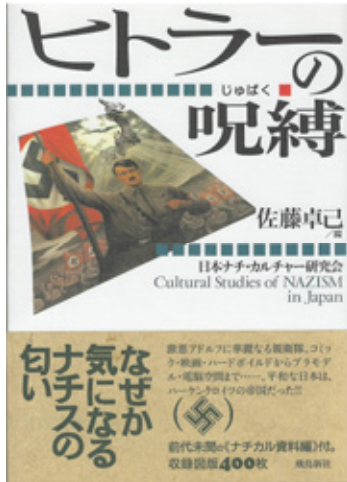


Consumption of Nazi Culture Images in Postwar Japan

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A collection of papers published in 2000 under the title *Under Hitler's Spell* (Hitorā no jubaku) provided the opportunity for me to change the direction of my research from German History to Japanese Cultural Studies. The study examined the consumption, mainly through mass media, of Nazism in popular culture. In the Japanese language, a subculture is called “Sub- Cul(ture)” for short. Hence, this consumption has been re-defined as “Nazi- Cul,” a genre of Japanese subculture. Along with additional interviews with specialists and resource materials, the book is comprised of ten chapters intended to give an overview of information on “Nazi-Cul” in contemporary Japan. Each chapter is focused on a particular form of mass-media. Chapter 1 talks about “The Labeling of Hitler” in newspaper journalism. Chapter 2 deals with “Nazi Adventure Novels”, and Chapter 3 discusses the image of Nazism in film. Chapter 4 explores “Hitler Manga” and comic book culture. Chapter 5 talks about the reception of Nazism in Japanese literature, from “pure literature” and drama, to “middle-brow” novels. Chapter 6 is about Hitler’s drawing influence on rock music. Chapter 7 explains “Unbelievable Nazism,” the world of the occult, from Jewish conspiracy theories to UFO theories. Chapter 8 discusses plastic models, an indispensable item for “otaku”. Chapter 9 is about the Heisei businessman culture of fantasy-war history novels. Chapter 10 argues about the spread of “cyber-Nazism” on the internet.¹



1: Cover of *Under Hitler's Spell* (2000).

Because such research ran the inherent risk of the author's intent differing from the reader's perception, becoming seriously involved with "rubbish" popular culture took a fair amount of courage for a historian holding a university position. Nevertheless, since popular "Nazi-Cul" strongly reflected the image that young Japanese university students attending my lectures in modern German History had of Germany, it was unavoidable to deal with this topic

Ten years have passed since the publication of *Under Hitler's Spell*. In that time the 11 September 2001 World Trade Center attacks occurred and, the Euro was introduced in 2002. It felt that, both in name and actuality, the curtain had closed on the twentieth Century – the "Age of Hitler." At the same time, images of Hitler and Nazism continue to occupy an important place in current Japanese popular culture. For example, Rokuhira Jūji's *Zusetsu akujin jiten* (Illustrated Dictionary of Villains, Gentōsha Komikusu, 2010), the Production Committee of Nazi Readers' *Moe, Moe Nachisu Dokuhon* (Nazi Reader, Īguru Paburissingu, 2010), and

Himaruya Hidakazu's *Hetaria 2 – Axis Powers* (Gentōsha, 2008) are books for general reading and, as of 2010, were carried by most bookstores. Images related to Nazi Germany feature prominently on the covers of each manga.



2: Covers of Illustrated Dictionary of Villains, 3: Nazi Reader and 3: Hetaria 2 – Axis Powers.

However, while Hitler is placed in the center of *Illustrated Dictionary of Villains*, he is framed by the Chinese Empress Dowager (right) and Russian Grigori Rasputin (left). This hardly gives the impression of Hitler as a transcendental symbol of “absolute” evil. Rather than an evil that is beyond comparison, this could be read as approaching relativism.

The classic “Nazi-Cul” style of *Moe Moe Nachisu Tokuhon* is impactful but its dense *otaku* references likely mean that its readership is extremely limited. *Hetaria* on the other hand, is well suited for general study of the image of Germany in present Japan. Published first as a web manga, the bestselling, four volume series *Hetaria* has reached a total of 1,900,000 copies, (as of 2011) and has been made into an animated television series and social network game. However, more than “Nazism,” *Hetaria* is emblematic of “Reich defense” or “Prussianism.” All three manga point to the importance of “Nazi-Cul” in current Japan. In sum, they relativize, and attenuate the Nazi image, but also incorporate it

into heavy geek culture.

Nazism and Nazi-Cul Research in Japan

My impetus for beginning research on “Nazi-Cul” came toward the end of the twentieth century. Although today I call myself a media researcher, in the early 1990s; I still bore a strong identity as a researcher of German History. In August of 1993 I was shocked by a news essay in the journal *Mainichi Guraphu* by former Bonn correspondent for the *Mainichi Shimbun* Itō Teruhiko. It was just around the time that Hosokawa Morihiro’s non-LDP administration had been established and Japan’s postwar political system – the “1955 system” – had collapsed. “Japanese academia ranks amongst the greatest authorities in the world of Nazi Germany research,” began Itō, and continued

Japan has assembled specialists in fields ranging from government, economics, industry, and social dynamics under Hitler’s rule. This includes, moreover, specialists in literature, philosophy, law, art, music and popular entertainment. Quite possibly it even puts German research to shame. As if to include every little thing, the most detailed research is being conducted. (Itō 1993: 34)

Of course this is a journalist’s overestimation. Original Japanese research on Nazism was actually very scarce. However, it was perhaps not entirely untrue that, at that time, just the number of university faculty calling themselves “Nazi researchers” could have been termed “the greatest.”² And despite the redundancy of “every little thing,” the focus of mass produced “scholarly papers” by this mass of researchers was so subdivided that the greater context was

difficult to ascertain. The problem that struck me, however, came with the following sentence.

My rough spoken German friend once asked me, ‘Nazi research in Japan is really prospering, but is it really of any use?’ He was a journalist and his words indicated the criticism of Japan that he frequently wrote in German newspapers – that Japan had no intent of seriously addressing its past of aggression in Asia. The flourishing of Nazi research in Japan had not been taken as an opportunity for the Japanese to pursue Japan’s crimes of aggression. (Itō 1993: 34)

It was nothing new for German reporters to criticize Japan. However, I hesitated a bit over the development of the logic directly linking Nazi research in Japan to the problem of Japan’s war responsibility. In this context, it would be possible to argue that the flourishing of Nazi research in Japan was being used to minimize and put aside Japan’s war crimes. Of course, it was not because of this fact that I hesitated. Rather, I felt as if I was able to catch a glimpse of the end of the paradigm of German history research in Japan.

Until that point, be it from the perspective of American Democracy or Soviet Socialism, Japanese historians could automatically secure their “political correctness” by criticizing the common enemy of German fascism. In the paradigm of Japanese postwar history, modern German history was equivalent to a criticism of the history of fascism and thus the significance of its research was self-evident. In my own experience as a student in the 1980s, I never once questioned why one would research modern German history. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, I became able to ask the students in my seminar this question. Also,

when introducing the translation of George L. Mosse's *The Nationalization of the Masses* in 1993, I began to think that those who conduct research on German Nazism should work with the awareness that the possibility of becoming a Nazi extended even to oneself. For the Japanese translation, Mosse wrote a foreword in which he summarized his purpose for writing.

The question of how to explain the success of Hitler is constantly being thrown before us. Many historians have dealt with shedding light on the various prerequisite social conditions for the Nazi Party's complete grasp of power and "politics." However, achieving victory over National Socialism, and achieving a renewed awareness of "politics" – the influence of which reaches even further today – has, generally speaking, only been passingly made reference to. This study addresses grasping a concept of "politics" that can truly be called politics of self-expression. Many who have experienced this generation speak with contempt for Nazi propaganda and emotional mobilization of the populace but they are forgetting the following fact. In other words, the problem lies at the foundation of the idea of the sovereignty of the people and, after Rousseau and the French Revolution, was a form of politics recognized as one of the central problems of the modern age. Accordingly, it is a problem of how much the populace is built in to the nation state, and how much they can be given a sense of belonging. (Mosse 1994: 3)

There is no need to be reminded that such participation of the populace in the drama of politics does not end with Nazism, but has been re-acted out in different, appealing attire, through the television and, even more so, the current internet age. While book stores in a shopping quarter overflowed with Hitler-related books and military magazines, and "Hitler specials" of variety-history shows on television claimed a high percentage of viewers, hardly any history researchers focused their attention on such "hobbies of poor taste." However, in contrast to university publications read only within a range of acquaintances, many thousands of times the readers, and tens of thousands the number of viewers, consumed Nazi representations from these sources.

Nazism as portrayed on Japanese television is particularly simplified. That democracy privileges such simplification as a prerequisite for participation of the people should not necessarily be criticized as a bad thing. Also, such television documentaries were generally critical of Nazism and cited comments by "knowledgeable specialists." At the same time, how these visual works were received by the viewer is a different matter.

Of course, such a cultural phenomenon was not unique to late twentieth century Japan. Rubenstein's words that "people still continue to be fascinated by Hitler, Himmler, and the SS. Books about Nazis continue to appear. They are bought in large numbers by a curious public. The Nazi period also continues to be a subject of great interest for the movies and television," (Rubenstein 1978: 1) and Rosenfeld's revelation that "in America (...) the popular literature industry seems to be able to sell almost any book with a swastika on its cover," (Rosenfeld 1985: 14) apply to a certain extent to the greater mass media of developed societies. Despite the fact that it should not be possible for intellectuals to defeat a mass movement like Nazism with logical criticism alone, there were hardly any sociologists researching "Nazi-Cul" at the popular level.

Hitler's Victory in the Culture War

It is perhaps possible to term the cultural phenomena of Hitler as a symbol of evil beyond comparison in mass popular culture as “Hitler’s culture war victory.” The title, *The War that Hitler Won*, bears the slightly science fiction sounding. While Nicholas Bethell’s nonfiction depiction of the Polish Blitzkrieg is famous as the book of this title, rather it is Robert E. Herzstein’s research on Nazi propaganda that raises an important question (Herzstein 1977). If “the war that Hitler won” is taken to be that of Nazi propaganda, then the flood of Nazi images in the postwar has been a victory for Hitler’s self-propaganda on the battleground of mass popular culture.



5: Cover of *Adolf ni tsugu*.

Speaking of his intent behind creating *Adolf ni tsugu*, a story about Hitler, Japan’s renowned manga artist Tezuka Osamu explained “I created *Adolf ni tsugu* out of a hope to, while I was still alive, record this dagger of state authority that swung down upon the people in the name of “justice.” (Tezuka 1996: 48) The piece, however, proved a failure that couldn’t fully portray the “evil”. Tezuka lamented the difficulty of evil in a conversation with

philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke.

Manga has become incredibly difficult for me to draw at the moment. By positioning a relativized villain alongside the hero, the villain becomes a hero and ends up overtaking the main character. Rather, a detestable villain who pulls off audacious deeds is easier for the reader to sympathize with. When that happens, the theme and motif which I originally intended become obscured, and I lose focus of what I'm writing. (Tsurumi and Tezuka 1985: 27)

For the humanist Tezuka, it was the state as the creator of war and hatred that was “evil” and not the people which comprised it. In Tezuka’s eyes, the evil that humans were capable of was an offshoot of an inhuman, rational system, and was reflected sympathetically as “human imperfection.” In response to Tezuka’s doubt over whether or not Hitler had acted out of a self-awareness of the evil he was carrying out, Tsurumi stated that “by my standards, the evil politics which is awakened to own evil means the higher-level of politics. In fact, I think it is the embodiment of politics. Japanese and Americans are lacking in this.” (Tsurumi and Tezuka 1985: 19)

Naturally, Tezuka was not able to portray this “high-level politics,” nor was he able to get to the bottom of Hitler’s “evil.” Although *Adolf ni tsugu* drew support from a large number of readers and, it wasn’t able to give any kind of explanation regarding the “evil” of Hitler’s politics. Moreover, Tezuka treated Hitler’s politics not as “evil” but as nothing more than “fanatical.” It is this point that makes the position of responsibility in regards to “crime” in *Adolf ni tsugu* vague. Even if an irrational, mentally-ill leader in power carries out rational mass slaughter, they remain in the world

of the innocent.

Nevertheless, few examples at the popular culture level have sincerely confronted Hitler like Tezuka, with the majority of manga and anime using him as nothing more than a straight-forward symbol of “absolute evil that must be defeated.” In today’s manga and anime, only Hitler has been brought forth as an image of a villain which can reach the consensus of all readers. However, the more realistically extreme evil is portrayed the more it becomes relativized, and for people living in the current, complex society, appears attractive. It is not necessarily the case that good/bad and like/dislike are corresponding concepts.

This is where the danger of the abuse of Hitler as a symbol of evil beyond comparison lies. When Hitler is made the symbol of absolute evil, he, at the same time, becomes the criterion with which to measure current politics. In the Christian world, because of man’s distance from absolute good – God – value was placed on human actions. Since Nietzsche proclaimed in the nineteenth century the “death of God,” in other words the extinction of absolute good, absolute evil, that is to say Hitler, has stood as the reference point for all values. If this cannot be called “Hitler’s victory,” then what else can it be?

In any case, as writer and editor, I was concerned about how such direct analysis of Nazi-Cul in *Under Hitler’s Spell* would be read in Japanese society. However, in Dec. 2000, the work received understanding responses from educators involved in peace education, as well as reviews from the Society for the Study of Modern History. In her review of the book, Modern German History researcher Inoue Shigeko spoke of the harm of using Nazism as the meter standard for evil.

More and more in the research world, it is becoming common knowledge that we cannot say that Nazism is an “extreme evil” beyond

comparison, but rather that Nazi ideology shares commonalities with many other systems of thought. Rather than a peculiar Nazi element, such characteristics as its “ability to implement” and “systemized authenticity” are shared in common with other ideologies, movements, and systems. However, instead of this awareness of historical research being utilized in education – especially political education – teachers currently continue to portray the Nazi era darkly as a historical lesson. This results in the image of the Nazi era becoming detached from the real state of affairs, damages the original meaning of “learning from history,” and runs the risk of overlooking possible elements in Nazism in the present. This also is the harm of Nazism becoming symbolized as “evil.” (Inoue 2011: 89)

A History of the Formation of “Nazi-Cul” in Post-war Japan

Naturally, the problem of the “symbolization of evil” outlined above is not peculiar to Japanese society. Rather, as an example of a particular phenomena in postwar Japanese society it would be apt to point out the large quantity of fantasy war histories dealing with a “Japan-Germany final battle” that have been published since the 1980s. Some representative examples of this genre include Aramaki Yoshio’s *Konpeki no Kantai* (Deep Blue Fleet) series (1990-1996, Tokuma Shoten), Hiyama Yoshiaki’s *Daisenryaku nichidoku kessen* (Grand Strategy for the Decisive Battle between Japan and Germany) series (1992-1997, Kadokawa Shoten) and Sato Daisuke’s *Reddo san, buraku kurosu* (Red Sun, Black Cross) series (since 1993, Tokuma Shoten). Dealing with such texts would

be easy if they were reactionary advocates of former militarism, however the matter is not so simple. In the world of fantasy war histories, Nazi Germany appears as a common enemy of Japan and the U.S. or, more precisely, the hypothetical enemy of post-war democracy. Such works of entertainment provide a fantasy that fits extremely well with the post-war democracy and the security treaty system between Japan and the United States. In other words, along with confirming values similar to those of the Yalta and Potsdam Treaties which regarded the confrontation in World War II between the Democratic and Fascist camps as the final battle between good and evil, they tempt the reader with the pleasing illusion that Japan really should have fought on the side of “good” Democracy against the Nazis. Moreover, a glance at the contents reveals that, the essence of their pro-war stories is nothing more than a variation on the post-war world view of “peace and Democracy.”

In this context, “Nazi-Cul” in Japan is not politically damaging and, it is perhaps even possible to say, is a symbol of peace. However, the popularity of such fantasy war histories indicates that criticism of Hitler was a necessary test of loyalty when relating the war in a “politically correct” way.

As in *Under Hitler's Spell*, when I examined the particular characteristics of “Nazi-Cul” in Japan in this way, I described the transformation of the Nazi image in postwar popular culture, along with what I, as a person born in 1960, experienced in the media. What became clear as a result of this research was that the image of Nazism has changed along with Japanese views of war.

The transformation of the image of *Battleship Yamato* (Senkan Yamato), a representative symbol of war in popular culture, can be easily broken into three stages. This overlaps with the change of the title of *Battleship Yamato* from being written in Chinese characters (*Yamato* 大和) to katakana (*Yamato* ヤマト), and finally hiragana (*Yamato* やまと).³ In other words, this corresponds to the post-war generation born between 1945-59 who read actual war nonfictions

such as Yoshida Mitsuryū's *Senkan Yamato* (戦艦大和, Battleship Yamato, Kadokawa Shoten, 1968), the generations born between 1960-70 with no war experience who watched the animated, science-fiction *Uchū senkan Yamato* (宇宙戦艦ヤマト, Space-Battleship Yamato) on television and in movies, and second generation baby-boomers born after 1971 who read the international intelligence manga *Chinmoku no kantai* (*Silent Service*).

Until the 1960s, when scars from war damages remained, numerous war nonfictions depicting “Japan’s War” existed and the Nazi image was mainly an import from American Hollywood movies. In other words no Nazi-Cul particular to Japanese society existed. This began to change in the 1970s when, due to the increasing activity of peace education movements, “war nonfictions” were forced out of young boys reading material, and “victims’ experiences from the home front” were encouraged. As a reaction to this, stories depicting “war set in outer space” became extremely popular. The most well-known example of this was the animated television series *Uchū senkan Yamato* (宇宙戦艦ヤマト, Space-Battleship Yamato, 1974, Nihon Terebi Keiretsu). Beginning with Führer Dessler (a combination of the words “death” and “Hitler”) from the star Gamilas, and who plots the annihilation of the human race on earth, all of the enemies’ names are given German-sounding names.⁴

However, as a matter of dramaturgical convenience, each time the series progressed, the villain Dessler became more of an attractive “rival” opponent. 1978’s animated movie *Saraba uchūsenkan Yamato – ai no senshitachi* (Farewell to Space Battleship Yamato: Warriors of Love) is the epitome of this. In the anime, which depicts scenes just as if the German Panzer Division Blitzkrieg had been projected into outer space, military uniforms fashioned after the Third Reich are raised to the level of aestheticism. The figure of Dessler was later repeatedly used as the

model for the “aesthetic Hitler - villains” in space operas such as the television anime series *Kidō senshi gendamu* (Mobile Suit Gundam , since 1979), and the original animated video *Ginga eiyū densetsu* (Legend of the Galactic Heroes, 1988-2000). It would be no mistake to say that the process of the aestheticization of Hitler’s image can be observed in the establishment of Dessler-(*Yamato*), Gihren Zabi (*Gundam*), and Reinhard von Lohengramm (*Legend*).

In terms of cultural history, the golden age of this “Nazi-Cul” began in 1978 when the record breaking hit movie *Farewell to Space-Battleship Yamato – Warriors of Love* caused a number of social phenomena.



6-8: Covers of Nazi-related animated movies.

One of those came when Sawada Kenji, the idol singer who sang the theme song for *Farewell to Space Battleship Yamato*, was criticized and made to remove his outfit after taking the stage dressed in Nazi attire replete with swastika arm band. In other words, the tumult created over this “swastika” incident indicated that Japanese society had become sensitive to the historic crimes of the Nazis. Also in 1978, the loan word “Holocaust” began to be commonly used. In October 1978, Television Asahi broadcast the monumental TV series *Holocaust* (originally broadcast in the U.S. by NBC). The series was broadcast over four consecutive nights, spanning a total of 9 1/2 hours. Additionally, Anne Frank’s original

diary was brought from Holland to Japan in 1978 and displayed throughout the country. Still today, the general Japanese image of the persecution of the Jews is comprised of the three key phrases *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Night and Fog*, and *Holocaust*, and thus, in this sense, 1978 marks a change in the popular Japanese image of wartime Germany.

The Expiration of “Hitler as Absolute Evil” and the Incorporation of Nazi Information into Otaku Culture

While this image of the Jewish persecution is connected to the beautification of Hitler as a formidable foe, it also strengthened the idea of Hitler as a symbol of “absolute evil.” When atrocious crimes occurred in 1990s Japanese society, the criminals were frequently suspected as being admirers of Hitler. During the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo incident, religious founder Asahara Shōkō, who instigated indiscriminate murder with sarin gas in Tokyo subways, was likened to Hitler. In fact, it is unmistakable that Hitler was praised as a hero in Aum’s official magazine. This reflected the worldview of Aum’s Tantric Vajrayana – a reversal of the balance of “Good and Evil” and the belief that the jump to “absolute good” was made possible precisely through “sacred evil.”

After that, each time a bizarre incident occurred, the mass media reported that the criminal had been influenced by Hitler. It was widely reported that the 14 year old boy who went by the name of Sakakibara Seito in the 1997 Kobe serial killings admired Hitler and that, when he was in elementary school, he had been impressed after watching episode four of the NHK Documentary *The Century of Visual Images* (Eizō no Seiki), “Hitler’s Ambition,” and begged his mother to buy him Hitler’s *My Struggle* (*Mein Kampf*). Along with this, tabloid magazines reported that *My Struggle* was found on the shelf of the culprit of the 2001 indiscriminate murders at Ikeda Elementary School in Osaka. Although a cause-effect

relationship was not necessarily clear in such heinous crimes, the image of Nazism likely allowed people to gain some kind of understand and relief in the face of an incomprehensible event.

However, as of 2010, I don't believe that explaining heinous crimes as having been influenced by Hitler is enough to convince the majority of Japanese people. This is because the very association of the image of Hitler with "absolute evil" is losing significance in mass popular culture. Of course, this is not just an issue particular to Japan. Perhaps because of the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers on September 11, the "Century of Hitler" has ended. After the German movie *Der Untergang* (Downfall, 2004), it is evident that the "humanization of Hitler" has been progressing in U.S. and European movies dealing with Hitler as well. This kind of "humanistic Hitler movie" was released in 2005 in Japan, on the sixtieth anniversary of the war. Although Kyodo Press reported German newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel's* criticism that "the purpose of portraying Hitler as a human is to achieve commercial success," they also released an affirmative explanatory article titled "Taking a calm, steady look at taboos." In Japan as well, the appeal of Hitler, which existed precisely because of the taboo, seems to have finally waned.

Therefore in twenty-first century mass media, we can no longer identify the flood of Nazi representations which existed at the end of the twentieth century. Rather, niche hobbies called "Nazi otaku" or "Nazi-Cul" are grabbing attention. This would include comics sold in Comic Market such as "Nazi yaoi" whose topic is homosexual male romance, and "Nazi moe" which is the amalgamation of military uniform fetish and Lolita fashion. . Although the word "otaku" originated in Japan, it is also used in English, French and German, and there is no longer anything especially Japanese about the desire for otaku-like fetishism.

Susan Sontag's analysis of the sexual appeal of Nazism as "a response to an oppressive freedom of choice in sex (and in other

matters), to an unbearable degree of individuality” applies as an explanation for the “Nazi otaku” as well (Sontag 2009: 105). Apart from that, the end-all-be-all to conspiracy theories about the complex state of world affairs – the Jewish conspiracy theory – as before, can be found in one part of this, however, this of course cannot be read as a particularity of Japanese society.

This type of minority culture is a byproduct of the subdivision of culture in an information society. Through speculatively selecting sub-cultures on the “hobbyist stock market”, today’s youth seeks the construction of self-identity. As long as a desire to psychologically compensate the collapse of self-histories (*jibunshi*) with the victory of virtual histories (fantasy war histories, *kakū senki*), the demand for Nazi-Cul such as the “Japan-Germany final battle” will likely remain. Such Nazi-Cul itself is simply a fantasy to maintain everyday life, and is not entirely harmful. However, within this fantasy, it is necessary to guard against aestheticized images of “Hitler as absolute evil.”

Would not Hitler, who was once a NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in Vienna before climbing to the top of the Third Reich, be seen as a “god” in the eyes of the contemporary “losers” of society who are suffocating with abundant freedom and trying to subvert the value system? At this point, only a small number of the socially weak hold devoutly to the idea of “Hitler as absolute evil.” Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that a great increase of the “loser group” in despair will not emerge as stratification of society progresses. In order to avoid a “Democratic emergence of Hitler” amongst the overwhelmingly large number of “losers” that globalization inevitably produces, it is much more effective to humanize Hitler than to demonize him. Denouncing Hitler as a demon, ultimately results in leaving the impression that he was “super human” (*Übermensch*). The history of super-humans is mythology, and not that of the path of a human full of inconsistencies.

This is also a problem of the way history is told. When historical accounts concerning Nazism are given, the disciplinary narrative of it as “unforgivable” and “something which must be refuted” is frequently employed. It is a fact that Nazi crimes are hard to forgive, and certainly this unforgivability should be kept in mind. However, was it not the fascist narrative in the first place which did not allow for counterargument? Narratives which invite dialogue, in other words non-fascist narratives are, now more than ever, necessary in historical accounts of fascism. The study of history that is free from taboo and compulsion is the prerequisite for mutual understanding. In that sense, not just making moral judgments about Nazi-Cul and its consumption, but an informed understanding will continue to be necessary.

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¹ The chapter titles and authors were as follows:

Preface: “What does ‘Nazi-Cul’ mean for the Japanese?” (Nihonjin ni totte “Nachikaru” to wa nanika), Satō Takumi.

Chapter 1: “Politically Correct” Journalism’s Hitler,” (“Seijiteki ni tadashii” jyānarizumu no hitorā), Hashiba Yasuhito.

Chapter 2: “Behind the Closed Doors of Nazi Hobbyism and the Consumption Desert of Military Fandom” (Misshitsu no nachi shumi, shōhi sabaku no gunji mania). Atarashi Kentaro

Chapter 3: “The eagle has landed, Hitler comes back again” (Washi ha maiori, Hitorā wa yomigaeru), Satō Takumi.

Chapter 4: Is Führer Dessler German? (Desurā sōtō wa doitsuka), Tomatsu Kōichi, Ishida Ayū.

Chapter 5: “Golden Boys – Raised on the Silver Screen” (Ginmaku ni hagukumareta gōruden bouizu, Miyatake Michiko.

Chapter 6: “Do Scream Punks like Swastikas?” (Zekkyō pankusu ha kagijūji ga suki?), Tomatsu Kōichi.

Chapter 7: “Hitler Comes Riding a UFO” (Hitorā ha UFO ni note

yattekuru), Harukawa Gensui.

Chapter 8: “The Long and Dark Shadow of Nazism in Japanese Literature” (Nihon bungei ni okeru nachizumu no eikō), Satō Yasuko.

Chapter 9: “Is Germany Really Japan’s Enemy? – The Direction of Fantasy War-battles Between Germany and Japan” (Nihon no teki wa doitsu da? Nichidoku kessen no yukue), Ishida Ayū.

Chapter 10: “The Impact of Cyber-Nazism” (Dennō nachizumu no inpakuto), Kawasaki Yoshinori.

² The numbers originally refer to university employees rather than Self Defense Force personnel. Current German research in Japan no longer receives the attention it did 10 years ago. In fact, the number of university students who select German as a second foreign language is consistently decreasing.

³ Three scripts are employed when writing Japanese: *kanji* (Chinese characters), *hiragana*, and *katakana*. Although a general standard determining script use exists (see the Ministry of Education’s 2012 *Jōyō Kanji hyō*, http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/nc/k19811001001/k19811001001.html), selective use is often employed to reinforce a certain tone or style, indicate an alternative meaning, or various other denotations. *Hiragana* is typically used for domestic words, whereas *katakana* is used when writing foreign words such as places or people, and import (loan) words.

⁴ The English word “death” is pronounced “desu” in Japanese and written as デス.