The Discourse of the Sci-Fi Fan Civil War of 1980 as Seen in Anime Magazines

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Abstract

The so-called "Anime Boom" period of 1977-1985 coincided with the resurgence of science-fiction in a new skin, a post-pulp incarnation of the genre which was informed by the latest developments in theoretical and applied astrophysics as well as hypothetical social dilemmas that would ensue as a result of the realization of these possible futures. In the midst of this, anime as a medium was coming of age and as it began to prove to be conducive for visualizations of these new imagined worlds, a clash in media ideologies began to form between certain groups of anime fans and science-fiction aficionados.

Much of this controversy hinged on the approach towards 1979's seminal robot anime series, *Mobile Suit Gundam*, with its unconventional balance between toy sponsor requisites and sci-fi/hypothetical science elements. Essentially, its legitimacy as a SF work became a matter of dispute, leading to heated arguments about whether SF anime can really exist.

The phenomenon was well documented in various outlets, but this paper will focus on the discourse that developed in 1980-1981 among the pages of the more otaku-centric publications such as *Animec* and *Out,* where debates between major sci-fi writers, anime production staff and fans, mostly centering on the problematic question, "What is SF anime?" and the search for a harmonious midway point between "SF fans" and "SF anime fans", have been recorded, encapsulatinged the mood of this pioneering era.

The Japanese animation industry has given rise to some unique "genres" – or perhaps, better phrased, "motifs" or "frameworks" – which continue to this day, as a result of certain commercial factors pertaining to business models and production processes put into place during the 1960s.

Introduction

To set the scene for the discourse that continued through the late 1970s into the early 1980s, some details need to be laid out to form a foundation upon which we may begin our analysis.

Firstly, it took around 15 years (1963-1977/78) for animation to be recognized as a viable subject to base magazines on, as the consumers "came of age". Previously-mandated sponsor requisites became quintessential anime tropes: robots, magical girls, etc. The original generation of anime fans created the market for anime magazines from a grassroots movement – publishers and editors at the time were of a different generation and had little knowledge of the subject. Fans (viewers/readers), writers, creators, all worked in tandem with one another during this 1977-1985 "Anime Boom" period –

formulating "critique" of the art form. From 1982 to 1983, the robot anime series *The Super Dimension Fortress Macross* epitomized the culmination of the grassroots movement – fans making their own anime. Following this, towards the end of the "anime boom", was a spike in the otaku subculture which challenged business models and resulted in a wide divergence between the mainstream and otaku culture (unlike with manga – due to the difference in generations), as well as between the sponsors and the creators (Rivera Rusca 2016: pp. 62-64).

The divergence is easy to illustrate if we look at the performance of the series which have strong, decades-long, supportive otaku fanbases; we can immediately make out a pattern.

1974: Space Cruiser Yamato: Cancelled → Revived as a movie → Sequels → Major franchise (new movie in 2015)
1979: Mobile Suit Gundam: Cancelled → Revived as a movie → Trilogy → Sequels → Major franchise (new series in 2015)
1982: Super Dimension Fortress Macross: Truncated → Extended → Major franchise (new series in 2016)
1982: Fairy Princess Minky Momo: Faced cancellation → Extended → sort of major franchise… (musical in 2012)

In summary, the demands of the end-users were for more mature story-telling, while the old model of toy manufacturers providing the production funding was still in place, therefore toy-friendly designs – robots and/or magical girl sticks and pendants – needed to be included in the show, and play an important part in the narrative, effectively undermining, or at least limiting, the "maturity" of the show's tone.

Defining Genres – Robots and Magical Girls

The "genres" in question are that of "Robot Anime" and "Magical Girl" anime. Robot Anime can entail any series or movie that features a robot, but is normally reserved for giant, battling robots. Meanwhile, anime series which feature young girls with special powers are classified under the Magical Girl Anime category.

As explained elsewhere, the evolution of these genres has been a result of a combination of various factors, with influences ranging from American television comedy *Bewitched* for the Magical Girl side of the equation, while *Thunderbirds* and the *tokusatsu* genre of live-action special effects Japanese movies and series played a major role in dressing the aesthetics of Robot Anime, while also dovetailing with the economic growth of Japan and its developing toy technology.

It has already been seen how, a decade in, towards the end of the 1970s, certain creative groups struggled with restrictive requisites, while at the same time taking advantage of them as catalysts to further creativity within narratives and products. This all points to a coming-of-age of the industry and of the viewership, and is an indication that the old business models would have to shift considerably. As a result, we saw a booming period of animation fandom culture, from around 1977/78 to 1985, and it gave rise to the OVA (Original Animation Video) movement, precisely targeting the "anime fan" consumer.

What this boils down to, is that at some point, (precisely around 1985) the old business model of toy companies being the main sponsors of anime, having created the aforementioned requisites, began to drop off, and in theory the true animation fans were freed from the shackles of having to feature giant robots or magical girl transformations to enjoy an engaging story with fully fleshed-out characters. However, by this point, that fan culture had actually come to expect and demand, rather, robots and magical girls in their animated entertainment, whether there were toys to sell or not.

Modern anime continues these (now fully established) traditions. Recent years, however, there have been many mixing of genres and motifs, causing some infighting amongst the fandoms, particularly prominent within those franchises that span decades and therefore have experienced these changes first-hand.

In January, 2015, an article on the Japanese website "Goo Ranking" showed some surprising results from their poll on the best "Idol Anime" series of all time. The top position was held by science-fiction space opera robot anime, *The Super Dimension Fortress Macross*, beating out even the legendary magical girl anime *Creamy Mami,* and more modern powerhouses, *IdolM@ster, AKB0048* and *LoveLive!* (Goo Ranking, 2015). How can we explain this?

At the annual industry event Anime Japan 2015, held on 22 March 2015, a chart tracing the evolution of this anime lineage using two parallel progressions – "Mecha Anime" and "Idol Anime" – was assembled and displayed, in both English and Japanese, and several full episodes, serving as representative picks from these lists, were shown on a large screen in a corner of the convention hall.

Firstly, the use of the terms "Idol anime" and "Mecha anime" are intriguing, because while perhaps "mecha anime" can be considered a more savvy, and therefore less generally common (in terms of non-fan-circle usage) term for "Robot Anime" which still gets the point across, it is in my view open for debate precisely what "Idol Anime" means, and whether or not it is synonymous with "Magical Girl Anime." This discrepancy becomes telling when we see the actual contents of the list.

We may surmise that modern "Idol Anime" consists of titles such as *Ai-katsu, LoveLive!, IdolM@ster, AKB0048*, and such, since they appear, at least on the surface, to follow the current notions of what makes up an idol act within Japanese society – that is, a singing young girl or groups of young girls whose down-to-earth personalities often make up for a lack of onstage talent (compared to other types of musical acts) in approachability and create a resonance and close relationship with audience members, who often act as "supporters", rather than mere passive listeners.

However, the Anime Japan list starts with *Sasurai no Taiyou* (*Wandering Sun,* 1971, directed by Yoshiyuki Tomino, who would later direct the revolutionary *Mobile Suit Gundam*) being described as the "origin of 'Idol Anime'". If we listen to the opening narration, we hear the phrase, "She aims to be a *singer* (歌手)". This seems out of place, because there is a notable distinction in Japanese society between "singers" and "idols", despite the fact that idols do also sing. It should also be noted that the main character here is based on famous real-life singer-

songwriter Keiko Fuji, whose daughter Hikaru Utada is now an international superstar, and neither of them can rightly be considered "idols".

The list continues with many magical girl shows but eventually as we follow the mid-1980s through to the 1990s, increasingly some discrepancies begin to arise, namely the placement of science-fiction works such as *Megazone 23, Macross Plus, Defense Force Hummingbird,* and *Key the Metal Idol*, to name but a few. Here I am referring to the prominence of "mecha" and "robots" in these works, which one may think would be better suited to the other list running parallel to this one, that of "Mecha Anime".

The *Macross* franchise is the most problematic of all of these, since the original 1982 series *The Super Dimension Fortress Macross* (1982-83) is in the "Mecha Anime" section, described as "A masterpiece robot action in the history of its evolvement" (sic), while sequels *Macross Plus* (1994-95) and *Macross Frontier* (2008) are in the "Idol Anime" category, and *Macross 7* (1994-95) is nowhere to be seen.

This leads in to the controversy, inasmuch as it can be considered so within internet fandom, which surrounds the latest installment in the long-running property, *Macross Delta* (2016), currently airing at the time of this writing.

The phrase, "This isn't Macross!" or variations thereof, can be found in online forums and comment sections and social media platforms in Japanese, English, Spanish and many other languages. Some examples include, "This isn't what Macross is about!"; "This isn't science-fiction!" and "This is just idol stuff!"

The issue comes from the story premise in the new series that in the future,

an infection known as the Var Syndrome that makes people deadly violent has spread across the galaxy and a special idol group has been formed to use the power of song as a deterrent to quell this illness. The singers fly into battle with giant transforming robots acting as their support fighters. In the original 1982 series, the robots are designed to fight giant humanoid aliens who, it turns out, can be defeated by inducing a culture shock through everyday aspects of human culture such as a song or a kiss, so the aspect of an idol singing as an effective military strategy was a twist discovery not made in the story until near the halfway point, and only employed fully in the latter half of the series.

In other words, the key difference is how prominent the idol aspects are in the show. The original *Macross* series is a product of a time where humanoid robots are a requisite for a boys' series to get on the air as the sponsor is invariably a toy company whose sales depend on increasingly complex robot designs. Modern anime, produced through a "production committee" chip-in style approach, do not need to adhere to such strict requisites, and so instead, can afford to lay its emphasis on other factors.

But the – mostly online – complaints from "fans" go even beyond simple denouncement of the alleged over-emphasis on idol culture – they lament the perceived "magical girl" aspects of the series, comparing it to *Pretty Cure* and *Sailor Moon*. This appears to be mostly caused by the first episode's introduction to "Walküre", the tactical idol sound unit, comprised of four (five later) young women who jump off fighter jets into the battlefield and, before breaking into song, change clothes from flight-suits into

extravagant idol stage costumes, through the use of a flashy transformation sequence reminiscent of tropes seen in "Magical Girl" anime series: a very by-the-book scene where they shine brightly as one costume disintegrates and another one forms in its place, topping it off with a pose and a catchphrase.

Clearly, even from the first episode, the series sets off to meld high-speed robot action choreography with magical girl elements set to idol pop BGM. Increasingly, many series are mixing differing aspects of multiple genres. What is it that causes such negative reactions amongst certain groups? It is not as simple as concluding that some people just do not want idols in their robot anime, or vice versa, as the case may be. In the case of *Macross*, one needs to go back and explore the roots of *Macross* creators Studio Nue and their position among Japanese science-fiction fandom to get to the heart of the matter.

Constructing "Realism" versus Constructing the "Real"

First, let us tackle the issue of "Real Robots" versus "Super Robots". Most robot anime fans today, be they Japanese or otherwise, would probably differentiate the Super tradition from the Real by choosing *Mobile Suit Gundam* and *Armored Trooper Votoms* as good examples of Real Robots, with their realistically complex military conflict background settings and emotionally-troubled protagonists, as opposed to the Super category, where the robots are seen as heroic machines piloted by hot-blooded teenage boys against clearly evil antagonists, such as *Mazinger Z* and *UFO Robo Grendizer*. That much is not in

question. However, for Gainax robot anime *Gurren Lagann* (2007) head writer Kazuki Nakashima, *Mazinger Z* was the first "*Real* Robot" for his generation, not "Super Robot". The reason, he describes, is because his frame of reference was *Tetsujin 28*, etc. Tetsujin had pupils, and Mazinger did not, thus is was more machine-like (here we should note that the 1980 remake/update of Tetsujin also did not have pupils, and seemed more technologically sleek overall). To him, Mazinger was revolutionary because of the series settings describing "*Chougoukin Z*" and "photonic energy" in a pseudo-scientific way. Enemy robots all had mechanical names with numerical suffixes like "Garada K7" or "Doublas M2", which were more "realistic" and reminiscent of *tokusatsu* tropes borrowed from the highly-influential *Thunderbirds* TV series (Hikawa 2013: 10), so the iconic "RX-78", the model number of the *Mobile Suit Gundam*, is simply a derivative in the same lineage, rather than a pioneering concept (*Animage Original*, 2009: 7).

From this, we can learn that the *generational factor* is instrumental in denoting genre demarcations, and for this particular generation, the closer the connections to established science-fiction, the more "real" the content seems. So that at least partly explains why *Gundam* is widely considered to be the first "real/SF" robot anime.

- The theatrical release of *Mobile Suit Gundam*, right in the middle of the "Anime Boom" has been referred to as a social phenomenon.
- Its production history has been well documented, and it mirrors *Space Cruiser Yamato*'s 1974-1977 trajectory in terms of its core

popularity build-up, its 1979 broadcast entrenched in television ratings battles, internal struggles with sponsors, and finally its explosion into critical acclaim following its 1981 movie edition, providing even more momentum for animation fanbases, both for *Gundam* itself and anime as a whole.

- Studio Nue was involved in the production of both, as well as *Macross* later.
- However, its success was met with some contentious opinions from certain camps.
- It should also be emphasized that (sub)cultural context is important – the development of this SF discourse is parallel to the evolution of the anime magazine, the rise of otaku culture, and also the "lolicon" movement. These elements intersect, interact and feed off each other.
- We will take a look at these factors mostly from the point of view of contemporaneous publications.

The changing notion of "SF Anime" through the years as seen in anime magazines

The first, "Manga Shonen Special: The World of TV Anime" (December 1977) is a pioneering publication, highly praised by anime critics such as Yuichiro Oguro (Animage, Anime Style), and Masanobu Komaki (Animec). It was conceived before Animage and other anime-specific regular magazines. It is telling to see how often and in which contexts the word "SF" appears in the text of this book.

- *Space Cruiser Yamato* – The movie broke through the "jinx" and helped "quell the idea that anime was just for kids". It cannot be overstated how important *Yamato* was for the anime industry, the fandom, and the recognition of these from the general mainstream society.
- "Giant robot heroes" – "Today, robot anime is a synonym for SF anime" – years before *Gundam*, these robots were already being described as "science-fiction.
- "True SF anime" – In reference to Shotaro Ishinomori's *Cyborg 009.*

Why the emphasis on SF in anime? In the 1970s, Japanese SF fandom was centred around the "Hayakawa SF Bunko" label of books, incorporating translations of SF classics and new, original Japanese SF novels. Around this time, gradually more manga-oriented illustrators began to do cover illustration commissions, such as Motoo Hagio and Leiji Matsumoto.

In the midst of this, a SF-centric design agency known as Studio Nue was founded in 1972, by Haruka Takachiho, an award-winning science-fiction novelist who would later find fame among anime fans for creating *Crusher Joe* and *Dirty Pair*. The studio popularized science-fiction and fantasy art in Japan. Members aside from Takachiho included illustrator Naoyuki Kato, designer Kazutaka Miyatake, writer Kenichi Matsuzaki and, later, the multi-talented Shoji Kawamori.

The March 1978 issue of Out magazine ran a special feature on Studio Nue, which served as a preview for the book, "*The World of SF Illustration: All about Studio Nue*", released later that year (August 1978). It showcased the most impressive

of Studio Nue's contributions to SF-oriented media, namely covers and insert illustrations for fantasy novels, spaceship and concept designs for SF anime such as *Space Cruiser Yamato* and the internal mechanism cutaway diagrams for many robot anime, which were very popular at the time (these were even made into small toys, where one side of the robot would have transparent armour revealing the complex machinery inside). Slowly but surely, the worlds of hard science-fiction and animation – and their respective fandoms – were starting to merge, or at the very least, find some overlap. Eventually, Studio Nue's interpretation of the Powered Suit design from the Japanese Hayakawa editions of Robert Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* would form the basis for so-called "real" robot designs later employed in anime from this point onwards, *Mobile Suit Gundam* being a prime example.

As *Gundam* begins to be analyzed as an anomaly for animation, we begin to see dedicated articles which seem almost investigative in nature. An early example can be found in the April 1980 issue of Out. We see a special feature entitled "What WAS *Gundam*?" – in the form of a question. This questioning of the status quo is reserved for something which clearly gave rise to a seemingly-unprecedented situation, thus prompting analysis. The approach – with the specific phrasing – is a technique which continues to this day, as evident in a very recent issue of Newtype, from June 2016, in a similar feature, which asks, "What WAS *Osomatsu-san*?" Such phrases legitimize the "social phenomenon (*shakai-genshou*, 社会現象)" status of the particular anime in question, while prompting analysis and critique.

The *Gundam* feature in this issue of Out had many columns by various writers, among them Kazuo Yamamoto alluding to "SF-centric queries", referring to the questioning of the validity of a giant robot in space and its place within a serious SF narrative. He connects the Heinlein's Powered Suit now being a staple of SF with the Gundam as a *piloted* "robot", and the use of "Minovsky particles" as narrative justification – or, perhaps, "excuse" – for giant robots, in other words, to satisfy the requisites posited by the toy company sponsors (p. 31).

Keiko Takemiya, the famous Year 24 Group shoujo manga artist (who is no stranger to SF, having penned the extremely popular *Toward the Terra*), also has a piece here, where she talks more about the animation techniques and the performances therein. Looking to the future, after *Gundam, Phoenix 2772,* and *Toward the Terra* (anime version), she predicts rotoscoping to be the new tool for anime (p. 36). It should be noted that a year earlier, in January 1979, Out featured a sizeable cover story special feature on Takemiya, a section of which was focused on her fantasy and SF works, with no controversy.

But it is Haruka Takachiho's own article in the April 1980 feature which guaranteed that this particular issue of Out would have a place in history by effectively kick-starting the great SF debate of 1980.

In the section entitled, "What is SF?", Takachiho writes:

- "Too many anime are being referred to as 'SF' recently. *Yamato* is not SF. *Ultraman* is not SF… The only one worthy of being called SF is *Future Boy Conan*."

- "I have been involved with the staff at Sunrise, but I would never let them refer to *Reideen* or *Combattler V* or *Voltes V* as 'SF.'"
- "Up to around episode 3, I had hopes that *Gundam* could become a great work of SF, but after episode 5, it just became painful to watch." (pp.21-23)

At around the same time, Ryu Mitsuse, another award-winning SF novelist wrote in the *Roman Album: Mobile Suit Gundam*: "SF fans are not comfortable with *Gundam*." This, of course, sparked a major outcry by anime fans, manifested in letters to Out, Animec and other publications. In the days before the internet, these magazines gave the readers a voice. Thus, when something as controversial as this appeared, the fans reacted in the same way they would have had they had access to Twitter or other such outlets – in this case, many pages were devoted later to fan opinions, where the font size had to be substantially minimized to maximize the content. Many were clearly angry that Gundam was not validated as SF when clearly its setting seems to allude to many theoretical future situations. It should also be noted that such heated discussions were happening within the staff room between the creators at the animation studio Sunrise itself. Questions and issues such as "Why would we paint the Gundam *white* – story-wise, logically speaking, it makes it an easy target, and from a production studio, practical standpoint, white paint takes longer to dry so the cel painting procedure is more laborious than it needs to be!", as well as "explosions do not happen that way in a vacuum", became common arguments amongst the animation staff.

But if we observe Ryu Mitsuse's own collaborations with Motoo Hagio, who had brought in many new fans into the world of science-fiction through her own original SF shojo manga works, such as *They were 11* and *Star Red,* we come across what appears to be a discrepancy – Robot anime is *not* SF, but Shojo manga *is* SF. In 1977, Hagio had already produced a manga version of Mitsuse's popular SF novel, *Hyaku-oku no hiru to sen oku no yoru* (*100 Days and 1,000 Nights*), from a decade earlier, to great acclaim. Also around this time, she was publishing manga versions of Ray Bradbury's classic works of SF literature, such as *R is for Rocket*. This is intriguing, because when we look at Hagio's opinions on this issue today, she appears very dismissive of genre classifications. Earlier in 2016, a special exhibition was set up in Kichijoji Art Museum dedicated specifically to showcasing Hagio's SF art illustrations and manga genga. To promote the event, Motoo Hagio herself, together with manga artist Mari Yamazaki (*Thermae Romae*) would hold a talk event on April 16th, 2016. Highlights pertinent to this topic include:

- Hagio: "We shouldn't worry about what is or isn't SF. *Thermae Romae* is SF, *Godzilla* is SF."
- Yamazaki: "I never thought about it like that. You showed me that many of the works I like just happened to be SF."
- Hagio: "What about *Ultraman*?" Yamazaki: "Well, he's an alien, so I guess that is SF, too?"
- Hagio "**Men** think about it in a completely different way."
- Hagio: "In putting together this exhibition, the staff were struggling

and asked me which of my works are SF, and I answered that **I have no division line."**

It seems clearly apparent that Hagio's outlook is the diametric opposite of that of Takachiho. In fact, Yamazaki and Hagio both came to the agreement that Fujiko Fujio's *21emon* (about a hotel in space, where all the guests are aliens, and thus is a good premise for a story about dealing with issues of cultural diversity and the like) is a SF masterpiece – it is simple enough so that kids can understand, but deals with such vast themes about humanity.

The *Gundam* flame had been kept alive by this SF debate, and by the time the February 1981 issue of Out was released, the *Gundam* hype had entered a new gear, as producers and fans were getting ready for the forthcoming movie edition. Freelance writer and critic Shimotsuki Takanaka, paraphrasing a Hideo Azuma quote from "*Yakekuso Tenshi* (*Desperate Angel*)", claimed that "TV anime has been 'cursed' by SF ever since *Tetsuwan Atom*", and "SF's widespread precedes the relatively young medium of TV anime" (p. 29). His exasperation stems from the observation that "*Yamato* drew "pure" SF fans and anime fans closer together but they still do not overlap…", concluding that "Anime fans are frustrated that SF fans cannot see the greatness, and refuse to see past the fact it is anime."

Haruka Takachiho returns in Out, April 1981, and the magazine takes advantage of the controversy to frame an expansive "Haruka Takachiho versus Yoshiyuki Tomino: Deathmatch Talk" feature (pp. 42-57), where the two would heatedly debate the points of contention regarding Gundam's validity as SF. In reality, the

"deathmatch" did not turn out quite as deadly as advertised, but there were some notable points made which would be expanded upon in later discussions. Perhaps most importantly, it marked the first appearance of the phrase "SF Mind", Takachiho's key requisite in the formulation of science-fiction narratives. Simply put, nobody can write a true work of SF without having an "SF Mind", that is, an advanced knowledge of the canon of SF literature and an up-to-date understanding of theoretical physics and such (pp. 56-57).

Other articles coupling with this feature in the issue included Masaki Tsuji's (Story writer on *Tetsuwan Atom* (60s), *Captain Future*, *Devilman*, *Cutey Honey*, *Attack No.1*, *Umi no Triton*, etc…) call, "Does anybody know SF anime?", where he claims that "TV anime and theatrical anime are totally different" (pp.58-60). This of course, would famously be echoed much later by Hayao Miyazaki where he refused to allow his works to be called "anime" so as to distance himself from the stigma attached to anime and its otaku fandom, preferring instead to have his works referred to as "manga films" (Steinberg, 2012: p. 8)

Animec devoted almost an entire issue to answering the question "What is SF anime?" in its special feature in Volume 20, dated January, 1981. A plethora of writers gathered to share their thoughts on, not only how to answer the question, but how to begin to approach it.

Yoshitake Suzuki, story writer on shows like *Reideen*, etc., claimed that, "True anime culture will take 50 years to come to fruition" (p. 32). Interestingly enough, we have already passed 50 years since *Tetsuwan Atom*, so that time is actually *now*. With anime more and more visibly mainstream than ever before, we

might be starting to see the effects of this – not that that correlates to an acceptance or growth in popularity of science-fiction.

Also worthy of note are writers Masaki Tsuji (again), Hiroyuki Hoshiyama, Kenichi Matsuzaki (Studio Nue), who claim that "the perfect SF anime is *Doraemon*" (pp. 28-29). This immediately brings to mind some echoes of Hagio and Yamazaki from earlier (or much later, as the case in real time would be), and their example of the (somewhat lesser-known) Fujio Fujiko work, *21emon.*

But the big shakeup here, as far as we are concerned, having as we do, the virtue of hindsight, is found within the two pages (36-37) entitled: "The 'third generation' bringing a new wave", referring to a new type of creator, who "had grown up with anime". We are talking about Shoji Kawamori (*Macross, Cyber Formula, Aquarion, AKB0048,* etc.) and Yutaka Izubuchi (*Galient, Gundam ZZ, Record of Lodoss War, Patlabor, Yamato 2199*, etc.). It must not be forgotten that at the time of the publication, Kawamori's and Izubuchi's names were hardly known, if they were recognized for anything it was for their design work on *Ulysses 31* and *Toushou Daimos* respectively, meaning that Animec recognized the potential of these creators as future leading names in the industry from an early age.

Kawamori brushes the whole SF debate aside, emphasising instead the importance of one's understanding of the real world, and the formation of a believable world within the fiction. What the creators of anime should focus on is not "realism", but rather, a functional reality within the limits of the work. "What's worse," he bemoans, "is that it's not even just about what is or isn't SF; it sounds like they're saying, 'if it's SF, it's good, if not, it's bad'."

Kazutaka Miyatake and Kawamori have repeated this "realism" versus "reality" aspect as a major factor in the works of Studio Nue throughout the decades, Miyatake as recently as October 2015 at his exhibition on the Mikasa in Kanagawa, when he mentioned that nothing he designs is "realistic", rather, it is part of the "reality" of the story and its environment.

Back to the Animec article, Izubuchi then says that *Lupin III: Castle of Cagliostro* and *Future Boy Conan* are examples of anime that are popular with SF fans not because they are anime, but because they are *good.* He laments the necessity that fans seem to have of using specific words and phrases to categorize and catalogue, which stops smooth interaction because people cannot agree on the correct terminology, yet it is clear that they want to engage in in-depth discussions, so it is almost a wasted opportunity. Once again, this feels like a callback to the aforementioned Hagio 2016 talk, where the basic message is that there is no need for "division lines."

Animec, volume 31, from August 1983 ran a large feature on *Super Dimension Fortress Macross*, with the contention that it was a "New Visual Media for the Catalogue Generation". The very concept is intriguing, as the editors are, already at this early stage, explicitly pointing to the way the readers (and by extension, viewers, fans) interact and discuss the show, often in heated exchanges about the story, the mecha, the characters, and so on (p. 25). Page 26 asks a new variant of that favourite question phrasing, "What WAS Macross?", featuring many of the Macross production staff now that the show had

finally wrapped up. Writer and Studio Nue member, Kenichi Matsuzaki, makes an interesting point in that, "All of the staff had different ways of thinking," and, perhaps most interesting of all: "Fans of Nue complained at first because they were expecting hard sci-fi..!" (pp. 29-30)

This otherwise non-remarkable quote is of utmost importance today, because, as we have seen, many fans, both within Japan and outside, continue to make the fervent argument that each consecutive Macross sequel is "not Macross!", due to the inclusion of other traits, often borrowed from other anime genres.

That may be quelled by the liner notes included with the recent *Macross Delta* Blu-Ray release, where a section entitled "All aspects of Japanimation are included in Mission 01!" (referring to Episode 1). The word Japanimation is a loanword from the American English term for Japanese animation which came into usage in the 1980s through the growing Cartoon/Fantasy Organization chapters which were gradually getting interested in the medium. It has been phased out in favour of the more acceptable "anime", but within Japan it is still being used within the animation industry itself, especially in contexts where there is a necessity to highlight the uniqueness of the various techniques of representation within Japanese animation as opposed to those employed overseas. The brief column, by Kawamori, mentions that the first episode starts off as a normal day, but then breaks down into a battle scene, then a concert scene, then aerial dogfights, and so on, thus it is full of chaos, a mixture of elements which "one is not supposed to mix", but that that is what makes it exciting. The genre, in this case, can be

simply said to be *anime*. It all begins and ends with Studio Nue.

In spite of this, in the 2004 DVD release of *Aim for the Top! Gunbuster,* a Kazutaka Miyatake interview included in the liner notes points to how he, while admitting that "SF fans love parody" (bringing to mind Hideo Azuma and the doujinshi culture which exploded in a barrage of sci-fi and sexual content in the late 1970s and early 1980s, later manifesting itself in the OVA movement of the mid-to-late-80s), conceded that that sort of thinking is "highly dangerous". The work (in this case, *Gunbuster*) is at its core very heavily SF-based, so, he bemoans, it is a missed opportunity and a shame it had to be full of call-backs and references rather than a wholly-original work. He emphasizes that at the very least the spaceship designs had to be original and refused to design something which was a parody or homage to a pre-existing, recognizable design (Gunbuster Blu-ray Box Complete Edition, pp. 60-61). This once again highlights the need for demarcation lines: the question of what can cross over, and what cannot, seems to be one which, as in the case of Takachiho, maybe simply a generational issue of perception – especially seeing as how Kawamori and Izubuchi, and, of course, *Gunbuster* director Hideaki Anno, are considerably younger than Miyatake).

The hefty volume, *Gundam Century* (released September 1981), published by the Out editorial together with writers Matsuzaki, and other staff members, cemented the SF status of *Gundam.* (Later, *Macross Perfect Memory,* another weighty book designed in a similar fashion, again, by the Out staff). It did so by discussing the show from various perspectives, as well as devoting an entire section to the

foundations of the Gundam universe, namely the "Gundam Science: The High Frontier" part, which is comprised of clear parallels and homages to, or perhaps even, outright plagiarism of, astrophysicist Gerard O'Neill's ideas for a future space society of space habitats, as described in his highly-influential book, "The High Frontier: Human Colonies in Space" (pp. 121-140). Here is where the foundation in theoretical science (at least, that of pre-millennial, space-race era human society) solidifies *Gundam*'s standing as a tier above other toy-centric, gimmick-oriented robot anime, or so the intention appeared to be. After this point, the SF debates surrounded *Gundam* mostly subsided. The "realists", it seemed, had won.

Once the smoke had cleared, Animec Volume 23 (April, 1982) ran a post-mortem of sorts of the debate in a feature entitled, "New Wave Anime". Toshiya Shiozawa claimed that there were originally "Two dreams: SF and anime", and that now, "Anime is trying to raise up what SF gave birth to" (p. 56). It should be noted that SF fandom and anime fandom were developing in tandem together with a mutually influential *tokusatsu* genre up until the oil shock and increasing labor costs set a major hurdle to the further evolution of *tokusatsu* so that anime was the most viable medium for visual renditions of science-fiction worlds and stories. Shiozawa's comment lends legitimacy to the success of this endeavor.

We thus conclude with the April, 1984, issue of Out, with *Nausicaä* on the cover, showing us how far we have come in just a couple of years. 1984 also being the year of *Urusei Yatsura: Beautiful Dreamer, Macross: Do You Remember Love*, all of which are featured in this issue, we are now able to pinpoint the peak of the "Anime Boom". Even Ryu Mitsuse and Motoo Hagio are also featured doing a talk together again, to celebrate the release of the image album recording of *100 Days and 1,000 Nights* (pp. 45-54).

Conclusion

We have seen how the arrival on the scene of Hayakawa SF Bunko flamed the passion of SF fans, and this dovetailed into an infusion of "hard SF" content into the TV animation medium. The shojo manga revolution (Y24) and its diversification into SF coalesced with this flame, bringing in female readers also, so that SF fans had accepted manga by the mid-1970s, but anime had not yet come of age – the "anime boom" was just starting and would not reach its peak until later (1984).

Anime fans were late to the scene, and amongst the shackles of commercialization/merchandising requisites, the medium struggled to gain recognition as a viable vehicle for "hard" SF stories, which is why *Yamato, Gundam, Macross*, etc., all had major production compromises, yet supportive fan-bases. This feud between the two camps was fueled by the egging-on of publications such as Out, whose popularity grew with ever more controversial content.

Regarding genre demarcation lines, female fans tend not to care, while older males tend to be overly concerned? Further analysis from a gender perspective in this specific time period would garner a greater understanding of this aspect.

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