

READING CONTEMPORARY IMAGINARIES INSPIRED BY MIDDLE AGES NARRATIVES THROUGH MASS MEDIA IMAGES

Teresa Torres Eça* and
Rosângela Aparecida da Conceição**

Abstract : In this article, the authors will approach images from film and games industry to discuss trends in contemporary young people and young adults' subcultures. The images will serve as a basis to debate digital natives fascination by metanarratives grounded on stories inspired by Middle Ages stories. A set of images will be discussed through methodologies of visual analysis that may give some insights about the fascination transmitted by medieval stories to young people and young adults' subcultures.

Keywords: *Contemporary imaginaries, Middle Ages narratives, mass media images, MMORPG.*

From the beginning of this article, the authors apologize for the incursion in this field, for the authors of this research are not art historians and their knowledge about art in the Middle Ages is very limited. However, they dare to suggest a vision, coming from the field of arts education informed by visual culture, hoping it may bring particular insights in the way Middle Ages metarratives are used and manipulated in images of contemporary subcultures, driven by the powerful tools of media dissemination and media technologies. As art based researchers, the authors are interested in all sorts of images from popular subcultures and the way they are produced, displayed and recycled by the audiences; as community artists, we are interested in debating the images produced for mass consumption by creative industries. As art educators, we are interested in the way people interpret and recreate mass media images.

Teresa and Rosangela met some years ago in a forum about digital arts in Internet. Teresa is a Portuguese woman aged 51 and Rosangela is a 36 year old Brazilian woman. To write this article, Teresa invited Rosangela to choose images from film or video industries she believed they were related to stories about the Middle Ages. Teresa chose 'Assassin Creeds' video game

* Researcher at nEA group a Research Institute in Art, Design and Society (i2ADS), School of Fine Arts, University of Porto, Av. Rodrigues de Freitas, 265, 4049-021 Porto, Portugal. E-mail: teresaeca@apecv.pt

** Researcher of groups CAT and GIIP, Department of Arts, Arts Institute of São Paulo State University "Júlio de Mesquita Filho".

images after having asked her eighteen year old daughter about the most popular youth games related to the Middle Ages imaginary on the Internet. Rosangela chose games inspired by the film 'The Lord of the Rings'. These two starting points lead the authors to an incredible journey through Internet games and forums of fans of the so-called 'medieval role play games'. In this short article, the authors want to raise a few questions about this topic.

The researchers Teresa and Rosangela situate their approaches in the broad area of art based research because they have used artistic processes for dealing with images (in producing; interpreting and recycling them). Art-based research is a socially responsible practice that uses a variety of methodologies that partner art and social science research (Knowles & Cole, 2008). The domain of art-based research, a more focused application of the larger epistemological process of artistic knowing and inquiry, has come into existence as an extension of a significant increase of studies researching the nature of art experience in higher education and professional practice (McNiff, 1998). Art-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all and different forms of the arts, as a primary way of understanding and examining experience both by researchers and the people that they involved in their studies. These inquiries are distinguished from research activities where the artists, artistic or visual works may play a significant role, but they are essentially used as data for investigations that take place within the academic disciplines that use more traditional scientific, verbal, and statistical descriptions and analyses of phenomena.

Visual image research

Visual image research has a long tradition in social sciences (Grady, 2008). Visual data record how someone responds to an object or event, and address the question: what do I feel about what I am responding to? Visual data may include various kinds of images and pictures that have been consciously constructed to either record or represent the world. Photography, films and drawings are major expressions used by social sciences. Analyzing images such as drawings is not a simple task, unless we reduce the interpretation to obvious, rather useless checklists. Image analysis offers a unique richness that must be taken as visual storytelling. Images can be categorized according to the formalistic principles of art and design such as line, tone and color, and principles of composition like similarity, juxtaposition, and balance. We can also look for lighting, angles of view, and framing. Drawings can be clustered according to their titles, topics or themes in an effort to seek meaning. We can look for intertextuality - visual quotes or references to other images if any. But, if we want to go further in

searching for meanings, we will need to enter the images' subjacent ideologies.

Ideology is expressed through cultural sign systems that are constitutive of social practice; ideology informs the way people act in the world and the way people act in turn tends to justify and reinforce ideology. Visual images are saturated with ideologies that reveal the hopes, fears, expectations, certainties, uncertainties, and ambiguities of our lives. By means of images, we engage in widely shared social assumptions about the way the world is, should be, or should not be. All imagery is ideological, meaning that imagery arises from a matrix of competing ideas, values and beliefs and it is always made with a purpose¹.

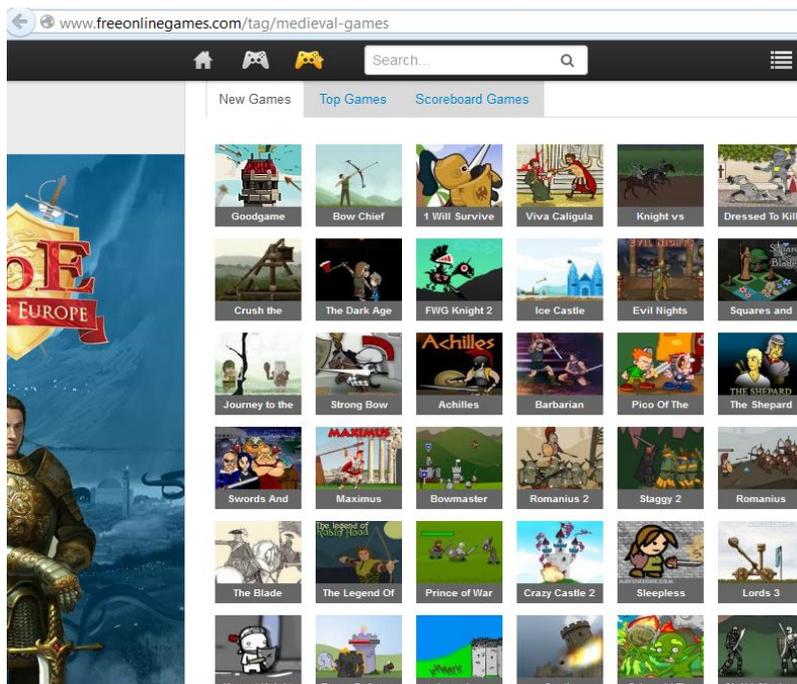


Figure 1. Screenshot of the web page of FOG- Medieval Games . Retrieved from: <http://www.freeonlinegames.com/tag/medieval-games>

Images often express ideologies through *metaphors* and *metonyms*. Through *metaphors* and *metonyms*, we make sense of the world and we make relationships accessible to our senses. For this purpose, when we use film images or play virtual games embodied in stories and images evoking a certain period of time, we make a unique appropriation of the imaginaries of that time, through the lens and mediation of what others imagined about that time. We experience collective metaphors in the 'in-between' space of

¹ Duncum, P. Seven principles for visual culture education. *Art Education*, 6-10, 2010, p.10.

interpretation. Figure 1 is a screenshot of a very popular web page for role play games inspired by the Middle Ages imaginary. The images used in the games associated with this webpage are very eclectic, the great majority in a 'comic' or graphic novel language adapted to digital tools. Each one of the images depicts a great amount of fascination concerning the ideal of epic Middle Ages times, in their own and contemporary ways they act as metaphors in the mind and body of its users.

Stories

To continue this discussion, we shall refer to the concept that history of art is a set of stories of art², so the authors will make their own appropriation and understanding of images through stories, and stories about stories. Conversations about periods among art historians usually have to do with particular periods and transitions between them, but since the authors are not art historians, their conversations will flow freely from one period to another, focusing the search on the similarities and differences, continuities and discontinuities of images. For that, they will use the metaphor of the cyborg, the avatar and the time portal to give a corpus to the discussion about the imaginaries of some contemporary subcultures inspired by the metanarratives about Middle Ages tales, myths, legends and images, in short images that were inspired by Middle Ages imaginaries as for example those illustrated by Figure 2.



Figure 2. Screenshot of the web page of RPG game 'Kingdom of age'. Retrieved from: <http://www.kingdom-age.com/>

² Elkins J., *Stories of Art*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.

Cultural studies are concerned with the study of forms and practices of culture (in all its outcomes and media), their relationships to social groups and the power relations between those groups as they are constructed and mediated by forms of culture³. By endorsing this perspective, the authors will direct their choice to subcultural products targeted by young people and young adults, and especially in products that are somehow inspired by Middle Ages images, tales and legends and conveyed by new technologies and media entertainment markets. Those markets include a wide range of products that are linked together; from film industries to personal gadgets and fashion accessories. The target audience use those products and recreate them contributing to the construction of one peculiar imagery displayed in their virtual daily lives. Images displayed and manipulated in their video or internet games, in groups, in their interaction with other players; collectively in cosplay events or lonely in their private spaces filled with images and objects illustrating their preferred games or movies.

In a certain way, we are cyborgs. Users of the RPG 'kingdom-age' (Figure 2) or the 'Agamemnon' games act as cyborgs using avatars in time portals, not really very far away from the chimeras, described by Donna Haraway, "chimeras theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs"⁴. We are creatures of both fiction and lived social reality, playing our different identities, our different avatars using hybrid technologies to understand and recreate the world. And in that way we built our worlds with intertextual information conveyed by available narratives. Stories of art are narratives profusely used and abused by media products in the entertainment industries, and the so-called 'creative industries'.

Films, comics, video games are constantly referring to images from stories of art, and from all periods of western culture. Myths and legends which are evoked by literature, film and theatre are re-interpreted in the so-called re-mix culture adapted with digital tools for the collaboration and sharing process used by individuals, groups or companies⁵. The most popular period among young people and young adults' imagery at the beginning of the 21st century seems to be the Middle Ages. It could be interesting to seek explanations for that singular attraction. The Middle Ages have persisted in contemporary world via digital games. Digital gaming translates, adapts and remedies medieval stories, themes, characters and tropes in interactive electronic environments. The Middle Ages artifacts, images, tales and stories

³ Lister, M. & Wells, L., Seeing beyond belief: cultural studies as an approach to analysing the visual. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications. 2001, p. 61.

⁴ Haraway, Donna, "A Cyborg Manifesto Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," In *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge. 1991, p. 150.

⁵ Lessig, L., *Remix: making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*. London: Bloomsbury, 2008.

evoked by these media products are reinterpreted according to contemporary concerns and conflicts, in all their complexity; an example may be visited in the Internet Role Play Game 'Agamemnon', inspired by the legends of King Arthur and Avalon. Jacques Le Goff claims that the origin of King Arthur's myth can be situated in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain), written between 1135 and 1138 probably by a Welsh chronicler: Geoffrey of Monmouth, a canon of Oxford, his text has been one of the most inspirational widespread works, found in novels, theatrical plays, music and films, contributing to the imaginary medieval re-mix⁶.

The new narratives present images inspired by Middle Ages stories intertwined with contemporary images and beliefs. Rather than a distinct time in the past, the Middle Ages form a space in which theory and narrative, gaming and textuality, identity and society are remediated and reimagined⁷.

It is possible that our cyborg culture has Neomedieval fascination trends; feeding our imagination with metanarratives from fiction books such as *The Mists of Avalon* by Marion Zimmer Bradley (1979) or *Eragon* by Paolini Christopher (2008) or with epic and children films such as *Robin Hood* or *Shrek*. Although popular media products do not directly acknowledge Middle Ages sources - they do not claim to depict this period in time - , they are often produced using extensive researches on Middle Ages stories and images. Online shopping offers us a series of costumes and artifacts clearly inspired by Middle Ages, associated with the brand chain of book and or films best sellers. Neo-medieval attraction for gaming — for example — creates cultural palimpsests, multiply-layered trans-temporal artifacts. And video and internet players of such games do not only buy products associated with to the brand or game, but they also produce them in edupunk learning processes. Individually players search for tutorials and information on Internet forums to extract what they need to perform the virtual experiences of the game in real life - for example a helmet, a crossbow or a sword.

Games

According to Huizinga (2007), the Middle Ages culture is based and inherited from classic antiquity fixed forms in the domains of poetry; rituals; philosophy, politics and war. For Huizinga, the ecclesiastic spirit of the chivalric code was directly inspired by the Greco-Roman ideals and novel ludic behaviours created in the Middle Ages, for example the knighthood ceremonies which were extremely innovative. And, it is interesting to notice how chivalric codes of behavior are reproduced and recreated in contemporary internet and video games (MMO and MMORPG games) where

⁶ Le Goff J., *Heróis e maravilhas da Idade Média*. (Stephania Matousek, Trans). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Editora Vozes, 2010. p.30-31.

⁷ Kline, D.T., *Digital Gaming Re-imagines the Middle Ages*. New York: Routledge. 2013.

the players assume roles explicitly inspired by knighthood orders and codes of behaviour.

Images

Having said so, let's now start to look for images that in certain way may support these intuitive claims. According to Hickerman, we need to acknowledge that art works [and images] can be seen as "an appropriate way of not only recording events or thoughts but interpreting them in a way which exposes a greater number of realities"⁸. The metaphors call for an understanding of contextual and cultural considerations. They must not be seen as truth claims, which are either right or wrong. Rather, we can dispute them, offer arguments for and against them, and judge some as more powerful or better than others⁹. According to Didi-Huberman (2009), visual representation has an "underside" in which seemingly intelligible forms lose their clarity and defy rational understanding, this underside, where images harbor limits and contradictions, visual representation is a mobile process that often involves substitution and contradiction and calls for subjective judgments.

In this section, images from two productions of young people popular culture will be displayed. The first series of images (Figures 3 and 4) are screenshots of web pages about the movie 'Lord of the Rings' illustrating contemporary fascination for the Middle Ages' imaginary, the film has been extensively studied by sociologists and cultural studies experts. The last image is a screenshot of one webpage about the video/ internet game 'Assassins Creed'.

The Lord of the Rings is a novel written by J. R. R. Tolkien between 1937 and 1949. The title of the novel refers to the story of the Dark Lord Sauron, who at an early age created the One Ring to rule the other Rings of Power as the ultimate weapon in his campaign to conquer and rule all of Middle-Earth in an imaginary time and space. The heroes of the story are imaginary creatures called Hobbits. Tolkien's work has been the subject of extensive analysis of its themes and origins. The enduring popularity of *The Lord of the Rings* has led to numerous references in popular culture, the founding of many societies by fans of Tolkien's works and the publication of many books about Tolkien and his works. *The Lord of the Rings* has inspired, and continues to inspire artwork, music, films and television, video games, and subsequent literature. The award-winning adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings* have been made for radio, theatre and film. In the film industry, *The Lord of the Rings* is a film series distributed by New Line Cinema. It consists

⁸ Hickerman, R., Visual Art as a Vehicle for Educational Research. In *The International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Blackwell. UK. 26 (3) 314-324, 2007, p. 317.

⁹ Parsons, M., Art And Metaphor, Body And Mind. In L. Bresler (Ed.) *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*. (pp.533-542). N.Y. Springer, 2007.

of three epic co-written and directed by Peter Jackson. The films are, by subtitle, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), *The Two Towers* (2002) and *The Return of the King* (2003). Each film in the series had special extended editions released on DVD a year after their respective theatrical releases. While the films follow the book's general storyline, they do omit some of the novel's plot elements and include some additions to and deviations from the source material.



Figure 3: Screenshot from: 'The Lord of the Rings'. Movieclips (Youtube) webpage. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0L-Zqr0eyDg>



Figure 4 Screenshot from: 'The Lord of the Rings'. Movieclips (Youtube) webpage. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDFKfRmmbk0>

Assassin's Creed is a video and internet game series published by Ubisoft Montreal and consisting in five main games and a number of supporting materials. The series was inspired by the novel *Alamut* by the Slovenian writer Vladimir Bartol. The games appeared on the PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, Microsoft Windows, Mac OS X, Nintendo DS, PlayStation Portable, PlayStation Vita, iOS, HP webOS, Android, Nokia Symbian Windows Phone platforms, and the Wii U. The main games in the franchise were developed by Ubisoft Montreal, with the handheld titles developed by Gameloft and Gryphonite Studios, with additional development by Ubisoft Montreal. The games take the idea from the inspirational book that “Nothing is true, everything is permitted”; this is also a current trend in the creative industry products and among video and internet games users. Players or users are protected by fictitious personalities (avatars) to live virtual experiences with no limitations except for those regulated by the game creators, inspired by chivalry behaviours and war games.

The game offers a virtual experience inspired by the story told by Vladimir Bartol about the story of Hassan-i Sabbāh, or *Hassan aṣ-Ṣabbāh* (c. 1034 - 1124), a Persian Nizārī Ismāʿīlī missionary, who lived in the fortress of Alamut. From the game series, we chose Figure 5 for analysis.

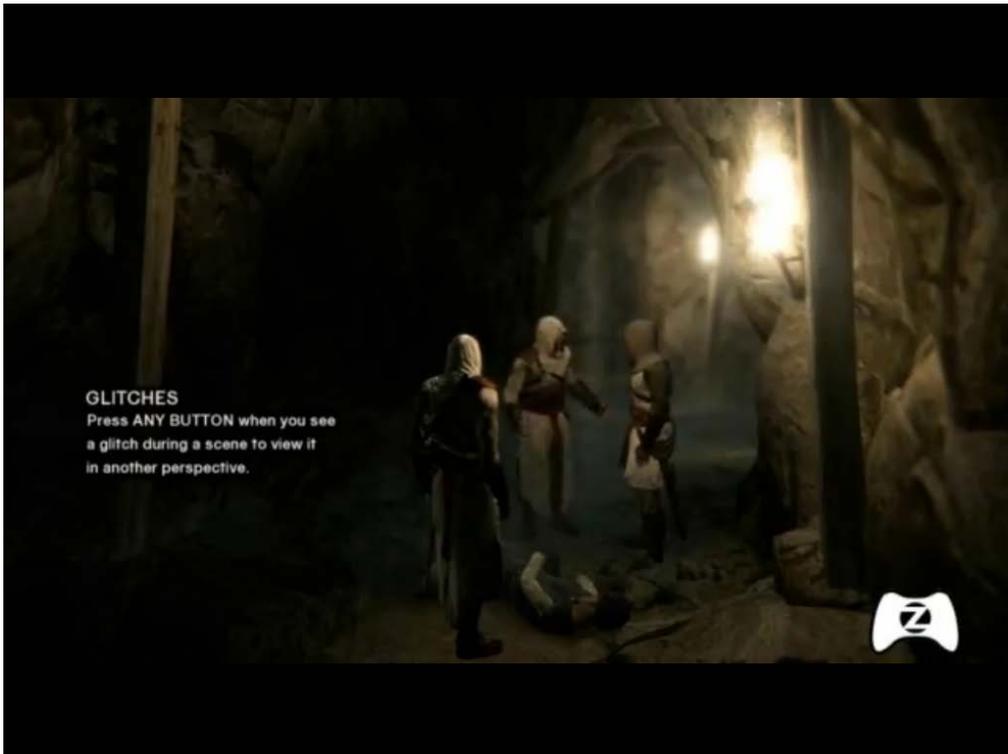


Figure 5: Screenshot from Assassin Creeds games. Zangado Games (Youtube) web page. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO0emuFDuEE>

Visual analysis

Images, like other documents are important data for researchers. They have been used in various forms in different fields of research in sciences and social sciences. They can convey 'objective evidence', later leading to obtaining findings. Generalization about what is depicted in images (mass media communication, creative and communication industries, etc.) requires observable, more or less 'objective' evidence. Content analysis has been used to study evidence based on images for a long time in social sciences. According to Bell¹⁰, maybe content analysis has been widely used because it seems like the 'commonsense' way to research. Like all research methodologies, content analysis is an effective procedure only if precise hypothesis and clearly defined concepts underpin its use. Categories of visual content must be explicitly and unambiguously defined and employed consistently to yield meaningful evidence relevant to the hypothesis. To

¹⁰ Bell, F., Content analysis of visual images. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications, 2002, p. 13.

observe and quantify categories of content, it is necessary to define relevant variables of representation. Each variable value can be distinguished to yield to the categories of content which are to be observed and quantified¹¹. For example, in the variable “gender”, we can look for values of role, setting and size. For example, we may start to analyze Figure 3 and Figure 5 by doing content variables or categories of content such as dimension (size, color, position in the image, range), a list of represented participants (male/female; adult/child) or a number of alternative settings such as outdoor; indoor; palace; house; river; ocean; mountain. Variables refer to aspects of how something is represented. We can later attribute values to each of the variables and interconnect them to see differences and similarities (See table 1).

Variables		Gender	Role	setting	artifacts
Values	Figure 3	Males	warrior	outdoor	Metal weapons, dress
	Figure 5	Males	warrior	indoor	Metal weapons, dress

Table 1: content analysis: categories of content

Variables and values are very useful for coding if we define them unambiguously. However this is not always possible, some 'subjective' variables are crucial for understanding the meaning of the images and the coders will have to make 'subjective' judgments to analyze the images. Images are not only denotative, they carry on connotations and invite readers to personal interpretation through the lenses of their life experience. The image may be static, but the meaning is always in the eyes of the beholder. Images may convey feelings through codes of shapes, color and framing. An image can engage the viewer in a compulsive urge to look and look again.

When we examine the content and the character of images as data, we are engaged in direct analysis. Collier¹² claims that direct analysis is a very simple basic model. In the first stage, we look at data as a whole, to discover connecting contrasting patterns, to make us think and ask questions that may be useful in the future. In the second stage, we make an inventory or a log of all our images, looking at categories grounded on our research goals. In the third stage, we structure our analysis, going through the evidence with specific questions – measuring, distance, counting, comparing. In the fourth

¹¹ Bell, *Ibidem*, p.16

¹² Collier, M., *Approaches to analysis in visual anthropology*. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications 2002, p. 39.

stage, we search for meaning by returning to the image, going back to our questions in an open manner, viewing the images in its contextual wholeness. Figures 3, 4 and 5 evoke a certain imaginary in the way they are related to other images in art, films and books, they quote other contexts, the type of sword in figure 3; the way the group is settled in figure 4, the type of dress in figure 5; the depicted landscape in Figure 3 or the interior scene in Figure 5 appeals to our senses and memories making us travel between spaces and stories. We know this is all fiction, Figure 3 was filmed in New Zealand and Figure 5 is a virtual architectural space. We know that the characters in figure 5 are not a representation of crusades, but we are transported to a fictional space where 'everything is possible', because it is a non-space, a space where polycentric and perspectivist views of reality are merged. For thinkers like Felix Guattari (1995, 2000) and Rosi Braidotti (2006), 'reality' is described as fluid, openly created and understood through a polyphony of diverse discourses and practices, within which 'individuals' and groups are free to navigate more or less strategically, according to desires and partial commonalities and differences. The solid 'self' is substituted by 'practices of self' and an ideal of the 'human being' as a self-creating, aesthetic formation, able to transcend or transform power/knowledge constructions such as age, gender or ethnicity in new unforeseen manners. The images produced by creative industries are always quoting stories from other contexts in a non-linear time and space for entertainment purposes. We could say in a very poststructuralist perspective, that these visions suit individualist and neoliberal tendencies in society, tendencies that - unfortunately for sustainability - also fueled a wave of individualism, precarity and consumerism (e.g. Gielen, 2009).

Although Figure 3 and Figure 5 may seem harmless, not very different from war games played in the past, we may have some questions about its real purposes in the western so-called 'information/knowledge' society. The images need meta-reflexive, multiperspective approaches to understand the purposes of producers and users. They denote the complex interactions that take place between the viewer and the viewed. We cannot 'read' the images without thinking for what purposes they had been produced. But why this fascination for contemporary multimedia products like films and games by stories about Middle Ages periods? What is so attractive regarding the Middle Ages' imaginary, codes of behavior, rites of war, social organizations? Visual events are always geographically, historically, socially, and culturally situated, and they always imply specific ways of looking (Rogoff 1998). Figures 3, 4 and 5 tell us much more about our times and our subcultures. By going through and searching how the audiences use such visual events, we may understand this fascination more. Film fans have Internet forums to meet, some of them using replicas of appropriate clothes or referential tee-shirts and other fashion accessories (Cosplay).

MMO/MMORPG game players organize themselves in groups, play in real time, sometimes in real spaces (they rent game rooms to be together); some of them buy or make all sort of dress and artifacts related to the games. What does this mean about contemporary societies in terms of relational needs?

Enlarging the boundaries to understand digital images

From the moment you begin to play Agamemnon you become a part of ancient medieval life. The time when medieval Knights were the icons of valour and protectors of their home-land. You will find the time of the Middle Ages here in all its glory. You might as well dig deeply into this website, especially if you have not played a MUD or an online RPG before: Agamemnon can be thought of as a part of these categories. The textual aspect of Agamemnon can often be very daunting. However, do not let this dissuade you. Once you have become accustomed to allowing your imagination to paint the images for you, there is much to be seen and imagined in a textual environment which cannot be gained from graphical medieval games or other games of this type. You should think about Agamemnon as being an ever unfolding interactive novel. The outlines, the substance of medieval England and all that medieval life came to stand for, will be there for you. However, much of your success and the role which you would choose to fulfill within the Middle Ages will be achieved by you and your actions. Your road and where it ends will be governed by each interaction with those who also choose to share the Middle Ages with you. Medieval England is populated and brought to life by other people who are also connecting to Agamemnon over the internet. They play just as large a role in the shaping of the society and medieval life as you will. They, and how you choose to interact with them, can often be the deciding factors of your character's fate¹³.

This fragment of text belongs to the introduction of the RPG Agamemnon. If we compare the text with the image in Figure 5 retrieved from the Game Assassins Creed, we will get a picture of what a virtual immersion in a digital game is. The Middle Ages is recreated not only as a time, but also as a time-space, inhabited by 'people' interacting and allowing their 'imagination to paint the images'. The plot works as an hypertextual process where the user decide the flow of the story within the limitations of the game creators, but nevertheless creating in the mind of the user the impression of unlimited freedom of imagination and social cohesion between players.

¹³ RPG Agamemnon. (2003 c). Retrieved from <http://www.agamemnon-rpg.com/introduction.html>

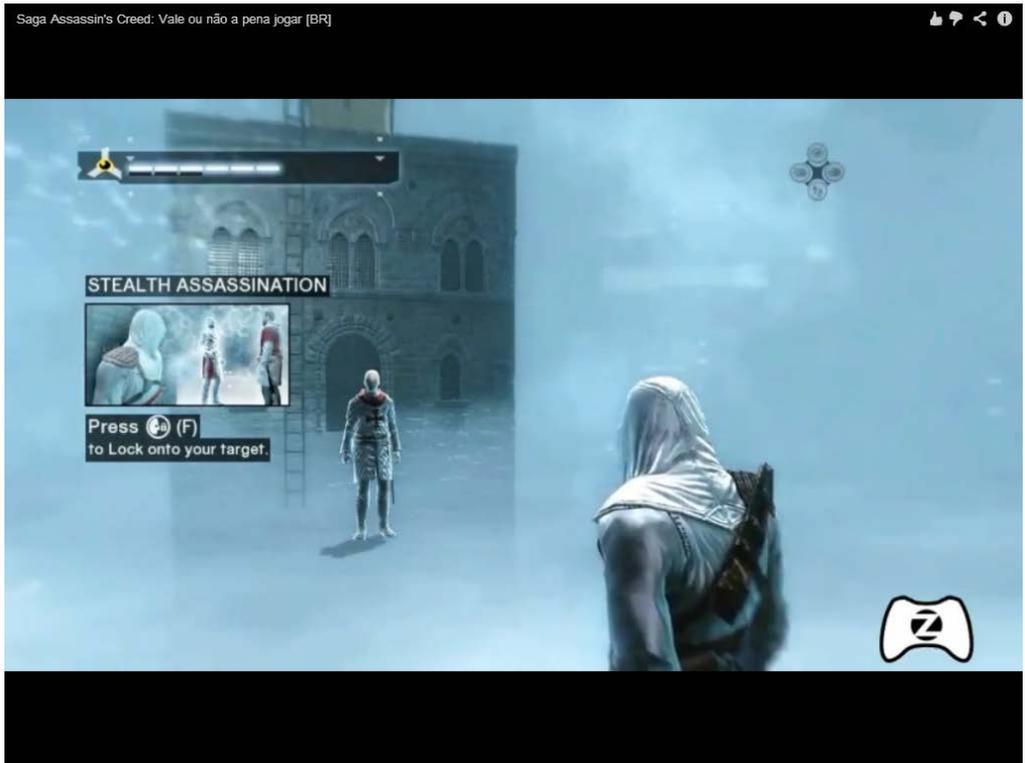


Figure 6 Screenshot from the webpage of the game 'Assassins Creed III'. Zangado Games (Youtube) web page. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO0emuFDuEE>

Images such as those reproduced in the chosen screenshots (Figure 1 to Figure 6) are not easy to analyze, even using cultural studies approaches strengthening the context of viewing, because the viewer is not only expected to look to the image, but also to be embodied in the image. Although we can try to focus also on the context of production and distribution, the meaning is difficult to understand. We can look at the form, describing the pictorial conventions that may be vaguely related to photography or drawing, or film, or comic visual conventions; this will give us great amounts of useful information. But, something is missing. Maybe the missing link has to do with the type of images, digital images are interactive and raise different levels of connection with the 'reader'. We can start to think about approaching the interacting levels in the images like Dubberly, Pangaro and Haque (2009) had argued. In this respect, we need to blur the borders and enlarge the boundaries of analysis in an interdisciplinary way, for example going through the participatory systems Pangaro (2000), analyzing images not only in a dual mode (image and decoder of the image), but also in a tripod relationship:

between player; game and other players. We will seek to understand their characteristics as “participants” that “act on their own, behave in complex ways that make sense to us, interact with us directly, work with us for achieving our goals, modify their own goals, partner with us in the creation new goals, collaborate with us on the design of new partners”¹⁴. Therefore, in order to understand the existing interactions with the participants and to propose new and more interesting ones, we need a framework to characterize degrees of: autonomy, complexity, interactivity, collaboration, goal-setting¹⁵. Therefore, the authors went through this approach to confirm some of their intuitive claims derived from a first attempt of the image analysis described in the previous section. They wanted to understand the degree of interactivity generated by images (and games) and they started to look at the communities of players taking into account the topic and the name of the game. Rosangela registered for the following internet forums MMORPG.com, MMOsite.com, PlayStation Forum, UBISOFT Uplay Forum. Rosangela also designed a short questionnaire [1] called 'Medieval Games Questionnaire (MMO and MMORPG) and posted it on 23.12.2013 on these Internet forums and Facebook pages. The aim of the questionnaire with 10 multiple choice questions was to identify profiles and habits of players and also to get insights about players' contextual knowledge regarding the history of the Middle Ages.

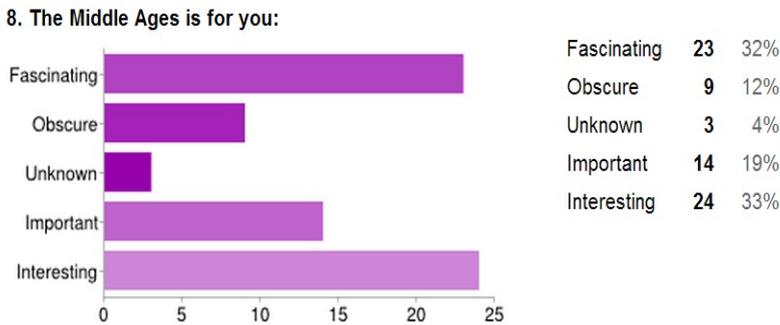


Table 2: Graphic results to the question 8 in the . 'Medieval Games Questionnaire (MMO and MMORPG), 2013.

¹⁴ Pangaro, Paul, *Participative Systems*, 2000, In: <http://www.pangaro.com/PS/PS2005-v1b-4up.pdf>, accessed 22-2-13.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

9. What more catches your attention in the Middle Ages?

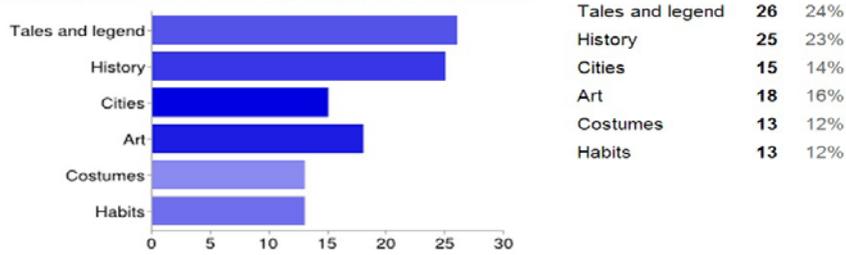


Table 3: Graphic results for the question 9 in the 'Medieval Games Questionnaire (MMO and MMORPG), 2013.

Between 23- 25.02.2013, Rosangela received thirty-six replies that had corroborated the author's claims that the medieval trend in young people and young adult's subcultures is a living presence in contemporary culture. Tables 2 and 3 and 4 illustrate some results obtained from the questionnaire that has helped the authors in their research for this study.

Bibliography:

- Bell, F.**, *Content analysis of visual images*. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications, 2002, pp. 10-34.
- Braidotti, R.**, *Transpositions*. On Nomadic ethics. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
- Collier, M.**, *Approaches to analysis in visual anthropology*. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications 2002, pp. 35-60.
- Didi-Huberman**, *Confronting images: questioning the ends of a certain history of art*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009.
- Dubberly, H., Pangaro, P., & Haque, U.**, *What is interaction?: are there different types?. ON MODELING. Interactions*. 16, 1 (January 2009), 69-75.
- Duncum, P.** *Seven principles for visual culture education*. *Art Education*, 6-10, 2010.
- Elkins, J.**, *Stories of Art*. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.
- Gielen, P.**, *The Art Scene. An Ideal Production Unit for Economic Exploitation?. Open*, 2009 (17) pp. 8-19
- Grady, J.**, *Visual Research at the Crossroads*, 2008. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. 9 (3). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs/>
- Guattari, F.**, *Chaosmosis, an ethico-aesthetic paradigm*. Sydney: Power Publications, 1995.
- Guattari, F.**, *The Three Ecologies*. London: Continuum, 2000.

Haraway, Donna, “A Cyborg Manifesto Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century”, In *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge. 1991, pp.149-181.

Hickerman, R., “Visual Art as a Vehicle for Educational Research”. In *The International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Blackwell. UK. 26 (3) 314-324, 2007.

Huizinga, J., *Homo ludens: o jogo como elemento da cultura*. (J. P. Monteiro, Trans.). São Paulo, SP: Perspectiva, 2007. (Original work published 1938)

Huizinga, J., *O Outono da Idade Média*. (Francis Petra Janssen, Trans.) São Paulo, SP: Cosac Naify, 2010. (Original work published 1919).

Kline, D.T., *Digital Gaming Re-imagines the Middle Ages*. New York: Routledge. 2013.

Knowles, J.G. & A. L. Cole, A.L. (Eds.). *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publication.

Le Goff, J., *Heróis e maravilhas da Idade Média*. (Stephania Matousek, Trans). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Editora Vozes, 2010. (Original work published 2005).

Lessig, L., *Remix: making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*. London: Bloomsbury, 2008.

Retrieved from:

<http://ia600204.us.archive.org/13/items/LawrenceLessigRemix/Remix-o.pdf>

accessed 22-02-13

Lister, M. & Wells, L., “Seeing beyond belief: cultural studies as an approach to analysing the visual”. In: van Leeuwen, T. & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*. London: Sage Publications. 2001, pp. 61-91.

McNiff, S., “Art -Based Research”. In: Knowles, & Cole (Eds.). *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publication, 2008, pp. 83-91.

Pangaro, Paul, *Participative Systems*, 2000, In: <http://www.pangaro.com/PS/PS2005-v1b-4up.pdf>, accessed 22-2-13

Parsons, M., “Art And Metaphor, Body And Mind”. In L. Bresler (Ed.) *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*. (pp.533–542). N.Y. Springer, 2007.

Rogoff, I., ‘*Studying Visual Culture*’. The Visual Culture Reader. London: Routledge, 1998.

Notes

The questionnaire used in this study can be accessed at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1N0mcIumI_-0qUFaELYUICK3-rDVecur9JFQRChPiofg/viewanalytics, accessed 25-2-13