

## Seeking a methodology for the analysis of the influence of anime on brazilian youth – a post-jungian approach

Gustavo Pereira Portes<sup>1</sup>

Edward Haig<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

This research aims to develop a new methodology for understanding how anime influences young people. Using the anime Naruto as object, case studies were conducted with four young people. Through an analysis of the stories narrated by them about both their lives and Naruto, it was demonstrated that their main life patterns were grounded in archetypes represented by images in this anime. Although these young people referred to archetypes related to rupture and the breaking of paradigms, innovation and transgression, such as those of the Hero, other characters such as those related to the maintenance of the status quo were also prominent in their narratives, suggesting a possible change in the posture of young people today.

**Keywords:** anime, archetype, influence, identification, identity

---

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral student in Media - Screen & Sound by La Trobe University, Australia. Master in Media and Culture Media by the Department of Professional Studies from Nagoya University, former Monbusho Scholar program. Researcher at Centro de Pesquisas em Cultura Japonesa de Goiás (CPCJ-GO) and Otaku Culture Research Group, Japan E-mail: orneans@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Teacher at the Department of Media Professional Studies University of Nagoya, Japan E-mail: haig@lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp

Analytical psychology and anime,<sup>3</sup> despite being apparently so distant from each other, have one thing in common: the disbelief they both had to overcome before becoming ‘popular.’ Representatives, respectively of a scientific and a cultural dimension, both of them were initially rejected or misinterpreted, believed by critics to portray elements of what was taken to be a counter-culture. In the 1960s, members of this so-called counter-culture began to make references to Jungian postulates and they gained notoriety in the 1970s, when the oppressed voices of young people started to have more social and political value.

In 1972, Marie-Louise von Franz predicted:

Today, interest in Jung is growing year by year, especially among the younger generation. Accordingly, the growth of his influence is still in its early stages; thirty years from now we will, in all probability, be able to discuss his work in very different terms than we do today (von Franz quoted by Hauke, 2000, p. 26)

She was not wrong. In fact, the work of Carl G. Jung has become a key resource in many different fields of knowledge, such as physics, where the main reference can be found in the dialogues between Jung and the physician Wolfgang Pauli (Gieser, 2004); in sociology (Singer, 2000); in comparative mythology (Campbell, 2008); and also in social communication (Hauke & Alister, 2001; Waddell, 2009; Vogler, 1992), among many others. However, even today analytical psychology is still viewed by some as esoteric and Jung as Gnostic, as mentioned by Hollis (2005, p. 23).

Anime, in its turn, was kept for many years at the fringe of ‘culture,’ as a genre either too childish or too violent and pornographic, which prevented it from being broadcast by Brazilian mainstream channels. In the 1960s the first animes arrived in Brazil, but it was only in 1994 that the real anime boom occurred, thanks to *Knights of the Zodiac* (broadcast for the first time by TV Manchete), which has become, together with *Dragon Ball*, the main reason for the popularization of anime in Brazil (Sato, 2005).

In both cases, analytical psychology and anime gained visibility in the same way. Namely, from part of the society and also from science. This was a result, among other factors, of the need of certain groups, mainly youths, to demonstrate their critical perspectives regarding the scientific and cultural models and to have a voice in society. Some symbolic examples can be cited, such as the use of the image of Jung’s face, among other people considered influential,

---

<sup>3</sup> Anime is the Japanese term for ‘animation.’ However, it has come to be used as an expression to identify specifically Japanese animation in comparison to other types of animation. The most basic characteristics of these animations are for instance their unique visuals, where characters have extremely large eyes and fantastic hair styles and colors.

in the 1967 “Sergeant Pepper” album of the Beatles (Hauke, 2000, p. 26); or a poster with the picture of Tetsuo, a character from the post-apocalyptic anime *Akira*, saying “That’s Begun!” on the wall of a house in the ruins during the Siege of Sarajevo (Napier, 2005, pp.4-5).

Despite these similarities, there is not much research that associates the Jungian postulates with anime studies. In the field of media theories, there are studies that relate the stories of anime with archetypal and mythological references (Okabayashi, 2007; Drazen, 2003), but there is still not a methodology for anime’s audience analysis by means of analytical psychology, or even a subjective verification of anime’s influence on young people through image and archetypal patterns.

Assuming that the anime audience is mostly composed of young people (Nakamura & Onouchi, 2006), the present study seeks to understand the influence of anime on the identity formation of four participants, who are part of this demographic segment, by means of important processes related to story and the character’s influences, such as: engagement with media texts, identification with the characters and the audience’s search for archetypal patterns that carry a symbolic appeal for them, as will be further explained in the following sections.

For a complete understanding of this research, it is first necessary to detail the methodology applied. Then, the participants are presented along with the probable archetypal patterns found in their personal narratives. Then, the processes of involvement and identification shall be duly explained.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of this research was based on two distinct branches of qualitative psychology: narrative psychology and interpretative phenomenological analysis (abbreviated as IPA). These methods have guided the interviews and also their analysis. The reasons for choosing these methods, what they are and how they were applied will be explained in the following sections. But first, we will detail the technical aspects of the interviews.

All interviews were conducted with students from a Japanese language school in Goiânia, the capital city of the state of Goiás. After obtaining the consent of the director of the institution, a simple questionnaire was administered to all classes and answered by all present students. The questionnaire, composed of some basic questions about the lives of students, was developed to facilitate the selection of interviewees. The interviewees were selected on the basis of two main criteria. First, that they were young, with ages between twelve and twenty-one years old, which corresponds to the beginning stages of pre-adolescence to late adolescence or

early adulthood. Second, that they liked anime, including *Naruto*, and had contact with the program with some frequency.

The questionnaire asked students to write the names of their favorite anime in order of preference. Moreover, they were also asked to indicate how many hours they usually spent every day watching anime and other types of programs (such as shows, films and TV news) on a scale of zero to five, where zero represented less than one hour and five more than five hours daily. From this information, four of the students were found to satisfy the criteria and were duly selected after first agreeing to cooperate in the study.

As previously mentioned, their level of exposure to anime was one of the most decisive criteria for selecting them. As the Cultivation Process theory postulates,

those who spend more time watching television are more likely to perceive the real world in ways that reflect the most common and recurrent messages of the television world (Morgan et al., 2009, pp. 34, 45-47).

For this reason, this study focused on those who reported having more contact with the medium because understanding audience's interpretations in relation to the 'real world' is crucial to determining the probable influence that anime can have.

Another important aspect of this analysis was the consideration given to other sources of influence, especially those relating to the social environment in which young people are inserted, such as friends and family, but also the characters of other media such as films, soap operas or sitcoms (Erikson, 1968, p. 87). Therefore, to limit (though not exclude) the possible influence of these other sources, participants were selected from those students who reported having less contact with other media. The lower the amount of contact with a certain character, the lower the probability of identification, while the greater the exposure to the same character the greater the chance that the viewer will feel like that character and be influenced by it (Rubin & McHugh quoted in Cohen, 2001, p. 259).

The interviews were conducted after the data were collected. Aspects of narrative psychology and interpretative phenomenological analysis were used to carry out these interviews and their analysis. These two methods will be detailed below, after which the participants will be presented and their comments analyzed.

## **NARRATIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

One of the fundamental functions of a narrative is to place events in a sequence of three basic components: a beginning, a middle and an end (Barthes, 2008). But the narrative

also has an important role in ordering and giving meaning to people's lives. As Murray (2003, pp. 115-116) notes, '[the narrative] also provides structure to our very sense of selfhood. We tell stories about our lives to ourselves and to others. As such, we create a narrative identity.'

Through the narrative, people not only develop their understanding of who they are but they define themselves in relation to others. That is, such narratives reveal how the world sees and interprets the individual.

Since such narratives deal with people's consciousness about themselves and how others interpret them, they are closely related to the study of identity. This has been formalized as the Theory of Narrative Identity. According to this theory, a person's identity is associated through narrative with a 'sense of coherence so that the divergent experiences form an interconnected which gives meaning to one's experiences and to life as a whole' (Roesler, 2006, p. 575). However, these experiences that form the basis for the construction of personal narratives are not only provided by consciousness or by the use of the senses. As stated by Whitmont (1978, p. 41), 'the ego-centered, subjective consciousness is a *partial* rather than a complete manifestation of the psyche' [*italics added*]. For the totality of the psyche, Jung used the term Objective Psyche, 'which generates concepts and autonomous image symbols' (ibid.). In other words, the unconscious also plays an important role in the perception of reality as a provider of images that must be experienced symbolically.

These images are called endogenous (originating within the organism) and are just as important as the exogenous ones (originating outside the organism and referring to the material world of external things) and both are reflected in behavior, for example, the expression of emotions and impulses (Whitmont, 1978, p. 41). Kawai (1991, p. 36) illustrates this theory by telling the story of a young Japanese student who had seen in his mother the image of a dictator, imposing and always giving orders. However, after talking with the mother, Kawai found that, contrary to the son's description, the mother was actually kind and quiet. That is, the boy's perception of his mother was based on symbolic images created by archetypal substrates provided by his unconscious.

The archetypes also give meaning to the experiences of the individual through universal patterns that may appear in certain situations, or perhaps even be activated by exogenous images (such as those of anime), and determine part or even the totality of one's life. As suggested by Roesler, 'a person's whole biography, their overall narrative identity construction can be governed by archetypal patterns' (2006, p. 579). As *Naruto* is a story produced for young people, especially boys, we may presume that some of its images can

awaken dormant archetypal patterns in its target audience. As Mark & Pearson affirm, ‘dormant potentials may not be experienced until an outer event or image awakens them’ (2001, p. 32). It is for this reason that narrative psychology was employed in this study. That is, as a mean to analyze the personal narratives of the interviewees in terms of the archetypal patterns that may have been activated by the symbolic images of the anime.

In previous studies of a clinical nature, such as Roesler (2006), the goal was to identify such archetypal patterns in the autobiographical narratives of patients and compare them with typical patterns found particularly in mythological texts. The similarity between the personal narrative of the analyzed person and the pattern of the myth was ascribed to the universal nature of the archetype. That is, the pattern symbolized in images in the myth, as part of the collective unconscious, was also present in the narrative of the interviewee so that there was a thematic repetition. For example, very simply put, if a patient talked in a very expressive way (i.e., with dialogues charged with emotion) about the theme of the weak overcoming the strong his/her narrative might be related by the analyst to the myth of David and Goliath as being the main archetypal pattern of the patient. However, the purpose of this study is not only to identify the archetypal patterns of young people, but also to show that these patterns can be awakened through images present in the anime. To this end, the interviews were analysed in the way suggested by Murray (2003, p. 120). First, the interviews were divided into two phases: one descriptive and another interpretive. In the descriptive phase, the dialogues were summarized in the form of short narratives with a beginning, middle and end, based on what respondents said. In the interpretive phase, personal narratives were interpreted in order to, as explained above, identify the main archetypal patterns of each subject and associate them to the pattern that the interviewees themselves identified in *Naruto*. Moreover, the analysis is also intended to show how young people understand the patterns that exist in *Naruto*, through a process of interpretation of the interpretations that respondents make of the anime, which leads to the second methodology applied in this research: interpretative phenomenological analysis.

### **INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS**

The objective of this research is not just to ask questions about the personal lives of the interviewees as a way of pointing out the archetypal patterns of their lives through comparisons with patterns found in, for example mythological texts. In addition to asking questions about the lives of the young people the interviews also asked about their interpretations of the characters and the story of *Naruto*. By doing so, identification of the origin of the anime’s influence on young people can be validated, since it is they themselves who point

out the archetypal images existing in the stories that influenced them the most. This is in accordance with von Franz (2002, p. 20) who explains that only the archetypal themes that are important to a nation or an individual shall be recalled when they talk about these stories.

When the interviewees talked about their favorite characters and stories, it became possible to interpret ‘how participants [were] making sense of their personal and social world, and the meanings that participants hold about particular experiences or events’ (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 51), and also to interpret in which ways they were affected by fiction. In this case, a two-stage interpretation process takes place, or a double hermeneutics.

The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world. IPA is therefore intellectually connected to hermeneutics and theories of interpretation (ibid., p. 54).

Summarizing the explanations of the methodology applied here, the four interviewees were first asked about details of their personal lives. From this information, a text in the form of a short narrative was elaborated through an interpretive process. Secondly, the interviewees were asked to talk, based on their point of view, about the characters and the stories of their favorite anime programs, especially *Naruto*. Finally, parallels were drawn between the archetypal patterns found in their personal narratives and those that were most remembered while they talked about their favorite characters and stories. Through these comparisons, it became possible to point out which images (or patterns) were responsible for the probable influence of anime on the identity formation of the interviewees.

## DATA ANALYSIS

When working with particular groups of people, certain archetypal images should be more obvious than others. People of different ages, for example, are likely to live their lives according to different images or patterns. In the case of young people, the dominant image is frequently that of the Hero or Explorer. Mark & Pearson (2001, p. 32) observe that:

Sometimes archetypes emerge because we are in a certain phase of life that evokes them: The child becomes a teenager and suddenly experiences the Explorer’s need to be different – to separate from the parents and learn about the greater world.

Based on this perspective and also that of other works (Campbell, 2008; Hollis, 2005; Vogler, 1992) the central hypothesis of this research predicted a strong influence of the archetypal image of the Hero (or Explorer) on the narratives of the young interviewees. In fact,

this image was present, but to a lesser degree than expected. Another issue is that more than one pattern was found in the individual narratives and it became necessary to account for this. The table below lists the young people’s (fictitious) names, the most probable archetypal patterns of their lives and a brief description of their stories:

Table 1 – Interviewees’ names, archetypal patterns and descriptions

Name	Main Archetypal Patterns	Description
Pedro	Child-Hero	‘The Regular Guy’ is another name to describe this archetypal image. Pedro is a very realistic boy, but it does not mean he has no dreams about his future. Strongly connected with his family and friends, he feels responsible for his younger brothers.
Paulo	Hero	The Hero represents the ego archetype, or our consciousness of who we are. The goal of the hero is to prove one’s worth through courageous and difficult action, such as Paulo’s need to go out on a journey to prove his importance to his family and to himself.
Jorge	Persona/Hero	Jorge has the same need as Paulo as someone who lives by the Hero archetype, but that is only outside his home. Inside, with his family, he is different. He wears a mask that represents a dualistic persona, i.e., his personality presented to the world and to his family.
Maria	Princess/Amazon	The princess stands for the image of the woman waiting to be rescued by the enchanted prince. Another name for this image is the ‘Maiden.’ However, Maria has also deep inside of her the image of the Amazon, the female warrior, strong and wise, which represents one of the aspects of the animus.

To detail the use of the methodology discussed in the previous section, we will use the case of Pedro, the first respondent. To use the method of narrative psychology in this research, i.e., under the theories of analytical psychology, one must, above all, identify the archetypal patterns present in the narratives of the interviewees and associate them with those typical patterns which are generally found in the surrounding culture (Roesler, 2006, p. 576).

The first pattern found in the narrative of Pedro was the Hero, and especially the Child-Hero. Among the comments made by Pedro, his concern in presenting himself and being seen by others as mature, in relation to himself, his friends and family was very noticeable. At one point, he says:

I know what I have to do. For example, I have to go to school every morning. Some years ago I didn’t like it, but now I don’t care. The problem is that I’m in a new school, I don’t know anybody, so it’s like a new life. But as time passes by, this situation gets better. Now I can see the reality, it’s clearer to me. I have my obligations, when we grow up we see it, so everything changes.



This pattern is widely used in myths and often found in the media. Young people, who have to prove their strength, dedication and responsibility to themselves and others is a constant mythological theme (Henderson, 1988, p. 110). Perhaps, the Western myth more relevant in this case is that of King Arthur, who as a child, was able to draw the sword Excalibur out of the rock in which it was embedded, a feat that no adult could achieve.

The second pattern identified was that of the Common Guy, or one who is satisfied with his/her own reality the way it is. An example of this pattern is associated with resignation, as Pedro demonstrates in another part of the interview, when he says, “I like things the way they are. I don’t want anything to change. I have a good family, despite the fights, I’m fine the way I am. I like my friends. My friends are like brothers to me.”

Pedro appears a little uncertain regarding whether to follow his plans and achieve his goals or to continue as he is now. This can be seen in terms of the “refusal of the call” pattern as described by Campbell (2008, p. 54). Campbell illustrates this pattern with the image of the Hebrew prophet Jonah refusing to comply with the orders of God, who consequently made him be swallowed by a whale. This pattern is also used widely by the media today and is usually found in characters that have a great attachment to their families, friends or places where they live, as it is the case of Naruto himself when he faces his first real enemy, or for example, when Luke Skywalker refuses to leave his family in *Star Wars*. This first stage of the analysis leads us to conclude that a prior knowledge of archetypal stories such as myths, legends and fairy tales (Jung, 1968, p. 17), as well as an understanding of the archetypal patterns used in the culture and media to which the respondents are exposed, are necessary in order for the archetypal patterns to be correctly pointed out and linked to the respondents’ narratives. However, the methodology is not limited to questions about the personal lives of the respondents. For a complete analysis of the influence of anime on a particular audience it is necessary to identify the sources of influence through the responses of the respondents regarding the media analyzed and then search for similarities between the patterns found in their narratives and those identified by themselves in their stories. That is, one must analyze the processes involving emotion through the narrative transportation and identification with the characters (Cohen & Talor, 2005). Accordingly, it is necessary to (1) determine what type of involvement the respondent has with anime and how s/he interprets the text, and (2) indicate whether the respondent identifies with a character in the story, since such identification should have a long-term effect on those who consume that media (Cohen, 2001, p. 249). For this purpose, we shall make use of the theory of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

## INVOLVEMENT WITH THE TV TEXT

One of the functions of IPA is to understand, through processes of interpretation, how the respondents interpret and see their world. The way they interpret the media products that they consume may help researchers to better understand who a particular interviewee is and how s/he understands the medium being analyzed.

For this study, we have chosen to employ the classification of Liebes (1996), which defines four possible types of involvement (or readings) with TV texts, as shown in the following table:

Table 2 – Four types of involvement with TV texts according to Liebes

	<b>Referential</b>	<b>Constructional</b>
<b>Closed</b>	Real (Hegemonic/confrontational)	Ideological (Diagnostic/oppositional)
<b>Open</b>	Ludic (Subjunctive)	Aesthetic (Analytic/critical)

Liebes explains each of these types based on other theories, such as Hall's encoding / decoding model (1980). According to Liebes (1996):

1. The 'real' prevails when characters and situations are incorporated uncritically into viewers' lives and vice versa.
2. The 'ludic' is a more open reading, in which viewers 'try on' different options for the rewriting of the program and their lives by relating to characters subjunctively and playfully.
3. The 'ideological' pervades the producer's message (thus assuming one hidden meaning of a meta-text).
4. The 'aesthetic' which is also a more open type, is where viewers discern the aesthetic building blocks of which the narrative is composed and show their ability to construct alternatives.

Although Liebes' classification defines four types of readings and readers, it cannot be said that each individual belongs to only one group. In fact, all four types co-exist within the same person. However, in each case some types of reading should be more evident than others. To illustrate the two main dimensions proposed by Liebes, the referential and the constructional, let us compare the cases of Pedro and Jorge. Pedro appears to be a more constructional reader whereas Jorge seems to be more referential. The respondents when talking about the story of *Naruto* apparently interpreted or read the same story from different perspectives. Pedro (and

likewise Maria) remembered mainly the structural and logical features of the narrative, ordering the actions in a structure of beginning, middle and end. According to him,

I remember that in the beginning there was a school with children studying to become ninja. Those students were separated into seven groups, three of them in each group, and Naruto was in the seventh one. There were stages, like exams, that they had to pass in order to become real ninja. They passed the first and second, and in the third stage a guy named Orochimaru (the villain) appeared, trying to kidnap Sasuke who was in Naruto's group, because Sasuke had some abilities that Orochimaru wanted for himself [...]

Unlike Pedro, Jorge showed a more emotional point of view such as when he remembered elements of the plot that most moved him. When talking about *Naruto*'s story, Jorge said:

*Naruto* is a way of knowing things you could never imagine you could learn only by watching an anime. Not only to learn about ninjas, but he teaches us how to pass through bad situations, how to behave in places where you aren't welcome, how to transform obstacles into things that can make you stronger [...]

Like Jorge, Paulo also demonstrated a more emotive and referential reading. Readers of this type tend to play more freely with aspects of the narrative and make a clearer connection between the fiction and their individual realities (Liebes, 1996, p. 39). They often use phrases like "this story is very similar to mine," or "that character is just like me." The influence of fictional stories in their lives is more easily found because the respondents make their own connections between what they see in fiction and how they act in reality. Jorge, for example, says that one part that moved him in *One Piece* (another anime) was when the main character decided to let himself be stranded on an island forever if that meant he could save his friends. Elsewhere in the interview, he recalled a personal case, as he said:

Once I was in a park and saw some guys bullying a boy there, and then I decided to help [...] I knew I had no chance against them all, but I came to the boy that was being bullied and said: 'I'm glad I found you. Me, the mountain and the monster have been waiting for you. Let's go and find them.' Then we left. [...] I felt so good, and I think he'll never forget it.

The archetypal pattern used by Jorge when he is away from his family is closely linked to that of fellowship, or the need for socialization and relationships. These are very

representative features of the anime and are also associated with the anima archetype (Whitmont, 1978, p. 189), and it is possible that this archetype has influenced this pattern. On the other hand readers that tend to make constructionist readings often make more subjective connections between fiction and reality. For example, Pedro said a few times that his life is full of ups and downs and he described how he was struggling to overcome these problems. When talking about the anime *Bleach*, he said:

I like the fight scenes. They inspire me. Well, the thing is, in a fight either you lose or you win, right? So, what inspires me is that the fight instructs you in many ways, fighting is not only violence. Well, I don't know but it really inspires me.

Pedro sometimes referred to himself as a strategist, and he liked to discuss the fights he saw in the anime critically with his friends. Apparently, for him the fights are the most important parts of the anime, and especially the way they are conducted. The pattern of the child-hero remains because part of his problems is centered on his need to help his younger siblings, which for him is a daily “fight.” Pedro also refers to this when he talks about his favorite characters, which leads to the process of identification with media characters.

## **IDENTIFICATION WITH MEDIA CHARACTERS**

According to Cohen (2001, p. 245), the process of identification between the audience and the character ‘is a mechanism through which audience members experience the reception and interpretation of the text from the inside, as if the events were happening to them.’ Cohen provides a detailed description of what identification is and argues for the importance of not confusing this mechanism with others, such as imitation or affinity. Since the influence of anime may change the attitudes and behavior of people over the long term, the theory of identification becomes important at an early stage because it depends on emotions.

What is being affirmed here is that for an influence on the individual’s identity to exist, first there must be an identification with the character through an image, whether real or imagined, so that ‘the audience member then empathizes with the character and adopts the character’s identity’ (Cohen, 2001, p. 252). And it is precisely through the archetypal image that archetypes are made conscious, and the image that carries the archetype becomes a symbol for those who identify with it, as Jung justifies:

This shows how the archetypes appear in practical experience: they are at the same time both image and emotion. And we can only refer to them when these aspects come together. When there is only the image, it describes something of small consequence. But when the image carries emotion, it becomes full of numinosity (or psychic energy) and becomes dynamic, causing various consequences (1968, p. 96).

The characters in the anime can become symbols for some people, and in the anime there are so many different types of characters that it becomes easy to find one with which one can identify (Okuhara, 2009, p. 201).

To illustrate how this theory was applied in this study we cite again the case of Pedro. In his interview Pedro mainly recalled three characters, two from the anime *Bleach*, and one from *Naruto*, his two favorite anime. All of these characters to a certain degree reflect the archetypal patterns of his life that were derived from his narrative. The *Naruto* character that he refers to is Shikamaru, a very quiet young man, who apparently has no great ambitions except to defend his friends and his village, but who is also recognized by all for his speed in creating strategies. According to Pedro, Shikamaru ‘is very calm, relaxed and thinks a lot. There are many people who think too much as he does, I like that kind of person who is planning strategies.’ The second character is Kenpachi from the anime *Bleach*. Pedro remarked that, ‘when you talk about Kenpachi, you think about his strength. He is very strong. He wears an eye patch and fights with one hand ... when he takes the eye patch off and fights with both hands, he becomes much stronger.’ About this character, there are two elements that should be noted: the first is that Pedro shows his understanding of the meaning of the eye patch saying that it represents the inner strength that everyone has within themselves. According to Liebes (1996), this would be a feature of the ideological reader in identifying the meta-text. The second element would be the importance that Pedro ascribes not only to the intelligent characters but also the strong ones, which is related to his third favorite character, Hitsugaya, also from the anime *Bleach*.

Hitsugaya is a supernatural child, whose powers exceed those of many adults in the series. When asked about the reason for his preference for this character, Pedro replied, ‘this is due to the fact that he is a kid, his appearance.’ And he continues, ‘he has powers that every boy dreams about. For a nine years old kid to have the strength of an adult is impossible, right?’

Adolescence is a stage where the child is being prepared for adult life, leaving the nuclear family (Erikson, 1968, p. 87). Characters like these are attractive because they give the

notion that young people can also be strong and face their problems like adults. In anime numerous similar examples of this type of character are easily found. It represents an aspect of Japanese culture concerning the independence of children. In Japan adults expect their children to be able to do many things without assistance and especially to behave well in front of others (Elza, 2009, pp. 56 - 57).

Like Pedro, the other respondents also discussed their favorite characters and their identification processes were analyzed according to the way they talked about them. It was noticeable that they displayed a high degree of excitement and emotion in their accounts. Furthermore, as already mentioned, correlating the relationship of the personal narrative of the interviewee with that of the characters by means of the interviewees' own words and perceptions, makes it easier to determine the influence of the environment on the interviewee and especially the origin of that influence.

#### **ABOUT INFLUENCE AND IDENTIFICATION**

When working with narratives, we can see the influence of anime and its stories and characters on a certain individual or group through the repetition of themes and also through the emotions expressed by fans when discussing them. The narrative approach allows the interviewees to feel free to talk about themselves and about their favorite anime, which facilitates the emergence of archetypal patterns for analysis. These patterns can be taken as influencing how the interviewees see the world, but also how the world sees them, because patterns represent their image and identity to others. Thus, an analysis of the influence of anime through archetypal patterns leads us to two main conclusions:

The first is that an interaction occurs between the receiver of the message and the message at the level of archetypes. That is, the receiver who lives by a particular archetypal pattern looks for stories and characters that provide images related to this specific pattern. The same can be said about people whose psychological needs make them to search for images loaded with psychic energy. For example, adolescents seeking, even if unconsciously, for images that help them to overcome this problematic phase of maturation. As stated by Campbell (1988, p. 217):

The image helps us to identify with the symbolized force. You can't very well expect a person to identify with an undifferentiated something or other. But when you give it qualities that point toward certain realizations, the person can follow.

What Campbell means is that the image should represent something specific to the one who sees it; if it means nothing, there will be no identification.

The second conclusion is that since these fans of anime identified themselves with different characters and not only with the main ones there must be a range of possibilities for the study of archetypal patterns and the features of characters.

This study has argued that new ways of approaching the various influences on the identity of young people ought to be considered, especially those related to the field of analytical psychology. This is because, as we attempted to demonstrate, if the influence on the identity of young people, such as identification, is understood as a process of emotional origin, identity research needs to extend beyond the field of cognitive psychology to include those of the collective unconscious and archetypes.

## REFERENCES

- BARTHES, Roland. *Análise Estrutural da Narrativa*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2008.
- BENNETT, Andy & KAHN-HARRIS, Kieth. *After Subculture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
- CAMPBELL, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. California: New World Library, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Power of Myth*. New York: Doubleday, 1988.
- COHEN, Jonathan. *Defining Identification: A Theoretical Look at the Identification of Audiences with Media Characters*. *Mass Communication & Society*. Philadelphia: Routledge, v. 4, n. 3, p. 245-264, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. & TALOR, Nurit. *Understanding Audience Involvement: Conceptualizing and Manipulating Identification and Transportation*. *Poetics*. v. 38, n. 4, p. 402-418, 2010.
- DRAZEN, Patrick. *Anime Explosion: The What? Why? & Wow! of Japanese Animation*. California: Stone Bridge Press, 2003.
- ELZA, Cary. *We all Live in a Pokemon World: Animated Utopia for Kids*. In: WEST, Mark (Ed.). *The Japanification of Children's Popular Culture*. Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2009.
- ERIKSON, Erik. *Identity Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton, 1968.
- GIESER, Suzanne. *The Innermost Kernel*. New York: Springer, 2005.
- HALL, Stuart. *Encoding/Decoding*. In: Hall, S. (Ed.). *Culture, Media and Language*. New York: Routledge, p. 128-138, 1980.
- HAUKE, Christopher. *Jung and the Postmodern*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. & ALISTER, Ian. *Jung & Film: Post-Jungian Takes on the Moving Image*. Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis Inc., 2001.
- HENDERSON, Joseph L. *Ancient Myths and Modern Man*. In: JUNG, Carl G. (Ed.). *Man and His Symbols*. New York: Anchor Press Book, 1988.

- HOLLIS, James. Mitologemas. São Paulo: Paulus, 2005.
- JUNG, Carl. G. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Approaching the Unconscious. In: JUNG, Carl G. (Ed.). Man and His Symbols. New York: Anchor Press Book, 1988.
- KAWAI, Hayao. Muishiki no Kouzou (The Structure of the Unconscious). Tokyo: Chuukou Shinsho, 1991.
- LIEBES, Tamar. Notes on the Struggle to Define Involvement in Television Viewing. *Reseaux*. v. 4, n. 1, p. 35-46, 1996.
- MARK, Margaret & PEARSON, Carol S. The Hero and the Outlaw. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001.
- MORGAN, Michael, et. al. Growing up with Television: Cultivation Processes. In: BRYANT, Jennings; OLIVER, Mary (Ed.). Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- MURRAY, Michael. Narrative Psychology. In: SMITH, Jonathan (Ed.). Qualitative Psychology. New Jersey: Sage, 2008.
- NAKAMURA, Ichiya & Megumi, ONOUCHI. Nihon no Poppu Pawaa. Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, Tokyo. 2006.
- NAPIER, Susan. Anime from *Akira* to *Howl's Moving Castle*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- OKABAYASHI, Kensuke. Manga for Dummies. Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, 2007.
- OKUHARA, Rieko. The Censorship of Japanese Anime in America: Do American Children need to be protected from Dragon Ball?. In: WEST, Mark (Ed.). The Japanification of Children's Popular Culture. Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2009.
- ROESLER, Christian. A Narratological Methodology for Identifying Archetypal Story Patterns in Autobiographical Narratives. *Journal of Analytical Psychology*. v. 51, n. 4, p. 574-586, 2006.
- SATO, Cristiane. A Cultura Popular Japonesa: Anime. In: Cultura pop Japonesa: Manga e Anime. Sao Paulo: Hedra, 2005.
- SCHODT, Frederik. Dreamland Japan. California: Stone Bridge Press, 1996.
- SINGER, Thomas. The Vision Thing: Myth, Politics and Psyche in the World. London: Routledge, 2000.
- SMITH, Jonathan; OSBORN, Mike. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In: SMITH, J. (Ed.). Qualitative Psychology. New Jersey, Sage: 2008.
- VOGLER, Christopher. A Jornada do Escritor. Rio de Janeiro: Ampersand, 1992.
- VON FRANZ, Marie, A Sombra e o Mal nos Contos de Fada. São Paulo: Paulus, 2002.
- WADDELL, Terrie. Wild/Lives: Trickster, Place and Liminality on Screen. London: Routledge, 2009.
- WHITMONT, Edward. The Symbolic Quest. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

*This text was received at 19 January 2012 and accepted at 26 March 2012.*