

global network player authority PewDiePie quilt god Let's Play anael undead wti authentic mediati on Skill pvp contest
 game rule system representation WoW blessing noob kills demon fact body fight pop's spe ingame PST discussion digital
 religion game analysis The Last of Us healing o'religio-escape soul dialo ruitua virtual identity buff priest genesis clan wedding
 simulation ludology death resurrection funeral rines immersion community symbols salvation mage Xbox 360PVE
 narrative



"Train a Scribe" card from *Lost & Found*, illustration by Annie Wong and Mimi Ace

precisely, the authors were asked to include

“the history of video games in the country or region, the reception of foreign imports, domestic video game production and exports, indigenous video game culture and how it was influenced by national history, video game company profiles, video game content description, the role of academic video game studies, and the future of video games in the country or region” (Wolf 2015, 2).

By definition and because of the variant developments in the different regions / countries, this cannot and does not mean that we have the same aspects covered in each entry. Rather, the reader is provided with tailored to the region chapters. In my point of view, this constitutes one of the book’s appeals: For the first time, we are actually able to detect the varying characteristics of game cultures in different nations and world regions, by consulting one work only.

The declared goal of the volume is to provide a (concise) introductory chronicle of video games for as many countries and regions as possible, written by experts for the regions. As Wolf (2016) stated:

“... even missing one crucial essay would make the book feel incomplete. There had to be essays related to each continent, and each major national industry. So it was a matter of finding someone to write all the essays, and preferably people who were natives of the countries in question, and who understood the national context and culture firsthand, having grown up with it, or at least someone who had studied them in-depth.”

This strife for completion goes hand in hand with the understanding that today, video games are consumed, developed and produced globally. But

“Scholarly work on video games has not spread nearly as fast as the games themselves have, though this is starting to change thanks to publications and conferences, which are more global in scope” (Wolf 2015, 12).

Indeed, global dimensions of gaming cultures are still extraordinarily under-researched: “Another so far highly neglected focus in the field ... is the global aspect of digital gaming” (Campbell et al 2016, 658). This regards both the study of specific regions which are under-researched or even not yet researched at all, as well as the study of games and gaming in an overall global setting, meaning that we need to relate the studies of different regions to each other. The varying game consumptions, developments and productions do certainly not work the same way everywhere in the world, but rather, we find two divergent trends in recent game development on a global scale. On the one hand, most globally popular blockbuster games, that is mainstream games, are being developed in a few countries (primarily the United States, some European countries, as well as in Japan and Korea) for global audiences (as argued e.g. by Zeiler 2015). On the other hand, arguably smaller, indie gaming companies world-wide are developing games for international and regional audiences (e.g. Zeiler 2016).

In a review of a few pages it is literally impossible to go into details even just with some of the 39 excellent chapters. So while a number of the book’s chapters deserve special credit, for the innovative material they provide and for opening new game cultures to the reader, let me pick out one example in this review: The chapter on India. India currently belongs to the more rapidly changing gaming cultures and uprising markets, regarding both game production and consumption. Souvik Mukherjee presents “the sleeping giant of the video game world” (2015, 235) on 13 pages, by giving an introduction to e.g. the India’s players and industry. The chapter starts with contextualizing the ludic aspects in Indian culture, by introducing to the

