Night Watch:
Transmedia, Game and Nation

GREG DOLGOPOLOV
The University of New South Wales

Abstract: In this article, I examine the various gaming adaptations of *Night Watch* as a de facto part of the transmedia project flow. The *Night Watch* storyworld represented a series of successful adaptations of the novel into multiple platforms of popular culture, film and various video games. However I argue that the concept of transmedia cannot fully account for the dynamics of multiplatform narratives, popular culture adaptations and commercial imperatives without a consideration of the national popular culture industries. As *Night Watch* took on the quality of a Russian national project across multiple media platforms, its realisation as videogame suggests that a national approach to studying the game as part of the transmedia experience is required along with an overview of thematic, industrial and game play issues. I seek to explore the demands of transmedia and Russian national popular culture in a case study that investigates the relationship between transmedia and the national Russian computer game adaptations of *Night Watch*.

Keywords: *Night Watch*, computer games, national cinema, adaptation, transmedia, cross-platform, popular culture, Russia.

> The *Night Watch* game offers you a chance to try your hand as a Light Other, to feel the sharp edge of the battles between Light and Darkness in these peaceful (to ordinary humans) times. And if you are an Other yourself, you'll have a chance to see yourself through other people's eyes, which can be quite useful too (*Night Watch PC*, User Manual, 2005: 5).

Night Watch [Nochnoi dozor], Timur Bekmambetov's 2004 cinematic adaptation of Sergei Lukianenko's 1998 best-selling fantasy novel became the catalyst for a discontinuous range of popular, unlicensed and user-generated cultural transformations across a range of media platforms. While the videogames and urban role playing games were not as popular as the film and the books, collectively the Night Watch storyworld[1] became an early example

---

[1] The storyworld is a key terms that relates specifically to transmedia texts and insists on strict narrative rules of shared universe continuity. Mike Jones provides a clear definition, 'In the modern age the core creative IP is not

of Russian transmedia. *Night Watch* dominated Russian popular culture from 2004-7 with the story universe spreading across a range of media and cultural activity including advertising, promotional campaigns, billboards, fan engagements on nascent social networking sites, a variety of computer games, pop songs and a parody version released on DVD. A detailed description of *Night Watch* is not essential here – suffice to say it is a supernatural vampire thriller that roams freely through history and popular cultural references in an exuberant battle between Light Others (good) and Dark Others (evil).[2] In this essay, *Night Watch* in italics refers to the film, the novel and the published games, whereas the non-italicized title denotes the broader social phenomenon and the transmedia narrative. Media scholar and transmedia guru, Henry Jenkins, defines transmedia storytelling as 'a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes it[s] own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story' (2011). However, the concept of transmedia has become limited in enabling an understanding of the dynamics of multiplatform narratives, popular culture adaptations and commercial imperatives outside Hollywood. This optimistic buzzword has too many rules and promises but does not accommodate a national dimension.

In this paper I examine the catalytic relationship between the *Night Watch* film and a variety of videogame adaptations in terms of transmedia and the concept of the 'national' to argue that debates about national cinema are relevant to making sense of videogames and cross-platform storytelling. Games studies have avoided engagement with concepts of the national (I discuss this avoidance in detail below). In contrast, blockbuster films, such as *Night Watch,* are rarely discussed outside a national cinema framework. I seek to explore the demands of transmedia and Russian national popular culture in a case study that investigates the relationship between transmedia and the national Russian computer game adaptations of the bestselling book and blockbuster film *Night Watch.* Is it possible or indeed appropriate to analyse games from a national perspective by employing some of the strategies of national cinema analysis such as textual and thematic studies that attempt to structure a 'natural' relationship with an imaginary nation? Methodologically I draw on the discussions of Susan Heyward about framing national cinemas to make sense of the relationship between Russian transmedia and videogame adaptations (Heyward 2000: 88 – 102). Susan Heyward, in reading Tom O'Regan 1996 analysis of Australian national cinema, explains that 'national cinema becomes an object of knowledge and a problem of knowledge […] by viewing cinema in

---

a plot but a Storyworld for which all manner of plots may potentially emerge on all manner of platforms. When we remind ourselves of this principle we are prompted to consider a non-medium specific approach to screen story-telling and development' (2011).

[2] The Others are two opposing supernatural groups of magicians, witches and shape shifters that appear human but are different to humans. The Light Others believe they are morally good and work to help humans as members of the Night Watch, an organisation dedicated to policing the actions of the Dark Others. The Dark Others are dedicated to hedonism and blood and operate as members of Day Watch, which polices the actions of the Light Others thereby striking a power equilibrium that has lasted thousands of years. Dina Khapaeva argues that the Light and Dark Others are members of two opposing vampire clans and that 'humans are entirely instrumental and play a marginal role in the battles' (2011). For more detailed discussions of the film see Norris 2007, Strukov 2010 and Khapaeva 2011.

a relational and interdisciplinary context it does not allow for a "naturalising" of the concept of national cinema but rather it causes a calling of things into question and in so doing generates problems in three areas, the critical, the political and policy-wise' (2000: 93). There is no denying the problems associated with defining national cinema or asserting that videogames are not cinema and they have a variety of different elements and development process that circumvent the highlighting of national origins. But in the case of Night Watch there is an occasion for framing a national element in videogame production, distribution and consumption in a relational and interdisciplinary context that, following O'Regan and Heyward, acknowledges the 'object of knowledge and the problem of knowledge' (Heyward 2000: 93). I will examine the national cinema perspective of Night Watch by way of exploring Russian computer games and the efficacy of a national dimension to game studies. I then examine three different types of gaming adaptations of Night Watch in order to examine the flows and incongruities of Henry Jenkins' articulation of the transmedia process. I argue for an expansion of the concept of transmedia that incorporates a consideration of platform quality, non-systematic flows and issues of the national.

National

Timur Bekmambetov's 2004 cinematic adaptation, *Night Watch*, was presented as a national project of state significance that signaled the revival of the Russian film industry (Norris 2007). The film's producer and Director General of ORT (Channel One), Konstantin Ernst,[3] loudly proclaimed at the premiere, 'this is our cinema, and whoever isn't with us is against us' ('Zhazhda' 2004: 11). Ernst saw the film and structured the ensuing discourse as a testament of Russia successfully responding to American popular culture. Stephen Norris explains this patriotic ardour:

> For many moviegoers (and some critics), *Night Watch* used the commercial and technical aspects of Hollywood to offer a more satisfying, more 'Russian' film, therefore beating Hollywood at its own game—the fact that the film cost only $4 million to make was often cited as 'proof' of this 'victory.' In effect, this aspect of the *Night Watch* phenomenon is part of a larger debate over what is 'Russian' amidst 'American' products (2007).

The focus on national projects needs to be seen in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing official search for a unifying, patriotic and prospective Russian 'national idea'. Although the plea by former President Boris Yeltsin, following victory in the 1996 elections, to produce a 'national idea' failed, the desire for a unifying vision for Russia has nonetheless persisted in official rhetoric. The *Night Watch* phenomenon was constructed as an allegory for nation building and a revitalisation of the local audience, cajoling them to take pride in domestic production, special effects and a uniquely Russian spiritually rich narrative that could compete with imported Hollywood fare on an equal footing. However, did

---

[3] *Night Watch* and *Day Watch* were produced by Konstantin Ernst and Anatoli Maksimov for ORT [Channel One], Russia's state funded but commercially focused national broadcaster. Ernst remains Director General of ORT.

the game adaptations associated with the story's universe similarly stand for a strong, national gaming industry or take part in the perennial directive from above for patriotism and a revival of a national identity? No. The videogame industry was at that stage largely outside a nation-building discourse or state funding. The Night Watch videogames that emerged on the back of the film's mainstream success were not used explicitly by the State for nation building purposes. But that did not stop various unauthorized Russian producers from blatantly commercializing the storyworld across every available platform. The games were only a part of the supplementary adaptation and cross-platform branding of the Night Watch universe, thereby prospectively asserting a robust national popular culture through vigorous commercial activity. The emerging transmedia event did not have an explicit national component, but it did strike new ground in innovating Russian cultural and commercial practices.

It is worth pausing for a brief engagement with the idea of the 'national' as a framing device in relationship to Russian popular culture. The nation is a political and cultural construction that is often presented as natural, distinctive, unified, authorised, non-contentious, constant over time and inevitably positive notwithstanding endearing local quirks. Nancy Condee in her analysis of Russian empire, nation and culture provides a critical analysis of the problems associated with the discourses of naturalising the concept of the Russian nation. Reading against Benedict Anderson's famous invocation of imagination she argues that 'his text is productive largely as a cogent articulation of its inapplicability to Russian historical congeries' (2009: 10). Condee suggests a 'more nuanced reading (i.e., one that permits the cultural text to speak back to us with a broader range of possible, available interpretations) might find a displacement of the national in favour of a diversity of strategies more suited to its imperial particularity' (2009: 11). This heterological approach that problematizes nation, state, empire, (re)constructions national identity and nation-building projects by presidential edict is central to our understanding of cultural artefacts in a political context. National cultural formation is not reification, but the product of domestic, autonomously connected industries that engage a variety of audience and critical communities that operate largely independently of the state and, while possibly distinctive, are not necessarily constant, natural or unique. The approach to examining the gaming adaptations of the Night Watch storyworld are based on a framing methodology taken from national cinema studies along with their attendant issues. I argue that these cross-platform adaptations of *Night Watch* represent, in terms of Jenkins' definition, a chaotic and commercialised transmedia process that has an important association with a heterological discourse of nation.

Transmedia

Transmedia provides conceptual opportunities for making sense of adaptations across multiple media platforms. But it appears that issues of quality and a national dimension are neglected in studies of transmedia. Similarly there is an assumption in Jenkins' writing that transmedia is a neutral process with equal standards and equivalence across all platforms that support the storyworld. In the cross-platform adaptations of *Night Watch* it became obvious that while different platforms supported the same storyworld, there were substantial differ-

ences in audience commitment and engagement with the individual properties yet marginal 'systematic dispersal' of the fiction. Does this lack of system preclude *Night Watch* from being transmedia?

In issue 6 of *Digital Icons: Studies in Russian, Eurasian, and Central European New Media*, 'Transmedial Practices in Post-Communist Spaces,' Natalia Sokolova tantalisingly proposes that with 'some reservations the *Night Watch* project was transmedia' (2011: 9). In this paper I ask whether a multi-platform story can be partially transmediated with 'reservations'? Does it have to be all or nothing? Sokolova argues that because *Night Watch's* main producer, ORT actively promoted the entire project 'from above', and because it remained largely a commercial entity with insignificant participatory cultural development, there was insufficient transmedia engagement (2011: 16). Although *Night Watch* was promoted by ORT, the resource rich, State funded national broadcaster, there were no assertions by the producers or commentators that the various platforms of *Night Watch* were part of a central-ised transmedia strategy. Neither ORT nor the producers performed the role of a central authority that systematically dispersed and controlled the Night Watch storyworld across multiple platforms, licensed merchandise and collected revenue. There was widespread fan activity but it was not harnessed creatively into the project development. Fan engagement involved a broad range of responses to the various associated platform outputs (not always positive), thereby maintaining the Night Watch storyworld in the popular cultural spotlight. However, cumulatively and retrospectively, Night Watch performed as transmedia. What is a stake in being transmedia? In Sokolova's figuration, transmedia is a higher state of the multiple platform adaptation process with a quality imprimatur based on audience participation. From a production perspective, *Night Watch* was not conceived as a transmedia project. More precisely, it was an example of Russia's emerging, cynically commercial approach to cross-platform franchising that engaged audiences in a complex, pervasive and compelling storyworld.

Night Watch was more than an adaptation of a best-selling novel. Henry Jenkins suggests that the difference between adaptation and extension is that the latter 'seeks to add something to the existing story as it moves from one medium to another' (2011). Whereas the literary text may have been the catalyst, there is no suggestion of its primacy in the ensuing cross-platform story telling process once it becomes activated by participatory cultural flows. The different platforms of the Night Watch world extended the story, added details and characters but as informal or perhaps disorganized cross media storytelling. Monique de Haas explains that cross media storytelling is 'communication where the storyline will direct the receiver from one medium to the next' (Hannele et al. 2004: 19). There is little evidence that *Night Watch* was a planned transmedia project or that the communication passed directly from one cultural site to the next as the cross-platform storytelling appeared retrospectively and discontinuously. The *Night Watch* project connected various properties producing a de facto transmediality that was not managed by the state with audiences and players following each iteration of the storyworld on different platforms as they emerged chronologically. It became an all-media storytelling project with extensive fan interaction and chaotic narrative developments that exceeded Jenkins' limiting systematic dispersal. The state may have sponsored the broad nationalisation of the Night Watch project (but not its individual components)

while enjoying the benefits of appropriating the storyworld's spread into broader popular and commercial activity.

The lack of campaign planning or the requisite transmedia demand for story to get dispersed systematically in order to create a unified and coordinated entertainment experience actually supported a more open participatory culture. The chaotic, non-systematic Night Watch universe activated various points of entry into the popular culture because there was imperfect orchestration, minimal franchise regulations but considerable fan activity (commercial and socially creative) around a complex fictional world. This universe could sustain multiple interrelated characters and their interactions around the basic premise of the battle between the Light Others and the Dark Others. At each stage, individually and cumulatively across the platforms, the Night Watch universe offered consumers new information and experience (some commercial and some fan-based) forcing a continuous revision of understanding the fiction as a whole. 'Additive comprehension' is game designer Neil Young's term for referring to the ways that each new text adds and expands the interpretative possibilities that occur when fictional franchises are extended across multiple texts and media (Jenkins 2006: 279). The virulent dispersal of the Night Watch story across multiple delivery environments dominated the Russian popular culture sphere inadvertently creating a project of national significance.

National Gaming?

If *Night Watch,* the film, took on the quality of a patriotic Russian national project, does this necessarily carry over to other media platforms? The Night Watch games were unique in that they were made in Russia and staged their action in contemporary Moscow, but they resided outside the national project economy that the film and books enjoyed. They had, in Tom O'Regan's terms (1996: 45), a series of relations between national and mainstream games (the gaming equivalent to Hollywood), national and international gaming industries and the games' and industries' socio-political contexts. But in the absence of a national approach to games studies there remains only a de facto association with the national. The game adaptations also featured an 'interdisciplinary approach' in relation to national cinemas that, in this context, takes into account their economic industrial base, but also criticism within film and game studies and cultural policies and political culture. This suggests that a national approach to studying the videogames as part of the transmedia experience is required along with a sketch of the thematic, industrial and game play issues.

Videogames are different to traditional understandings of cinema as territorialised and authored, although cinema in the age of YouTube is a radical departure from established funding and distribution models. In contrast to films, games have a variety of different inputs, infrastructure and development process that circumvent the highlighting of national origins. Aside from some small-nation boosterism (Knight & Brand 2008), or scholarship on notions of American cultural imperialism (Dyer-Witherford and de Peuter 2009), or the ethics of racialized representations in mainstream games that re-enact race based pedagogies (Chan 2005), there has been little in the way of exploring videogames from a national per-

spective. An important formative work in charting the field of national gaming is Cao and Downing's (2008) article on the video games industry in China. Their paper combines a history of the emergence of videogames in China from pirate copies and imports of Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese material to the development of popular domestic products. Cao and Downing explore the nexus between the industry and the political and economic context, the relationship between Asian producers, the tastes and values of local gamers and an introduction to some examples of domestic production. Although quite descriptive, it sets the groundwork for future national approaches to examining emergent videogames markets.

Unlike national cinemas and the attendant discourse, the discussion of video games tends to avoid an engagement with the national. Is it possible or indeed appropriate to analyse video games from a national perspective by employing some of the structures of the established national cinema analysis? In examining Eisenstein's nation building cinematic projects, Noel Carroll and Sally Banes reason that 'If, as Benedict Anderson (1983) has suggested in his classic *Imagined Communities*, the idea of a nation is in large measure imagined retrospectively, the Soviet Union offers an interesting counterpoint – that of a nation imagined prospectively' (2000: 121). Russia has a burgeoning videogame industry[4] but until recently and, unlike the resurgent national cinema,[5] there has been an uncertain relationship with the State. Russian cinema is dominated by state financial support. In contrast, the Russian games industry has traditionally operated with minimal government intervention. Then in 2009-10, a series of government proclamations began to change the landscape. In November 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced plans 'to form a powerful centre for research and development' in the hi-tech and innovation sector (RIA 2010 March 12). Then in April 2010, Medvedev stated, 'the country needs to develop its own computer games industry' (RIA 2010 April 29). This call to the Commission on Modernization and Technological Development of Russia's Economy [Komissiia po modernizatsii i tekhnologicheskomu razvitii u ėkonomiki Rossii] led to the government commissioning a number of 'patriotic games'. This modest proposal demarcated a distinction between national games, that is games produced within the Russian industry and critical economy, and the concept of 'patriotic games' – that is, games designed to boost young people's flagging patriotism through the production that would promote the Kremlin's vision of the 'historic truth', especially around representations of WWII in order to support Dmitry Medvedev's 2009 decree on preventing the falsification of history.[6] Incongruously the project for developing gamer patriotism was devised through the commercial production of six flight simulator games – an area of expertise for the domestic games industry, but it is hard to imagine these games instilling patriotism though a program of youth inoculation. However, it is with this appeal and the ensuing government support that a national dimension to digital games emerged in Russia. Direct funding

---

[4] According to a report from research firm DFC Intelligence, Russia has 'the fastest growing PC online market […] The market for Russian games was about $500 million in 2011, and is expected to grow at an annual rate of about 15 percent to $1.5 billion by 2016' (DFC Intelligence Predicts 2012).

[5] Birgit Beumers notes that 'as the Russian economy stabilized under Putin, the cinema sector began to grow and soon advanced to become the fifth largest film market in the world' (2011:11). The production of feature films peaked in 2007-08 with 107 and 106 titles respectively. But due to the impact of the financial crisis, production in 2011-12 has dropped to below 2006 levels (The Film Industry in The Russian Federation 2010: 46).

[6] I am grateful to Stephen Norris for pointing out this connection, 'Kremlin Works to Prevent Falsification of History' (2 November 2009).

for developers and government guidance on 'appropriate' ideas goes a long way towards creating a sense of 'national' gaming. State intervention in gaming themes invariably generates a greater awareness of national origins as well as potential gamer antagonism to patriotic, but poorly developed domestic videogames. Yet as Simon Shuster suggests that 'despite rave revues from Russian officials, critics deplored the release of "Eugene Onegin: Devil's Mercy", which sought to provide a lesson in literature by rendering the hero of Alexander Pushkin's masterpiece as a zombie killer' (2010). Shuster quotes Alexei Pastushenko, a spokesman for 1C-Softclub, a Russian game developer working closely with the government, who acknowledged, 'of course if you want to pull in gamers, patriotism doesn't cut it' (2010).

Possibly the naming of nation in game development may be counter-productive as it denies the opportunity for the game to stimulate fantastical possibilities in the global popular without national attribution. For example, released in 2011 Team Bondi's *L.A. Noire* quickly became a critical success and Australia's first premium title. Published by Rockstar Games, it is set in Los Angeles in 1947 and challenges the player to solve a range of cases. Adopting a distinctive film noir style it has outwardly nothing to do with Australia. Traditionally national cinema audiences anticipate the representation of identifiable characters, landscapes and native narratives. Videogames are not bound by the same expectations.

Australians have been making videogames for an international market since games moved from the arcades to home computers and consoles in the early 1980s. Despite this long history in the industry and the creation of a number of influential games, the profile of game designers within Australian cultural and media industries has neither attracted the attention of most Australians nor been widely celebrated as a significant Australian cultural achievement (Knight & Brand 2008). Similarly, in Russia, the well-developed national games industry with multiple international successes of domestic titles (*Tetris*, 1984; *IL-2: Shturmovik,* 2001; *Men of War*, 2009) and a strong track record of effective localisations of imported games for Russian consumers has not benefited from widespread domestic recognition, mainstream media celebration or state financial support. National origins of game setting, production and development are perhaps less important than in films, but their appearance and discourse operate differently to the film industry. A key factor is state support and funding for films, as opposed to games, which typically receive less government assistance.[7]

After having been ridiculed with stereotypical portrayals as mafia criminals and having World War II history rewritten*,* the Russian government has finally awoken to the importance of controlling the narratives and structures of representation in the gaming universe. President Dmitry Medvedev said, 'There is a gaming industry in Russia that I believe can be very significant for the upbringing of our children. Russian game development exists and we have to support it. We can't rely on foreign publishers alone' (Education Ministry 2010). It is understandable why the debate has turned the freewheeling, apolitical gaming cultural market

---

[7] In Australia a campaign by computer game development industryasks, 'if *Happy Feet 2* the movie is eligible for tax breaks, Happy Feet 2 the computer game should be eligible for something similar' (Boland 2011). The *Playing for Keeps* (2007) report surveyed a number of high profile game producing nations. The results show that France, Singapore, Canada and South Korea have good government funding environments while the UK, Australia and the USA have low government funding environments. It would be useful to compare the funding environments of the games sector to state support for a national film industry in the same countries.

towards a national cinema framework by the authorities, keen to exercise greater control over popular culture. State funding of the games industry does not guarantee production outcomes and it is worth noting that most indigenously produced games prior to these Presidential proclamations had a robust sense of a national identity, although an ill-defined sense of export opportunities. Since 2010 there are clear signs that Russia plans to fund and support domestically produced patriotic games through tax breaks and a $10.8 million grant to help develop a series of patriotic titles. Pavel Zyryanov, a member of parliament's committee on youth policy stated,

> What we need is more programmers who have a patriotic education, who are on the right ideological level. Computer games today are part of a vital ideological platform that effects the consciousness of our young people. They learn history, they adopt values, and it's important that this process is given a pro-Russian background (Shuster 2010).

These projected efforts would redouble the patriotic impulse of the Russian gaming industry that has found success largely by focusing on the role of the Red Army in the Great Patriotic War, medieval history and military simulators. The emergence of state support for the games industry in Russia will bring a greater emphasis on national issues in gaming and their relationship to the cinema and other media platforms.

Night Watch Film and Gaming

The broad variety of *Night Watch* game adaptations across a range of formats was not part of a structured cross-platform marketing strategy or fan-generated creativity. The games were indirect adaptations drawing pragmatically on the novel, the film, the critical discussions and interpretations of the storyworld that were circulating within popular culture. The games ranged from casual online shooters that used the iconography of the movie, but without any licensing or narrative depth[8] to extensively developed, licensed and distributed globally computer games. There was an active social network presence with fan videos on YouTube and the emergence of a Massive Multiplayer Online Game role-playing game that built up a community of players over many years (Dozory.ru). Regional communities went partially off-line playing the extreme night game DozoR (www.dzzzr.ru) with the game spreading rapidly across Russia. These games provided various degrees of extending the complex fictional world of *Night Watch* with character background and plot development, but it was not systematic, unified or coordinated entertainment experience in the same way as *The Matrix* or *Glee*. The cornucopia of Night Watch related adaptive activity does not correspond to Henry Jenkins' transmedia storytelling requirements of 'systematic dispersal across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience' (2011). Despite the commercial drive of ORT (Channel One), to promote and develop the Night Watch brand, there was a limited systematic dispersal. Undisciplined fan activity and small-scale profiteers took ownership of the storyworld. There was little coordination of

---

[8] Online shooter game *Nochnoy Dozor* (2005) created by web design studio Naïve (www.art-Naïve.ru).

how the story developed across and between platforms; suffice to say that it did maintain Night Watch at the height of national popular culture for a number of years and that in itself served the state's de facto national project.

The *Night Watch* storyworld was the first Russian book to cinema to web to game crossover.[9] The author, Sergei Lukianenko, is an avid gamer and it is conceivable that the novel was inspired by gaming. Bekmambetov's film features a narratively important filmic representation of a gaming sequence that asserts an innovatively hybridizing, postmodern aesthetic that Vlad Strukov argues is a surprising form of generational connection and plot predestination (2010: 208, 214). Appearing three times throughout the film, the un-named *Street Fighter* (1987), *Mortal Kombat* (1992) styled arcade game plays a key role in foreshadowing the narrative. It demonstrates the Lord of Evil, Zavulon's (Viktor Verzhbitskii) attempted mastery over fate by playing a videogame fight simulator. The in-film gaming offers a brief glossy texture to amplify the decadence of the Dark Others. The Light Others have meaningful jobs as electricians, while the Dark Others play games. Zavulon, enraged by the Light Other Anton (Konstantin Khabenskii) killing his beloved vampire, Andrei, plays a videogame to relax, honing his evil strategies by sparring with his enemy in the virtual arena of an arcade fighter on his Playstation 2. In this game within the film, a muscled-up avatar version of Zavulon dressed in dark cloak, black string t-shirt and sporting a white Mohawk fights an opponent in a green suit and dark glasses, seemingly a better dressed version of a Light Other, brandishing what seems to be a screwdriver and a fluro-tube. The virtual Zavulon rips his own spine out to fashion a jaggered sword, while Zavulon the game-player assumes an executioner pose with his controller, predicting the Wii game controller by several years. He has his green-suited opponent at his mercy, ready to execute him when suddenly the Light Other springs up and kills him in one hit by stabbing the screwdriver into his skull. The English words, 'You Lose' in large medieval font throbs on the screen with the avatar Zavulon rocking backwards with the screwdriver protruding from his forehead. Introducing the in-game film twice before the final battle on the rooftop suggests that Zavulon foresaw his final battle with Anton over Egor (Dmitrii Martynov) and was strategizing how to win the allegiances of the powerful young Other through game play. It is through game play that Zavulon sees his destiny and is thereby able to make alternative choices in order to win. Zavulon has worked out how to beat the game and thereby defeat Anton not through brute force, but by cunning. Rather than receiving a screwdriver in the forehead, Zavulon manages to turn the tables on Anton by substituting a child avatar (Egor, Anton's son) for himself, thereby turning Egor against his father and choosing to join Zavulon's Dark Others. The in-film game plays an integral narrative and stylistic role in the film adaptation of the book and may have catalyzed the ensuing transmediation flow.

---

[9] The crossover between various platforms and properties was unlike the West a novelty in Russia. The first film and soundtrack crossover was noted as taking place in September 2000 with the release of *Brother 2* (Brat 2, Balabanov, 2000). The soundtrack was released to coincide with the film's public screening (Kontsert 2000). I thank Dawn Seckler for alerting me to this event.

Extending *Night Watch:* PC Game Adaptations

A range of videogames emerged in quick response to the film's success no doubt in order to cash in on the popularity of the storyworld and perhaps because of the in-film cues connecting the film to computer games. Given the novelty of this commercial relationship in the Russian context, it is arguable whether the games were structured promotional devices, casual profiteering or a form of multi-platform storytelling, keeping the Night Watch universe at the forefront of mainstream popular attention. As there was no evidence of centralized ownership or coordination between the various properties it would be hard to argue for one or another of these possibilities. The outcome was that the Night Watch transmediation had a national dimension and reflected the economies of commercial and state media synergies in a general popular cultural commercialization of the emerging brand. The release of two different PC games maintained audience involvement in the storyworld before the start of the promotion campaign for the film's sequel, *Day Watch* (2006) and connected cleverly with the international marketing of the film and DVD.

There have been two commercial PC[10] game adaptations that explore the Night Watch universe: an arcade style car racing game and a real-time role-playing vampire slaying game called *Night Watch PC*. Both games are set in Moscow within the worlds invented by Lukianenko and Bekmambetov but are extensions and elaborations rather than faithful adaptations. Both feature the battle between the Light Others and the Dark Others but only very limited choice in gamer's selection of which side they will inhabit. *Night Watch Racing* (Publisher: Noviy Disk Developer: Psycho Craft Studio) is an arcade style car racing game set around Moscow's streets (without the horrendous traffic jams). It was released for PCs in December 2005 and tied in well with the marketing campaign in the lead up to the January 2006 theatrical opening of the second film in the series, *Day Watch.* The game was not licensed and therefore its connections to the film are limited to concept and a few still character images. Players choose one of six avatars resembling the film's characters and race around convincing Moscow streetscapes in an attempt to tip the balance between the forces of Darkness and Light. There are two versions of the same game, *Night Watch Racing* and *Day Watch Racing.* Purchase choice defines the gamer's national allegiance, car selection with its unique magical powers and, more importantly, the soundtrack played on the car stereo. The Night Watch listen to classic Russian rock and drive yellow Soviet-era domestic cars; whereas Day Watch play gangster rap and get about in jazzed up black, imported modern cars. The Day Watch disk features swearing and profanities and is not recommended for children under eighteen. This identification of Others with a style, social values and modernity closely resonated with the novel and the film's assignation of moral identification. At a narrative level this distinction asks questions of the players about choice and their level of identification with clichéd national identity formations highlighting their imaginary and, possibly ironic, association with positive patriotic characters or foreign criminal aristocracy. In terms of game play, foreign popular culture loving criminals were not discriminated against.

---

[10] The majority of games sold or downloaded in Russia have been PC games (personal computer). Since 2008 consoles (PlayStation, Xbox and Wii) have emerged indicating a greater mainstreaming and commercialisation of computer game culture.

At a commercial level, this is a cute marketing ploy that demands an early decision by would-be players. Unlike the film, novel and PC game version, the racing game and the multiplayer online game provided players and audiences an equal opportunity to take on the Dark Others' point of view. This is significant in that it frees players to engage with their choice of national identity outside of the proscribed positive value of the Light Others as good, patriotic folk-Russians.

The game employs the ideas, aesthetics, rules, values (team play rather than individual performance) and some of the characters (Zavulon and Gesser), but extends the storytelling into a car racing dynamic where winning the street race impacts on the future fate of the world. *Night Watch Racing* provides the player with limited opportunities to choose, but it does make a point of highlighting its patriotic attributes. For an arcade racing game it has the requisite national gaming elements with its setting, style and soundtrack choice. There was minimal 'additive comprehension': the racing world mimicked the film's aesthetics and cannibalized the novel's concepts, while the racing tracks profiled Moscow streetscapes. The game provided negligible character backstory, but it did allow consumers to engage with supplementary narratives and experiences within the Night Watch universe, even if many of these engagements were undermined by the negative feedback on social media sites ridiculing the poor quality of the game. Transmedia storytelling does not necessarily demand a positive consumer experience. The game was cheap to produce attaching the Night Watch storyworld to an existing gaming format with minimal innovation. The game was limited in terms of 'additative comprehension' to the storyworld, but given the narrative importance of car chases in the film, it did provide players with an opportunity to engage with that aspect. Nonetheless, this game did not motivate widespread player discussion on social networks other than disgruntled YouTube videos and comments. Yet the producers capitalised on the success of the *Night Watch* films to exploit associated titles' popular value while ignoring copyright, licensing and quality issues. Issues of (poor) quality or player dissatisfaction with one platform remain unaccounted for across a transmedia narrative. Transmedia is not a neutral playbox. One property's poor quality may have a deleterious impact on the systematic dispersal and flow of the other platforms and the ensuing audience engagement.

Night Watch PC

A far more substantial engagement was the tactical vampire killing, role playing game (RPG), *Night Watch PC*. It was created by the established Russian gaming developer Nival Interactive for PC and was positively received in the domestic trade press.[11] It was the only game produced under license and with the support of the original author, Sergei Lukianenko, who acted as a consultant for the developers. The game is thematically close to the novel, but

---

[11] The PC game was released in Russia on 18 August 2005, a year after the film release (27 June, 2004). It was subsequently licensed, translated and voiced-over for the international market and distributed by CDV on 26 June, 2006 shortly after the limitedUS screening of *Night Watch* came to a close (17 February – 15 June 2006). In a carefully orchestrated campaign, the game's US distribution was planned to coincide with the DVD publication of the film. The CDV version features American actors providing some terribly clunky Russian accents but otherwise retains the unique humour, plot and game play of the Russian original.

has little stylistic or narrative connection to the film. However the game abides by the *Night Watch* storyworld creating an audience experience that features cumulative, continuous and rich transmedia narratives on a highly interactive gaming platform.

The time pressures of producing a videogame in less than a year to coincide with the marketing push for the cinema release of the second film was always going to undermine innovative game production. The Nival Interactive developers added the Night Watch storyworld rules on top of the proven Silent Storm game engine thereby substantially reducing development time and expenses. The developer's choice of a turn-based RPG ensured greater scope for drawing in novice gamers as it was designed to extend the player's exploratory experience of the Night Watch storyworld.

This was not the first Russian game to appear on the international market that highlighted its Russian national origins, but it was perhaps the first to be tied to a fantasy blockbuster and set amidst recognisable Moscow locations. Moscow plays a key role in the narrative action. Players gain a gods-eye view of the chilly parks and slushy streets surrounded by bleak apartment blocks. The capital stands in for the nation as an atmospheric metropolis that becomes the battleground for Russian sorcerers and magicians fighting Russian vampires, witches and werewolves. The battle between good and evil in Moscow is the unifying force that coordinates the *Night Watch* gameplay appearing across all media platforms. Unlike the film, the game does not question whether the 'good guys' may be more evil than the Dark Others. Like the film, players have no choice than to take the point of view of a Light Other who discovers his magical powers at the beginning of the narrative. Exploiting the RPG format, players engage in a continual series of battles against a whole host of vampires, witches and hooligans making it appear as if Moscow is teeming with evil. The film poignantly suggested that the simple binaries between Dark and Light are bewildering, but the game takes this further by providing a narrative of double-crossing, deceit, covert operations by the Dark Others and the infiltration of Light Others into the camp of Evil. However, players cannot choose to play as a Dark Other, thereby undermining a key transmedia interactive element – the capacity to enact a vast range of choices. The Light Others are far more powerful than the Dark Others. They have more weapons, more opportunities and more skills. Despite the number of vampires lurking all over the city, the game ensures that this is not a level playing field.

The aspect of *Night Watch PC* that allows a rich platform-specific experience is not the predictable game play or the cinematic in-game cut scenes, but the opportunity to roam freely in the Night Watch storyworld of a supernatural Moscow. The game allows players to move around and avoid the linear narrative while exploring the various city zones and the eerie atmosphere. The wandering experience allows the audience the greatest level of interactivity to develop a deeper comprehension and engagement with the plotless storyworld by not engaging in an endless cycle of fights with the dark forces.

Night Watch PC features a combination of the film and book characters, locations and storyworld, but with the extension of new characters and unique plot possibilities. Players may recognise some of the film personalities: the gaming avatar Zavulon bares a strong resemblance to Viktor Verzhbitskii and is voiced by the actor. Other characters are less recogniseable and a number are invented within the parameters of the fantasy universe. While it is

possible to play the game without having read or seen the film, the experience would be diminished as the storyworld could be limited by platform. There is an assumption that players have an understanding of the broader Night Watch universe, but the game's RPG genre assuages the need to be an experienced gamer to find a passage through the interactive narrative. For non-gamers, the key attraction would be to explore more of the ideas, possibilities, locations and characters developed in the *Night Watch* storyworld. For gamers who are not fans of the book or film, *Night Watch PC* as an autonomous property, could be disappointing as a tactical RPG. Consequently the transmedia experience should not be considered as neutral or predictable and definable by marketing specialists. Narrative flows across multiple platforms needs to recognise audience skills, pleasures and experiences. What is rarely considered in transmedia analysis is the discontinuous and chaotic approach that audiences bring to apprehending the narrative flow. Jenkins's idealised 'systematic narrative dispersal' is rarely possible in practice.

Following the release of the second film, *Day Watch* (Dnevnoii dozor, Bekmambetov 2006), the game of the same name (Nival 2006) allowed players the capacity to choose to play as a Dark Other. It is not clear what motivated this change, but it was a significant modification in allowing the game platform independence from the film narrative to do what games do so well and that is to provide narrative and character options. Whereas in the film *Day Watch* the audience is positioned to be on the side of the Light Others, while interestingly the game allows players opportunities to experiment in terms of their player identity. Similarly in the massive multiplayer online game, *Dozory.ru,* players choose whether they are Light or Dark Others thereby developing complex relationships with their clan. This choice creates greater balance in the gaming experience leading to a less adversarial, more nuanced play that is not devoted entirely to combat. *Dozory.ru* was a prime example of fan creativity developing the storyworld and generating the cross-platform glue, but in a non-commercialised environment. Writing retrospectively about the entire Night Watch storyworld project there may appear to be an (incorrect) assumption that audiences followed the story across multiple platforms in a chronological and controlled fashion. There is no guarantee that players of one *Night Watch* game would have experiences with the film and the books and games of a different genre, but this does not prevent them from having a transmedia experience. It is unlikely that players would abide by a linearity of consumption that follows production and distribution patterns, but that would not preclude them from entering into the transmedia narrative flow.

Rarely are issues of quality discussed in examining a film's qualification as constituent of a national cinema. National cinemas assume quality cinema that is representational of the best and most vital elements of a nation. *Night Watch* was celebrated as a high point of post-Soviet national cinema on the basis that it captivated audiences with its unique expression of domestic popular themes, its impressive low budget special effects and its international success. In contrast, the lack of celebration around *Night Watch PC* undermines its national game status, but not its engagement with the cross-media promotion of the storyworld. Although it was celebrated in the Russian gaming media, the game's reputation suffered from a

poor reception internationally.[12] *Night Watch PC* did not share the film's potent dualism of foregrounding its Russianness as well as flaunting its international competence. The international game version was an effective marketing tie-in with the film and DVD release in the USA. A big part of the game's attraction for international audiences were the Moscow locations and characters who spoke in English but with heavy Russian accents foregrounding a unique Russian national production. But the *Night Watch PC*'s translation demonstrated the complexity of a transmedia narrative crossing national borders. Where in Russia there was a colossal popular cultural labyrinth that turned a de facto transmedia project out of disconnected media entities that shared the Night Watch storyworld, the international release of *Night Watch,* removed from the Russian popular culture context, remained a limited linear cross-platform promotion exercise. This points to the difficulties of the localisation of a Russian RPG game in the USA, for instance, but also highlights that the global gaming industry does not necessarily parallel the film industry when it comes to discourses of the imported national. Games tend to eschew dominant national markers so as not to interfere with a prevailing 'internationalised' mainstream standard of game play. Foreign films (with the growing prevalence of subtitles) do not operate in the same homogenising economy highlighting their difference to the mainstream as a distribution strategy. Cross-platform marketing can go some way towards minimising the foreignness of national cultural imports through a comprehensible structural marketing language at the same time as featuring the unique national accent as an exotic feature in transmedia artefacts. The distinction between transmedia and cross-platform marketing is that transmedia builds a multi-dimensional experience for users engaging audiences in the storytelling experience; its successes and failures remain an aspect of the storytelling production process. In subtle, but important, contrast cross-platform marketing strategy uses multiple platforms to tell a single story, selling or branding one concept or connected entertainment products. The goal for transmedia is for different platforms to communicate different things within the broader storyworld, but as was evident in the case of the localisation of Night Watch in the US, the transmedia experience becomes limited by homogenised perceptions of quality and the absence of national popular cultural contextual translations.[13]

Henry Jenkins argues that 'in the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best - so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics, and its world might be explored and experienced through game play. Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained enough to enable autonomous consumption. That is, you don't need to have seen the film to enjoy the game and vice-versa'

---

[12] 'Nochnoi dozor' / 'Night Watch' (2005). www.mirf.ru/Reviews/review38.htm (accessed 24 October, 2010); 'Obzor igry nochnoi dozor' / 'Review of the Night Watch game' (2005). stopgame.ru/review/nochnoj _dozor/review.html (accessed 24 October 2010); 'Nochnoi dozor' / 'Night Watch' (2005). www.lki.ru/text. php?id=284 (accessed 24 October 2010); 'Nochnoi dozor' / 'Night Watch'. www.igromania.ru/gamebase/3106/ (accessed 25 October, 2010); 'Verdikt: dozhdalis'! Nochnoi dozor' / 'Verdict: Finally! Night Watch' (2005). www.igromania.ru/articles/47424/Nochnoi_dozor.htm (accessed 12 October 2010). Barlow, James (2006, 15 September). 'Nightwatch Review', *Game Slave.* http://www.gameslave.co.uk/content/nightwatch-review/ (accessed 2 August 2011); 'Night Watch - PC – Review' (2006). pc.gamezone.com/reviews/item/night_watch _pc_review (accessed 25 October 2010).

[13] It is important to highlight that this pattern of cultural transfer is only applicable to the English speaking world in terms of the game translation and fit with movie, DVD and ancillary releases.

(2003). What he does not consider is that not only does each individual platform of the franchise need to enable autonomous consumption but also and more importantly, they need to fulfil user satisfaction autonomously so as not to undermine other properties in the transmedia flow. The moment one self-contained aspect of the storytelling does not match up to the high standard set by the other aspects, the glue is fractured and its 'additive comprehension' becomes subtractive understanding. In these circumstances a transmedia project becomes exposed as naked cross-platform promotion.

Conclusion

Medvedev's peculiar patriotic gaming proclamations offer an interesting development on the imagined communities – the imagining a national gaming culture prospectively. It is doubtful that explicitly produced Russian 'patriotic games' would enter into the domain of popular culture, other than as parody. *Night Watch PC* is not a patriotic game and yet its production context, storyworld extension across multiple gaming platforms, its 'additive comprehension', translation and distribution for an international market highlight its key role as a Russian national videogame. But is it constituent of transmedia? The game was integral as a movie tie-in, unifying the game within the novel and the films and with the games beyond the films connecting them with the ancillary marketing that flow into further instalments of the trilogy. But it went further than this by developing the storyworld, linking players with reader and filmgoers and expanding the narrative in the popular cultural space of national games culture in Russia. Contrary to Sokolova's attempt to define a comparative absolutism of transmedia, adjudging *Night Watch* as a limited attempt, due to its promotion from above and simultaneously its lack of coordination from below (2011: 16), I would suggest that the notion of transmedia, with its myths and rules, is itself limited, overly venerated and in need of review. Brian Clark, in a compelling critique of transmedia, seeks to dismiss it, claiming that the idea that stories move between media was

> A lie, a conceptual overstretch, and we all went along with it. […] If everything is transmedia, then nothing is transmedia. We all knew that was a lie. […] because there are no rules: anything is transmedia, everything is transmedia. So now, in retrospect, I'm surprised I ever thought that' transmedia' described something useful, let alone inevitable (2012).

Does it have to be all or nothing? There were no marketing assertions that the various platforms of Night Watch were part of a transmedia project, although the various properties performed as transmedia. There was no executive producer, no centralised strategy only a virulent storyworld, chaotic licensing and the nascent search for profits and association with the film's success by various participants and producers. In order to be celebrated as a national game, *Night Watch PC* required a degree of critical media success to gain the requisite authority to maintain the tactical and optimistic transmedia narrative. It may have failed in this quest, but the Night Watch storyworld was the first integrated film, novel, game package to emerge out of Russia with only partial licensing and unsystematised delivery channels to

ensure narrative flow that engaged audiences across the various media platforms. The informality, the discontinuity, the absence of licensing and the lack of systematic dispersal across multiple channels (despite the producing and distribution power of ORT) was not a failure of Night Watch's transmediation, but a projection of Russian popular culture that remains bound by the simultaneous opportunities of chaotic participation, underdeveloped official 'national projects'and incomplete commercialisation in developing storyworlds.

References

Barlow, James (2006, 15 September). 'Night Watch Review'. *Game Slave*. http://www.gameslave.co.uk/content/nightwatch-review/ (accessed 2 August 2011).

Bekmambetov, Timur (2004). *Night Watch* [Nochnoi dozor]. Pervyi kanal, Kinokompaniia Tabbak, Bazelevs-Prodakshn, Russia.

Bekmambetov, Timur (2006). *Day Watch* [Dnevnoidozor]. Pervyi kanal, Kinokompaniia Tabbak, Bazelevs-Prodakshn, Russia.

Beumers, Birgit (2011). 'Film Production in Russia. An Industry?' in *Directory of World Cinema: Russia,* edited by Birgit Beumers. Bristol, UK: Intellect, 16-21.

Boland, Michaela (2011, November 15). 'Games industry "constrained by lack of government assistance"'. *The Australian*. http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/film/games-industry-constrained-by-lack-of-government-assistance/story-e6frg8pf-1226195634376 (accessed 4 February 2013).

Brodsky, Vsevolod (2004, 12 July). 'Mainstream dlya sobornosti'/ 'Mainstream for unity'. *Expert*, 26 (427), http://expert.ru/expert/2004/26/26ex-dozor_29406/ (accessed 7 February 2008).

Cao, Yongand John D. H. Downing (2008). 'The realities of virtual play: video games and their industry in China'. *Media, Culture & Society,* 30 (4): 515-529.

Carroll, Noël and Banes, Sally (2000). 'Cinematic Nation Building: Eisenstein's *The Old and the New*' in *Cinema and Nation*, edited by Mette Hjort and Scott MacKenzie. London: Routledge, 121-130.

Chan, Dean (2005). 'Playing with Race: The Ethics of Racialized Representations in E-Games' in *IRIE* (*International Review of Information Ethics)*, 4. www.i-r-i-e.net (accessed 16 November 2009).

Clark, Brian (2012, April 22). 'Transmedia is a Lie'. http://www.facebook.com/notes/brian-clark/transmedia-is-a-lie/10150841850433993 (accessed 29 June 2012).

Condee, Nancy (2009). *The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

'DFC Intelligence Predicts Russian Games Market Worth $1.5 Billion by 2016' (2012, May 12). http://gamepolitics.com/2012/05/09/dfc-intelligence-predicts-russian-games-market-worth-15-billion-2016 (accessed 26June, 2012).

DozoR Night [Game]. http://classic.dzzzr.ru/moscow/?section=about&what=2 (accessed 20 October, 2010).

Dozory [Multiplayer online game]. www.dozory.ru/(accessed 20 October 2010).

Dyer-Witherford, Nick and de Peuter, Grieg (2009). *Games of Empire: Global Capitalism and Video Games*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

'Education ministry to boost Russia's video game developers' (2010, June 23). http://www.rt.com/news/sci-tech/computer-games-education-russia/ (accessed 20 April 2012).

The Film Industry In The Russian Federation: A report for the European Audiovisual Observatory by Nevafilm, with the collaboration of RFilms, September 2010. http://www.obs.coe.int/oea_publ/eurocine/russianfilmindustry_nevafilm2010.pdf (accessed 12 October, 2012).

Hannele, A., Kangas, S. and Vainikainen, S. (2004). 'Three views on mobile cross media entertainment' [TTE4-2004-17], *VTT Information Technology, Research Report*, http://www.vtt.fi/tte/rd/multiplemedia/show/crossmedia_entertainment.pdf (accessed 6 May 2012).

Heyward, Susan (2000). 'Framing National Cinemas' in *Cinema and Nation*, edited by Mette Hjort and Scott Mackenzie. Routledge: London and New York, 88-102.

Jenkins, Henry (2003). 'Transmedia Storytelling'. *MIT Technology Review*, http://www.technologyreview.com/news/401760/transmedia-storytelling/3/ (accessed 29 June 2011).

Jenkins, Henry (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide.* New York & London: New York University Press.

Jenkins, Henry (2007, 22 March). 'Transmedia Storytelling 101', *Confessions of an AcaFan,* www.henryjenkins.org (accessed 29 August 2011).

Jenkins, Henry (2011, 1 August). 'Transmedia 202: Further Reflections', *Confessions of an AcaFan,* www.henryjenkins.org (accessed 29 August 2011).

Jones, Mike (2011, 22 August). '*Underbelly Razor* & The Virtue Of A Non Platform Specific Storyworld'. http://www.mikejones.tv/journal/2011/8/22/underbelly-razor-the-virtue-of-a-non-platform-specific-story.html (accessed 20 August 2012).

Khapaeva, Dina (2011). 'From a Vampire's Point of View'. *Kinokultura,* 32, http://www.kinokultura.com/2011/32-khapaeva.shtml (accessed 22 November, 2012).

Kontsert (2000). 'Kontsert v "Olimpiiskom"'. http://brat2.film.ru/olimpisky.asp (accessed 20 November 2012).

'Kremlin Works to Prevent Falsification of History' (2009, 2 November). http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-2009-05-19-voa59-68644182/407982.html (accessed 24 April 2012).

Lukianenko, Sergei (2007). *Night Watch*. London: Arrow Books.

Knight, Scott and Jeffrey Brand (2008). 'History of Game Development in Australia'. Melbourne: ACMI. http://www.acmi.net.au/explore_history_oz_game.htm (accessed 2 August, 2011).

Medvedev, Dimitri (2010, 29 April). 'Russia needs to develop computer games industry – Medvedev' in *RIA Novosti,* http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100429/158805070.html (accessed 24 October 2010).

'Nochnoi dozor – kino dlia patriotov?'/ 'Night Watch – cinema for patriots?' (2004, 19 July). http://www.nakanune.ru/articles/nochnojj_dozor__kino_dlja_patriotov (accessed 24 October 2010).

Night Watch (2005). Nival Interactive and CDV Software, PC Game and User's manual.

Night Watch Racing (2005). PC Game. Publisher: Noviy Disk. Developer: Psycho Craft Studio.

'Night Watch PC' (2006). http://www.metacritic.com/game/pc/night-watch (accessed on 25 October 2010).

'Night Watch - PC – Review' (2006). http://pc.gamezone.com/reviews/item/night_watch_pc_review (accessed 25 October 2010).

Nochnoy Dozor (2005). Flash Game. Studio Naïve. (www.art-Naïve.ru) http://www.yayoye.com/night-watch-online-game/3118/ (accessed 3 June 2010).

Norris, Stephen M. (2007). 'In the Gloom: The Political Lives of Undead Bodies in Timur Bekmambetov's *Night Watch'. Kinokultura,* 16, http://www.kinokultura.com/2007/16-norris.shtml (accessed 2 February 2008).

O'Regan, Tom (1996). *Australian National Cinema*. London: Routledge.

Playing for Keeps (2007). UK Trade and Investment, Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform. http://www.gamesinvestor.com/content/research/Industry-Reports/Playing-for-keeps-(2007)/ (accessed 20 April 2012).

RIA (2010 March 12). 'Russia to build its own 'Silicon Valley' near Moscow – Medvedev'. http://en.rian.ru/science/20100318/158240604.html (accessed 26 October 2010).

RIA (2010, April 29). 'Russia needs to develop computer games industry – Medvedev'. http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100429/158805070.html (accessed 26 October 2010).

Shuster, Simon (2010, 7 June). 'Russia attempts to turn the patriotic tide by funding new video games'. *The Telegraph*, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/7809066/Russia-attempts-to-turn-the-patriotic-tide-by-funding-new-video-games.html (accessed 24 October, 2010).

Sokolova, Natalia (2011). 'This is your show!' Mass Creative Practices in Transmedial Projects'. *Digital Icons: Studies in Russian, Eurasian and Central European New Media,* 6 (1**)**: 1-33.

Strukov, Vlad (2010). 'The Forces of Kinship: Timur Bekmambetov's *Night Watch* Cinematic Trilogy', in *Cinepaternity: Fathers and Sons in Soviet and Post-Soviet Film*, edited by Helena Goscilo and Yana Hashamova. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 191-216.

'Zhazhda novoi krovyi' / 'Thirst for new blood' (2004). *Iskusstvo kino,* 12: 3-12.

GREG DOLGOPOLOV teaches and researches at UNSW in video production, film and television theory. His research interests include post-Soviet cinema and and the crime genre. He has written extensively on historical television detective serials, reality game shows, contemporary cinema, Australian vampire films, documentary films, international horror and mafia representations. His research has been published in *Social Semiotics, Senses of Cinema, Metro Magazine, Lumina, Real Time* and *Kinokultura*. Greg co-edited *Studies in Australasia Cinema* in 2011. He is the curator and associate director of the Russian Resurrection Film Festival. [gregd@unsw.edu.au]