Original Article

The Aporia of Welfare Culture as War Culture in Postwar Japan

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Abstract   This study showed a fundamental perspective for discussing the relationship between war and social welfare. The author focused on and investigated the relationship between war and welfare within the cultural understanding of war in postwar Japan. First, the background and theoretical point of view on welfare culture are studied, as reported in section II. Then, discussions of the relationship between war and culture are classified, as reported in section III. Then, the concept of war culture, as an interdisciplinary concept, is examined, and value judgments of the concept in the study of welfare culture are questioned in section IV. Several studies that have suggested a compatibility between war and welfare are reviewed, and a war culture that is compatible with welfare culture is defined in section V. The war culture found in postwar Japan is characterized in section VI, and finally the investigation is concluded in section VII. War culture in postwar Japan is a compound of war weariness and life conservatism, which has supported the Japan-US security system. When social welfare studies takes the perspective of culture, we should not only confront war but investigate welfare of ourselves as well.

Key words: war, culture, welfare, social welfare

I.   Introduction

This study develops a fundamental perspective for the discussion of war in social welfare study and suggests the prospect and issue of the discussion of war, with reference to welfare culture and war culture.[1]

Social welfare studies in postwar Japan have placed the terms "war" and "social welfare" in opposition, founded on the concept that war threatens welfare. The reverse course has been seen since 1950 in this relationship. Generally, funding for social welfare and armaments is considered to move in inverse proportion. However, some studies suggest that war is compatible with the promotion of the welfare state in principle, and that war and welfare are not necessarily opposed.

Therefore, social welfare studies require a newly developed understanding of the relationship between war and social welfare and the relationship between war and welfare. The author focuses on and investigates the relationship between war and welfare within the cultural context of war in postwar Japan. A fundamental perspective is suggested for discussing the relationship between war and social welfare.

First, the background and theoretical point of view on welfare culture are studied, as reported in section II. Then, discussions of the relationship between war and culture are classified, as reported in section III. Following that, the concept of war culture, as an interdisciplinary concept, is examined, and value judgments of the concept in the study of welfare culture are questioned in section IV. Several studies that have suggested a compati-

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bility between war and welfare are reviewed, and a war culture that is compatible with welfare culture is defined, as summarized in section V. The war culture found in postwar Japan is characterized in section VI, and finally the investigation is concluded in section VII.

II.   What is the study of welfare culture?

The Japanese study of welfare culture was pioneered by Ichibangase in the late 1980s as an area within social welfare study. Welfare culture is considered to be a formation emerging from the combination of the ideas of welfare and culture (Ichibangase, 1997a; Masuko, 2017). Welfare refers to having a standard of living sufficient to pursue happiness, and culture comes from the Latin cultura, meaning creating and cultivating good things through working on the environment (Ichibangase, 1997a). Welfare culture has the meaning of a purpose; oriented toward creating a culture where all can achieve welfare (Masuko, 2017). The essence of welfare culture is the spirit pursuing the culture of our aliveness as whole persons based on human dignity, as declared "wholesome and cultured living" in article 25 of the constitution of Japan.

The study of welfare culture within social welfare studies has pointed out its dependence on the material and economic richness of Japan in the twentieth century (Ichibangase, 1997). Against the background of high economic growth, the Japanese have asserted their legal right to receive social welfare in the form of goods, money, and services as a compromise with the state.

However, the question of whether social welfare produces welfare has remained open. Welfare culture is intended to create a culture that fulfills the spiritual side, in harmony with goods, money, and services. Another question of whether social welfare in the welfare state stands on the victims in other countries also remained. The study of welfare culture trusts the supranational and international meaning of culture, at the time of review of the welfare state (late 1980s).

It is familiar with the idea of human rights in the sense that it crosses borders, therefore it can be said that welfare culture is human rights culture (Ichibangase, 1997b).

III.   Discussions which referred to both war and culture

How does the study of welfare culture address or understand war in its cultural aspect in postwar Japan? Theories that relate war to culture can be divided into the following groups, according to approach.

1.   War culture

The theory of war culture regards war as a human cultural activity, and it is considered to be neutral. This perspective considers war to be an aspect of culture that expresses some positive qualities of human beings or as a cultural expression rooted in human nature that cannot be judged as good or evil. Creveld's discussions are representative here.

2.   Anti-war culture

This group of theories relies on the value judgments associated with postwar pacifism in Japan. As above, the concept of war culture is used to discuss the cultural conditions that support war. However, here, war culture is given as an absolute.

Most Japanese studies that incorporate anti-war culture are characterized by the incorporation of the understanding of the Second World War, and they do not refer to discussions of war culture above. One group describes the adaption of cultural activity to war (Yoshino, 2011; Takaoka, 2014). Another group points out the negative national character that has been brought in postwar Japan (Kato, 2009).

3.   Cultural development

In this category of thought, the relationship between war and cultural development is assessed. Einstein famously wrote to Freud to ask how human beings could be freed from the yoke

of war. In response, Freud wrote of the relationship between human drives and war. According to him, the death drive plays a role in leading to war, but the development of culture could displace death drive and use its energy in other ways.

Related to this, in 1986, at an international conference held by UNESCO in Seville, Spain, a group of scholars presented a document called the Seville Statement on Violence, which denies the view that war is biologically inherent in human nature. This statement also suggests that cultural develpment is important to the renunciation of war.

4. Cultural diplomacy and cultural policy

Cultural diplomacy and cultural policies are discussed widely in the context of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. They are effective in peacebuilding as multifunctional, complex mechanisms, against some criticism, such as the possibility of conflict by culture, the immorality of the use of culture and the requirement of direct provision of food and money rather than culture (Fukushima, 2012).

In addition, soft power diplomacy is a related concept within the network of war and culture. This refers to the ability to obtain results through an entity's own innate attractiveness, not through compulsion or reward, produced by a nation's culture, its political ideals, and the attraction of its policies (Nye, 2004).

IV. Is war culture evil?

The theory of anti-war culture forms the closest analog to the study of welfare culture. Here, the understanding of the academic and interdisciplinary concept of "war culture" should be reviewed. Toshiya Yuki describes it as "a fashion with a dark color of dark era that engulfs and destroys people's dreams and hopes" (Yuki, 2015: 85). He calls for the power to feel and resist disturbing times being cultivated and indicates the role of the study of welfare culture. Mainstream studies of welfare culture include discussion based on the idea of war culture.[2]

We can outline studies of war and culture. That is, (3) cultural development provides hope, (2) anti-war culture can be used to counteract (1) war culture, and describe it as negative, and (4) cultural diplomacy and cultural policy investigate a peace-promoting practice.

However, the relationship between (1) and (2) remains in question. The neutrality of the concept of war culture, as in (1), should be recognized, at least in terms of the spirit, attitude, and national traits of those who support war. That is, although war may be catastrophic, this does not mean that the spirit and thoughts of the people who lived during wartime must also be catastrophic. Within the memory of the war generation, even though battle itself could be terrible and cruel, people living during in the war era felt that society had a bright side. For example, Yoshimoto recalled watching aerial battles in Tokyo with excitement, and he characterized the atmosphere of society at that time as bright.

The whole atmosphere of society is extremely bright and constructive. "The world was dark during the war" is a terrible lie by the postwar left and postwar believers in democracy. During the war, the world is refreshing, or it is very bright. But that brightness is really not good. A society without darkness is morbid and unhealthy (Yoshimoto, 1999: 196–197).

Those who have lived through times of war have different experiences, sources of information and impressions of the war, thus, the assessment of war culture as a dark culture and placing it in opposition to welfare culture is questionable.

Using the theories discussed above and their ideas of war and welfare, we can come to a definition of war culture and consider the war culture of postwar Japan.

V. Theories referring to compatibility of war and welfare

Theories that assess the compatibility of war and welfare can be divided into three contexts:

welfare state theory, new war theory, and war culture theory.

1.   Welfare state theory

Welfare state theory suggests that the system of total war in fact formed the basis for the welfare state, thus considering war and social welfare to be compatible, without making a value judgment between them. Wartime Great Britain produced the earliest model of the UK welfare state (Beveridge, 1942; Titmuss, 1963). The government took advantage of changes in society that allowed the formation of a welfare state. The citizenry experienced a feeling of unification and were prepared to sacrifice their individual interests for a common purpose.

Social policy studies in Japan came to a similar conclusion. Okouchi found that "The war does not make social policy go backward, but go forward" (Okouchi, 1944: 4). Social welfare that supplements social policy can be understood in the same way. In postwar social welfare studies, it is recognized that the prototype of the welfare state appears in the time of war (Kouhashi 1962; Sho, 1998; Ito, 2017).

The welfare state has the aspect of anti-war that let peace be kept through keeping state-monopoly-capitalism under the Cold War. It is, however, related to promise the life and welfare of fellow citizens rather than those of people around the world. Welfare states in this sense do not contradict the war itself in principle. Welfare state theory suggests that ordinary people can accept war as long as they do not become victims. Things are the same in the present day after Cold War.

With reference to war, the Japanese people are less concerned with the profit of social welfare than with the security system as a sedative against the fear of nuclear weapons and terrorism. The value of a safety that can never be achieved became an alternative to the implementation of social policy and the pursuit of social welfare.

2.   New war theory

War in the contemporary world no longer resembles the Second World War. After the Cold War, neoliberalism forced people to live in globalism. As a result, the economic and social tension brought a new style of organized violence, such as local conflicts and terrorism. This novel form is called new war.[3] The actors in a new war may not be sovereign states but terrorist organizations and international networks. The motives for a new war can be diverse, whether resistance to the policy of a regional or global hegemon or persecution or exclusion of people with different identities, rather than being a straightforward battle for resources.

The response to a new war must involve the use of force to protect and release people from violence and maintain security. Today's armies are specialized forces and not mass armies, and they tend to play a policing role. The concept of human security has become part of the philosophy of the response to the new war era. This idea complements across crisis management functions, including the prevention of armed conflicts, countermeasures against terrorism, disaster recovery, and humanitarian assistance.[4]

In the new war era in Japan, few experience the cost or blood as it was felt in the Second World War. Japan could not stop the support for the Vietnam War and the Iraq War. Territorial and economic ambitions, fanaticism, nationalism, and feelings of hate are no longer essential for Japanese war, which occurs in a place that is separate from daily life. In addition, currently, social media war is attracting more attention (Singer and Emerson, 2018). Everyone can support the war from home through their smartphone. They are not only those who are irresponsible living in safety, but also those who demand the truth, oppose injustice, and hope to build a brighter world.

It is the civilians who are required to express self-control rather than the military. In a democracy, some wars are begun by civilians rather than the military (Miura, 2012).

3. War culture theory

Discussion from the perspective of postwar pacifism tends to treat war as absolute evil (Kato, 2009; Yuki, 2015; Ebisaka, 2018). Traditional war theory does not support this premise, and the current discussion in the Japanese context relativizes it. According to Creveld, war has an attractive cultural power, which people cannot control through their reason, ultimately acting more like sports than like politics (Creveld, 2008). If this were not so, it would be more difficult to act in such a destructive way. Creveld recognized war culture as the human spirit behind cultural expression about war.

Ishizu develops an understanding of war culture as a strategic expression culture and discussed the fostering of the modern version of Japanese war culture (Ishizu, 2013). Ishikawa claims that peace is also culture, just as war is culture (Ishikawa, 2012, 2017). He claimed that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which renounces war, is also a form of war culture (Ishikawa, 2012: 138).

War culture theory does not recommend a specific position on the military, but recommends that we accept the image of humans as war humans. The concept of war culture in war culture theory is not contained within the meaning of strategy itself, but the spirit and attitude that produce it.

4. Definition of war culture

War culture and welfare culture are two sides of the same coin. Welfare culture is the spirit pursuing culture of our aliveness as "wholesome and cultured living". While pursuing welfare, sometimes because of this pursuit, one can accept and support war.

Based on this understanding, war culture can be defined as the spirit and attitude of social traits guiding how people accept and support war while pursuing their own welfare.

In the next section, we discuss the war culture of postwar Japan and identify potential issues in the study of the relationship between war and social welfare.

VI. War culture of postwar in Japan

What is war culture in postwar Japan? It is a compound of war weariness and life conservatism, which has supported the Japan–US security system.

1. Support for the Japan–US security system

The conception of Japan's own Self-Defense Forces and the Japan–US security system suggests what the general idea of the Japanese people is regarding the handling of wars. In response to the government's "Public Opinion Survey on Self-Defense Forces and Security Issues" (the latest version is from 2017 data, published in January 2018), in 1969, 52% of Japanese expressed a sense that there was a danger of war or that they could not state there was no danger, but in 2018, the total of those expressing a sense of danger and a sense of some danger was 85.5%.[5]

The US–Japan Security Treaty was rated as helpful for Japan's peace and security in 1978 by 65.6%, and in 2018 this had risen to 77.5%. In 1969, 40.9% stated that Japan's safety should be protected by the Japan–US security system and the Self-Defense Forces, and in 2018, the figure was 81.9%.[6] These results clearly indicate that almost all Japanese people want to maintain the status quo. In 1991, 69.8% were in favor of increasing or maintaining the current level of power of the Self-Defense Forces, in 2018, 89.2% were in favor of increasing or maintaining the current level, thus this indicating that the Japanese wish to maintain or increase the current status of defense.

As a result, the majority of Japanese consider that Japan is at risk of becoming involved in war and it is, therefore, necessary and beneficial to maintain and strengthen the Japan–US security system.

2. The culture of "war weariness" and "life conservatism"

What is the war culture of postwar Japan, which accepts and supports the idea of war,

under the premise of maintaining and strengthening the US–Japan security system?

It could be described as war weariness. Here war weariness is a more accurate expression than anti-war or renouncing war. In social welfare studies, renunciation tends to be expressed in relation to Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan (Kato, 2008; Shibata, 2016; Sekiya, 2017). However, if these concepts really do rule the thought of Japan, it is impossible to explain the existence of US military bases on Japanese territories and the fact that the Self-Defense Forces have been deployed overseas.

The most accurate expression here is that of war weariness, supplied by Nosaka. According to him, "Anti-war may bet own life to save others, but war weariness wants only own life, at best, or the safety of wife and children" (Nosaka, 1969: 191). It is a selfish sprit and attitude. Yamamoto illustrates Nosaka's concept and writes that the reason why Japan could have recognized itself as a "peaceful state" after the war is because of the power of "war weariness" (Yamamoto, 2016). According to Sabata, for the Japanese to live a bright life while being aware of Japan's dark history, they have needed to cling to a peaceful daily life (Sabata, 2005).

Connected with war weariness, life conservatism is a cultural characteristic that can be related to the postwar Japanese war culture, which has been under discussion since the late 1970s. According to Yamaguchi, life conservatism is the political consciousness of the middle class, which was born when Japan became a middle-class society of 100 million against the background of a period of high economic growth. It is a "self-centered attitude that wants self-protection rather than public justice" (Yamaguchi, 2017: 91). Yamamoto asserts that the feeling of life conservatism is one that everyone has, and it flows into both feelings of war hatred and the impulse to arm oneself to prevent war (Yamamoto, 2016).

War weariness and life conservatism are consistent as they have it has been built up and strengthened little by little until now. This is the spirit pretending to ignore or forget something troublesome, and feeling safe. This is not passive for the Japanese, but active, for their brighter life. It has the character of culture relating to war in the form of forward thinking and decision-making, going beyond just a social-psychological reaction.

VII. Perspective of war from the study of welfare culture

When we think of our welfare culture as war culture, we need to consider a concept of culture which is not within the nation like the welfare state, but supranational. The study of welfare culture pursues supranational peace, and in that sense, we must say we are still a long way from a welfare culture.[7]

The Japanese in the postwar era express a kind of war culture through their hope for welfare, and cling to that idea. This is the foundation of the peace movement and of support for politics that strengthens military power and cooperates in war. We see cruelty and violence depicted daily through television or smartphones; however, if we can protect our own welfare (or believe that we can), we can make the decision to leave things as they are and even cooperate with violence.

From this point of view, there is room to improve the understanding of the relationship between war and social welfare by rethinking the view of a reverse course. Is social welfare inversely related to the military, even though welfare is not opposite to war for the majority of Japanese? When social welfare studies take the perspective of culture, this aporia must be kept in mind. Social welfare studies should not only confront war but investigate our own welfare as well.

Footnote

1 "Study of welfare culture" has the same significance as the "study of human welfare and culture" which forms part of the name of the academic society "Japanese Society for the Study of Human Welfare and Culture".

Both expressions refer to the intention to achieve a level of culture such that everyone enjoys wholesome and cultured living.

2 Please refer to pages 58–62 in the "Research Project Report" published in the Japanese Society for the Study of Human Welfare and Culture, Journal of Human Welfare and Culture Studi*e*s Vol. 28 (2019).

3 For the idea of new war, reference is made to Kaldor (2001) and Kono (2013).

4 Human security is based on the idea of capability which is the potential for their respective life, and complements human rights (Sen, 2003). The idea of capability enables of a necessitating an economic and political system which realizes equality based on the theory of liberty (Yamawaki, 2005). Social welfare study can have a coherent perspective on capability, human security and human rights, and find it necessary to have economic and political systems including guaranteeing social welfare.

5 In the 1969 survey, the choices were: Dangerous; I cannot say it is not dangerous; No danger, and I have no idea. In the 2009 survey, the choices were: Dangerous; Rather dangerous; Not quite dangerous; No danger, and; I have no idea.

6 In the 1969 survey, the option is As usual, protect Japan's safety with the security system and the SDF.

7 The context of war responsibility can require re-examination of the war culture and welfare culture in postwar Japan. According to Maezawa, the discussion of war responsibility after 1989 came with the emergence of the study of welfare culture, the idea that invasive war is evil has been strengthened rather than the idea that war itself is evil. The discussion of Japan's war responsibility and demand for compensation has been strengthened after the Cold war from that perspective. We can say that about not only the fifteen Years War but also the invasive war that Japan was indirectly involved in post-World War II due to pursuing their own welfare.

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