Local Anime on the Global Stage:
Performance and Identity Crisis in *Full Metal Panic! The Second Raid*

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In TV anime series, narrative and character, among other elements, tend to be highly conventionalized. These conventions are a significant part of how anime is produced, recognized as anime, and interpreted. It is through the performance of these conventions that anime articulates its identity. In this study, I analyze how anime’s conventionalized patterns are performed within the context of shifting tensions between the local and global. This will be explored through an examination of *Full Metal Panic! The Second Raid* (TSR: 2005), an anime historically situated during the peak of anime’s exportation boom and the JSDF’s deployment to Iraq (2004-06), and which can be read as thinking through identity, globalization, and military narratives. I examine how TSR performs anime’s established conventional patterns in a manner that questions the logic of those conventions, engaging with the anxieties of expanded exportation of a previously local, niche product suddenly exported on a global scale with government backing, and the contemporaneous media discourse on the expanded militarization of Japan. The identity crisis of the main character, Sousuke, acting as the core, conventionalized plot of the series, will be analyzed in relationship to the identity of anime itself. Through Sousuke’s identity crisis TSR raises questions about anime’s conventional logic (the narrative and character conventions that appear commonplace), and their connections to the ethics of using lethal force (even in defense), problematizing conventional anime narrative structures and military narratives in general.