World of WarCraft, the role-playing game and the deconstruction of the classical model. The construction of environments and multiform narrations.

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> "World of Warcraft, like many massively-multiplayer online role-playing games, is constantly evolving. In an effort to keep the game challenging and balanced (…) new content and game systems will also be added."
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> *World of Warcraft* Manual Book, page 13

The communication pretends to share the results of a budding investigation that we are carrying out around the video game *World of War Craft*.

The hypothesis from which the investigation starts goes through the demonstration of how the role-playing games dismantles the classical model, established with the cinema, starting from the construction of an *alternative* model based on:

1.- The relation of the observer/player with the symbolic universe proposed.
2.- The Setting.
3.- The narration.

1.- Relation of the observer/player with the symbolic universe.

Let's remember the idea of the film spectator.
The projective systems of artistic creation have always tried a "place" for its spectator. In the cinema furthermore, the exhibit's own structure proposes the spectator as an indispensable element of the cinematographic act, developing a hegemonic model, in which it occupies a central and essential position. As Müsterberg stated, the cinema works ideally for the spectator, it is formed to aim the human spirit not existing, psychologically, nor in the film nor in the screen, but only in the spirit that gives it its reality. It is articulated like this, a whole device of creation and cinematographic reproduction designed for this cinematographic spectator without all its creative process remaining ruined. Retaking the Sartrian thesis of the image as "absent-presence", in which the perception of the world gains force from an infantile mentality which considers the reality of the dreams with so much presence with the reality of the vigils, it introduces the figure of the cinematographic spectator in an identical position, as this one is the one who gives a "soul" to the things he perceives over the screen. In this way the perception in the cinema comes close to the "magic perception" based in a system determined "by the believe in the double, in the metamorphosis and in the ubiquity, in the universal flow, in the reciprocal analogy of the microcosms and macrocosms, in the anthropocosmomorphism".

This way the author puts together the processes of the dreams with those of the cinema, shaping a psychoanalytical theory of the spectator, of unquestionable validity in the surroundings of the institutional representation, which is based on the processes of projection and identification, in which the spectator, instead of projecting himself over the world he absorbs it towards his own world. He makes it his. The cinema with its techniques favours said phagocyte, provoking and intensifying his projection.

The double projection goes through an unconscious primary phase, a tactic agreement between the spectator and the representation, thanks to which the two dimension images psychologically become real to the observer, offering to his look a "sham" of his perception of the real universe. And if this projection tries to get close the spectator to a "parallel reality", one has to take into account that it is establish through the base device (the camera) to produce certain effects. Plus the unconsciousness of the projection and the structural elements which emanate from the cinematographic`s own happenings, permits the spectator to submerge into the magic of what happens before his eyes feeling an integrated and an essential part of said "reality".

The second projective phase goes through the identification of the text's superficial elements. At this point, the secondary projection personifies itself in the character's figure and of its psychological construction. In this sense the spectator's selective memory acts in the reconstruction of the character, providing it, to a certain point, a distorted psychology: the character appears upon the spectator's memory with a simpler psychology than what it is in reality. This one builds up in a more contradictory and complex manner through out the story. Also the characters are not only "beings of the fiction" with paths that are born only for the story, but that are built up and limed with a biography, a past that reduces them to behaviours derived from their own vital path. Given this association by remembrance, the spectator tends to believe that he has identified himself by the liking with the personage, by its character, by his behaviour..., a little bit like in the real world. This way the secondary identification in this level is basically the identification with the character as a fellow man figure in the fiction.

However, there are authors who believe that the *diegesis* identification in the cinema uses more complex mechanisms, for which that identification comes from a "structure" effect, a question more of place than of psychology. As a fact, in order for the spectator to find his place, the narrative space of a sequence or a scene, is sufficient with inscribing to this scene a network of relations, a situation. At this point, it has little importance that the spectator does not know his characters. This way, as Barthes states, identification does not have psychological preferences. It is a structural operation: I am that one which occupies the same place as I.

In the role-playing games, Barthes' maximum is not only an option, it's essential. If it is true that we could assume for the video game the first of the projections, in such, that the tactic agreement between the user and the representation, it is also true that in said universe the player believes himself the centre of the representation because he is, because he has created a character to move around that parallel universe. I am that one that occupies the same place that I, becomes virtually effective when the user is capable of moving by himself in said universe. Once the character is created, re-presentation in the representation of oneself, and once assume his characteristics by the user in rule forms, also existent in the classical story to know how to decode it, acquires the power to articulate it's own destiny. Walk freely and virtually through that universe deciding his actions and interactions. The antroprocosmocentric projection becomes more effective in the sense that the player is conscious of being one in that universe, with a "physical" space in virtue of his designed character and not as in the cinema, without effective presence but psychological.

2.- The Setting

The cinematographic construction sets forth its setting criteria in virtue of the creation of a two-dimensional space with an impression of a three-dimensional, under the inherited patterns of the renaissance projective systems.

Reality sensation, intromission in a recreated world, illusionism, which though being a word with low acceptance by critics, it constituted one of the most revolutionary values that the artificial perspective placed in reach of the artist in form of accepted hegemonic creation models, which came to mark a point of inflexion in art, where the recreation of the reality, the organization of the composition and the harmonization of this new reality with the pictorial flat surface, are the principal formal potentials of the new perspective.

If during centuries it was thought that the norms of the perspective coincided with the physiological reality of vision and with the same structure of nature, with photography the system's level of convention is observed. The system that has reined the European painting since the Renaissance has emerged from the perspective but it has not supposed the rigorous acceptance of all its premises mathematics. This pictorial system has such a parallelism with the photographic, that it can therefore not be spoken of the abandonment in our century of the old system's representation.

The cinema as a projective technique based in the reduction of reality through the altered objective. Through another path, the traditional space notion but parting from a reaffirmation of the principles of the projective geometric. The creation criteria pass through the relations that are established between what is seen (field) and what is not seen (out of the field). The global space created by the cinema makes for both to have a similar importance, but it is the enounce stay which determines the presence / absence, what we can see and what we cannot. Also, the mobile character of the cinematographic image complicates the space creation processes, which at the same time includes the temporary creations, up to now if well implicit not explicit in the text. Therefore the creation of a field and its articulation with an out of field, now it's added with the possibility of movement in the time-space through the mobile camera, and the possibility of incapable movement by the setup is provoked by the travelling that, if initially it was basically used to follow the actors, soon it will find a meaning of character, not only functionally but expressive: the camera takes body, it moves between the characters and with them, it converts itself in an autonomous presence which gives back to the spectator its own look from the same interior of the scene's space. Thanks to the mobile camera, the spectator submerges in the space represented, because this one becomes a place in which it moves in a psychological manner: the things are making themselves "here and now" because it's capable of following them in it's own mobility, according a continuous development, present, actual. The camera acquires then a signification that initially it did not have, the one of supporting the construction of the dramatic space.

The role-playing game analysed comes back, in this sense, to modify the lay out of the temporary space creation. Temporary because it permits the spectator the possibility to play in real time building up the story as he advances in the game: the ellipsis are the player's strategy, not the creator's, the universe offers it to him, temporarily, parallel to his. In space because the game, in third person, permits him not only to recognise the conventionalised 2D criteria, in the field's deep form, but with a soft mouse movement, the sequence plan in which his path develops through the parallel universe, permits him access to the parts of the fields not shown by the screen. In this case, it is the player and not the creator that can determine the frame, and with it access freely to all the infinite space of the virtual.

3.- The Narration

If the classical model bases the narrative structure in the casualty, in the presentation of an effect which succeeds a cause, weaving a network of structures between characters and situations clearly determined by the author, constructed upon the virtue of inherited norms from the traditional narrative since Aristotle, in the video game, the narration is abandoned in a risky chance form. Even though we must make a series of actions to strengthen our I in the story of the video game, we are free in doing them. If we opt to do them in the place and time predetermined, our character goes assuming a series of skills and abilities that make his journey easier. In the contrary case, we will take more time to reach them, but in any case, the story will not break. The user becomes a lector author capable of influencing his own course without eroding the universe in which he is immersed.