since they try to integrate the State with other stakeholders (civil society, the market etc.) for the co-creation of actions that have public ends.

## **CO-PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SERVICES**

The co-production of public services began to be discussed at the end of the 1970s, in a workshop about theory and analysis of public policies (NABATCHI; SANCINO; SICILIA, 2017; OSTROM, 1996). According to Ostrom (1996), the initial goal of co-production was to oppose to hegemonic theories of urban governance, which reinforced the leadership of centralizing policies. Despite its promising beginning, the discussion about co-production decreased with the years, and has only become more visible in the past decades (CHAEBO; MEDEIROS, 2017; NABATCHI; SANCINO; SICILIA, 2017). According to Chaebo e Medeiros (2017), this new interest came from the understanding that citizens have been more and more active in the production of public services.

Alford (2014) corroborated this perspective indicating that the co-production of public services is essential to encourage citizen participation. Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch (2016) believe that co-production is a public administration practice, claiming that any sort of multiple involvement in public policies, between State and citizens, configures it.

Co-production understands that the most ordinary producer of public policies is the State (in its several representations), and citizens are their extraordinary producers (OSTROM, 1996). In this sense, co-production shows that society also influences the result of public services, and these services are not only managed by the government and executed by bureaucrats (ALMEIDA; EMMENDOERFER, 2022; TAMBOVTSEV; ROZHDESTVENSKAIA, 2023; VERSCHUERE; BRANDSEN; PESTOFF, 2012).

According to Edelman and Mergel (2021), co-production is essential for innovation in the public sector, for being open to the diversity of ideas and stimulating co-creation. Besides, it allows many social problems to be identified and solved through more complex strategies that are reflected upon collectively (AMANN; SLEIGH, 2021; BEDNARSKA-OLEJNICZAK; OLEJNICZAK; KLÍMOVÁ, 2021; PILL, 2022).

It is worth to mention that, originally, co-production was used to represent the fact that different actors interfered in public services (ALMEIDA, 2023; OSTROM,

1996). However, throughout the years, co-production was also used as a perspective to analyze public policies (CHAEBO; MEDEIROS, 2017). This happens because public services are materializations of the public policies, among their other forms of manifestation (MORAES, 1999).

Along with this consideration, it is necessary to distinguish the use of co-production as the practice of a theory from co-creation itself. Co-production as practice are the actions that effectively involve non-governmental actors in the production of public services. As theory, co-production would be lenses that see and explain that public policies are built collectively. These two uses of co-production complement one another, because theory is only justified if an event takes place in practice.

Considering its distinction and relationship with co-creation, co-production can be seen as a practice with great potential for stimulating it (RADNOR *et al.*, 2014; STEINMUELLER, 2013). So, we can infer that co-creation is the generation of ideas collectively, which often emerges from the interaction of actors in the administration of public policies, that is, the co-production of public services.

It is also important to clarify that co-productive practices do not occur naturally, and not always should be seen as advantageous for having substantial benefits (OSTROM, 1996). This author shows that many circumstances need to be pondered for that, such as: the existence of laws that guarantee social participation; if there is technology that allows collective participation; and if the different actors involved in the process take on the mutual commitment and dispose of some credit. Therefore, it is observed that co-production requires a convenient environment to be perpetuated.

In that matter, Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012) point out that the participation of non-state actors in co-production is a result of the combination between individual motivation and naturalness of involvement. Van Eijk and Steen (2016) indicate that many factors can facilitate the involvement of citizens in co-production, such as the importance of the problem or issue to be resolved, be it from the social or the personal point of view.

Such considerations make us question, especially for studying the articulation with creative cities, which public management model can favor co-production and create an environment that is more fertile for innovation in the public sector. That is, why do creative cities encourage co-production, and, because of that, are more likely to innovate in the public field? In the next topic, this matter will be debated

## **INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Innovation is an essential element for economic growth and progress (AUDY, 2017; CAPPELLESSO; RAIMUNDO; THOMÉ, 2021; MINEIRO; SOUZA; CASTRO, 2021; SCHUMPETER, 1982). It emerges from an initiative, either modest or pretentious, that originates something new, which can be related to processes, products, practices etc. (MIRANDA *et al.*, 2019; SIMANTOB; LIPPI, 2003). Innovation can be both incremental, with minor improvements in relation to what already exists, and disruptive, bringing a new technological landscape to social practices (AUDY, 2017; SCHUMPETER, 1982).

According to Furtado (2008), the basic guideline of innovation has always been to broaden human perspectives and possibilities. With that in mind, it is possible to observe a similarity between the definitions of creativity and innovation, not as synonyms, but as complementary concepts. Creativity is associated with the effort to create good ideas, whereas innovation would be a result expected from such an effort, that is, the application of good ideas. With that, Furtado (2008) defends that innovation is a result of social creativity. This facilitates the understanding of what innovation in the public sector is. However, before dealing with this concept in particular, it is important to explain how it appeared.

According to Emmendoerfer (2019), innovation in the public sector became a topic of international relevance after the XX century, due to the extensive use of technological measures to improve public administration. In the XXI century, innovation in the public sector stood out due to the need of the State to adapt to the demands imposed by a connected world, including in relation to policies and public services (EMMENDOERFER, 2019).

This necessity is very much related to the process of globalization, which enabled the connection between people and organizations (with the internet and devices such as notebooks and smartphones), which was much harder in the past (CASTELLS, 2009). Besides this need for adaptation, innovation in the public sector came to reduce fiscal expenses and to qualify the democratic system, so that public services could have more social credibility (CAVALCANTE; CUNHA, 2017).

The proposal of innovation in the public sector is to give new and good use to public resources through improvements in public administration processes and the products generated by them (public policies) (OSBORNE; BROWN, 2005). Therefore, innovation in the public sector can be understood as the use of incremental or totally new ideas, which bring some public value to society (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2013; MULGAN, 2007). For Emmendoerfer (2019, p. 22), innovation in the public sector is:

[...] an idea (new, improved or renewed), systematized for the context of its application, with the objective of solving a public interest problem, whose leadership is exercised, at least initially, by people who demonstrate entrepreneur behavior in public administration.

The understanding about entrepreneur behavior is that of people who, in specific moments, propose to take calculated risks, with initiative to generate innovative proposals (EMMENDOERFER, 2019). Therefore, entrepreneurship ends up being a latent characteristic of each individual, which can be exercised or not. It is worth to ponder that, in this study, innovation is considered as “the use of the idea”, and not the process that originated it, which is closer to the concept of creativity.

Considering the relationship between innovation in public service and co-production, it starts from the conception that co-production can generate more legitimacy to new ideas that are created and used, since it starts with



social pretensions (EMMENDOERFER, 2019). Another aspect mentioned by this author is that, when established by different actors, co-production can maintain innovative actions in several government mandates. Besides, co-production is considered to be a fertile practice for innovation, for opening up to multiple perceptions and experiences (EDELHANN; MERGEL, 2021; RADNOR *et al.*, 2014; STEINMUELLER, 2013).

Despite that, it is possible to say that, for encouraging creativity by the interaction of multiple actors, creative cities are more prone to innovation. Creativity is an essential attribute for innovation and growth of a specific location. Creativity contributes with human organization and can help least developed countries to break away from the technological dependence of developed countries (FURTADO, 2008). The “creativity” factor was also important to explain the rise of small cities, which were then considered as irrelevant in comparison to more populous ones (RICHARDS; DUIF, 2018).

Therefore, it is observed that a public administration that aims at socially promoting creativity – characteristic of creative cities – is considered as a differential, since it indicates the predisposition of a place to innovate itself and develop economically more than others. This will be discussed in detail in the next topic, through the location theory, which tries to understand and explain the reasons for the economic disparities of territories.

## **DISCUSSIONS IN THE LIGHT OF LOCATION THEORY**

Here, we will discuss, through the location theory, how the incentive to co-produced creativity can be a factor that favors innovation in the public sector and the economic development of a territory. According to Dallabrida (2017), the basic principles of location theories (or classic spatial theories) are the elaboration of explanatory models that can identify the reasons for territorial disparities, especially economic ones (DALLABRIDA, 2017).

Besides this more common element, location theories are dismembered in more specific points of analysis. When verifying this variation, Dallabrida (2017) divided them in three groups of models: the industrial location models, which determine the location of production as a way to reduce costs and transport in industries; the growth poles, circular and cumulative causation and chain effects, which highlight sectoral interdependence as causes for the location of companies, and, consequently, regional development; and the models that incorporate dynamic external economies, starting from the assumption that the reasons to invest in a place and its growth are continuously changing.

Not going further in each of these groups, but from the central perspective of the theory, it is valid to ask: what would such growth or development that explains spatial inequalities be? Therefore, it is necessary to elucidate which concept of growth or development — economic, social, environmental etc. — this work refers to, also to delimit which implication of innovation in creative cities has been analyzed here by the location theory.

According to Bresser-Pereira (2014), it is important to distinguish development and economic growth from human development and progress. Whereas the former development would be more associated with improvements in life status, coming from the process of capital accumulation, human development would include five broader objectives:

[...] development of safety (more peace between nations and less crime), economic development (welfare), political development (more political equality and participation in the government), social development (more economic equality), and environmental development (more protection for the environment) (BRESSER-PEREIRA, 2014, p. 58).

Bresser-Pereira (2014) considers that one way of measuring human development and progress is through the Human Development Index (HDI), which, in general, assesses the *per capita* income of the country based on its gross domestic product (GDP), on the life expectancy of people and schooling rate. Despite being criticized for not representing an adequate verification of this type of development, HDI is considered as a very important indicator to compare realities between countries (BRESSER-PEREIRA, 2014). Development and economic growth are measured by *per capita* income itself, which is also an indicator for that purpose (BRESSER-PEREIRA, 2014).

Based on this short analysis, what development would be more adequate to indicate as being a result of innovation? This line should be drawn so there is no chance of confusing concepts, which is something many authors do when approaching these two types of development as synonyms (BRESSER-PEREIRA, 2014).

This paper discusses the role of innovation for development and economic growth, since it is more associated with location theories (DALLABRIDA, 2017). In spite of that, this study does not ignore other possible positive impacts of innovation for a specific territory; it is just a profile to relate innovation with the spatial disparities investigated by the location theory.

In this sense, presenting some studies that handle innovation and its spatial variations, it is possible to explain the reason why creative cities, with co-production, are more prone to economic development. For Cima and Amorim (2007), innovation interferes deeply in the diffusion of economic growth and in the efficiency between regions and sectors. Besides, the authors indicate that economic growth is presented in the cities-regions by the expansion of their central limits, through the creation of specialization centers that are willing to innovate.

Casali, Silva and Carvalho (2010), also starting from a location theory (*neoschumpeteriana*), show that the economic imbalance between the five Brazilian regions (North, Northeast, Southeast, South and Midwest) is explained by their technological discrepancy. In their research, these authors observed the importance for less developed regions to advance in the process of innovation and internal co-creation of technology, in accordance with their available resources:

[...] it is extremely important that the North, Northeast and Midwest regions begin their own research, aiming at technological and economic development (CASALI; SILVA; CARVALHO, 2010, p. 548).

The technological development of the regions is a consequence, so that new technologies can be developed, improved and adapted to existing technologies, physical and human productive resources of each region (CASALI; SILVA; CARVALHO, 2010, p. 549).

By specifically analyzing the city of Bushehr, in Iran, Tayebbeh *et al.* (2023) identified that the creative factors of the studied territory were essential for its development, especially because they favored innovation. The work of Daldanise and Clemente (2022), based on the case of Naples, in Italy, also indicated the creativity promoted by different social groups as a differential element for the development of the place, especially for the valorization of their material and immaterial patrimony.

According to Foster (2022), even though co-creation is often neglected in the economic development process, it is central for that and needs to be part of urban planning. Co-creation and co-production enable the use of ideas that can generate economic benefits, especially because they involve people with different demands and perspectives, aiming at generating innovative strategies for the territory (EDELMAAN; MERGEL, 2021; EHRET; OLANIYAN, 2023).

With that, it is possible to indicate that innovation, resulting from an endogenous movement that considers, in the first place, the peculiarities and visions of local actors (cultural, resources etc.), is an essential element for the economic development of a territory, and the analyzed parts here are the cities. According to Audy (2017) and Schumpeter (1982), innovation can be understood as a vector for economic development.

Dallabrida, Covas and Covas (2017) also believe that innovation, when connected to sustainability and social integration, leads to the economic development of a territory. According to these authors, sustainability and social integration are inserted as attributes that prolong development. Because of the importance of social integration, it is observed that co-production is essential for a continuous effort addressed to innovation and economic development.

Besides this benefit of co-production, which favors innovation and economic development, Koch and Hauknes (2005) emphasize that the collective decision making of what will be innovated is essential to weight on the needs of the group and the achievement of legitimacy. Therefore, co-production can be seen as a practice that boosts innovation and the economic development that results from it.

So, we can infer — in the light of location theories — that the incentive to co-productive innovation in creative cities is an essential factor for economic development. That, together with numberless other factors (such as natural resources, logistic position etc.), can help to explain the reasons for economic-territorial disparities, especially among creative cities and those that are not recognized as such, given the proper proportions for comparative ends.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this essay, it was possible to observe that creative cities, due to their stimulus to co-production and co-creation of public services, are more prone to innovation and economic development than cities without the same institutional commitment. Despite that, it is not possible to state that cities without the title of “creative” do not co-produce innovation nor make strictly more limited efforts towards economic development. The only indication here is that — in the light of the location theory — the model of administration of creative cities, directed at promoting innovation in the public sector by multiple actors, is a positive and differential factor towards economic development in the territory.

So, more specifically, this consideration will depend on each studied case. Therefore, it is relevant that further studies, especially theoretical-empirical ones, analyze how the institutional commitment assumed by specific cities that participate in creative city networks has been effective — thus verifying if the co-produced creativity has been contextually stimulated. Besides, it would be pertinent to analyze the potential implications of creative cities beyond economic development, relating them to other essential dimensions from the sustainable point of view, such as social, environmental, cultural, political dimensions etc.

However, even with its characters of introductory debate, this essay has brought significant contributions. Theoretically, its considerations enabled to identify a territorial characteristic that favors the innovative co-production of public services, which is public administration that is committed to encouraging creativity by multiple local actors. That is related to the theoretical gap identified by Gouveia Júnior, Bezerra and Cavalcante (2023), showing that the literature needs to continuously discuss the effects of co-production of public goods and services by a specific context of the administration.

As a contribution to the public territory governance, this study shows that co-production should be promoted by city administrators, since it favors innovation in the public field and, consequently, territorial economic development. Therefore, this study also justifies the proposal of creative cities: to stimulate an innovative culture, involving society as a whole (LANDRY, 2008).

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