Introduction

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To begin with a disclaimer, *Anime Studies: Media-Specific Approaches to Neon Genesis Evangelion* is not primarily dedicated to the famous franchise, which started as *Shinseiki Evangerion* directed by Hideaki Anno (b. 1960) on Tokyo TV in 1995–96 and has, over the course of the last 25 years, come to represent anime in the narrower sense against animated movies by 'auteurs' such as Hayao Miyazaki (b. 1941), Mamoru Oshii (b. 1951) and Satoshi Kon (1963–2010). In this volume, the initial TV series of *EVA* (as it is abbreviated hereafter) provides a case for the study of anime as distinct from, while connected to, Animation Studies, and as institutionalized within the humanities via academic societies and scholarly journals, among other things. The overall aim is not to make a claim that might help to establish new university programs, but rather to promote critical balance between the legitimization of studying anime through its service to authoritative disciplines or 'bigger issues,' and the consideration of forms, practices and institutions that have been associated specifically with anime and that have facilitated its global recognizability. Before surveying which aspects of Anime Studies are being foregrounded by each of the 10 chapters, it is first necessary to introduce the discourse on anime that forms the background to this volume. As several chapters touch upon notions of anime in a transcultural way, related specifically to *EVA*'s global spread (see, for example, the beginning of Chapter 6 by Manuel Hernández-Pérez), below the focus will be on the initial Japanese

context. Similar to Chapter 7 by Zoltan Kacsuk, which investigates the landmark role of *EVA* for *otaku* (geek) subculture as articulated by Japanese critics, the foregrounding of Japanese discourse is aimed not at generating Japanological expertise (i.e., using anime as a tool for knowledge about Japan), but complicating, or diversifying, the predominant English-language discourse on anime and illuminating a number of 'blind spots.' Consequently, this Introduction places an emphasis on the first two of the title's three components: the study of anime and the specificity of anime as media. Analytical and interpretative discussion of the third component, *EVA* itself, would go beyond the scope of an introduction and is therefore left to the individual chapters.[1] That said, a summary of the first TV series' plot as well as a list of the main characters and a chart of their interrelations are provided in the Appendix. Chapter 2 by Ida Kirkegaard highlights the contingency of the researcher's primary sources in the case of a globally circulating anime like *EVA*; Chapters 8 and 9 by Olga Kopylova and Selen Çalık Bedir, respectively, address the ensuing franchise with regard to some of its segments.

Popular and academic discourse shows an inclination to use the word *anime* in the sense of 'Japanese animation' (and, in Roman languages, it is often replaced by the latter term). Initially an abbreviation of the Anglicism *animēshon*, it entered Japanese industry jargon in the early 1960s, when programs that would later be identified as anime circulated under the name of TV manga (*terebi manga*). In the late 1970s, anime came to spread among wider audiences along with animated Science Fiction series for young adults, beginning with *Uchū senkan Yamato* (*Space Battleship Yamato* or *Star Blazers*, dir. Leiji Matsumoto and Noboru Ishiguro, 1974–75) (Nishimura 2018: 246). In Japanese today, the word may designate many different things, ranging from animation in a general, transmedial and transcultural sense, to a specific type of animation based on mangaesque drawings, whether manually produced or computer-generated.

1 See also Suvilay (2017) for an excellent textual analysis.

This volume seeks to advocate the study of anime as distinct from Animation Studies, but not in an attempt to privilege the 'Japan' component, which has admittedly played a significant role thus far with regard to both the global dissemination of anime and Japan Studies as its gateway into academia (cf. Napier 2001; Bolton 2002; Lamarre 2002; for an overview, Berndt 2018). Due to anime's turn into an easily recognizable transnational media form, its national specification as "TV animation mainly broadcast in Japan" (Nishimura 2018: 245)[2] or Japanimation (the label under which it was first promoted outside of Japan around 1990) has lost relevance, and so has anime's categorization as a 'genre,' of movies in general or animated movies in particular, something that harks back to non-Japanese distributors and critics (Sano 2011: 77; Clements 2013: 3). The fact that a Film-Studies volume like *The Japanese Cinema Book* (Fujiki & Phillips 2020) still posits anime as a genre (in line with horror, melodrama, yakuza film, etc.) is indicative of an approach from the outside of anime viewership and research. On the inside, anime is conceived rather as media and more closely related to televisual than cinematic culture, up to and including 'new television' (cf. Lamarre 2020).

The use of the term *media* below follows art historian W. J. T. Mitchell and media theoretician Mark B. N. Hansen, who deliberately employ it in the collective singular as a "term capable of bridging, or 'mediating,' the [traditional] binaries (empirical versus interpretive, form versus content, etc.)" (2010: location 41 of 5205), going beyond technical mediums and a prioritizing of single artifacts to include aesthetic forms and social contexts in equal measure and thereby mediations, that is, interrelations. Accordingly, this volume's focus on media specificity is broader than modernist aesthetic notions of medium specificity as associated with the work of Clement Greenberg (1940) or Noël Carroll (1985). Rather, this volume agrees with *Storytelling Industries: Narrative Production in the 21st Century* by Anthony N.

2. Translations from Japanese are all mine.

Smith, who employs the term *medium* in a similar sense as Mitchell and Hansen use *media*. Smith sees both the 'semiotic' and the 'technical' (but not the 'cultural') approach to a given medium undermined by digitization, and he does not play off economics, policies or society against aesthetics either:

> In the media convergence age, a given medium's distinct modes of production, circulation and reception, along with economic models, regulatory systems, and broader socio-cultural attitudes and practices underpinning these processes, can clearly set that medium apart in terms of its narrative constraints and affordances. (Smith 2018: 14)

Media scholar Lukas Wilde distinguishes, albeit for manga, but also applicable to anime, between three dimensions: semiotic-formal (i.e., artifact-oriented), material-technological (related to production, distribution and consumption in the narrow sense) and cultural-institutional dimensions, all with their respective actors and practices (2018: 133). Approaches like these also help to avoid generalizations that lead to simplified juxtapositions between anime and live-action movies, or manga and literature, highlighting instead differentiation within given media according to socio-cultural field and genre, for example.

As a matter of fact, not all animation made in Japan is subsumed under the heading of anime, at least not in Japanese discourse and among researchers like those who form the core of the Japan Society for Animation Studies (JSAS; founded in 1999): critics and historians who have been working outside of academic institutions, clinical psychologists and art-college professors of animation, as well as scholars in Media Studies. Strictly speaking, anime articulates TV and cel, or cel-look, animation in addition to 'Japan.' But, since the 1930s, cel animation has been employed in different ways and formats, with limited and full animation or TV series and movies for theatrical release being by far not the only ones. Pioneer Kenzō Masaoka (1898–1988), for example, used cels to emulate silhouette animation striving for smooth movement and illusion of depth, that is, creating

a "cinematic impression" in his 5-minute sequence within *Momotarō: Umi no shinpei* (*Momotarō: Sacred Sailors*, dir. Mitsuyo Seo, 1945, 74 min.) (Sano 2019: 19). In contrast, by tendency, the following are not included in anime even if they are cel-animated: Japanese TV commercials of the 1950s, experimental films of the 1960s by the Animation Group of Three (*Animēshon sannin no kai*) (cf. Morishita 2018), award-winning shorts by independent animators such as Noburō Ōfuji (1900–61) and Kōji Yamamura (b. 1964), fan-cultural reworkings of commercial productions like Anime Music Videos (cf. Brousseau 2020) or animation in video games. 'Anime proper' prioritizes entertaining genre fiction, which is distinguished from *animēshon/animation* as being industrially motivated, highly formulaic and more committed to audience participation than authorial intent. For film scholar Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, anime is "a commercial term invented and promoted with multiple marketing, targeting, and formatting strategies in Japan and subsequently adapted to a global cultural level" (2010: 244). Jonathan Clements, who authored the most comprehensive English-language history of anime to date, introduces it "as a particular *kind* of Japanese animation, that diverges in the 1970s by fastening itself to other objects and processes, including but not restricted to: foreign interest, transgression, visual cues, merchandising and integration into a media mix" (2013: 1, emphasis in the original). Obviously, anime's media specificity has always included a certain openness, that is, the inclination to go beyond Japan, TV and cel animation.

While Clements regards serial puppet animation on TV as a forerunner of anime due to format (2013: 140), popular discourse clings to cels and limited animation and traces the beginnings of anime back to *Tetsuwan Atomu* (*Astro Boy* or *Mighty Atom*, dir. Osamu Tezuka, 1963–66). Its format of 25-minute-long weekly episodes comprising less than 5,000 cuts formed the standard for animated TV series until the late 1990s and has been increasingly accompanied by

feature-length franchise movies. With regard to media specificity as entwining textual with contextual characteristics, anime appears on the whole as an "assemblage of polarized tendencies" (Lamarre 2020: 317). In *The Anime Machine* (2009), Lamarre introduces several central terms related to production technology, most importantly *open compositing* (the variable layering of images enabled by the multiplane camera, which leads, among other things, to anime's characteristic placement of two-dimensional characters in front of apparently deep, three-dimensional backgrounds) and the *exploded view*, where the impression of depth appears from fragments spread across the picture plane instead of central perspective resting on a single vanishing point. This stylistic device was pushed forward by *EVA* and not limited to visuals: "In effect, the superplanar image—which brings multiple planes to the surface—unfolds as a superplanar narrative structure with multiple frames of reference . . ." (Lamarre 2009: 165).

Out of technical and economic constraints TV anime had to make do with immobility and discontinuity in several regards. This gave rise to an aesthetic of the *animetic interval*, as Lamarre calls it, where movement is rather suggested than represented (or fully animated), the visible is not necessarily in sync with the audible and, as seen in *EVA*, gaps and loose ends in narratives entice fan participation. Intervals induce *switching*. Recapitulating the lineage of anime-esque animation, Lamarre sees it arising "from transformations of an apparatus or social technology geared initially towards combining education and entertainment [in the case of *Momotarō: Sacred Sailors*], and then later towards code-switching, and finally towards media-switching" (Lamarre 2020: 322). Thus, compositing and switching connect characteristics of anime texts to exhibition formats and transmedia franchising.

Clearly, anime as media is not confined to the technical medium, or support, of cel animation. Before the introduction of cels in the 1930s, Japanese animation workshops were already engaged in the

compositing of images, drawn on paper and held together with glass plates (Lamarre 2020: 314). *EVA* director Anno himself used drawings on paper when he began creating animation on 8-mm film as a student. His first attendance at PAF, the non-profit Private Animation Festival dedicated to amateur productions, in 1979 was crucial in that regard, as he encountered the work of Group Ebisen, to which today's art animator Yamamura and also animated-movie director Sunao Katabuchi (b. 1960) belonged back then. A year later, Anno showed his own animated metamorphoses drawn on paper at PAF, as part of Group Shado's program. It was in retrospect to this experience that he stated, "anime doesn't have to be cel" (Anno 1997: 32), when anime fans rejected the final *EVA* episodes 25 and 26 not only for the narrative turn from robot action to interiority, but likewise for its deviation in medium, using pencil drawings on paper, photos, storyboard pages and so on (Chapter 1 by José Andrés Santiago Iglesias and Chapter 2 by Ida Kirkegaard provide a closer examination of Anno's bold aesthetic choices). At a point in time when Fuji Film, which had supplied celluloid films to Japanese studios since 1934, discontinued its production in 1996, cels and mangaesque drawings were still regarded by fans as indispensable for anime proper. In addition to Anno's personal intention ("I drafted the final episode like that also because I was aiming at liberation from cel anime. Pigheaded anime fans maintain that it is not anime without cels, to my dislike," cited in Igarashi 1997: 45), it is interesting to note that in the pre-war period the medium (i.e., how an animated film was technically made) appeared less important to viewers than how it looked (Nishimura 2018: 59), namely, like a *manga film* (*manga eiga*) due to the entwinement of moving images (*dōga*) with humorous drawings (*manga*). Accordingly, Asia's first feature-length cel-animated movie, the Shanghai-made *Tiě shàn gōngzhǔ* (*Princess Iron Fan*, dir. Guchan and Laiming Wan, 1941, 103 min.) was marketed as 'long manga' (*chōhen manga*) upon its Japanese premiere in 1942 (Du 2019: 46–49). At that time, *manga* connoted

primarily line drawings that served light-hearted educational stories for children (Nishimura 2018: 103). Animation historian Akiko Sano (2011: 74) describes the manga film as integrating flat, and as such mangaesque, character designs with spatial, by tendency, photo-realist backgrounds.

Today, the term 'manga film' is mainly related to Hayao Miyazaki and his self-distancing from 'anime.' Remarkably, he has avoided the name 'animation,' which is favored in the field of art colleges and short-film festivals and is also attached to foreign animation auteurs like Jan Švankmajer and Yuri Norstein. With regard to these two artists, the pioneer of TV anime, Tezuka, reportedly introduced the term 'art animation' in the mid-1980s (Morishita 2018: 294) at around the same time when Miyazaki finished *Kaze no tani no Naushika* (*Nausicäa in the Valley of the Wind*, 1984, 117 min.) and began to label his works 'manga film.' In contrast to animation, 'manga film' suggests a commitment to feature-length narratives and stories which associate Japan. Such association is, however, not necessarily confined to setting and motifs, but it may also include the manga medium. As is well known, Miyazaki adapted Monkey Punch's *Lupin III* manga and furthermore serialized a graphic narrative of his own (*Kaze no tani no Naushika*, in *Animage*, 1982–94). As such, his animated movies already approximate anime, which is known for close ties to *story manga*, with its black-and-white sequences of still, paneled images on paper (cf. Steinberg 2012). But Miyazaki occasionally also employs anime-esque techniques and motifs, such as limited animation and cute 'anime smiles.' Traditional Film Studies publications tend to regard the relation of anime and manga film in Miyazaki's work as succession in a rather teleological way: turning away from TV and its manga-based series, and steering toward auteur movies instead (Greenberg 2018: 61). In actuality, Miyazaki's works occupy less an opposing than an intermediate position, as, for example, instances of collaboration with Anno indicate. Both directors have been

acknowledged for their efforts in the mid-1990s to depart from the genealogy of industrial anime albeit with opposite vectors, namely, from without and from within (Igarashi 1997: 11–16). But Anno had also worked as an animator on the giant warriors in *Nausicäa*, and eventually he performed the voice of the protagonist in Miyazaki's *Kaze tachinu* (*The Wind Rises*, 2013, 126 min.). Furthermore, it is the reception of Miyazaki's works abroad that may suggest an intermediary position: "Just as the transnational reproduction, promotion and dissemination of Studio Ghibli's texts worked to spread Miyazaki's cinema as a new kind of art animation, fans have actively embraced that cinema for the resistant and ambiguous subcultural capital that it affords . . ." (Rendell & Denison 2018: 11).

The emphasis on 'animation' in the wider sense or even art animation, which is maintained in Japanese criticism against 'anime,' is primarily a matter of cultural field. But animosity against anime is not limited to Japanese discourse. In her monograph on 'Japanese animation,' film historian Maria Roberta Novielli uses the word anime once, in a footnote (2018: 58), concordant with her preference for experimental short films in the wake of Yamamura. In contradistinction, historians may apply the word anime retrospectively without considering discourse traditions, as is the case with Frederick S. Litten's investigation of early Japanese animation (2017). Much aware of such traditions are Japan Studies scholars Alistair Swale (2015) and Christopher Bolton (2018). But while they include the word anime in the title of their monographs, their actual discussion gives preference to animation auteurs and feature films that are not affiliated with franchises and as such not exposed to the distributive power of TV. Due to their bounded narrative structure and "their higher production standards" (Bolton 2018: 18), such movies appear to recommend themselves to critical intellectual readings, whereas TV anime series invite material (i.e., not ideology-focused) consumption, fan-cultural sharing and affective engagement. It is further noteworthy that recent

media-theoretical approaches exercise restraint with regard to the term anime, but for different reasons. An emphasis is put on transnational networks in the age of digitization and "distributive experiences" that relate to "a different economy, a different temporality, a different phenomenology and a different memory structure in the social than the 'classic' model of cinematic spectacle" (Zahlten 2019: 314). Here, anime is conceived "less as a subgenre of animation but an organizing principle" (ibid.: 312). Media practices come to the fore, mediations and modi of "techno-social existence" (Lamarre 2018: 10), and the focus is less on anime than "animation produced via Japan" (Lamarre 2020: 322) in order to escape fixation on both national markets and media specificity. But the fact that the discursive 'nationalizing' of anime (i.e., its ascription to Japan) paradoxically increases in proportion to transnational distribution (Zahlten 2019: 313) may be taken up as a challenge to revisit the media-cultural identity of anime under transmedial and transcultural conditions. The anime-typical assemblage of polarized tendencies could also be discovered in the relation between dissolution and reinforcement of media specificity.

The chapters of this volume present 10 different aspects of Anime Studies, beginning with close attention to textual characteristics in the first half and broadening the scope to include subcultural discourse, genre categorizations, franchising and fandom in the second half. Chapter 1 by José Andrés Santiago Iglesias investigates anime as filmic media and pays special attention to forms of animating movement. Taking its departure from *EVA*'s famous long static shots and the definition of anime in general as limited animation, it demonstrates how immobility and mobility are actually interrelated, and it suggests not to conceptually juxtapose limited and full animation, but rather trace the variable ratio of almost motionless extended cuts and sequences of high-speed editing. In addition to this 'ratio dynamism,' two more aesthetic devices are analyzed: synecdoches that allow for indirect

presentation of the main action; and line drawings, whose potential to interconnect without being fully animated is revealed with regard to comics, in particular the interrelation between panels. In Chapter 2 by Ida Kirkegaard, the anime-typical cel bank takes centre stage. Set up for each individual production, this pool of cuts intended for reuse had initially been deemed aesthetically unfavorable, a deficiency just like the immobility due to limited animation, but it developed into a style of its own, as evinced by *EVA*. While Chapter 1 argues against the simple binarism between stillness and movement, Chapter 2 employs bank cuts to question the opposition between repetition and originality, as well as that between fantasy narratives and realism in favor of an assemblage, so to speak, that takes the form of anime-specific realism and leans on viewers' familiarity with a whole set of visual and auditory conventions, intradiegetically as well as intramedially consistent narrative codes, and an audience engagement that oscillates between code recognition and affection. The chapter shows in particular how *EVA* first constructs anime-specific hyperrealism typical of the robot, or more precisely *mecha*, genre and eventually subverts it.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore anime with regard to sound, a dimension that has only recently begun to attract academic attention. In Chapter 3, Heike Hoffer provides a musicological analysis of the use of classical music in anime on the example of Beethoven's 9th and the "Ode to Joy," which plays a central role in *EVA*'s episode 24. Contributing a new aspect to the Anime Studies issue of repetition and 'recycling,' the chapter considers not only the deliberate use of the "Ode to Joy" in the *EVA* narrative (as anticipation of tragic events or dramatization), but also its connotations in contemporary Japan, resting on people's intimate relationship to it, for example, through amateur choirs. Thus, it becomes clear how anime conjoins traditional 'high culture' and contemporary subculture through emotional and social investment. While a discussion of anime music in general

and *EVA*'s soundtrack in particular is not part of this volume, Minori Ishida addresses another crucial element of anime in Chapter 4: the voice actor. Her main focus is on gender, or more specifically anime's tradition of having women perform as boy protagonists, and how in the case of *EVA* the intra- and extratextual performance by Megumi Ogata attracted female viewers to robot anime. As distinct from contemporaneous South Korea, the anime media had already significantly matured in 1990s Japan, including a whole media environment that gave rise to voice-actor stardom. From an aesthetic point of view, it is noteworthy how the anime-typical discrepancy between the visible and the audible has changed since *EVA*. Ishida reminds us that precisely the visual dissimilarity between voice actor and anime character has been one of the main attractions for female audiences and an important resource of anime's aesthetic criticality.

Chapter 5 by Stevie Suan introduces anime as a performative media in a different way: It focuses on characters as actors or, more precisely, on how the way characters move creates different notions of selfhood. Whereas traditional *EVA* discourse has, for a large part, engaged in psychoanalytical readings of the characters and male otaku as their core target audience, Suan brings the perspective of environmental humanities into play and applies it to the two main types of character movement in anime, namely, embodied acting and figurative acting. He interprets the former as ultimately promoting an anthropocentric individualist subjectivity, and the latter as a kind of posthumanist objecthood that presents itself toward the end of the *EVA* series, among other things, in the form of characters assembled of parts of other characters.

Chapter 6 by Manuel Hernández-Pérez focuses on genre as a crucial part of Anime Studies. Recapitulating anime's global distribution since the mid-1990s, which has stretched from VHS and DVDs to TV channels and eventually streaming platforms, the chapter illuminates the contingency of genre categorizations, whether

demographical (*EVA* as targeted to boys, i.e., *shōnen*) or thematic (*EVA* as Science Fiction, robot and/or *mecha* anime). At the same time, it demonstrates how useful the focus on genre still is, not only with regard to recent marketing tags outside of the domestic Japanese context, but also with regard to identifying differences within anime—instead of homogenizing anime and juxtaposing it, for example, to live-action cinema.

The last four chapters of this volume approach *EVA* and, through it, anime mainly from the perspective of users and their critical or affective engagement. Chapter 7 by Zoltan Kacsuk explains how closely the discursive construction of *EVA* as a landmark anime was tied to the subculture of otaku, introducing an enormous amount of representative Japanese voices and shedding light on a field of criticism located in between academia and fandom, that is typical of popular media in Japan, not only anime. While the chapter is informed more by Fandom Studies than anime research, it points to some important issues with regard to the latter. For example, it illuminates the segmentation of fandoms in the early 1980s, when separate communities emerged around Science Fiction literature, manga and anime and different modes of engagement evolved according to these different objects. It also historicizes the relation between otaku and anime, showing how anime occupied a privileged position especially for the second generation of otaku at a time when anime production, distribution and consumption was not yet extensively digitized. In this context, investigating media-specific approaches to anime on the example of *EVA* recommends itself precisely because *EVA* appealed to a core audience of viewers who were interested in anime's media specificity (and who were disappointed in view of their assumptions being subverted by the final episodes). Reversely, this fact may suggest that the focus on media specificity is outdated.

However, the *EVA* franchise continues unabated, and Chapter 8 by Olga Kopylova may stimulate a discussion of possible reasons for

that insofar as it introduces in detail transmedial franchises of narrative texts in its first part, and modes of engagement with them in its second part, taking its departure from a critical discussion of Hiroki Azuma's theory of 'database consumption' (2009 [2001]).[3] Anime is addressed here as a narrative media, open to franchising and adaptation, for example, in manga and games. Differentiating between narrative-driven, (story)world-driven and 'database'-driven franchises on the one hand, and between encyclopedic, forensic and affective modes of fan engagement as ways to enjoy *EVA* as a transmedial franchise on the other, the chapter traces the changing significance of narrative and representational contents for active users through manga adaptations of *EVA*, which, again, are read as indicative of fannish modes of engagement: Apocalypse and trauma are met with striking indifference, while playful practices prevail. This links Chapter 8 to the subsequent Chapter 9, by Selen Çalık Bedir. Similarly interested in narratives, it focuses on anime as gamelike narratives, carving out their particularities in comparison to *EVA* video games. Rather than fannish engagement, it juxtaposes gameplay and narrative consumption, and it examines respective preferences induced from elements such as alternative scenarios and inconsistent causality.

The final chapter, Chapter 10, by Jessica Bauwens-Sugimoto, returns the focus to fans, but fans whose affective engagement with the characters and the textual openness of *EVA* leads to the production of fan fiction, which deserves conceptualization as a media in itself. With its focus on the mainly feminine boys-love fandom, the chapter connects to Ishida's study of voice actors as an attempt to feed gender-conscious perspectives into Anime Studies by paying tribute to other than male actors on the side of both production and consumption. It also connects to the above-mentioned fannish indifference toward *EVA*'s life-and-death issues that have been so prevalent in psychoanalytically informed feminist discussions and in broader otaku discourse. The playfulness of mainly female fans is interpreted

3. As one of the few media-theoretical texts available in English, Azuma features in many chapters of this volume, however, not necessarily in a canonical manner.

as a subversive revelation of the masculine anthropocentric overtone of the *mecha* genre, as well as the tradition of *EVA* reception.

All in all, the chapters of this volume share several concerns across their different emphases, which can be regarded as forms of assemblage: between aesthetic forms and economic constraints, media texts as artifacts and situated media experiences, anime's media-specific identity and media-ecological embeddedness, specific local situations and global flows. All contributions exercise restraint with regard to strictly representational readings of *EVA*, traditionally related to religion (touched upon briefly in Chapter 6), psychoanalysis or the 'lost decade' in Japanese society. As mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction, this volume does not claim to be a comprehensive or authoritative guide to *EVA*. Too many aspects are missing, among which two appear especially vital: the anime-specific economics of *EVA*, from funding to licensing,[4] and the distribution and reception of *EVA* in Asia, the Chinese-language markets to begin with. Yet, it is hoped that the contributions assembled here provide a first step to reconsider anime, media specificity and *EVA*, which may lead to a broader critical discussion.

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4 See Denison 2018; Anno 2019; Denison 2020.

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