The Narrative Leadership of World Politics: Interpretations of President George W. Bush's Phrases on the 'War on Terror' and their Relation to Information Technology

The narrative leadership of world politics presented by President George W. Bush in the form of 'war on terror' meta-narrative fulfils the objects of the thesis describing how President Bush is seeing and experiencing the world, and what is the role of information technology in it. The research target to deal with President Bush's speeches becomes more understandable when the thesis constitutes the narrative questions of language such as descriptions, prescription and technological language games Bush tells about the world politics.

The thesis uses political philosophy as a context for a narrative analysis. I will use a dromos as part of the political philosophy methodology focusing on the narrative approach. Deconstruction will rely on Jean-Francois Lyotard's analyses on narratives and Paul Virilio's discussions on tendencies of information technology to serve as a condition for interpretation and understanding. From this perspective relation between Bush's narratives and local realities, intentions and practices, actual and virtual, knowledge and information that are present in world politics can be asked. The study is therefore more about philosophy of (information) war in a world than traditional textual analysis of speeches as it looks into the phenomenon of war in world politics and its practices. This is a way how we can understand Bush's security narratives on terror and information technology constructing a world and world politics.

The thesis links two phrases to the 'war on terror' meta-narrative told to the Americans (Chapter 3) that are studied: the phrase 'take the battle to the enemy' directed to a technology oriented audience (Chapter 4) and 'this is a different kind of war' phrase directed to a military audience (Chapter 5). All these three phrases define fundamentally Bush's presidency and are the key for generally understanding Bush's 'war on terror' meta-narrative.

The relationship between U.S. national security and information technology will be explicitly studied in the thesis in a way that questions the phrase 'take the battle to the enemy' as not only a challenge to world politics, but also a challenge to Americans themselves in their home country.

The thesis's look into to the narrative's relationship to information, knowledge and information technology will suggest how the phrase 'this is a different kind of war' and the images are powerful "weapons" in the current era of information warfare for the President. At the same time it will be shown how problematic the President's phrase relying on speed, performance and efficiency is when seen from somewhere other than the 'bully pulpit'.

The final part of the thesis considers and comes back to some of the questions and answers raised throughout the study concerning President Bush's meta-narrative, deconstructing it and returning to relevant security questions in order to further understand the "war on terror" meta-narrative.

President's narratives with phrases of war reveal the differend existing between President's meta-narrative and locally experienced little narratives, which reflect the nature of world politics and relativity of war. The thesis also discusses implicitly how challenging it is in the information age to direct speeches to a specific audience, when messages travel across the world from one culture to another as meaning of phrases become meaningful in particular situations.

The thesis suggests that President Bush's meta-narrative on 'war on terror' reflects more a narrative power than actual power to free world politics from problems such as terror. In practice, this shows how power of information technology has not been able to solve the problems of terror, but in many ways powerless. Actually use of information technology has enhanced to blur political problems of terror.

President Bush's narrative leadership is very much paradoxical in nature as freedom demands restrictions, justice demands injustice, and information superiority demands more information technology. The study argues that it is the paradox that makes President George W. Bush's narrative leadership more understandable, which fulfills the perpetual American dream of freedom. One can ask is the 'war on terror' meta-narrative the ethical way America engages and wants to engage with the world in practice and wage information wars.

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