Presentation

This special issue of Intexto is dedicated to Game Studies and Philosophy. It is part of the joint initiatives of the Laboratory of Digital Artefacts of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (LAD/UFRGS, Porto Alegre, Brazil) and the Game Studies Research Centre of the Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland). It has been edited by the coordinators of those groups, Suely Fragoso e Tomasz Majkowski and is composed of 13 articles, covering issues of interest such as aesthetics, spatiality, meaning production, ludic subjectivity, ontology and others.

Before presenting the articles in more detail, we would like to assert the relevance of this special issue for game research in Brazil and other Portuguese-speaking countries. To this end, we make a slight digression about Game Studies in Brazil, specially its presence in the area of Communications Studies, to which this journal, Intexto, is linked. After that, we underline the general decisions of the group of translators and reviewers in order to clarify how the team dealt with words and expressions which have no equivalent in Portuguese or which are usually not translated in Brazil, but not necessarily in other Portuguese speaking countries.

Game Studies, Communication Studies and *Philosophy of Computer Games* Conference

Game Studies' initial struggle to avoid absorption by other disciplines is over. The recognition of games as research objects in their own right opened the way for more effective incorporation of the contribution of other disciplines, including Communication and Philosophy. Given the local conditions of scholarship, such links with previously existing disciplines were essential for the acceleration of Game Studies in Brazil. However, this did not take the form of restrictive sheltering: it is undeniable that, for Communication Studies, games are media products, but Brazilian Communication scholars are not blindly applying what is known about other media to games. Likewise, they are following their own paths, not merely reproducing theories and methods developed in other countries, cultures and contexts. This does not mean that they are unwilling to dialogue with the international

community, as testified by the growing presence of Brazilian researchers in international conferences and the lasting relations established during periods of study and research abroad.

On the other hand, participation in the international Game Studies community poses specific challenges for Brazilian scholars. One is the high cost imposed by the geographical distance between Brazil and the countries hosting international events. Another is the adoption of English as *lingua franca* of the game research community. The latter applies more frequently to beginners, but expert researchers are not immune, especially when dealing with concepts from other disciplines, such as *strictu sensu* Philosophy. This was one of the factors which led to the choice of subject for this special issue.

The conference Philosophy of Computer Games was identified as a rich source of papers dealing with matters which are dear to the Brazilian games research community, such as games epistemology, ontology and aesthetics, and player experience. It is an annual event, devoted to bring together game scholars interested in philosophy and philosophers doing research on games of ludic variety. The traveling conference, held on various European universities, started as a joined seminar held by IT University of Copenhagen and University in Oslo in 2005 and grew into full-time conference with the 2007 event held in Reggio Emilia. Twelve editions were organized in total, each of them devoted to particular philosophical subject, from computer-generated space to action in computer games, from knowledge production and meaning-making to ethical issues, such as freedom. The conference itself grew in time to be established as an intellectual avant-garde of humanities-oriented game studies.

Even though one collected essays volume was published in Springer's series on Philosophy and Technology, the main way Philosophy of Computer Games Conference contributes to the development of games studies is through the strictly curated archive of conference papers. As a standard procedure, the conference demands that all speakers deliver their papers in advance and make it available on the particular conference website. This practice is known to Brazilian communication and game scholars from national conferences such as Compós, Intercom and SBGames[1], but is not so common in international conferences. It allows attendees to engage not only with the argument as presented during

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the talk, but with all the reasoning outlined in written form. As a consequence, debates are more refined and in-depth. Besides the written archive, Philosophy of Computer Games preserves video recording of lectures given and make it available through streaming platforms. Not surprisingly, the conference archive of papers and videos has become one of the most important and inspiring open-access sources in the discipline, with numerous citations in top peer-reviewed journals. Besides the written archive, the conference preserves video recording of lectures given and make it available through streaming platforms. This way what started as a small gathering of like-minded philosophers become major contributor to the discipline of games studies.

Editorial and translation decisions

That archive is the origin of the papers translated for this special issue of Intexto. As editors, we did not think appropriate to restrict the choices to our personal preferences. Several Brazilian scholars were invited to indicate their preferences and, after we obtained permission from the authors, to translate the texts they had previously chosen. This way, the translation of those highly specialized texts was on the hands of scholars qualified in each specific subject, method or theoretical framework.

To our satisfaction, all selected authors authorized publication of the Portuguese version of their texts in this special issue[2]. Several expressed their satisfaction with the fact that Intexto is an open-access journal. This is another practice which is common in Brazilian academia, but not in other countries. It would not be possible in Brazil if not for the generous dedication of thousands of highly qualified people throughout the country. Amongst them are those who acted as curators, translators and translation reviewers for this issue, to whom we are grateful. Special thanks are due to Dnd. Luiza C. dos Santos, author of the overview of the 13 articles and interview, which the readers will encounter in the next section.

Some translation decisions which were applied as a general rule must be made explicit in this Editorial. Various words and expressions were not translated from English,

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[2] Only one paper could not be translated: Rami El Ali's "A new solution to the gamer's dilemma", presented in Philosophy of Computer Games 2014. It had been previously published in a Springer journal and, despite our efforts and the support of the author, the company did not authorize the publication of the Portuguese version without payment of a value above our means.

following common usage in Brazil. We apologize if that creates difficulties to readers from other Portuguese-speaking countries. Other words and expressions were unfolded or aggregated to approximate the final translation of the original text as much as possible. The most frequent case was that of "play", a world which has no direct correspondent in Portuguese. It has always been translated as "jogar" (play games, or sport). Special cases have been explained in footnotes. A similar situation is that of the word "game", which is expanded when translated as "jogo" and restricted to "digital game" when not translated. Variations such as electronic game, computer game and board game were translated.

It is also important to say that, as a safeguard of the uniformity and quality of the special issue, each translated article was revised by a second game studies scholar. After a new round of revision by the first translator, persistent doubts were discussed by the members of the Laboratory of Digital Artefacts in Brazil. Very persistent doubts were redirected to the original authors.

In order to facilitate the work of students and colleagues with these translations, we cared to verify the availability of previous translations of the bibliographic references of all articles. Whenever possible, the original reference was changed to previously published translations: for example, Salen and Zimmerman's Rules of Play, originally published by MIT Press in 2003, has been changed for the Brazilian edition from 2012 (Regras do Jogo, Editora Blucher). Citations were transcribed from the Portuguese edition, with the correct page numbers.

An overview of the articles in this special issue

What follows is a brief presentations of the selected texts included in this special issue of Intexto. Readers will notice that the articles cover a wide range of subjects within game studies, but there are clear connections between them.

The texts of Emil Hammar, Rune Klevjer and Pierre Depaz approach, by different angles, the relation between game and reality - that is, the articles focus on the relationship between the gameworld and the players' world. Emil Hammar starts "Postphenomenological play" with an interesting combination of the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Don Ihde's postphenomenology, from which he proposes a reading of game experiences in terms of their potential to allow us to question the way we live and

attribute meaning to the world of our everyday experience. In the author's article, the game is a technology capable of mediate the world to its players.

In "Representation and virtuality in computer games", Rune Klevier proposes an ontological discussion of real time participatory graphical environments. The author's perspective aims at understanding these computational graphic spaces as non-simulating models, endowed with an ontology of their own, with which interaction becomes possible as they are understood as concrete objects of the real.

The article by Pierre Depaz, "Discussing the world through algorithms: political philosophy in computer simulations", addresses the political aspects of computer simulations, seeking to understand and analyze the roles of the player and of the designer in the production of thoughts and actions. The author situates computer simulations as capable of contributing to philosophical and political thought through their relation to aspects of reality and their specific modes of production and execution.

Players are the focus of the texts by Staffan Björk and Jesper Juul and by Daniel Vella. Staffan Björk and Jesper Juul discuss the unusual idea of non-player games in "Zero-Player Games: -Or: What we talk about when we talk about players", aiming to explore components that can help a more accurate understanding of the player concept.

In "Action as the basis for an aesthetic of ludic subjectivity", Daniel Vella proposes to think of action as a constituent of players' 'self', i.e., of their idea of who they are in a particular gameworld. Based on analyses of the relation between subject and action from a specific set of games, the author develops what he calls the "aesthetic of ludic subjectivity".

The notion of player continues to be discussed in the articles by Rikke Nørgård and Marta Kania, two texts in this collection that explore the specificity of the relationship between player, avatar and game world. Rikke Nørgård relies on Merleau-Ponty, Sheets-Johnstone and Sennet to examine the relationship between players and their avatars having corporality, locomotiveness, and hand skill as key concepts. In the article "The joy of doing: the corporeal connection in player-avatar identity", the author restores the body as central to the research on player-avatar identity and the idea of 'doing' as a basis for pleasure in games with approaches that differ from the first-hand idea.

In the essay "Spirit of Seriousness and Bad Faith. On the Meaning of in-game Life" Marta Kania explores the idea of an "I-avatar" with an analysis of the game "The Vanishing of Ethan Carter.". The "I-avatar" emerges from the entanglement of the perspective of players and their placement in the game with their avatars, as emergent and situated

entities which allow for the production of meaning and interpretation of the individual experience in the context of the game.

Ontology and players experience converge in Olli Leino's article "From Game Spaces to Playable Worlds". The author departs from a critical analysis of what he understands as "paradigm of spatiality" in game studies and continues towards a discussion of the idea of "gameworld".

The articulation between Game Studies and Literary Studies can be seen in the articles by Sebastian Deterding and Tomasz Majkowski. Sebastian Deterding begins "Fiction as Play: Reassessing the Relation of Games, Play, and Fiction" reviews the propositions of several authors and proposes an understanding of play and fiction as subcategories of the act of playing, thus re-evaluating the relationship between both terms. The double articulation of proposed by the author resituates games in relation to other fictional media.

In "Grotesque Realism and Carnality: Bakhtinian Inspirations in Video Game Studies," Tomasz Majkowski proposes a rephrasing of the critique of portraits of human bodies and the interactions between them in digital games. The author analyzes the representation of hypersexualized female bodies and hypermuscular male bodies, as well as the combats of extreme violence and hyperrealistic scenarios as phenomena of carnival aesthetics.

Other articles in this dossier, such as the writings of Dominic Arsenault and Maude Bonenfant, Ivan Mosca and Sebastian Möring, approach directly some core conceptual philosophical issues. Dominic Arsenault and Maude Bonenfant's article, "Poiesis and Imagination in the Aesthetic Experience: The Moment of Grace in Computer Game Play," focuses on the aesthetic character of experiences in games. The departure point sides with John Dewey, from whose work the authors advance to think about aesthetic experience in non-artistic contexts, analyzing the unfolding of aesthetic experiences in a variety of games.

Ivan Mosca's article, "To be AND not to be, that is the Quest. Ontology of rules in computer-based games" discusses what is specific to the structure of a game and points towards a more complex debate within the framework of Game Studies based on the fact that we still lack theoretical tools to analyse non-explicit meanings in games, to which textual analyzes or systems of rules do not suffice.

In "Understanding Single Player Computer Games as Experimental Systems", Sebastian Moring starts from the idea of the capacity of single player games to produce innovation, which leads to an understanding of games as experimental knowledge-

producing systems. Throughout the text the author identifies, presents and discusses four categories in which the capacity for novelty production would be possible.

Finally, the interview with Marcin Blacha addresses previous undertakes of the author, as a Philosophy scholar interested in Whitehead's Philosophy of the Organism as a possibility for the studies of games, as well as his experience in the game industry. The interviewee discusses the rich exchange between the academic field and game producers, his work as Story Director at the prestigious CDProjectRED and the particularity of a Slavic School of game design, among other subjects.

We hope that these translations of selected papers from Philosophy of Computer Games will be inspiring for the Game Studies community of Portuguese-speaking countries.

Enjoy.

Suely Fragoso & Tomasz Majkowski

Editors of the Special Issue

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