Transmedia's Implications of the use of RPG and Wargame as tools to support Vast Narratives of Medieval Fantasy

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Resumo

Surgidos na década de 1970, o *Wargame Chainmail* e o primeiro RPG compartilharam o gênero da fantasia medieval para explorar narrativas interativas. Neste artigo são analisadas as principais vastas narrativas do gênero fantástico medieval envolvendo RPG e *Wargame* e as implicações transmidiáticas das adaptações. Alguns sistemas de regras têm suas mecânicas de jogo discutidas, trazendo base para a experiência do uso do RPG como ferramenta de apoio criativo e de coesão de narrativa no cenário Terras de Shiang. Utilizando regras de RPG e de *Wargame*, o artigo mostra o processo criativo e as implicações transmidiáticas da experiência analisada.

Palavras-Chave: *D&D,* Narrativa Vasta, Terras de Shiang, ReOPS, RPG, *Wargame*.


Abstract

Emerging in the 1970s, the Wargame Chainmail and the first RPG shared the medieval fantasy genre to explore interactive narratives. In this article, we'll analyze the main vast narratives of the medieval fantasy genre involving RPG and Wargames and its transmedia's implications. Some systems of rules have their game mechanics discussed, building the basis for the experience of using the RPG as a tool for creative support and cohesion of narrative in the scenario Shiang's Lands. Using rules of both, RPG and Wargame, this article exposes the creative process and the transmedia's implications of the experience analyzed.

Keywords: D&D, Shiang's Lands, ReOPS, RPG, Vaste Narrative, Wargame.

1 Introduction

In the early 1970s in the U.S.A. were created the first Wargames and RPGs (Role Playing Games) of medieval fantasy. The first 1960's Wargames would use historical references to simulate combat, but that changed with the release of the Wargame "Chainmail" which used a mythology based on medieval fantasy created by Tolkien in his trilogy "The Lord of the Rings" (Tolkien, 1954). There would be the use of mythical beings and races adapted to a game engine, miniatures, board and scenario to simulate combat in a fictional world. Three years after the creation of "Chainmail", in 1974 is released the first RPG using the same fictional elements, but this latest would individualize the characters. With the rules of RPG you could define, through a system of rules, each of the characters who were previously treated as sets. "Dungeons and Dragons" (or simply D&D as it is known) and "Chainmail" were created by Gary Gygax in two partnerships (with Jeff Perren in "Chainmail" and Dave Arneson in D&D) and published by TSR. It opened up possibilities for exploring fictional realities through games (Gygax & Parreno, 1973) (Gygax & Arneson, 1975). Figure 1 shows the cover of the Wargame "Chainmail".

Figure 1 - Cover of the rulebook of the Wargame "Chainmail".
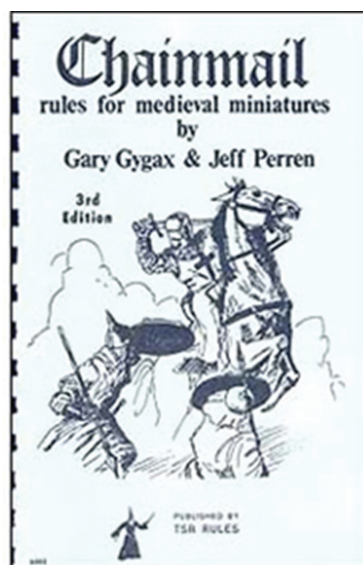
According to the anthropological perspective of Roger Callois (Callois, 1958), four categories can be listed for classification of games:

Agôn: In this category, even if equality among competitors is requested, it cannot be fully met. Either by the characteristics of individual competitors, as muscle strength and skills, endurance and cleverness, or by the rules and conventions that exist in games, a competitor or team will always end up benefited. These imbalances promoted by the rules can be exemplified by statements and observations by the opponent. In the possibility of operating his cleverness, the player can go to a situation already known. As in chess, each move can promote or permit a temporary imbalance, which could even result in the victory.

Alea: In this category randomness and chance appear. It's in the game that man has the opportunity to deal with the reality of random, contingency and improbability; of what is not logical or systematic in the eyes of man. The set of all substances of the game, despite the players having received attention in training and expertise, can escape the circumstances and the domain of man's ability to predictability.

Mimicry: The third category deals with the fictional games in which participants take upon themselves the role of certain characters. It's a way of appropriating another reality different than the one they already own. The mimicry explores the pleasure of playing a role, or at least of going through a character.

Ilinx: In this category the games are associated with a frantic search for a situation that puts the body into exhaustion reaching momentary frenzy, but also a maximum of ecstasy. The Ilinx covers the different varieties of an exaltation which implies a stunning both organic and psychic.

When we analyze "Chainmail" and D&D under this classification, we have the first game focused on strategic thinking, in which the rules are used to simulate combat with basic units of twenty men, with six-sided dice (d6), relating this game strongly to agon (strategic) and alea, and less to mimicry. On the other hand, D&D is a game in which the rules define specific parameters textual and numeric to a single character (marked on the character sheet) and the use of these parameters with dices that have a varied number of sides (four, six, eight, ten, twelve and twenty sides) to resolve combat and other narrative situations, makes this a game related more equitably between mimicry, alea and agon. Figure 2 shows the cover of the rulebook of D&D.

Figure 2 - Cover of the rulebook of D&D RPG, the first American edition (A) and the Brazilian version, the classic "black box", RPG released by Grow (B).
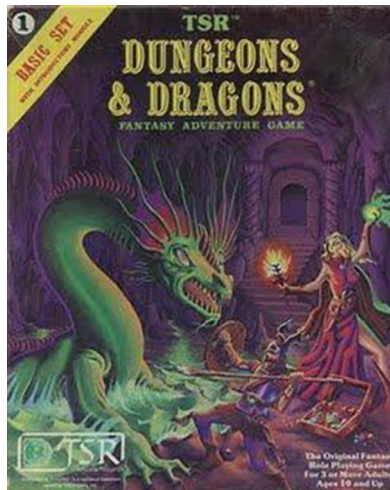
A

B

The game D&D introduced two new concepts, the first being his introduction of the notion of Dungeon Master (or DM) which acts as judge and narrator and is responsible for maintaining the fictional scenario of the game, applying the rules at each situation as described. The second new concept is the one of evolution of the character. After the players embark on an imaginary adventure in which they face monsters, gather treasure, interact and gain experience points, those are used to evolve the character, making it more powerful as the game progresses within a campaign. A 'campaign' is a series of adventures or scenarios, usually using the same characters and players, and using the same system of rules (Masters, 1994). Uniquely, this game proved to be an activity that unites the narrative and the playful in an intrinsic way.

D&D opened the doors for a genre in which it was possible to explore different realities, historical or fictional. In the years following the launch of D&D (1975) many RPGs with different historic and fictional thematics began to emerge, like "En Garde!", set in 18th century France (Hanny & Chadwick, 1975), "Boot Hill" set in the old American West (Gygax & Blume, 1975) and "Empire of the Petal Throne" set in a complex fictional world (Barker, 1975). Currently there are over one thousand titles of RPG (Andrade & Godoy, 2004). However, since its release, D&D dominated the American industry of RPG. In 1977, the game was divided into two versions: The simplest, called "Dungeons & Dragons", and the more complex one, "Advanced Dungeons & Dragons", abbreviated as AD&D (Gygax, 1979).

The 1980s and 1990s brought to the market a large number of RPGs and D&D and AD&D began to share the public more equitably. Figure 3 shows the cover of the AD&D second edition (Cook, 1989). In 1999, TSR was sold to the company Wizards of

the Coast, which reissued in the following year the first of all RPGs to a new version.

Figure 3 - Cover of the second edition of AD&D.

In 2000, the simpler version was discontinued and the complex version was renamed "Dungeons & Dragons 3rd Edition". In July 2003 is released "Dungeons & Dragons v3.5", version known as D&D 3.5 (Cook et al, 2003). With the exception of the 4th Edition (the current one, launched in 2008), the D&D has evolved in three decades its game engines (to the D&D 3.5), allowing a better balance between different types of characters, which may vary in race and class. The developments made the game more closely related to the agon (strategic) and mimicry, reducing the relationship with alea. Figure 4 shows the cover of D&D 3.5.

Figure 4 - Cover of the RPG D&D 3.5.
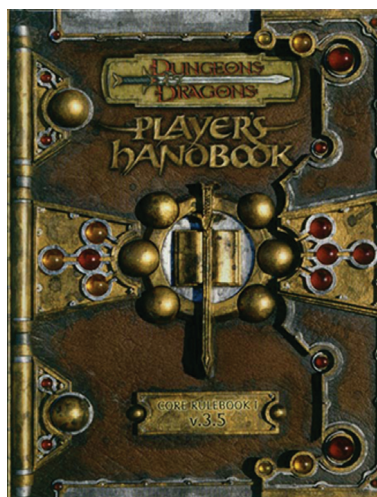
Since its creation, medieval fantasy worlds were made to be explored with the rules of D&D, some of which explored the transmedia, that is, the exploration of the scenario in other media such as literature, comics and games in a unique way. One example of this is the "Forgotten Realms" scenario, initially created in literary

form for children in the late 1960s by Ed Greenwood. In the 1980s, the author wrote several articles for a magazine specialized in RPG[1], which culminated in the creation of an RPG book in 1987 (Greenwood & Grubb, 1987). The RPG has opened space for transmedia exploration of novels, comics and adaptations to computer RPGs (which include titles such as "Eye of the Beholder" series, "Baldur's Gate" and "Neverwinter Nights") creating a vast narrative of this scenario. In the 1980s a highly successful adaptation for animation, Dungeons & Dragons, leads a group of youths of our world to a classical world of medieval fantasy.

The relationship of the medieval fantasy RPGs with Wargames had a new binding in the early 2000s. Concurrent with the release of 3rd Edition D&D, "Chainmail" Wargame was relaunched. Taking advantage of some rules of D&D 3.5, the new miniatures game hit the market still tied to some rules of the traditional miniatures games, such as using measuring tape to mark the distance (current games use maps with determined areas - as squares or hexagons - which facilitates the application of the rules). Despite some innovations, such as the use of rules of engagement for smaller groups, "Chainmail" was not a hit, but opened the market for this genre of game.

The release of D&D 3.5 innovated the use of miniatures in order to mark the placement of characters on the map. Due to the wide public acceptance a Wargame called "D&D Miniatures" was released. Their battles are made of character against character, where each has a miniature to be placed on the board, an illustrated card, containing the game data in one of its sides and the information about the RPG on the back. Through this new system, there was the possibility of direct integration between the Wargame and RPG.

The experience of using RPG and Wargame for transmedia products has been explored in the scenario "Shiang's Lands", a fantasy world, where there are no human and the predominant races evolved from apes, tigers and lizards. The technological evolution is close to the medieval times and the elements of the scenario are closer to the Eastern cultures (with emphasis on Japanese and Chinese). The world of "Shiang's Lands" was created in 1993 using the AD&D system (second edition) and was adapted to a system of general rules, called "OPERA RPG"[2] at the time. The rule system has evolved along with the scenery, being published in 2004 in its 6th version (Andrade & Godoy, 2004). Nowadays the system is in its 8th version, and was relaunched with the name "ReOPS"[3] (Andrade & Godoy, 2010).

Currently a vast campaign is running on "Shiang's Lands" scenario with the

1 "Dragon Magazine", published by TSR, from 1976 to 2007.
2 It is said that a generic system is one that can be adapted to any type of scenario, historical or fictional.
3 <http://www.rpgopera.tk>

help of RPG in the construction and cohesion of the narrative, including the triggering of an epic battle, runned by the rules of the Wargame, which its results directly intervened in the RPG campaign and history of the world itself. Through this experience, the transmedia creation within the scenario will be addressed, discussing the creation of vast narratives in the second topic; the game mechanics of RPG and Wargame in the third topic; the creation using the RPG scenario "Shiang's Lands" and its transmedia's implications on the fourth topic and finally, the conclusions on the fifth topic.

2 Medieval Fantasy's RPGs and Vast Narratives

Contemporary to D&D, a medieval fantasy world that did not use Tolkien's elements was released, and although it never achieved the success of D&D, it has an important historical role. The RPG was called "Empire of the Petal Throne" (Barker, 1975) and it was created by a university professor and linguist M. A. R. Barker. The world of this RPG, the fictional Tékumel, was created in the 1940s. Through the study of languages like Urdu, Pushtu and Mayan, the Tsolyáni language was created in the 1950s with grammar guides and dictionaries (Barker, 1950). This language is spoken in the world's largest continent and due to its complexity, can be compared to Tolkien's world. Figure 5 shows the cover of the basic box of this RPG.

Figure 5 - Cover of the box of "Empire of the Petal Throne".

The world of Tékumel brought a level of detail and quality to their campaign which was unknown at the commencement of the RPG industry, with less emphasis on combat tactics inherited from Wargame. Because of support issues in TSR, Barker left the company and continued publishing the RPG until the present day, including:

- "Swords & Glory", published in 1983/4 in two volumes;

- "Gardasival: Adventures in Tékumel", published in 1994;

- "Tékumel: Empire of the Petal Throne", published in 2004.

In terms of scenery, Tékumel has much greater detail than other worlds of D&D. Barker detailed gods, religions, rituals, government, clothing, customs, habits, and more importantly, the languages were established for each nation on the planet. And these elements did not come from a Westernized medieval world. Barker took his experiences with India and Asia to create an extremely unprecedented culture and totally different from what the roleplayers are used to, as they are familiar with medieval fantasy-influenced Tolkien. "Empire of the Petal Throne" is a game in which the system and settings work together to produce a world where the characters are tied to the power structure - religiously and politically - and the decisions of these powers serve as background to the campaigns. Unlike most D&D scenarios, where players faced monsters, in Tékumel they face Tsemels (warrior-cardinal), leading a holy war against heretics neighbors.

Following the publication of the first RPG set in Tékumel, Barker went on to coordinate RPG campaigns with Game Masters spread all over the North American continent, and this made it possible that his fictional universe could expand in a unique way. From 1984 onward, novels setted in Tékumel were published, expanding its vast narrative - in total there were five, the last being in 2004. In this scenario, the role of mimicry has been highlighted in relation to agon and alea, a trend that was followed in later decades by some RPG scenarios.

In the 1970s the publisher Chaosium was founded and it was responsible from them on for titles that prized the narrative more deeply into the possibilities of representation. Creating a system of simple rules based on percentages[4], the production of RPGs from Chaosium drew attention to the wealth of detail present in the narratives and descriptions of their titles. Figure 6 shows the cover of the manual of "Basic Role-Playing".

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4 Generic system of rules called "Basic Role Playing", originally published by Chaosium in 1980 and reissued in 1981, 2002 and 2008.

Figure 6 - Cover of "Basic Role-Playing".

In his first title, the RPG "RuneQuest" (Perrin & Stanfford, 1978) is set in the mythical world of Glorantha. An extremely rich fantasy setting which contains mythology, theology, among others. It houses narratives in different media such as comics, Wargames, RPGs, video games, novels and so on. The universe is greatly influenced by the work of Joseph Campbell[5] and this is used as the basis for many myths. Because of this universe, whose expansion happens in various media, Glorantha provided to the RPG "RuneQuest" an extremely immersive environment, bringing several tools that contribute to an unique experience for players. Due to all those media, the RPG "RuneQuest" is historically considered the second most played RPG of the market (Maranca, 2001). Figure 7 shows the cover of the "RuneQuest" RPG.

Figure 7 - Cover of the "RuneQuest" RPG.

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5 There are a great number of books by Joseph Campbell, a scholar of mythic narratology. His best known work is entitled "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" and it was published in the 1950s (Campbell, 1992). In this work, Campbell defines the 'hero's journey', a basic narrative structure present in most epic stories.

The "Stormbringer" RPG (Andre & Perrin, 1981) is set in a medieval scenario of dark fantasy created by Michael Moorcock, in the series of novels about Elric of Melnilboné. This RPG, created around the albino former emperor Elric of Melnilboné, has several mediatics bifurcations, ranging from comic books, movies, music and novels. In transmedia universe, the RPG does not work as a tool of narrative construction, but as a complement to the scenery created. Immersion in this narrative is guided in the use of all media content. The basis for this story is rooted in the character of RPG Elric of Melnilboné, former emperor of a civilization, which has the ability to summon supernatural beings and has the sword Stormbringer, which gives name to the RPG. The sword gives strength and health, however it must be powered by souls. Campaigns can rely on the stories of doom that the protagonist brought to their civilization with the use of his sword, or even in the rich fantasy scenario whose influence comes from Bertolt Brecht to the mythology of Tolkien, among other great names. Figure 8 shows the cover of "Stormbringer" RPG.

Figure 8 - Cover of RPG "Stormbringer".

In the RPG "King Arthur Pendragon", also known as Pendragon (Stanfford, 1985) the setting is medieval historic fantasy with a small fantastic intervention (where there is the use of magic - but more discreetly than in other scenarios alike). This game's main motto are stories experienced in the context of King Arthur, based on the result of over ten years of study of that period, providing a narrative construction that uses of tragic aspects, conflicts and some cooperativism of the historical period in which it passes. The thematic also suggests fantastic facts rooted in myths or issues related to religion, paganism, etc. As the narrative is contextualized in legends as the Holy Grail, or other various myths of the Dark Ages, it opens a very extensive range of external references that can be used to enhance the campaign. Despite the fact that the Pendragon

RPG does not have a vast media extension, the RPG has served as a means of research, in which players follow a campaign referring to events of the time, enriched by the game system (Harrigan & Wardrip-Fruin, 2009). The narrative becomes concise through relatively common conflicts over the period, for example, the campaigns can lasts for years and there is the question of the character's death causing the player to assume his heir, bringing a singular continuity to the campaign. Pendragon is a RPG that features an immersive experience very interesting, providing education through these conflicts of a world full of idealism, tragedy and legends about immortality. Figure 9 shows the cover of this RPG.

Figure 9 - Cover of the RPG Pendragon.

Looking at the examples, we note that narrative of RPG differs from traditional narrative of literature and film because they provide a single focus of characters to make your story move forward. RPG campaigns are built without a main character, being able to accommodate multiple protagonists. The variability of characters has direct implications on the choice of the game mechanics. There are several examples of D&D scenarios that excel fantasy over realism. In the Pendragon RPG, we have a more realistic and less fantastic scenario. An analysis of some rules systems of RPG will be presented in the next topic.

3 Game Mechanics
3.1 RPG

The mathematization of reality through a game mechanic gives narrative cohesion to the RPG and enables the equating of characters and situations presents in the scenario, even in fantastic worlds, such as the settings of D&D. The mathematization leads to models that allow a simulation within the reality of the scenario, which can

be explored with characters permitted by the game mechanics. To understand its importance we will see the evolution of the rules from the first edition of D&D to its third edition, and also discuss the system of rules of other RPGs such as the "Basic Role-Playing" and "ReOPS", whose cover is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10 - Cover of "ReOPS".

In its first edition, D&D utilizes mainly stereotypes and archetypes to create characters, even though all of them, the main as well as the supporting cast, share certain parameters such as:

- Attributes:

> In DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, six skills are used to define a character: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution and Charisma. Strength defines physical power. Intelligence measures the speed of learning and reasoning. Wisdom indicates the level of common sense of the character. Dexterity is speed and agility. Constitution refers to the health of character and Charisma determines how much a character can be handsome and friendly, in the opinion of others.
> The skill points are determined by throwing 3d6, so they vary between 3 and 18. The higher the points, the better the character in that skill. For example, a character with Strength 3 is extremely weak, while another that has Strength 18 is very strong. (GYGAX, 1979, p. 4).

- Hit Points: they define how much damage the character can take before passing out or dying.
- Alignment: in D&D, there are three alignments: Lawful, Chaotic and Neutral. Every character or monster behaves according to one of these alignments.

Each class (as are called the archetypes in D&D) has its own specifications and choosing a pre-determined class, the player chooses therefore these singularities.

In this first edition of D&D we have eight main archetypes for player characters: Warrior, Cleric, Mage, Thief, Dwarf, Elf and Halfling. The separation of these classes includes not only the skills and abilities as well as the character's race.

Each class has a table of progression, its own evolution, powers (as the spell for Mages, divine powers to the Clerics) and specific skills. Besides the number of hit points that are set by the roll of a dice.

The first system of rules of D&D is simple, and it was the basis not only for the evolution of its own mechanics as for the evolution of the whole RPG in general.

Some years after the launch of the first edition came its development, "Advanced Dungeons & Dragons" or AD&D. With a more complex system and more rules that were designed to meet the need for a game more entertaining. Its game mechanics became thicker, enabling the development of various supplements with plenty of ambiance content in relation to classic fantasy such as: further description of the classes and resources, development of more creatures, more spells and the creation of entire fantasy scenarios.

The main changes of AD&D with respect to the first edition of D&D was the depth of gameplay and the launch of various supplements.

The alignment of D&D became a trend and was expanded. In AD&D the moral orientation of the character is built through the combination of the concepts: Good, Evil, Neutral, Lawful and Chaotic.

The emergence of AD&D brings a separation in the archetypes. In this edition, the class does not define the race of the character, it is chosen separately, thus increasing the possibilities of characters. The races presented in the AD&D are: human, elf, dwarf, halfling, half-elf and gnome. While the character classes are subdivided into: Warrior (which is subdivided into Fighter, Ranger and Paladin), Wizards (which is subdivided into Mage and Specialist), Rogue (which is subdivided into Thief and Bard) and the Priest (which subdivided into Druid and Cleric). In addition to being able to combine two or more classes, which increased the possibilities of archetypes.

With the advent of the third edition, AD&D went back to being called D&D. This new version comes with a different and current guise, bringing many differences and improvements compared to their older versions.

The changes in the rules were not limited only to details, but also affected the structure. The great advantage of the new version is a game system called "D20" that became open causing many generic AD&D systems to disappear.

The system of attributes and skills was simplified and improved, there was the introduction of the half-orc as a race. There aren't any more subdivisions in character

classes, different from the second edition (AD&D), these classes over the course of their levels acquire special skills that make them unique, whereas before the differences are summarized in just a few skills, at the points of life and in other small details. The classes of the third edition of D&D are: Fighter, Bard, Barbarian, Monk, Wizard, Druid, Sorcerer, Rogue, Ranger, Paladin and Cleric. There was the creation of some prestige classes that are archetypes that the characters can get in the game after some experience in order to make the character more unique. The evolution of the skill system, better description of the items and weapons, among other improvements.

It seems natural that the third edition of D&D would be an evolution of its predecessors, however there were many RPG systems that failed to improve their game mechanics, so they came to losing players and its market share (Rosson, 2011). "Dungeons & Dragons" until version 3.5, is a good example in terms of evolution of the system.

Another important rule system that allows us to explore the world of medieval fantasy system is the "Basic Role-Playing". It was developed from a set of attributes similar to "Dungeons & Dragons". It uses the following attributes: Size, Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Power and Appearance (or Charisma). The hit points are dependent on the average size and the constitution of each character becoming partly static and not following the evolution of the character as in other systems. It was then possible to develop a system especially designed for simulation.

An important point of their differentiation in relation to other mechanisms is that the system of "Basic Role-Playing" is based on percentage, so it uses a dice of one hundred faces (or two ten-sided dices) instead of a dice set each, with a number of different faces (dices of: four, six, eight, ten, twelve and twenty faces) as used in D&D. This system simplifies the gameplay, but without reducing its effectiveness for most cases of simulation.

The percentage is generally used for both skills and character development simulating the path travelled to fully develop a skill, creating a learning curve.

The combat system is differentiated because it allows a number of defenses. In D&D the defenses were generally equal and did not directly dependent on the decision of the player. In "Basic Role-Playing" defenses and attacks were more strongly linked to interpretive and narratives decisions and less fixed in the game mechanics.

Another important element of "Basic Role-Playing" rules is the fact that there are no different rules for character and skills creation of heroes, supporting characters, monsters or enemies. By varying the values of the skills, the same system is used for both the hero and the villain. This system quickly encouraged players to create a wide

variety of non-human characters and the scenarios became increasingly pluralistic.

The different systems have their particular rules and simulate the reality of the game in different ways. In game terms, each group of players will decide which system to use based on many factors such as fun, availability, rules, degree of simulation, scenarios available, among many others. In the case of using the RPG as a tool for vast narratives there are other considerations, such as using the same system of rules to maintain the cohesion and choose the most suitable system for the adaptation of the narrative is of paramount importance. It is in this context that appears the importance of generic rule systems that allow basically any story to be adapted and simulated through their rules.

The "ReOPS" is an example of a generic rule system that allows basically any scenario to be adapted to its gameplay. It was designed after analyzing other systems of rules so that previous experiments were considered in the attempt of stepping forward to create a system that encompasses any creature, hero, mythological being so these could coexist and interact in a balanced way.

This system uses mainly a triadic separation (Physical and Mental, and in appropriate scenarios, Magic), rules that define the psychology of characters and rules for adjusting the randomness.

Thus, one can provide from a realistic approach to the heroic, through several intermediate steps, all to ensure that the style of play is "absorbed" by the system of rules.

Some of the scenarios adapted to "ReOPS" are[6]: "O Mais Longo dos Dias", based on World War II, more specifically on the Operation Overlord (the landing of Allied troops in Normandy to the liberation of France); "StarCraft", scenarios based on an electronic game of the same name; and "Saint Seiya", based on the animated series "Knights of the Zodiac". These are examples of how this RPG system can satisfactorily adjust to its gameplay the most varied narratives, whether it stemmed from games, movies, literature, comics, etc.
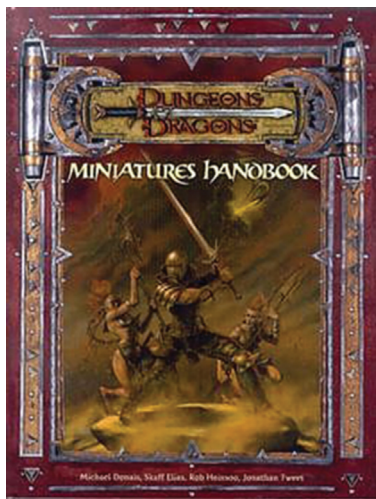
3.2 Wargame

When battles involving a large number of characters are necessary for the narrative, the mechanics of the RPG game can be somewhat fault. At this time the Wargame becomes a better resolution, because it works in its essence with battles between multiple characters, with battalions, armies, among others and has a direct

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6 The scenarios mentioned and many others can be obtained in <http://www.rpgopera.tk>, in the section "downloads/ cenários".

connection with the RPGs. Among the main Wargames, we will mention the game mechanics of three of them: "Chainmail", "D&D Miniatures" and "Jogo de Miniaturas Terras de Shiang". The cover of the rulebook of "D&D Miniatures" can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11 - Cover of the rulebook of Wargame "D&D Miniatures".

The Wargames generally make use of a board (the field where the battle will unfold), miniatures that represent the fighters and rules for regulating combat. Figure 12 shows a character sheet and a miniature of the game "D&D Miniatures".

Figure 12 - Character sheet (A) and miniature from the Wargame "D&D Miniatures" (B).

A   B

The first medieval fantasy Wargame is "Chainmail" and it brings several innovations such as: Each miniature represents a number of fighters, rather than just one

(twenty fighters in general), a measuring tape is used to calculate the distance between the units and the six-faced dice to ensure randomness. As a precursor, "Chainmail" has been vitally important as the basis for the evolution of medieval fantasy Wargames, having a balanced randomness, but with some problems in its gameplay.

Concurrent with the launch of D&D 3.5 was released the "D&D Miniatures" Wargame with a great improvement compared to its predecessors. It uses squares instead of the measuring tape to calculate distances, optimizing the playing time, but creating problems, since the square has four sides and doesn't meet the freedom of movement that later the use of the hexagon will contemplate. It is the first to apply the individualization of each miniature including the use of sheets to describe their characteristics, making a direct connection between the D&D RPG and Wargame. In addition to contributing in setting up their new game mechanics, the "D&D Miniatures" also contributed to the popularization of Wargame directly.

In this context the "Jogo de Miniaturas Terras de Shiang" is born, which relies on the "ReOPS" system of rules for its construction. In its conception, the miniatures game was designed so that its gameplay were simple, fast and easy to understand. Its randomness is less than their counterparts, first due to the use of two six-sided dice instead of one with twenty faces (used in "D&D Miniatures") and also because its system privileges strategy. The use of the hexagon is an advantage itself, because it enables effects like explosions and spells to propagate in an almost round wave, something that the square does not meet. Each face of the hexagon best represents the orientation of the miniature that can be facing any of the six directions.

The correct use of the game mechanics is essential for the success or disaster of a vast narrative that uses its rules as a support, since such system should bring cohesion and balance to the narrative and should not interfere with its progression. A right choice will bring the security to create almost any scenario imagined.

4 Transmedia Exploration in "Shiang's Lands"
4.1 Creating and using RPG and Literary Narrative

The scenario "Shiang's Lands" began to be developed as part of a RPG world, but it was detached of it (earning its own literary history) and has evolved into campaigns, initiated in 1994 to the present day.

The scenario began as an island present in a classic medieval fantasy world, inhabited by races of apes and tireses (humanoids evolved from monkeys and tigers, respectively), yet insulated from contact with other races present in the world. Among

the possible classes in its first version of 1993 that used the AD&D system, there were tireses characters: Sacred Weapon warriors, Traveling Mages-warriors and rogues. And for apes characters, the possible classes were Warrior, Archer and Monk of the Elements.

In particular, the island attracted a lot of attention from the creator that he decided to separate it from the rest of the world and extend it into a continent giving it a new history. In 1994, the "OPERA RPG" system began to be develop and nowadays it is used to ambience games narrated in the scenario "Shiang's Lands". This new world was defined by having a slightly lower gravity than Earth, bathed by a red sun with no seasons. A world where the plants can reach dozens of meters and also the insects and arachnids can grow to gigantic proportions. Giant lizards and very strong mammals coexist in this hostile world, causing the humanoids to team together to increase their chances of survival.

The literary history of "Shiang's Lands" has been developed since 4000 years before the ground zero[7], passing by the Great War that involved people of all races inhabiting the great continent, and advanced to about 700 years later, when the vast majority of tireses and about half apes were living in cities and under a general government. Other races were added to the scenario, as the lantros (humanoid lizard people that has more advanced technology than the apes and the tireses) and the banques (humanoid amphibian people). The lantros got into conflict around the year 70 with the tireses that inhabited the plains and the apes that lived in the forest. The conflict happened because of the lantros's expansionist policies of territories. After several defeats by weapons, spells and tactics, apes and tireses decided to unite against the common enemy.

The Great War was unleashed for more than a decade with many twists involving magic. Finally, desperate lantro magicians made a big mistake using magic, which brought a powerful and evil being to Shiang's Lands. The dragon D'rask ends up doing a deal with the lantros, but he was killed by the hands of apes and tireses. His death happened in the terrestrial dimension, but the spirit of the resentful creature began to inhabit a dimension, in which indirectly had contact with the terrestrial dimension. After the defeat of D'rask, the lantros were cornered, and it is believed that another magic error took the lantros away from the earth dimension.

After the war, the apes started to live in fortresses and the tireses, cities. While the apes performed trades on an exchange basis, the tireses began to use metal as currency. Around the year 400, a commercial guild dominated the guilds of other cities

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7 As the calendar of the current scenario was created by the tireses, the ground zero is the construction of a gigantic bridge made of wood, an architectural work that brought together two villages previously separate by a large river, which led to the foundation of the tirese city of the Middle.

and the tireses began to be organized into a kingdom. Unfortunately, the tireses were too ambitious rulers and the intrigues and misuse of power made the tirese people to weaken as a nation.

Meanwhile, the spirit of Dras'k united to the spirits of lantros wizards that wanted revenge against the apes and tireses, managed to cross the intermediate dimension between their habitat and the terrestrial dimension and created a magical plague that affected the waters of the River of Life, extensive river that crosses the forest and the plains. Each race suspected of the other and almost started a war between the two people, but the intervention of the entity that was thought extinct (composed of apes and tireses) showed the true to the rulers of both nations. The Summit, which is responsible for the expulsion of the lantros, showed using its magic the intervention of enemies that exist in other dimensions. Despite the fact that the population was not informed, the war was forgotten.

Parts of the apes tribes started to inhabit the fortresses by joining their cultures around the elements. Other tribes less morally advanced and with cults geared to the Gods and Deities evil, continued with nomadic habits into the great forest which occupies about a quarter of the largest continent's territory.

In the decade of 560, a magic performed by spirits of lantros mages, created a boby for an abyss creature from a mass of dead bodys. The creature was inhabited by evil spirits. The deformed beast became known as Aberration and terrorized the tirese city of the Middle. Eight decades later, an Aberration scares the apes population of the fortress of the Dawn. Both of these monstrosities were destroyed by local heroes.

The tireses started to worship the storms after a long period of drought and the Thunder-God began to act in the earth dimension through his heralds, the Travellers, who often stood against their governors.

At this point the literary history of the scenario ends. The next 200 years of the world's history now relies on the support of the RPG as a tool to the creation and cohesion, such as the RPG Pendragon mentioned in the second topic.

4.2 Evolution of the Rules along with the Narrative

The literary narrative of "Shiang's Lands" was completed in 1995, when the first games began to be realized, already with the system "OPERA RPG". At that time the system was in its second version with the basic mechanics and magic defined, and it allowed players to do campaigns with characters both apes and tireses, being permitted the classes mentioned in subsection 4.1. Within the game mechanics of "OPERA RPG",

the classes began to be called archetypes. The cover of "OPERA RPG" can be seen in Figure 13.

Figure 13 - Cover of the basic module of "OPERA RPG".
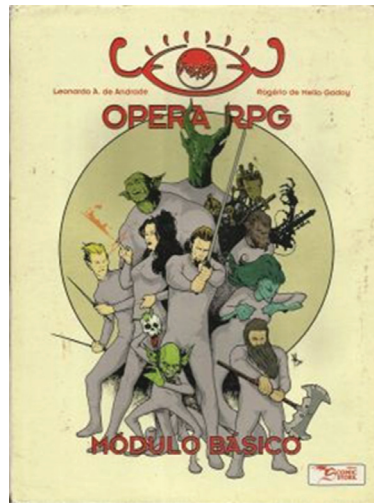
Before the first campaign to take place, about fifteen adventures of RPG were performed with characters apes and tireses, but independently. The ape heroes faced giant snakes and insects, while the tirese heroes fought against gladiators (fighters trained and paid by the Kingdom of Shadows).

The first RPG campaign was held in the tirese city of Rocks, capital of the Kingdom of Shadows, in the tirese year of 690 and it involved a Sacred Weapon character, two Travellers and a Rogue against a tirese family of great power in the city, which used magical knowledge learned from the lantros's scrolls of the Great War. Using the magic of fire, the Yamada family controlled a large number of gladiators characters and aimed to capture apes to put in the arena of the city of Wind. The politics aimed to entertain the tirese people and to promote the betting market. With the promotion of interaction between an ape warrior hero and the tirese people, several battles were fought with gladiators and Shadow mages. The closing of the campaign had two dead characters (the Rogue and a Traveller), but the action prevented a disagreement with the apes, which was the pursuit conceived for this campaign.

In 1997, "OPERA RPG" in its third version incorporates rules for psychological profiling, psychic powers and the first version of martial arts. This became the archetypes of characters with boundaries of conduct, with implications within the gameplay which allowed defining codes of honor for the characters to follow. Furthermore, the inclusion of psychic powers brought the possibility of defining spirit characters. Finally, following the suggestion of the players of the first campaign themselves, martial arts were created in the scenario based on animals of the fauna of the world. The black snake (giant and treacherous reptile) and the godo (docile bipedal mammal, very

strong and with a powerful kick) were chosen as the initial martial arts styles for tirese characters. Another new tirese character archetype was created, the Guardian of the Sacred Temple that can specialize in warrior or archer.

For introducing this archetype, we created a campaign of three mini adventures with characters that lived in a temple built with stones in the city of Waters. During the largest known storm of Shiang's Lands, those characters who were trained with the naginata spear and with the bow, helped the younger and older population to take shelter in the temple, which in a mystical way, resisted the action of nature. As a kind of divinity, the Sacred Temples began to be worshiped by the locals and soon began to be replicated in other tirese cities.

To the ape characters were created two new archetypes, the Scouts, who specialize in tracking and surveillance, and the Spearmen, a special type of soldier very important in fighting against the beasts that inhabit the forests. To differentiate these two archetypes of the Warrior, this archetype has come to be treated as a special force soldier, while the Scout and the Spearmen would be most basic training soldiers.

The second major campaign of "Shiang's Lands" happened in the year 720, with two categories of campaigns (one with the apes and the other with the tireses) taking place interconnections between the narratives. All the archetypes were explored and the campaign focused on an action promoted by the inhabitants of the inferior dimensions, especially lantros mages who were plotting the creation of the largest Aberration ever invoked. This game had mages of the Summit (created narratively and with a character sheet), one of which was delivered to an experienced player, which showed the limits of the system of magic. The first group of characters consisting of apes, had as its mission to prevent the invocation of that monster. The apes had contact with spirits who warned of the chaos that would be promoted by the creature, but the players of this narrative focus were unable to prevent it. The second group of players, investigating the mysterious disappearance of animals and creatures in the city of Valley ended up joining the surviving apes against the giant monster, Aberration known as the 'Ten-Eyed Horror'. The monster, a floating tentacular orb, slaughtered most of the apes and tireses heroes involved, including the mage of the Summit. The only survivor was an ape warrior hero who fought with a magic weapon borrowed by the Summit. This character, in the future, gave rise to the archetype Mercenary (tirese or ape trained in combat, which fights on behalf of the Summit with the help of magical artifacts or magic).

Analyzing the experience of the second campaign, we created characters very different from humans that used to have some problems to their representation within

the "OPERA RPG" system (such as the Aberration). This problem was also found in other genres explored in campaigns with different scenarios (especially involving super creatures). This promoted the first version of the rules for super creatures and nonhuman characters in the fourth version of "OPERA RPG" system in 1998.

The next change in the history of the scenario was the introduction of the Emperor Shiang, a deity that incarnates on the earth dimension to prevent a war against the apes and to oppose to the Shadows. Until then, the RPG was called by "Oriental Adventures" and it was renamed "Shiang's Lands" with the introduction of this fact in its history.

In the next stories series, there were profound changes in the scenario. A new race, coming from another dimension and with great magical powers, came to inhabit Shiang's Lands. The Cyclops, beings more morally evolved and with a strange appearance, came into contact with the apes and tireses. The former Shadows rulers made an agreement in which magic gems were exchanged for knowledge, which was misused by the new mages causing madness and destruction of some of their own people. It was created at this time more styles of martial art for tirese characters (Night Bird and Krondai's Embrace). To the ape characters, the archetypal Gunner was added, an ape that uses the crossbow, a weapon of simian origin fired by trigger.

With a dozen of games, the third campaign put in contact tireses and apes heroes with some of the kings of Shadows that learned spells of manipulation of the body, mind and to get in contact with spirits. The rules of magic were revised and the Shadows mages, for the first time, carried magic items causing unexpected results (such as the death of several characters). At that time emerged the idea to let characters that could not complete their missions in life, to represent spirits in the campaign (until their goals were met). Within the possible archetypes, the Ecclesiastical Guardians (mages) were included, worshiping the Sacred Temple.

The third campaign started in 793 (year of the coming of the Emperor), when several heroes fought against the Shadows kings, in combats involving Shadows fighters, mages and some Shadows kings. This resulted in combats between characters present in the earth dimension and characters with the psychic power of astral projection and spirits. At the beginning of the campaign, there were six Shadows kings with magical knowledge and each had created an item capable of opening portals to a dimension. The heroes were able to eliminate three of these, but the others escaped. This campaign counted with the Summit again with the mages being played by experienced players. This experience allowed to successfully test the system of magic. As the bell-portals were very dangerous, later campaigns end up involving the holders of these fearsome items.

The fifth version of the "OPERA RPG" system of 2000 allowed the creation of all kinds of characters. This allowed a fourth campaign in the tirese year of 72, during the Great War. At that time, the rules already differentiated races with physical and psychic characteristics of apes, tireses, lantros, banques and cyclops, in addition to the character archetypes. In this campaign the enemies of the players were the lantro army and the apes and tireses heroes characters had inferior armorial, but were in greater numbers. This campaign brought the need for a new archetype, the Shaman, a type of mage that has spiritual powers and over animals. This archetype was incorporated into the history of the world and has existed only for ape characters. Historically, the tireses lost their connection with animals and spirits after the Great War. The Shamans were created with spells that affected animals, fact that tipped several battles in favor of apes and tireses.

The fifth campaign was played exclusively by ape characters that faced the banques allied with giant insects. Passed in the year 791 (just before the coming of Shiang), in this campaign the banques used his magical shamanic knowledge combined with artefacts and weapons from the lantros and the power of giant insects. During the campaign there was the first appearance of the Animal God who brought advice and tactics to apes (it was a huge lizard, named Rorag). This campaign was the first in which miniatures were used in a hexagonal map to determine positions in combat, but it utilized the rules of the RPG.

The next series of stories featured the first versions sheets of the Emperor Shiang (which has seven copies in the terrestrial dimension and another as God) and the competitors played with experienced heroes with great skill in battle, in order to destroy the Shadows kings. Begun in 800, the highlight was in the character Sacred Weapon that received from Shiang the power to make the weapon go back to his hands. The success of the archetype was such that at the insistence of some players, tireses began to train apes to be able to access it. An adventure in which the players interpreted the Sacred Weapon tireses and the apes in training, there was a disagreement (based on cultural causes - apes are herbivores, and refused to eat meat). This fact brought the end of the connection between the Sacred Weapon clan and the Emperor (formerly, the code of honor of the Sacred Weapon was devotion to the Emperor, so they began to direct their worship to the tirese people). This led to the emergence of a new class of characters, the Lethal Blades. Trained by Emperor Shiang over six years, the warriors at the moment of their graduation received, as a present, a magical blade to fight the Shadows.

Begun in 814 and ended in 818, the sixth campaign was quite long. A Shadow

king who had deformed his body in order to become a monstrosity made improper use of a bell-portal and ended up trapped in another dimension. This fact caused the need to create a map of all the dimensions above and below the terrestrial dimension, and of spells that can connect these dimensions. It was established three dimensions below: Affliction (home of D'rask and lantros mages), Darkness (home of Shadows kings and mages) and Ashes (home of old evil Gods and spirits that have not fulfilled their mission in life) and a higher (home to the Gods and Deities of good character).

A race to obtain magical gems started (the Emperor, the Summit and the Shadows needed them for magic items), which made the limits of the territory to be explored. The first sheets of apes cultists as enemies were created in this campaign. At the end of it, the three bell-portals had been destroyed, but the Shadows kings were able to plant a cursed legacy on volumes in which are described magics in the language of the lantros, to control the body, causing pain, besides rituals for creating magic items and invocation of Aberrations. In an adventure in which players must recover a magic item stolen, they stumbled upon a powerful magical ritual that was interrupted so desperate that led to the coming of a Shadow king to the terrestrial dimension. Surprisingly, the only character who was not terrified at the sight of the monster managed with a great hit (caused by chance in the dice's randomness) to eliminate the creature. This character that after this adventure became a figurant, assuming the post of Shogun.

Also in this campaign, Shadows mages using the tomes of knowledge created two more bell-portals capable of opening portals between the same dimensions and between others ones. In particular we can mention an adventure with a bell-portal in which five heroes and one of the Lethal Blades were stuck to the dimention of the Ashes, a unusual ending ever for the Game Master.

The first publication of the "OPERA RPG" happened in 2004 (Andrade & Godoy, 2004), in its sixth version of the system. Fine adjustments of costs and power were made in relation to the previous version and the rules of magic were optimized for the scenario. The first sheets of Animal Gods were made also during this period.

The eighth campaign started in the year 901, with the introduction of two tirese character archetypes, the first being the Server, a type of cleric that deals with spirits, and the second a fighter named Tigers Claw, fighting style created by Emperor Shiang. This campaign was the longest so far, with about thirty adventures. Its story happened in a time of transition, because when Shiang took over as Emperor, allowed that for three generations the families of great power in the cities ruled as Shoguns and Daimyo. In the year 901 in the city of Rocks, the Shogun showed himself as a Shadows mage and holder of one of the bell-portals. His plan was to bring back his master, Daichega

Kabin, a Shadows king destroyed by the Emperor and the heroes and that currently was a resident of the dimention of Darkness.

In this campaign were created the first characters named Divine Disciples, heroes of high esteem of the Emperor. It was also defined the entire hierarchy of the Summit (with a sheet for the main characters - the ape leader Hoack Krush was interpreted by a player in the campaign). The campaign had great twists and in the final battles (involving many participants) was created the first version of the rules of the miniatures game. In the end, the bell was recovered and stayed in possession of the Summit.

In 2010 it was released the eighth version of "OPERA RPG" under the name of "ReOPS" (Andrade & Godoy, 2010). This edition came with several optimizations in the system of warfare skill, power and racial characteristics. It resulted in a review of all races and character archetypes, increasing the gameplay of RPG and further extending the possibilities of representation. With the new optimized version of the rules for the scenario, all the main characters had their character sheets elaborated, including Gods and Deities. The compilation of rules describing the scenario was published in an e-book[8] (Andrade, 2011b) and in a book (Andrade, 2011a).

4.3 Transmedia Experiences with the Scenario

The first transmedia experience with the scenario "Shiang's Lands" was a comic strip designed to have eight pages, to be placed at the opening of the RPG book. Using RPG as a tool, were developed six characters (two apes and four tireses) to face an Aberration in the Valley of the Observer (where previously took place the battle against the Ten-Eyed Horror). The points of the characters were balanced and the combat was very tough for the characters (there was only one survivor). This comic strip is present in black and white at the opening of the e-book and in colored version in the book, as shown in Figure 14.

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8 <http://terrasdeshiang.com/downloads>

Figure 14 - First page of the comic strip "Dia Chuvoso", in black
and white version (A) and in colored version (B).
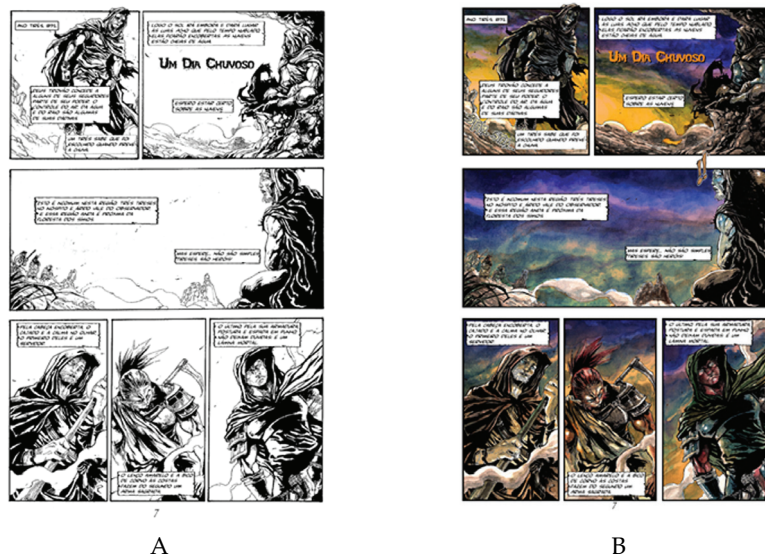
A   B

The last campaign created is passed in the tirese year of 903 and involves a complex plot with various characters involved. Within the scenario, two characters were built:

• Sacred Weapon Flying Blade: Tirese hero that lives in the lower (and poorer) part of the city of Rocks. Flying Blade has a heroic nature and serves to the tirese people with devotion;

• Hong Po: Young tirese of rare pelage that guarantees him certain skills with special types of spells. Separated from his parents at birth, Hong Po was educated in music and literature. At the age of six, his grandfather found him and freed him from the tutelage of Shadows. Currently, grandfather and boy live in the suburbs of the city of Rocks (in the area of protection of the hero Flying Blade).

Besides these characters, others pre-existing ones also have involvement in the plot:

• Vishir: Animal Goddess whose body was destroyed in the earth dimension, known as the Golden Vigilant since antiquity. Vishir protects Shiang's Lands until these days of evil forces from the dimention of the Eternal Souls. She has apes worshipers, which are treated as Shaman within the archetypes of the scenario;

• Kor-Tur: character of the race of cyclops, a race more morally advanced with great magical powers that fights the evil forces. Kor-Tur knows all the Shiang's Lands and has an ancient magical artifact, a bell-portal;

• Dargon: Lizard Animal God killed many centuries ago by another Animal

God, still alive to this day, named Rorag. About 150 years ago, Dargon almost returned to the terrestrial dimension with the help of a tirese, with the characteristics of Hong Po, and a bell-portal;

• Shadows: are aware of Hong Po existence, the Shadows begin to fear him after they find out that Dargon wishes to go back to the earth dimension with his help. For this reason, they want to kill him.

To create the campaign's initial game, a basic plot was created centered on the request for help of Kor-Tur to Flying Blade to care for Hong-Po and the bell-portal, asking him to ensure that the young man never use it. As in several plots created with RPG with a transmedia goal, the campaign served as a collective force of creation of situations and lines. In particular in this case, the narrative developed during the campaign, with a few exceptions, was used entirely for the script of a pilot animation four minutes long. Figure 15 shows two frames of this animation pilot, titled "Um Estranho Pedido".

Figure 15 - Frames of the stereoscopic animation "Um Estranho Pedido".
A – The flight of the Animal Godness Vishir. B – Tirese city of Rocks.


A

B

After Kor-Tur joined the fate of Flying Blade and Hong Po, these sought help from the Shogun and the high priest of the Sacred Temple. In private conversations, Flying Blade and Hong Po became aware of the power connected to the bell-portal. After a short period of time collected in the home of the Shogun, the characters decide

to travel to the city of the Rising Sun (former city of the Middle and now capital of the tirese empire). This second plot was developed with the assistance of RPG.

At the beginning of the trip, Hong Po and Sacred Weapon were surprised by gigantic snakes but counted with the help of imperial soldiers and some heroes to face the real enemy: cultists apes, led by the Shaman Molgur and the Warrior Gurok, which along with several worshipers of the evil God Dargon, planned the kidnapping of Hong Po.

The unwinding of the story counted with the use of rules of the Wargame "Jogos de Miniaturas das Terras de Shiang" (Andrade, 2011c) described in the third topic. It was used to coordinate an epic battle with more than twenty characters involved, as shown in Figure 16. The strategic and tactical possibilities of the game proved to be efficient to lead the conflict, which result in the victory of the cultists apes, who abducted Hong Po. The Sacred Weapon Flying Blade was seriously wounded during the battle, lost possession of the bell, bringing a bleak future for the Shiang's Lands.

Figure 16 - Photography of the board where the epic battle unfolded.
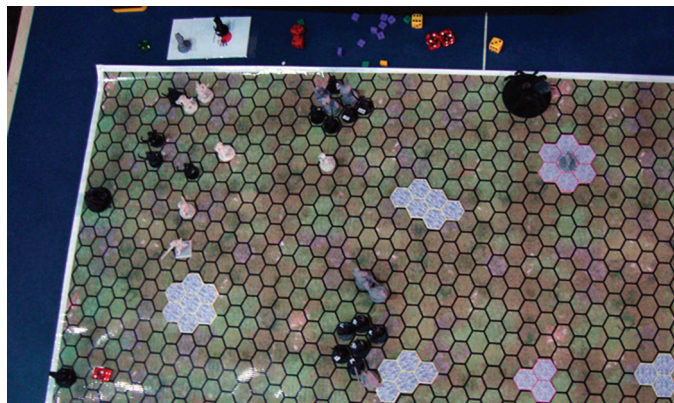
It is noteworthy that during the drafting of the rules of the Wargame, the imperial soldiers are shown as a new archetype. Less powerful than the heroes but in greater numbers, the imperial soldiers had its archetype added to the RPG, showing that the transmedia with narrative cohesion of this experience contributes to the expansion of the vast narrative present in the scenario.

The campaign has not yet been completed and it will use the RPG as a tool for cohesion and if in the future another great battle unfolds, also the Wargame will be utilized as support to the narrative.

Conclusions

When examining the campaigns developed in the scenario of "Shiang's Lands" we can observe that the RPG is an important tool to the cohesion of the narrative itself,

and also as a support for the expansion of its vast narrative.

The synergy between mechanics and narrative with a concise system of rules allowed the controlled exploration of the scenario, realistically increasing its complexity and contributing to its evolution. In relation to the creation, the RPG is shown as a powerful collective instrument, as each player can contribute with their ideas to the narrative. The experiences of the RPG table, filtered by the Game Master, lead to more detailed and creative stories than conventional individual narratives. Unlike the narrative exploration centered on a character, as in cinema, literature and theater, the process of creating using RPG allows multiple narrative focus and even simultaneous.

Within the genre of medieval fantasy, the role of mass combats has great importance and the combat described in the rules of RPG is not the most appropriate for this narrative management. From the 2000s, with the emergence of game mechanics to Wargame related to RPG was established a new way to play RPGs and Wargames jointly, which provided a new plausible and even a more visual experience, once that with the help of miniatures, players have a better sense of the environment in which the characters are and with whom they interact in that setting. This contributes to a transmedia construction directly, such as novels, comics, animations and video games.

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