

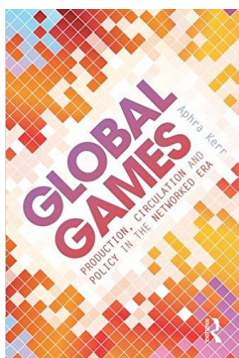
try, the reflection of the sun's rays from the blade of the sword, the colossus must first be found and then it must be figured out how to beat them. It is the same yet different, poetic like ICO, but more accessible. Shadow of the Colossus became a video game representing good taste. Again, the word 'art' was exploited abundantly, as if art was something more than a game, as if art added something to the game, something that is not natural to the game. Art as a higher level of the game, the next thing that video games are aiming for in order to get some rehabilitation. It is not a self-serving pastime, waste of time anymore but it can already bear some true values.

Regardless of the extraordinary amount of naïve ideas of art that have appeared in the rhetoric describing the uniqueness or otherness of the Ueda games, the fact remains that both ICO and Shadow of the Colossus indicate how much video games have changed over the last two decades.

It is the struggle for their own dignity – as an expression of this struggle are discussions about video games and art – but the struggle has turned into open door banging. Overall, video games are treated as copyright works, just like films, novels or operas, and what is most important, video games have identified their own canon, they have been mollycoddling it and taking care that the canon really lives.

Those who are interested in video games more deeply, more essentially, those who do not consider them as an immediate pastime but as something that has its own history, poetics, language, those do not have a problem to return to the old games on new platforms, and that is extremely important. Playing a game for twelve hours, alone, offline, immersing oneself in the story, experiencing it, thinking, feeling, becoming part of it – this experience alone can be new for players two generations younger for whom playing equals a playing online experience that they simply did not expect from a video game. And some may like it, just like some viewers like old black-and-white, silent films. Because of this, the canon makes sense.

That is the reason why ICO and Shadow of the Colossus were released together on Playstation 3 in 2011 and this is also the reason why Shadow of the Colossus has been released for the third time on Playstation 4. Of course, this game looks a bit different, it is renewed but it is exactly the type of renovation that basically does not change anything, it only reaches out to the fact that time is passing. It would be less comfortable to look at the unrenovated battle cruiser Potomkin, an unrenovated Shadow of the Colossus would be played less comfortably, there are no other significant differences.



## GLOBAL GAMES: PRODUCTION, CIRCULATION AND POLICY IN THE NETWORKED ERA

KERR, A.: *Global Games : Production, Circulation and Policy in the Networked Era*. New York : Taylor & Francis, 2017. 228 p. ISBN 978-0-415-85887-8.

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Dr. Aphra Kerr is a senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Maynooth University in Ireland. Global games: production, circulation and policy in the networked era is a book based upon ten years of her discussion and research. As the au-

thor says, „this book aims to provide a theoretically robust and empirically informed but accessible analysis of the political, economic, social and cultural factors shaping production in the digital games industry and analyze how it is globalizing its production operations and localizing its content and services to reach the most lucrative markets“.

The book situates game production in the contemporary socio – historical context. It examines how the influence of liberal democracy and late capitalism in Western developed societies exists alongside the state – driven capitalism of China and other forms. The focus of the book is on commercial market productions. It also provides examples from non – market public, artistic and amateur productions, particularly where they are connected to networks of commercial productions.

The second chapter examines the structure of the games industry at a macro level. It also tries to determine the influence that globalization, the western financial crisis, changing policy regimes and technology have had on trends over the past decade.

The third chapter explores how the digital games industry produces its games and what type of work is involved. The author believes that just as work has become more socialized in the information industries, employment has become more individualized.

Chapter four sets out to challenge the perception, that while marketing gets some attention, other processes are often overlooked – “dismissed as below the line, as non – creative and non – strategic”. It is described how marketing departments have become involved in player acquisition, the analysis of player data and content generation aimed at customer relationship management. The author also explores their growing ability to collect, manage and utilize business, technical and player data. She believes that an area which is crucial to the circulation of games is localization, which often begins at the creation stage where code and assets are internationalized and made ready for localization.

Chapter five analyses policies aimed at encouraging game development in particular locations. The author looks at different situations in Europe and North America or Canada and in China or South Korea where policies are framed in opposition to neighbouring countries, and finance is targeted at the development of healthy games drawing upon historical themes. A related trend which this chapter explores is the rise of collectives, communities and pop – up events that are bottom up, underground and not driven purely by the market. The final aspects are new legislative and regulatory acts and concerns, which again vary across space and offer us a way of thinking about how companies, states and other participants attempt to shape game production.

The author in this book focused on changes in the professional production of market – orientated digital games as they harness and adapt to online and offline networks. She also examined broader organizational, institutional, legal and policy shifts and tensions surrounding these changes. She believes, and we must agree that the digital games industry provides media, communication and games scholars with a rich terrain for research – enabling us to challenge and renew existing theories and concepts.

Aphra Kerr in this book provides a very complex introduction to every step of the game lifecycle. Production of a game is a very complex area in which can be found a wide variety of influences. It must have its main idea coming from historical contents or everyday needs, it must have a target group which can bring the game to real economy life, it must have a production team which starts from the basic facts

known about the games field. In the first phases of lifecycle it requires a huge human input, work, ideas, time and of course capital. The socio – historical context may be different in every country around the world, but only if the main idea is right, can worldwide success be achieved. This book takes a look into the complexity of game production and defines several milestones in this path.

Only a complex team can provide a complex background of success production. Successful games must be supported by the strong structure of the games industry at any level. Aphra Kerr describes the influence of globalisation at a macro level, western and eastern cultures, policy regimes with their indirect influence. Also financial crisis and technological progress is not forgotten.

Production teams are people located in their environment, from which they receive ideas. Aphra Kerr describes the effect of, for example, social networks on game authors and employees.

After mass production the next step is the marketing of a game. It has to be creative because a new game must be interesting and strategically effective to be able to present the product in a very short space of time. Customer referral seeks only such a game that will appeal to him and hence the task of marketing is to convey information in a short hand form.

Around the world exists a network of players with which players are involved, as well as associations and companies producing games. This network covers data in the form of games and their ideas on one hand, and on the other hand data that travels as feedback from players. The entire interchange mechanism is continuous and interconnected. Many companies do not only process the data, but convert it into new products. The gaming net is then fed by this circle, as detailed in Aphra Kerr's book.

Business around the world has the same goals but can have different local policies. The Global Games book also deals with these differences based on the different historical circumstances of each region and country. These differences between Western Caribbean countries such as North America, Canada and Europe or China, South Korea and Japan are described in the book. Different perceptions of fun and humour, actions and drama must be taken into account not only in the game but also in communication and marketing. The book accompanies and draws on the various currents and trends that have a fundamental and spill-over effect on the area.

Digital games are expanding around the world. No part of society is completely immune. It is therefore very important to know the rules that move these worlds and which are also involved in transforming our society. This book by Aphra Kerr is definitely an important part of this international information exchange. In the digital world, which is invisible to our eyes, the mechanism of the creation and consumption of individual game components is revealed. At various stages, it shows the impact of social factors, historical ties, economic opportunities, plural efforts and motivations of individuals and societies. All this is displayed over a longer time horizon and by taking into account changes in individual cultures. Aphra Kerr has created a book that can be an encyclopaedia of the past, or a manual for the future. In one place, it gathers comprehensive information about the world of digital games in a global company.