ABSTRACT

The history of combat is primarily the history of radically changing fields of perception. In other words, war consists not so much of scoring territorial, economic or other material victories but of appropriating the immateriality of perceptual field. The function of the eye has become the function of the weapons (Virilio, 1989; 2009). To understand information age warfare we have to understand the concept of representation as a part of our process of violence. The idea of information warfare or an information operation is based on the process where the physical target is no longer destroyed with the kinetic systems, but the process where the non-kinetic systems, like information, scan the symbols-semiotics networks. We like to consume safety different kind of fears. The feeling of the safety fear based on the virtual boundaries, which are set in the movement from “principle” to “practice, in other words in the actualization of the cyber-form. The power of fear is not a form. It is not abstract. It is the movement of form into the content outside of which it is a void of potential function, of the abstract into the particular it cannot be or do without. (see Massumi 1993, 20-21)

Today, particularly the advanced mobile technology, the Internet and the entertainment industry immensely exploit the experiences from different wars and conflicts for example as ideas of computer games. In return the military industrial complex represents its own language for example in the concept of information operations with the help of applications particularly rising from the entertainment industry. The roles of Hector and Achilles, the teachings of Jomini and Clausewitz have an effect in the background of games and gaming. Opposite to Clausewitz's thinking, Jomini took the view that the amount of force deployed should be kept to the minimum in order to lower casualties and that war was a science, not an art. The most central genres in gaming are "strategy", "adventure", "shooter", "sports", "simulation", "music", "role playing" and "puzzle". All of these are related to warfare one way or another. Another interesting fact is that in the 1950's the first computer games were mathematic strategy based games that had been developed in universities (Czosseck, 2009; Peltoniemi, 2009).

Keywords: Computer Games, Decision Making, Information Operations, Propaganda, Representation

From Military Threats to Everyday Fear: Computer Games as the Representation of Military Information Operations

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Sun Tzu the acme of the *Art of War* is a victory without fighting. Chess can be considered as a game connected to the art or war, which follows a clear rational pattern, but the endless number of options makes it chaotic, creative, sudden and even tragic. In his classic piece the Iliad *Homer* describes, through the warriors Hector and Achilles, the two central roles of warfare: warfare controlled by duty and warfare controlled by emotion. This duality can be seen throughout the history of the western art of war, sometimes emphasizing the rational and normative nature of warfare (Hector) and sometimes the intuitive, subconscious and emotional nature of warfare (Achilles). As the science of a new age advanced Jomini developed geometric and mathematical models for warfare, whereas Clausewitz saw that war cannot be controlled rationally and it is always affected by chance or friction. Today, we can find this evolution of warfare, for example, in computer games (Bosquet, 2009; Taylor, 2003).

War themed computer games also have the characteristics of real warfare planning (Allen, 2010; Virilio 2009; Zizek 2010). In the games you can fight almost in a way that feels physically real, advancing block-by-block and by firing at targets, enemies or objects, you can change weapons and ammunition according to the power you need. On the other hand, in the games you can also plan and simulate operations as in real military staffs. In the games you can lead and give tasks, switch operating environments and conditions. This is also done in real military operations (Allen, 2010; Boisot, MacMillian, & Kyeong, 2007). The games also act as a recruiting channel as the young people have a natural command of gaming and the world of play. Game simulators placed in shopping malls give a realistic image of for example Afghanistan and under the guise of entertainment they get the young people interested in the military as an employer. In addition, the movie industry is using crime and war more and more as a frame of reference for the actual story (Peltoniemi, 2009).

War shapes society and society shapes the suppositions related to war (Stahl, 2010; Shaw, 2005). War is rewriting its position as a part of western society, economy, politics and industry. The media, advertising and the Internet enable real-time data transfer where the interfaces of different actors (political, social, economic, military) blend into a one single information flow. The chance is born, that the society becomes permeated with security so that its actions can no longer be intervened in. Also the blending of weapons systems to become more and more like the regular IT systems, especially in the sphere of information warfare, makes the definitions of warfare, weapon and soldier to be relative. Clear norms related to violence drag behind the actual cases. A typical example of this is the information battle between Wikileaks and the Pentagon. The facts are missing and we depend on impressions (Ellul, 1965; Gray, 2002).

In this article I try to describe the post-modern complex networks of different kinds of actors of making war and security. The main argument is that all actors from a single poor young dropout to a high political level state member are part of the complex ‘military-industrial-advertising systems’. The real combat for example in Afghanistan is connected to the high-technology industry and advertising market. For example, warfare of the information age is represented by computer games. There is also a possibility that the news of war and conflict are not real anymore, but a complex level represented and framed to a level that is familiar to our senses (Stahl, 2010).

2. THE PROPAGANDA OF WAR: PERCEPTION AND ITS REPRESENTATION

Charles S. Peirce is one of the creators of the concept of semiotics and representation. According to his theory, the moment before a person becomes conscious is preceded by a numerous series of perceptions of which we are unaware. In other words, according to him, we are never temporally directly simultaneously in
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