

# Monika Brzegowska

## Doctoral dissertation – abstract

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## THE PARADOX OF WAR

In the first chapter of my doctoral dissertation, I present and analyse various viewpoints on war. I am particularly interested in the interrelationship between war and technological advancement. On the one hand, war is the most terrifying human activity, but on the other hand – it is the most powerful trigger of technological progress and scientific development. Therefore, despite its destructive nature, war may be perceived as a source of creative power which brings positive outcomes. This paradox is the subject of my analysis and the inspiration for my dissertation.

Numerous machines, inventions, and technologies which have been designed for military purposes become adapted for civilian use. In my dissertation, I describe examples of such technologies and their applications in everyday life.

In the next part, I examine how wars change their character and form alongside technological change, which makes them even more global and destructive. Artificial intelligence is replacing people in military actions and autonomous weapon systems are being developed. Information technology has enabled and enhanced new forms of military activities, such as cyberwar and wartime propaganda. The boundaries of war have expanded: nowadays, it can be conducted in different forms simultaneously, including conventional, irregular, and psychological warfare, cyberwarfare, and acts of terrorism.

The use of the latest technologies at war accelerates the process of dehumanisation. It allows people to renounce the fundamental moral principle: “Do not murder”. Such technologies, including autonomous robots, can kill from a distance, which reduces the soldiers’ sensitivity and accountability for the committed crimes.

In my dissertation, I focus on the paradox of war which concerns technological development. The interconnection between war, technology, and science is powerful: this is an extremely explosive combination. Apart from this subject, I also present other aspects and examples of the war paradox which I find interesting.

The second chapter is a presentation and description of my art project. I discuss my experience and approach to the main subject as well as the emotions it has provoked in me. Moreover, I outline my inspirations and explorations in this section. The main sources of inspiration for my art project are documentary photographs and films.

Further on, I describe the stages of my art project and research process. The project presented in the dissertation consists of large-format serigraphs and multi-media installations. I used a number of tools and technologies to create it, including those developed for military purposes. I prepared the serigraphs using a computer and graphic design software. Form, shape, and structure are important notions in my project. The character of each work is defined by carefully selected raster images, which play a key role there. I researched the applications and impact of each halftone on the overall shape of the work. I intended to combine traditional printmaking techniques with digital images and new media as well as static images with moving images and sound. I also attempted to find the appropriate correlation between the graphic image and video and sound. By combining various techniques, I confront a world created by means of graphic design with a fragment of reality shown in a video. I wanted the particular components of the installation to complement one another, reinforcing the message this way. There is a fusion between the different media used in the project. In this manner, I juxtapose certain contradictions and opposites: static vs dynamic, traditional vs modern, imaginary vs real. By being complementary, they build a new quality. I understand this approach as analogous to Heraclitus' views on war and conflict. The philosopher believed that the unity of opposites could create a new value and that change could bring a new value into being.

The combination of different media offers a more complex and versatile experience to the audience by engaging a variety of senses.

In the next section of the dissertation, I discuss the impact of the current political situation on my work.

I have selected 9 large-format serigraphs for my art project, alongside 4 multimedia installations.

*MIRAGE 9* | serigraphy

*MIRAGE 22* | serigraphy

*TRANSGRESSION* | serigraphy

*NO MAN'S LAND* | serigraphy

*PARADOX I* | serigraphy

*PARADOX II* | serigraphy

*ERROR* | serigraphy

*SNAKE ISLAND* | serigraphy and sound

Collections:

*MO(U)RNING LANDSCAPE* | serigraphy

*MAYDAY! MAYDAY!* | animation

Multimedia installations:

*CAMPUS MARTIUS* | serigraphy, video projection

*SHOW MUST GO ON...?* | serigraphy, video projection

*ECHO OF WAR* | video projection on corrugated polypropylene sheet

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