



Title	Subcultures of war : Images of the Asia-Pacific War in Japanese youth and fan culture [an abstract of dissertation and a summary of dissertation review]
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## 学位論文内容の要旨

博士の専攻分野の名称 博士（教育学） 氏名 Aleksandra Jaworowicz-Zimny

### 学位論文題名

Subcultures of war.

Images of the Asia-Pacific War in Japanese youth and fan culture.

(戦争のサブカルチャー。若者とファンの文化における太平洋戦争のイメージ。)

### Abstract

Memories of the Asia-Pacific War (1937-1945) are constantly present in Japanese popular culture. Despite much research concerning representations of the war in mainstream culture, little is known about representations in amateur works. This dissertation analyzes images of war in Japanese fan productions, defined via a modified concept of the 'circuit of culture'. I focus on four forms: music, *dōjinshi* (fan comic books), fan videos and military cosplay. I identify three main concepts necessary in the analysis of war-themed fan productions: *kandō*, nostalgia, and pop nationalism. *Kandō* is a strong emotional reaction to given content. Nostalgia allows idealization of the past and its perception according to the needs of the present day. Finally, pop nationalism is a trend of 'loving Japan' expressed through small things like support for Japanese sports, national symbols and Japanese products, but without explicit reference to historical consciousness or politics of the contemporary state. These three elements are recurring aspects of the fan productions discussed.

The fan productions presented in the case studies are created by young people who have no personal memories of war, but remain strongly influenced by media and pop culture images. All the works discussed were made public, posted on the Internet, or presented during dedicated events, with the purpose of being consumed by an audience. I analyze the content of these fan productions, the types of war narratives they present, and their

ideological stances. Whenever possible, I reached out to the creators. During the interviews they shared their motivations, historical interests and details of the production process, particularly about the research necessary for creating works on the theme of war.

Analysis of war-themed fan productions shows that these amateur works are clustered towards the conservative and nationalistic end of the ideological spectrum of war memories. By contrast, mainstream representations cover the whole scale from progressive, through progressive-leaning and conservative to nationalistic. Ideological positions are partially related to the form itself. Fan productions are made as a hobby, for the entertainment of both creators and audience. They are short, visually attractive and emotional, and this form is more suitable for expressing positive attachment and affection rather than distanced criticism. The creators usually conduct thorough research in the area of their interest, gaining deep but selective knowledge about Japanese war history. Many actively choose to avoid discussions concerning Japanese war responsibility, although they are aware of the issue. Motivations for creating fan productions vary from mainly self-expression to influencing audience and 'teaching' people about the war past. The latter attitude is characteristic mainly of people with nationalistic views advocating a positive interpretation of Japan's role in the Asia-Pacific War.

While in some cases attachment to conservative/nationalistic narratives overlaps with support for conservative politics, data gathered during the interviews suggests the existence of 'nostalgic pop nationalism'. Some of the creators take deep pride in the wartime past, use it as part of their identity construct, and perceive the war generation as role models. Simultaneously they distance themselves from the modern-day Japanese state. The analysis suggests that many young Japanese actively seek positive images of heroic past without supporting conservative politics. The study, therefore, deepens our knowledge about the place of (medialized) war history among the entertainment practices of young Japanese, and provides insights into nationalism shaped and spread from the bottom up.