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Tackling the Problem of History through Video Games: Everyday Storytelling and Uneven World-Building

A hybrid *u:japan* lecture by Alexandre Paquet

Thursday
2026-04-16
18⁰⁰~19³⁰



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History is an exceedingly complex and challenging endeavor, a critical writing process that must inevitably struggle with the (re)presentation of its subject matter. Video game studies, whether through writing the history of the medium or from the perspective of representations of the past in video games, continues to encounter this ongoing challenge. This presentation is not, however, directly concerned with these approaches but rather in the broader question of the relationship between history and video games, or in other words, how video games engage with the problem of history. Influenced by historians and theorists such as Harry Harootunian, David Harvey, and Henri Lefebvre, I consider how video games engage with the problem of history through the two concepts of everyday life and unevenness. I am invested in the potential of video games for experimenting with the production of history via these two key concepts through form and content dialectically.

I do so by examining the long-running video game series *Legend of Heroes* developed by

Nihon Falcom. More specifically, I argue that the *Legend of Heroes* series' formal structure and content-specific differences for each entry provide a singularly fruitful terrain to engage with the problem of history as a critical production and writing process defined by everyday storytelling and uneven world-building. In the first section, I establish the problem of history as a practice that must critically engage with the notions of time and space. The next two sections examine the everyday storytelling and uneven world-building of *Legend of Heroes* respectively.



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Alexandre Paquet is a scholar of Japanese popular culture with an emphasis on video-games, anime and manga whose research is rooted at the intersection of transnational media studies and critical cultural theory. The core of his work is informed by a utopian framework of social change, engages in an exploration into the depths of popular culture as a productive playground for such change, and advances speculations on new ways of being together. He has published articles on a variety of topics from popular culture in *Mechademia*, *Video Game Art Reader*, and more. Alexandre is also the French representative for the Canadian Game Studies Association.

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