



## Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-machine Interface

*Masamune Shirow*

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## **Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-machine Interface** Masamune Shirow

March 6, 2035. Motoko Aramaki is a hyper-advanced cyborg, a counter-terrorist net security expert heading the investigative department of the giant multi-national, Poseidon Industrial. Partly transcending the physical world and existing in a virtual world of networks, Motoko is a fusion of multiple entities and identities, deploying remotely controlled prosthetic humanoid surrogates around the globe to solve a series of bizarre crimes. Meanwhile, Tamaki Tamai, a psychic investigator from the Channeling Agency, has been commissioned to investigate strange changes in the temporal universe, brought about by two forces, one represented by the teachings of a professor named Rahampol, and the other by the complex, evolving Motoko entity. What unfolds will be all in a day's work...a day that will change everything, forever.

## **Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-machine Interface Details**

Date : Published January 5th 2005 by Dark Horse Comics,U.S. (first published June 28th 2001)

ISBN : 9781593072049

Author : Masamune Shirow

Format : Paperback 312 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Manga, Comics, Graphic Novels, Science Fiction, Cyberpunk



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# From Reader Review Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-machine Interface for online ebook

## Artur Coelho says

Ghost in the Shell original surpreende e aguenta o teste do tempo, como aventura cyberpunk bem humorada. A consciência humana que anima o corpo robótico da Major Kusanagi oscila entre acção pura e a consciência de ser um ser cuja humanidade se resume à sua consciência dentro de um corpo mecânico, num mundo onde a interligação homem-máquina é cada vez mais prevalente.

Ghost in the Shell 2 - Man-Machine Interface não é a continuação direta do primeiro, vai muito mais longe numa história onde outra operacional da agência japonesa Secção 9 está ainda mais integrada no mundo digital, capaz de transferir a sua consciência através das redes, distribuir-se por diversos corpos robóticos, e talvez esteja perto de atingir uma forma de transcendência digital.

O tom é de um cyberpunk barroco, muito visível no exagerado estilo visual, que ultrapassa o do mangá original. O traço de Shirow anda a solta, fascinado com a visão do digital que ainda hoje caracteriza a sua iconografia. No entanto, esta obsessão com a estética e mitografia cyberpunk distrai da história. Shirow passa mais tempo a tentar fazer o equivalente em BD das cenas cinematográficas de hackers a invadir sistemas e a lutar no virtual do que a estruturar uma narrativa coerente.

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## Gianfranco Mancini says

Technobabble/fan service levels are just off-scale in this final volume of GITS manga, sometimes it seems the author is the only one understanding what is going on and the absence of fan favourite Section 9 characters like Batou is almost too much, but Masamune Shirow's artworks are so good here that left breathless this reader.

A beautiful Shell but the Ghost inside was absolutely as not as good.

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## J.M. Giovine says

It's rather intriguing and odd to analyze this sequel, since it feels everything but an actual sequel of the previous Ghost in the Shell. Yeah, Shirow Masamune clarifies at the beginning that this takes place four years after the original, and even so, the story goes all over the place, so much, it doesn't seem to fit in this continuity, with the exception of a couple of references, the prologue and the epilogue, aside of that, this could easily be seen as a crossover. This time, the story focuses on a so-called Motoko Aramaki, a somehow successor (mostly spiritual) to the previous main character, being she a kind of head of a super agency affiliated to the government, who's also a full body cyborg. The thing I noticed with this volume was how random it feels. While the focus and tone are practically the same, as well for some of its art, there's a certain feeling of insecurity, in regards of the story and its characters, specially the main one, since it is not actually clarified what or who she is, for the most part. The main issue is Masamune wants us to dig her as the new main character, but the thing is, the attachment for Motoko Kusanagi was that much in the previous volumes,

now she seems just like one more character, and that only works against her. Now for the art, well, it is impressive, as always, but it was the random addition of 3D art. It works at first, when the visuals are too complicated just to be shown in black and white format, but they feel forced; just something Masamune thought would look cool at the time. And, while in regards of plot, the book still acknowledges some of the existentialistic and humanistic aspects of cybernetics, IA and technology for sci-fi purposes, it's approached in such randomly confusing ways, its everything but enjoyable, at moments. In the end, I guess this "continuation" serves a certain purpose, and at times I did enjoy it, but I only wished this could've been more reminiscent of the first volume, and more concentrated in regards of the storytelling, which I believe it was its weakest aspect. Fans of the first volumes might like it, but casual manga readers could find it a little bit tricky and raw.

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## **E.S. says**

This was by far the best Ghost in the Shell volume I've read and I'm bummed that it's the last volume. From what I understand, there are only 3 volumes of Ghost in the Shell, no? Volumes 1, 1.5, and 2. In this book, the main character is not Motoko Kusanagi, but Motoko Aramaki...otherwise known as Motoko 11, which from my understanding is sort of like....I don't want to say a child of Kusanagi, but rather she has elements of Kusanagi in her as well as the Puppeteer (remember, Kusanagi fused with the Puppeteer...also known as Project 2501?). In this volume Motoko 11 (more than one Motoko prototype then...?) tackles Millennium, the "enemy" of this book who controls a group called Stabat Mater. Millennium is looking into something called Brain Expansion (or rather it's a experiment or project they are working on). Brain Expansion is called off though once Motoko 11 infiltrates them. However, it is also revealed that \*spoilers\* Millennium is also known as number 20...so number 20 of the Motoko hybrids? This volume was as fucking mind-bending as Legion. The artwork was beautiful and the transitions from black-and-white to color were perfect. My only complaints are a) the action was sometimes hard to follow and b) sometimes the vocabulary was so complex, I felt like I needed a dictionary of words for this universe. Shirow's notes were helpful, but I felt like every page something new was introduced and I'm thinking "wait...okay...now what does THIS mean?" Despite some of the confusion, I couldn't stop turning the pages and wanted to find out what happened. IT ENDED IN SUCH A CLIFFHANGER AND THERE ISN'T EVEN ANOTHER DAMN VOLUME. If I'm not mistaken, Kusanagi/The Puppeteer were behind the whole Millennium thing in general, they WEREN'T Millennium necessarily, but I think they were wondering whether or not the brain expansion was worth doing and in the epilogue, I think we see this brain expansion of Kusanagi in some crazy psychedelic combination of science, space, and mythology. But...the end we see (oh shit, I've forgotten her name now, but the woman who was observing all of this happening to Kusanagi) her eyes light up like she's found out some crazy truth, like the meaning of life itself or something, or like HER brain has expanded. Has Kusanagi fused with her? Is she a part of her? I didn't understand it. In fact, sometimes it feels like there isn't a storyline at all, but rather a bunch of technical language that makes perfect sense to the author, but not to the reader. I know...this is a very conflicting review. My bad.

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## **Jordan says**

I really hate to give such a low rating to anything Ghost in the Shell, but this really deserved it.

The majority of this manga is, to put it bluntly, complete and utter crap. I love Ghost in the Shell and I usually love Shirow's art, but this book was pretty terrible. We'll start off with the story. Most of it gets lost

completely in all the technobabble (complete with rambling footnotes) and most of the time I had no idea what was going on. Motoko (not the same as the original) spends most of the story floating around nude in cyberspace while ordering her ridiculous looking AI assistants to put out decoys and toy bombs and other techno jargon nonsense. Most of this could have been cut and the story might have seemed a bit more cohesive. Then there's the art. It's pretty terrible too. Shirow seems to be using some weird combination of more 3-d realistic looking art and flat anime art and it just doesn't work well. It's jarring and most of the 3-d looks bad. He also randomly switches between color and black & white, sometimes right in the middle of the page. Plus there was a ridiculous amount of fanservice everywhere. I'm used to some from Shirow, but the majority of the book was Motoko floating around nude or running around in various bodies flashing her underwear in awkward action shots. Overall I don't think I'd recommend this to anybody. Really the only merit I saw in it was in elements of it that were drawn on for the anime.

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## **The Final Song ❀ says**

That is a lot of shiny girls and technobabble.

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## **Jirka says**

Tak predne, zklamani, ze to neni druhy dil GitS s Motoko. Oproti prvnímu dílu jsem m?l pocit neskute?ného chaosu v d?ji, opakovan? jsem se vracel a ?etl si znovu n?které stránky, což neznamená, že jsem to nakonec pobral. A d?j mi opravdu nesedl, nenašel jsem si k n?mu žádný vztah, nev táhl m?. Oproti prvnímu dílu jsou tu ?asto kresby v jakémsi divném 3D stylu, který mi hodn? nesedl. Z jiných mang jsem zvyklý, že je velmi málo barvené kresby a má sv?j ú?el a smysl, tady jsem na ú?el a smysl nep?išel a z n?jakého d?vodu mi to i dost vadilo. Jo, a sorry, ale poznámky pod ?arou by tady vysta?ily na další knihu, dost to ruší od ?tení. Pro m? osobn? obrovské zklamání z knihy, i ze m? samotného, že m? druhý díl Ghosta prost? nebavil...

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## **Lashaan Balasingam (Bookidote) says**

**You can find my review on my blog by clicking [here](#).**

This was probably one of the biggest disappointments I've ever known in a long time. With a franchise like The Ghost in the Shell, you'd think that everything related to it would be inevitably flawless and indisputable as a cyberpunk classic. Limited to three deluxe editions, the manga is anything but what the franchise's reputation acknowledges it to be. Learning it the hard way was not something I planned on doing, but now that I've been through all three volumes, I won't deny the overwhelming sense of disenchantment I felt for this series. With that being said, I still see the light at the end of this tunnel with the chance to finally check out the anime adaptations that have clearly been the source of all the praise garnered for The Ghost in the Shell name.

What is the final volume of The Ghost in the Shell about? I couldn't even tell you even if you gave me all the time in the world to spell it out for you. The story doesn't exactly follow the iconic protagonist known as Major (Motoko Kusanagi), but instead follows Motoko Aramaki, known as Motoko 11. While not technically the same, they share a lot of elements in common, as the story hints that she might be an offspring of Motoko Aramaki and another key character in the franchise. Nevertheless, Motoko 11 still has

Major's fashion sense and destructive combat skills to help fans fall in love with her. While technically set after the events of the first volume, most of this story arc shows no continuity at all to any of the past events.

And so you must be wondering what is Motoko 11 doing throughout this story. Well, most of the story, if not all, has her floating around naked—without nipples—sort of like a doll with a human face, within a neural-mapped electronic brain as she attempts to hunt down an unknown villain. To do so, she attempts complex and incomprehensible hacking techniques to access hidden pathways, bypass complex protocols and inject viruses, and all that with the help of strange little tech assistant creatures, creatures that visually made no sense and only made me want to ignore most of the time.

Coherence and structure were clearly not Masamune Shirow's strong suit. This volume, while it was just one huge story arc, never tried being coherent even if its publication would have depended on it. As the author attempts to deliver once again an ambitious and complex story, he completely fails to hit his target and gives us what is probably the most unnecessary story ever. If I could sum up what I faced against throughout this reading experience, it would come down to two things: technobabble and pornography. You read that right. Flipping through this volume, I found myself not understanding a single word thrown at me more often than not. I honestly couldn't see what the purpose of throwing random technological instructions left and right could serve to the experience when the story itself was impossible to follow. I simply felt like I was a living fish dropped in the middle of a cat fight: I didn't know what was going on, but I knew something was going to kill me soon.

And then there's the pornography. I'm going to call it just that because that's all it really was. Every single female character in this volume had watermelons on their chest, a stomach slimmer than a tree branch and a buttocks bigger than my pillows. And that obviously includes the protagonist who doesn't hesitate a moment to find herself in a strange position to showcase her assets and her panties. Not only were the designs so unrealistic and were inappropriately showcased every flip of a page, you could easily tell that the purpose of it all was nothing more than to sexually arouse readers. Trust me when I say this happens a lot. Who needs a Playboy magazine when you got this volume of *The Ghost in the Shell* to do the trick. It really was about raising your libido levels, while trying to convey some sort of original idea or philosophy around artificial life. As if pumping all that blood out of your brain to other parts of your body would help a reader reflect on complex ideas. Funny thing is, as I slowly—actually pretty quickly—approached the epilogue, I wondered how the volume didn't feature actual hentai—if you have no clue what that is, I invite you to look it up at your own risk—instead of flirting with softcore pornography. Surprise, surprise. Right towards the end, there's actually a panel that was straight out of hentai.

While the source material might have scarred me momentarily, I still remain optimistic regarding its anime adaptations. After all, after having delved into the manga, it's safe to say that its fame did not arise from there.

Yours truly,

Lashaan | Blogger and Book Reviewer  
Official blog: <https://bookidote.com/>

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I'll never understand this. It should never have existed...

P.S. Full review to come.

Yours truly,

Lashaan | Blogger and Book Reviewer  
Official blog: <https://bookidote.com/>

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## **Sam says**

There are some great ideas explored in this book, and the writing is great. What i found disappointing about the book was its reliance on fan service as a selling point. As far as i can tell from my own perspective, this book would be bought and read by anyone familiar with the series who read the first book, watched the movie, or watched the television show. The amount of aforementioned fan service (a term that refers in general, to mostly unnecessary additions of titillating visuals to a story) in every other installment in the franchise is at a tolerable level, but in this manga series there's just a bit too much to make the story readable. It's kind of embarrassing, in fact. I mean, as far as manga and anime goes, Ghost In The Shell is about as successful as they get. So why sink to such base tactics to sell books? And if you're going to sink to those tactics for selling the book, why bother with the philosophical acrobatics posited by the story? The art and the story appeal to two different demographics, and there's probably not very much crossover. I could go on and on. I mean, if authors would just talk to me before they publish, I could totally help them make their books like, ten times better. Maybe even fifty times better. Sheesh! Don't they know that? :^}

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## **Jesus Flores says**

### **GITS 2**

Varios años después de lo que sucedió en GITS, Makoto en su nueva identidad Chroma es contratada para resolver un caso, aquí ella tiene múltiples cuerpos dobles que puede controlar a distancias, una IA de apoyo que parecen pingüinitos. Lo que empieza con un posible caso simple de sabotaje industrial al parecer termina convirtiéndose en una confrontación con otra IA al parecer derivada de ella misma y con accesos a recursos similares. No solo eso aquí se aborda como tema la conciencia propia de las IA y las implicaciones de los cibercerebros de las personas y sobre una posible fusión de conciencias. La verdad este si requiere un mayor tiempo de lectura. Aparte aumenta mucho las veces en que Chroma tiene que hacer los dives en los cerebros de las personas que investiga o controla y mucha terminología de virus y barreras, planos y capas.

Interesante ver como esa parte de conciencias cibernética y de AI, se compaginan con la parte mistica/espiritual hasta un cierto punto.

5 stars

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## **João says**

Very interesting ideas all around, and nice ending.

But the execution is really bad. Breaking it down:

1 - Narrative: Overly complicated. Sometimes it even seems on purpose. Meaningless phrases and words, technological jargon invented/misused/not explained.

- 2 - Explanations: Or better, the rants. Most of these are extremely annoying and fail to explain anything.
- 3 - Beginning: Worst first chapters in of all Shirow's works I've read. Very hard to get into this GITS2 and start to enjoy it. GITS 1 and 1.5 didn't have this problem.
- 4 - Art: While, having many moments of brilliance, most of the times it's just a mess. Many styles mixed that just don't work. Some pages made me cringe.
- 4.5 - 3D: That overused - horrible - 3D rendering... Why? It just sucks. My eyes are bleeding. And Shirow is extremely talented at drawing. Again: Why?
- 5 - Fan service: Irritating to say the least, the narrative sometimes is lead by it... Awful! It destroyed what could be otherwise a great manga. This killed it for me. Can't take seriously the philosophical aspects being thrown at the same time as no-nipple-boobs. Hundreds... No. Thousands of times.

It's all there. It can almost be grasped: a great manga. You just need to unveil the overflow of awful authorial and editorial decisions. That's it: many layers of awfulness.

I love Ghost in the Shell. But really, many fundamental aspects of this particular volume make it impossible to truly enjoy it.

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## Hamza says

This is a good read, but I truly didn't understand a great deal of it. Unlike the first *Ghost in the Shell* volume, this book is full of *too much* technobabble that only Shirow himself seems to understand. There were so many technological references I didn't understand that I had to constantly google them. Fun fact: about half of them are real, the other half were merely invented for this series. The confusion I experienced with that *and* the jumbled storyline(s) are what caused me to lop off a star rating, as well as take so long to finish the book. I only gave it four stars because I enjoyed trying to follow along, and because I love Motoko and her wacky tech adventures. But those expecting the same thing as the original volume are in for a disappointment.

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## Msr2d2 says

S?abo! Nawet bardzo. Nie tego si? spodziewa?em po kontynuacji Ghost in the Shell. Zamiast kilku ró?nych opowie?ci jest tylko jedna, strasznie rozwleczona i ma?o dynamiczna. Wi?kszo?? "akcji" dzieje si? w ?wiece wirtualnym (na co w zasadzie wskazuje podtytu?), który ukazany jest w sposób strasznie statyczny. Cho? momentami fabu?a ma szans? wci?gn??, to przedziwne opisy star? hakerskich bywaj? na tyle zawi?e, ?e mo?na si? w tym pogubi?.

Nie pomaga tu te? szata graficzna (a w szczególno?ci strony w kolorze), która bardziej nawet szkodzi. W znacznej wi?kszo?ci kadrów r?cznie rysowane t?a i panoramy zast?piono renderami komputerowymi. Zachowano jednak bardziej odr?czn? i klasyczn? form? przy postaciach. Niestety jedno z drugim si? nie ??czy i wygl?da... W zasadzie to nawet nie wygl?da X.x

Drug? bol?czk? szaty graficznej jest dziwny fetysz autora do rysowania postaci kobiecych z perspektywy ukazuj?cej bielizn? i ogólnego nadmiaru goliżny rysunkowej. O ile we wcze?niejszych tomach elementy takowe miały nawet jakie? uzasadnienie fabularne i wyst?powały sporadycznie, o tyle w tym tytule dodano tego tyle, ?e a? strach. Chyba po to, aby przyci?gn?? do lektury jak najwi?ksz? hord? niewy?tych



gimbazjalistów. Po prostu dno dna i pi?? metrów mu?u w kwestii dobrego smaku.

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### Nick Tramdack says

A disappointment, especially for a fan of the original manga. I thought this one lacked heart, stakes, and perspective. But I guess it has something to recommend it if you like absurdly curvy babes shouting out antivirus commands amidst a garishly realized, but nevertheless totally bullshit depiction of cyberspace.

I gather there's some secret twist in the chronology, like the stuff is presented out of order but you only realize that later. However, I couldn't be bothered to figure it out in detail...

What happened to Shirow?

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### Chris Youngblood says

This has got to be literally the single longest book that I have read wherein *nothing happens* for the majority of the book.

I have been through Man-Machine Interface several times cover to cover, and I have to say that the entire 'plot' of the book - so called - could have easily fit into one half the number of editions. I don't know how many pages I skipped during the useless and pointless cyberspace e-"battles" wherein the main character does absolutely nothing except float there on a page packed with pretty CG images and tell her little drones to release "*toy bomb combo B!*" or somesuch nonsense, while they blather at her that "*barrier maze QQQ has fallen, and the enemy has begun action 'X'!!!*". It's almost as if the honorable Mr. Shirow realized that the story he had plotted out had a minimal page count, so he had to pad the story out with gratuitous illustrations of the heroine in skimpy panties and low-cut dresses talking to simplistically designed helpers while floating in a non-specific representation of computer land.

Now, about those gratuitous upskirt shots. I'm beginning to think that Masamune Shirow is a dirty old man with a pen and a panty fetish, because of the number of pages wherein our heroine is depicted either in skimpy clothing, performing martial arts in a skirt (with the point of view conveniently placed to greasily ogle the heroine's unmentionables), or stylistically rendered as completely nude, such as when the characters are floating in cyberspace. There are simply too many of these pages scattered throughout the book for it to be little more than pandering to perverse shut-ins with a hentai fetish. I suppose that it could be argued (if one wished to delve so far into a make-believe world) that those people who have opted to become total cyborgs no longer suffer from the shamefulness of being naked that most people seem to suffer from. If this were true, then where are the naked male cyborgs? I counted only one half-naked male cybernetic organism in the entire book, and the character was actually a 'suit' for yet *another* scantily-clad female cyborg to crawl into and hide within. Any female cyborg that has a position in the healthcare field is dressed like some ultra-distilled male pervert's version of a pornographic nurse, where all the men are in casual clothes, three-piece suits, or heavy concealing armor. Even a female cop cyborg that is taken over by the 'heroine' of the book gets into a fistfight with several robots while wearing a micro-miniskirt, giving the reader several free looks at her gonch.

Of course, there was also the gratuitous, pointless lesbian scene in the first *Ghost in the Shell*, so I think it's

safe to say that Mr. Shirow just enjoys drawing nekkid women. That's fine, if the book is erotica, porn, or even an artistic representation of the female form (as another Shirow book has done). *Ghost in the Shell: Man-Machine Interface* is none of these, however, so the technique seems almost desperate, as if the author were trying to say: *"Look! Boobies! Don't look over here at the lack of story! Just look at the tits on this chick! Hey, check it out, I'm giving you panty-shots galore, too!"*

Don't get me wrong; for the most part, I think all of Masamune Shirow's work is entertaining, complex, well-developed, and a thousand times better than the dreck that passes for anime nowadays (*Naruto*, anyone?). I just feel that this one could have done with either a little more developing and proper scripting, or a lot less page count...and far more of a point to having so many naked women in the book (or fewer naked women to begin with), rather than for some kind of base gratification. *GitS:M-MI* has been touted as a "philosophical romp into the meaning of personality and identity", but I suspect that's just an overenthusiastic PR man trying to get the books to sell.

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