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# Representing Race: The Body and Racialization in Japanese

## Women's Media, 1960s-1980s

戦後日本の女性メディアにおける「身体」の表象—「人種」を中心に—

A dissertation presented

by

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to

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## Abstract

As the narratives about Japan being a mono-ethnic society are increasingly put into discussion (Liu-Farrer 2020, Weiner 2009) it becomes imperative to understand how processes of racialization, that is, the “representational process of defining an Other (usually, but not exclusively) somatically” (Miles 1996, 109) have taken place in Japanese society.

This research investigates the processes of reproduction of the concept of race in the everyday spaces of Japanese post-war society from the 1960s to the 1980s, with a particular focus on the way in which it appeared in media targeted to female consumers. It argues that racialization processes have been intertwined in the representations not only of the “foreign” other, but also of the “Japanese” self, as well as of those people whose identities are in-between the aforementioned categories (such as “mixed race” Japanese).

Through the analysis of media images, it traces a history of the discourses surrounding “race”, the “self” and the “Other”. It starts from the 1960s, a period in which the memory of the war was starting to fade due to both the passage of time and the Japanese economic miracle. Discourses about self and Other were channeled into the racialized media spectacle of the “mixed race”. Glamourized and stigmatized at the same time, they offered an occasion to discuss who was to be considered “Japanese”.

In Japanese media images, bodies that are read as “foreign-looking” appear more often in situations where the model is to be looked up to; however, they entail some sort of emotional distance (Kozakai 1996). On the contrary, bodies that are read as “Japanese-looking” tend to appear in relatable positions. This structure was already present in the

1960s and will continue until the end of the 1980s. However, alternative discourses existed as well. During the 1970s, models such as Yamaguchi Sayoko re-imagined the “Japanese-looking” body as an object of admiration that was grounded in the “historical” aesthetics of Japan. At the same time, the location of the “mixed race” body started to shift.

The 1980s were an age of economic prosperity, conspicuous consumption and globalization. The relatable “Japanese-looking” body took the center stage while an increased contact with the foreign led to a clearer, racialized definition of what it meant to be “Japanese-looking”.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 *Scope and background of the research*

The objective of this research is to investigate the processes of racialization in the everyday spaces of Japanese post-war society, with a particular focus on the way that they appeared in the various forms of media consumed by Japanese women.

Japan has been widely considered to be an ethnically homogenous society. While this would seem to be proven by the fact that only 2.30% of the population holds foreign nationality (Shutsunyūkoku Zairyū Kanri-cho 2020), this does not account for the people who, while not being (only) of Japanese ethnicity, hold Japanese nationality. Thus, the image of monoethnic Japan has been continuously disproven in research since at least the 1990s.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in topics related to immigration and diversity in Japan. While the country has never adopted an open immigration policy, there are grounds to say that Japan is a country to which people migrate to (Liu-Farrer 2020). The gradual increase of foreigners living in the country has brought an increase of so-called “*hāfu*”<sup>1</sup> (“mixed race”) children, and this is changing the face of Japanese citizens themselves. It is no longer uncommon for “mixed race” Japanese to represent the country at international beauty pageants and in international sports competitions.

However, images of “mixed race” and other people who look different from the

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<sup>1</sup> The word “*hāfu*” is one of the words used to indicate the children of a “Japanese” and a “non-Japanese” national. This includes “mixed-race” (biracial and multiracial) people, but also people with a Japanese national and a non-Japanese national Asian parent. For further discussion on the use of the term, see the appendix in Iwabuchi (2014).

commonly perceived image of the “Japanese” have been a constant of the mediascape since the 1950s. Indeed, the children born between Japanese women and American soldiers during the occupation were counted among the social problems that the country faced after the end of the war (Shimoji 2018), and after that negative perception gradually faded, there has always been a spot for “mixed” people in the fashion and entertainment industries.

During the post-war period there was also discussion about Japanese citizenship and the meaning of “Japaneseness”. After the fall of the Japanese empire, the country reshuffled the boundaries between “Japanese” and “foreign” citizens (Shimoji 2018). The newly “monocultural” Japan was based on Japanese ethnocentrism, as it barred former colonial subjects from the acquisition of nationality (Shimoji 2018). At the same time, there was an abundance of western-looking images of the “foreign” in national media (Ochiai 1990), that might have influenced the perception of the “Japanese” self. There are then grounds to argue that the image of the “Japanese citizen” has been created in tension with these two different dimensions of the “foreign”.

This research aims to chart a fraction of these processes by focusing on how ideas surrounding “race” (hereafter without parentheses) have appeared in women’s media from 1960 to 1990. Women’s media are a particularly interesting field to scrutinize meaning-making processes because they are deeply tied with consumerism, materiality and everyday life. Advertisements for consumer goods in women’s magazines have been one area in which imagery of the foreign body has been the most prominent. The materiality of make-up and body modifications such as cosmetic surgery offers us the opportunity to consider different meanings and values attached to specific phenotypical characteristics. This interest in phenotypes was also shared by the pseudo-scientific

disciplines that, before losing credibility at the end of the Second World War, created the blueprint for the racial categories that still survive in popular discourse nowadays. Lastly, the meaning-making carried out in everyday life can be considered the “social subconscious” of a particular society, as it is often not subjected to the rigorous analysis that more academic or political discourses face. Thus, it can be a fertile ground to scrutinize those social processes, such as racialization, that are not always explicit in public commentary.

By analyzing how race appeared in representation and discourse, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of the complex standing that “foreigners” have in Japan, whose society has been often characterized as being open to cultural influence while being closed to migration (Kozakai 1996).

## *1.2 Theoretical perspectives*

In the following section, I will introduce the theoretical underpinnings of this research project while discussing previous studies related to the topic at hand. It will be divided into three subsections: the first will cover the theories behind the concept of race, from both local and global perspectives. The second will be centered on the intersections between race and gender as they appear in women’s magazines. Lastly, the third section will focus on the concept of relatability (or the lack thereof), and how it is applied to the racialized body through different visual strategies.

### 1.2.1 Concepts of “race” and “ethnicity”, “majority” and “minority” in the Japanese context

#### **The concepts of “race” and “racialization”**

The central topic of this research project is the way in which racialization processes have been carried out throughout women’s media published in post-war Japan. The following paragraphs will be dedicated to explaining the importance of using this framework and delineating some of the theoretical underpinnings.

“Race” is one of the concepts that are used in society to categorize people. It is often compared to (and used in tandem with) the term “ethnicity”, as both categories are used to describe groups of people who share some common characteristics. However, whereas the latter puts more emphasis on shared culture (Jenkins 2007), the former tends to be a descriptor that focuses on the phenotypical characteristics of people (Lemonik Arthur 2007).

As a scientific concept, race has been disproven in the “Declaration by world’s scientists” document published by UNESCO in 1950 (UNESCO 1950). Nevertheless, the habit of dividing the population into different categories, often according to their phenotypical characteristics, has persisted in many societies. To underline the fact that the construction of race is a process that entails “categorization, a representational process of defining an Other (usually, but not exclusively) somatically”, Miles (1996, 109) uses the term “racialization”. Although various degrees of trans-national influence exist, these racialization processes are generally specific to each society. This research will follow the trajectories of racialization of the Japanese post-war: it will trace how different bodies have been ascribed to different “racial groups” through the discursive

and visual representational practices of mass media.

Studies on racial minorities and racialization processes have also been the starting point for what is known as whiteness studies in the white western world. Pioneered by scholars such as Dyer (1997) and Frankenberg (2005), this field of study has analyzed the place of “whiteness”, that is, the condition of power that comes with being considered white in western societies. “Whiteness” is a specific “place” in the double sense of being in a powerful position on the racial ladder and having a viewpoint that shapes how the self, the other(s) and the social relations that are formed between them are perceived (Frankenberg 2005). Furthermore, it also has the distinct feature of being “unmarked” in majority-white societies. Thus, it easily slips into becoming the definition of what is normal and common of the whole of humanity (Dyer 1997). The perspective of whiteness studies has been constructive insofar it has helped revert the gaze that was often focused on defining what made racial minorities “different”. By taking a whiteness studies approach, we are obligated to consider how normativity is constructed in each society and how this process is often carried out along racial lines. However, since these studies have mainly been carried out in Euro-American settings, they need to be adjusted to the context of Japan, where whiteness cannot be “unmarked” in the same way.

Western research on the representation of racialized bodies has focused on issues that arise from them being positioned outside the “norm” that is whiteness. One of the most common is stereotyping, that is, the representation of racialized bodies according to a few simplistic and essentialized characteristics (Hall 1997). In Japanese media, various discourses about race are reproduced and transmitted overtly through stereotyped representations. However, any analysis on stereotyping must be mindful of the Japanese



context. The representations of people who are visibly different from the image of the “Japanese” are influenced both by the nationalistic discourses on the Japanese majority and by those that continue from the “scientific racism” that originated in the “West” in the 1800s.

### **“Race” and “racialization” in the Japanese context**

The following paragraphs will detail how concepts of race, majority and minority have appeared in research about the Japanese context. Before recent scholarly contributions on the study of “mixed race” (see Keane 2020, Shimoji 2018), the framework of race was not often employed in Japanese research. Indeed, concepts such as nationality or ethnicity have been generally preferred. However, these theoretical perspectives are not always enough to understand the relations between the normative majority and the minority. This gap is especially easy to spot when considering the social history of the very diverse group that is the “mixed-race” Japanese (see Shimoji, 2018). Mixed-race Japanese of Asian descent tend to be made invisible<sup>2</sup>, while mixed-race Japanese of non-Asian descent tend to be made hyper-visible (Iwabuchi 2014). This phenomenon reveals that the idea of a “Japanese” majority is also constructed upon phenotypical differences, and thus, needs to be addressed in research.

In the case of Japan, the terms “*gaijin*”, “*hāfu*” and “*Zainichi Korean*” (among others) can be taken as examples of racialization. It might seem inappropriate to use the term

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<sup>2</sup> In English language, it might seem counterintuitive to define “mixed-race” the people who are born between a Japanese parent and a parent of another Asian ethnicity, even more so if the non-Japanese partner is East Asian. Nevertheless, they define themselves as “mixed” (*hāfu*) in Japanese.

“racialization” to refer to social groups that are not necessarily considered different from the majority population because of their physical characteristics. However, one must bear in mind that as defined above by Miles (1996), the process of racialization does not necessarily entail the presence of a phenotypical difference. To cite an example outside of the Japanese context, Northern African people are often racialized in the south of Europe even though the differences between them and the majority populations are mostly cultural and religious rather than physical. In Japan, as we will see below, the *tan’itsu minzoku* discourse led to the spread of a racialized self-identification based on purity, which becomes particularly noticeable when one thinks about the use of the words “*hāfu*”, “*quōtā*” (which effectively indicate the amount of “Japanese blood” present in the person) and the colloquial antonyms “*jun japa*”, “*jun nihonjin*” (‘pure’ Japanese). This process of racialized self-identification has been influenced by both ideas of race and ethnicity.

For a long time, these processes have been made invisible. Since the end of the Second World War, the dominant attitude towards race and racism has been, in Kawai’s words, “Japan is the place where only the Japanese live; and therefore, racism cannot be an issue in Japan” (Kawai 2015, 20). Intellectuals on both ends of the political spectrum embraced the idea of a mono-ethnic (and mono-racial) “Japanese people” (*tan’itsu minzoku*) (Kawai 2015; 2023). This dominant discourse works similarly to the colorblind racism of the United States (Kawai 2023) and has had the effect of creating a majority whose defining trait is, according to Keane, the privilege of not having to notice racism and racial relations (Keane and Uehara 2019).

Keane and Uehara’s definition of the majority could be taken to be a sign of change in Japanese social studies. With the exception of Fujikawa’s (2008, 2011) preliminary

studies on the meaning of the word “whiteness” in a Japanese context, concepts about “majority” and “normativity” were never clearly formulated, neither in Japanese nor in Western research. The result was the existence of two different understandings of racial relations in Japanese society. The first approach mirrored western racial ideologies: according to this approach, the white body is considered to be the normative paradigm, and all non-white bodies to be subaltern. Ideas about race had already entered the country in the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however they reached popular knowledge in the Meiji period after their inclusion in elementary school textbooks, which reported Blumenbach’s five racial categorizations as introduced by Japanese intellectual Fukuzawa Yukichi (Kawai 2023). This view placed the “white race” at the top of the racial hierarchy, describing them as beautiful and intelligent, while the “yellow race”, which the Japanese people belonged to, was considered to have “short noses and slanted eyes” (Kawai 2023, 53) and to be less intelligent than the “white race”. This line of thought was at first internalized, with businessmen such as Takahashi Yoshio proposing intermarriage between white and Japanese people in order to “improve the Japanese race” (Kawai 2023, 56). However, the diffusion of the concept of “ethnicity” gave way for a new racial understanding that could open up the possibility of a “Japanese ethnicity” that was superior to the other members of the “yellow race”. This understanding of the Japanese ethnicity (*minzoku*) harbors the possibility of effectively functioning as an agent of racialization. By recognizing themselves as separate from other peoples that, according to “western” definitions, would be considered belonging to the same race, it is possible to categorize them as “Others”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In his research, Oguma (2002) shows how discourses that saw the differences between

The racialization of the Japanese could thus function in a duplicitous manner: on the one hand, as members of the “yellow race”, the Japanese were able to see themselves as “peers” to the other people of Asia, especially those who were under their colonial subjugation. This also allowed Japan to advocate for the equal treatment of all races at the Paris peace conference of 1919-1920 (Kawai 2023, 134). On the other hand, it seated them at the top of the clear hierarchy that was established between the colonial subjects: this was, for example, reflected in the educational opportunities, as well as in the quality of the rations that each “ethnic group” received during the war (Kawai 2023, 135-136).

After the Second World War, the positive attention reserved to the white body, as well as all the cultural products that originated in white majority countries is often implied to be a direct consequence of the United States’ hegemony. In his book *Shinbei to Hanbei* (2007), Yoshimi analyzes how anti-American sentiments (*hanbei*) were more manifest in the immediate post-war period. However, the withdrawal of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (hereafter; SCAP) in 1957 and the increase of imagery that tied the American lifestyle with the luxuries of consumerism gradually contributed to their fading. Japan has been a ripe terrain for the spread and internalization of western ideas, especially since it avidly consumed American and European media. Thus, the hegemony of Euro-American culture has been unmistakably

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Koreans and Japanese to be of a racial nature existed during the colonial period as well. This is seen for example in the concern that the eugenicists of the mid-1930s showed for the mixed marriages between Koreans and Japanese, on the rise after Korean laborers were forcibly relocated to Japan to sustain the Japanese Empire’s war efforts. However, overly emphasizing racial differences carried the risk of contradicting Japan’s excuse for military expansion into Asia, which at the time was justified through the insistence that Koreans and Japanese were originally the same people (*nissen dōshon*). See Oguma 2002.

felt in Japanese society.

However, at the same time, we must be careful not to oversimplify the Japanese internalization of Euro-American cultural products and ideas. A critical point that Kozakai (1996) makes is that Japan has never been colonized and that the west's influence on the country can in no way be compared to the impact that Europe and America had on former colonies in Africa and Asia. The power that Japanese actors had in selecting which and to what extent Euro-American culture should be introduced should not be understated. It should also be taken into consideration that, as Kozakai notices, images of the white west were often circulated in Japanese society according to the needs of the Japanese social psyche, rather than being an imposition from a directly hegemonic power.

The second approach places the “Japanese *minzoku*” (Japanese ethnic identity) as the default and, by extension, at the top of the social hierarchy. This is an extension of the ideas about the “Japanese ethnicity” that were formulated in the pre-war era (Kawai 2015). After the end of the Second World War, the word “*minzoku*” (ethnicity) had fallen into disuse outside of the idiomatic phrase “*tan'itsu minzoku*”, which as we have seen is used to describe the Japanese population as mono-ethnic (Kawai 2023). Kawai (2023) cites political scientist Yoon Keun-Cha's argument that the idea of a Japan being a country with no minorities led to the formation of an “identity which ‘emptied’ the concept of ‘ethnicity’” (Yoon 1996, 6). Kawai explains how this meant that while being built on the assumption of the racialized “Japanese identity” formulated before 1945, which saw the “Japanese people” unified under the same language and culture<sup>4</sup>, it made

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<sup>4</sup> One important element in the formation of the ethnic Japanese identity pre-1945 was the

this racialization invisible and natural (Kawai 2023).

The *tan'itsu minzoku* discourse became widespread immediately after the fall of the Japanese empire, and the same period saw the archipelago occupied by the Allied forces (1945-1952). Shimoji (2018) notes how it is during this period of intense social change that the racial categories that interest contemporary Japanese society were established: the former colonial subjects of Korean, Taiwanese and Chinese ancestry were excluded from citizenship and thus racialized as outsiders. The same happened to the “mixed-race” children of the mostly American soldiers stationed in the country: we will see later how even those who obtained Japanese citizenship were not exempt from being racialized as “Other”.

Decades later, the *nihonjinron* genre of books that became popular from the 1970s to the 1980s had a role in the popularization of the *tan'itsu minzoku* discourse (Kawai 2023). According to Yoshino (1992), these theories argued for the particularity of Japanese culture and society and were constructed through a comparison with what is seen as being a universal, normative culture - the “West” after the Meiji period and Chinese culture before that. The *nihonjinron* doctrine is based on the assumption of a shared “Japaneseness”, which attaches the cultural identity that is usually associated with the concept of ethnicity with physical characteristics of the body, such as blood (Yoshino 1992). Throughout this research, we will see how in popular culture, considerable efforts were also placed to the construction of a normative “Japanese-

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idea of the Japanese people’s common genealogy as descendants of the emperor, which was seen as the father of the nation. This aspect was significantly de-emphasized after the declaration that the emperor was not divine. However, the metaphor of “shared blood” between “the Japanese” has quietly persisted in the post-war (Kawai 2023).

looking” body. The mixing of a cultural identity with physical characteristics makes it so that this “Japaneseness” functions in the same way as a racial category, even though in different social contexts it would not be considered as such.

In everyday practice, these two perspectives are often intertwined with each other: because of this, considering them separately can also get in the way of social research, especially when it focuses on the lived experience of individuals. Hence why it is essential to keep in mind, as Keane (2020) does, that in social life, the majority can first and foremost be defined by the privilege of not having to understand one’s place in society and the potential consequences of one’s actions.

To summarize, there are two ways of understanding relations with the foreign Other: one that underlines the influence of eurocentrism and another that emphasizes the importance of the local setting and national identity. This research project is based on the premise that neither of these two perspectives is wrong: rather, they are deeply interconnected. Eurocentrism and Japanese nationalism intersect to create a dominant and normative image of “foreigner” and “mixed-race” in media. However, we must not conflate this dominant/normative image of the foreigner to the social reality of “foreign looking” people in Japan.

### **Racialized bodies**

The way in which “race thinking” has been applied to perceptions of the body in Japanese society is the main topic of this research. My argument is that this “race thinking” has led to a racialization both of the “Japanese majority” and of the various minorities (including those groups that can be considered minoritarian only in the numerical sense) that appear in Japanese media.

In order to highlight the processes through which the bodies that appear in female-oriented media have been, consciously or not, sorted in racializing categories, we could not avoid relying on the fictional category that is the “Japanese-looking” body. This idea, while deeply rooted in everyday discourse, is illusory.

What is the “Japanese-looking” body? As we will see throughout this dissertation, the postwar discourses about the physical characteristics of the Japanese body were often constructed through comparison with the foreign (often synonymous with white). For example, Takezaki (2020) notes how fashion model Itō Kinuko’s “eight heads tall” (*hattōshin*) body, which to this day continues to be the ideal when it comes to beautiful proportions, was a body that was “tall enough not to lose to foreign women” (Takezaki 2020, 191) and, after landing third place in the Miss Universe beauty contest in 1953, “was accepted by the world” (Takezaki 2020, 191).

Similarly, Yamamura (2016) notes how the “three-dimensional make-up” (*rittai keshō*) that became popular during the same period was strongly influenced by “western” beauty standards. These make-up techniques, which can be compared to contouring, serve to enhance the nose bridge and enlarge the eyes, creating the effect of a chiseled face. Yamamura notes how “techniques to correct low nose bridges and puffy eyes existed as far back as the Edo period, (···) but now that the target of comparison were white women what needed to be corrected was the ‘flat’ face (*heimenteki na kao*) of Japanese women, who were Asian [and not white]” (Yamamura 2016, 181). The judgements attached to the characteristics of the “Japanese-looking” body swayed according to the trends of each respective era; however, the image of an often short, non-muscular body with a “flat” face remained predominant when speaking about the “Japanese-looking” body.



However, defining exactly the characteristics of the “Japanese-looking” body is an impossible task. As it can be said of any population, no definition can possibly account for the physical variation between each individual. This variation is recognized in popular discourse as well: consider the words “*shōyu gao*” (soy sauce-like face) and “*sōsu gao*” (sauce-like face). Both terms first rose to popularity in the late eighties and are used when talking about the physical connotation of Japanese individuals, especially men<sup>5</sup>. The Dictionary of Japanese Slang and Colloquialisms defines “*shōyu gao*” (Yonekawa 2006, 289) as “a fresh-looking long face with typically Japanese monolids, almond-shaped eyes and a well-shaped nose”. Its contrary is given to be “*sōsu gao*” (Yonekawa 2006, 327), “a face with occidental-like chiseled features”. The term “*sōsu gao*” is usually not used to refer to foreigners – rather, it indicates non-Japanese-looking Japanese<sup>6</sup>. It is not surprising that the dictionary gives as an example prominent “*hāfu*” actor Masao Kusakari, although “*sōsu gao*” individuals are not necessarily of mixed origin.

There are a number of interesting observations that we can make from the use of the slang words reported above. The first is that even when talking about internal variations, the “Japanese-looking” body is constructed in relation to a “different” Other. The “*sōsu gao*” concept functions as a double-edged sword that on the one hand proves the fallacy of essentialism at the empirical level – if all Japanese were actually “Japanese-like”, there would be no need to create a new category that refers to “non Japanese-like Japanese”.

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<sup>5</sup> Although their use is somewhat extended to women as well in that unregulated place that is the Internet.

<sup>6</sup> Blackness is a priori excluded from discourses of variation that are internal to “Japaneseness”: “*sōsu gao*” was used to refer to people who have white ancestry, but not Black.

At the same time, this demonstration of anti-essentialism is dependent on essentialistic dichotomies: the term “*sōsu*” brings back to mind the complete alien-ness of the foreign, and the contrast with the term “*shōyu gao*” serves to reinforce the constructed mental image of what is “Japanese-like”. The essentialized image of the “Japanese-looking” body is continually re-constructed through different vectors of antagonistic relationality, that come from both inside and outside from what is perceived to be the “Japanese-looking” body itself<sup>7</sup>.

The references to physical characteristics that appear in the “*shōyu gao*” and “*sōsu gao*” are but one of the discursive strategies used to allude to the racialization of the majority: other metaphors rely on idioms that are associated with bodily secretions such as blood and smell.

Kawai (2023) notes the importance of blood as a metaphor in the creation of a Japanese (racialized) ethnic identity: she notes how scholars such as Ueda Mannen (1867-1937) talked about the Japanese language, one of the three element that are assumed to form the Japanese ethnic identity, being the “spiritual blood” (*seishinteki ketsueki*) of the Japanese (Kawai 2023, 62). Similarly, she notes how the discourse of Burakumin<sup>8</sup> discrimination, which often becomes apparent at the time of their marriage, is framed in terms of “blood mixing” – a rhetoric that racializes the minority even though they are legally and genealogically Japanese (Kawai 2023). In the research

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<sup>7</sup> Arguably this has been made less of a problem because of the proliferation of categories. Nowadays there are so many of these kinds of denominations that the act of categorization in itself is starting to lose meaning.

<sup>8</sup> Burakumin are the descendants of the lowest classes of Medieval Japanese society and would thus be considered ethnically Japanese. Nevertheless, scholars such as Takezawa argue that their discrimination is actually racial in nature (Takezawa 2005). Kawai (2023) also cites the Othering of Burakumin as an example of racialization in the Japanese context.

sample, this reference to blood appears in the late 1980s when the women who had strong feelings of admiration for the English-speaking “west” were referred to with the term “*kecchū gaijin*” (foreign-blooded). Not only does this term carry an affinity with the language of illness, it might also imply that the “spiritual blood” that was considered to be the Japanese language had been substituted by English, the language of the *gaijin*.

References to smell mostly come up in the word *bata-kusai* (butter smelling), which much alike the term “*sōsu gao*” was used to indicate something/someone that was Japanese (or had Japanese heritage) but was very foreign-like. The reference to butter indicates, precisely like in the case of sauce, a very commonly used condiment in “western” cuisine (*yōshoku*), which while commonly used in the country is not considered to be of indigenous origin. Unlike “*sōsu gao*”, however, the term *bata-kusai* was also used with negative connotations.

Similar remarks can be made about the “mixed” body, which will at times be addressed with the words “mixed-looking” body. Indeed, there is a huge phenotypical variation between “mixed” Japanese, even when their ancestry is the same. It is thus very hard to pinpoint who is and who isn’t “mixed”, unless accurate background information is provided: as we will see in the analysis, this was not standard practice unless the person was very famous, something that rarely happened in the case of fashion models.

Nevertheless, in everyday discourses, the idea of a “mixed-looking” body was likely as pervasive as the idea of a “Japanese-looking” body, to the point that non-“mixed” Japanese celebrities who assumed a “mixed” persona in order to match their image to their looks was not unheard of.

Although both the “Japanese-looking” body and the “mixed-looking” body are socially constructed notions, we cannot easily do without them: since it so often appears in

popular discourse, it is a trope through which the majority defines themselves and the other. It is more productive to see how this image has been constructed through textual and visual discourses, as it can be helpful to analyze the relationship that it has to membership in society: highlighting the contradictions and historical variations behind the perception of what is “Japanese” and what is “mixed” (or even “foreign”) might hopefully become a first step in order to imagine an image of Japanese citizenship that is more inclusive, and that better reflects the reality of an increasingly diverse society. Accordingly, the words “Japanese-like” and “mixed like” will be accompanied by inverted commas in order to highlight the constructed nature of these ideas.

#### 1.2.2 Race, consumption and gender

Among the vast number of media produced and consumed in Japan, this research mainly focuses on media aimed at women of a younger (10s –20s) female demographic. This section aims to explain the particular perspectives that an analysis of such documents can offer while trying to understand the (re)production of concepts of race.

The following paragraphs will delineate the theoretical reasonings for linking race and women’s media. Researchers in Japan and abroad have widely assumed that foreigners have been a constant presence in Japanese media productions, especially in advertising. Hagiwara (2004) stresses that Japanese advertisements rely on foreign actors, who appear in 18.6% of the commercials retrieved in 2003. He bases his research mainly on Kozakai (1996)’s “paradox of foreign cultural acceptance” (*ibunka juyō paradokkusu*).

According to Kozakai, the presence of foreign-looking bodies is higher:

1. when products are foreign in origin or associated with foreign (often equaling

western) customs. (p.30)

2. in the advertisement of goods related to conspicuous consumption, that would be not considered a necessity. Conversely, the closer the good is to everyday life and use, the higher are the chances of employing an Asian model. (p.31)

3. in instances where the foreign-looking body isn't threatening to Japanese self-image. (Kozakai 1996, 36-37)

The image of the foreign body is thus associated with consumption, and the less close this consumption is to the necessities of everyday life, the higher the chances that images of the foreign will be involved in it. Thus, it is important to look at consumption and the actors that actively participate in it.

Since the industrial revolution, our understandings of the processes of production and consumption have been intertwined with notions of gender. During this period the act of production began to be understood as a “public” and “masculine” activity and, on the contrary, the act of consumption began to be seen as a “feminine” act that was conducted privately (Williams and Saucedo 2007).

It follows that consumption practices have often been understood as apolitical. However, consumption choices and patterns do have a social and political meaning. According to Sakamoto (2019), “consumption (···) is something that provides ideological narratives to people, and [through it, people] are taking part [in those narratives]” (Sakamoto 2019, 242).

The link between gender and consumption is conspicuously present in Japanese society as well. Clammer (1997) argues that women have played a central role in consumption since the early days of Japanese consumerism in the Taishō period. He

argues that, especially when it comes to those forms of consumption related to the self and the body, “it is women who primarily control symbolic resources (···) and to a great extent define for their husbands and children the ‘correct’ means of self/body presentation consistent with social status or anticipated/desired status” (Clammer 1977, 86). Researching women-oriented media, which supported this kind of consumption, might thus prove to be a fruitful starting point to understand the ways in which race is understood in the Japanese context. Throughout this thesis, we will see how several ideas about the relation between “foreign-looking” and “Japanese-looking” bodies, as well as the link between self and other, are being constantly communicated and received through consumption practices.

More specifically, this research will focus on the representational practices surrounding the kind of conspicuous consumption that has historically been addressed to women more than men, such as fashion and make-up. The data collection at the core of this research has been primarily focused on fashion magazines targeted to a young adult demographic. These contain a wealth of information on practices of fashion and make-up, which are interesting to look at because of their material nature: they are essentially an act of modification of the body. The actors who partake in these practices must consider the material surfaces as well as the different phenotypical possibilities of the human body in order to enhance them. This attention to the phenotype is also shared by the pseudo-scientific thought that has created the notion of racial groups. Perhaps unsurprisingly, concepts of race have been influential in the production of the know-how of these disciplines, at times more subtly and at others more explicitly.

### 1.2.3 The body between “desire” and “relatability”

We have mentioned above how according to Kozakai, the appearance of “foreign” elements in advertisements is inversely proportional to the ordinariness of the products that are being promoted. This phenomenon has been observed repeatedly until recent times (Hiyoshi 1997; Hagiwara 2004; Morokami 2005; Togano, Kawamoto & Takabayashi 2016), and has often been explained through the “paradox of foreign cultural acceptance” defined by Kozakai in his book of the same name (1996). Noticing how “western elements are fewer in [advertisements of] things that belong to the realm of the ‘essential’, whereas in the [advertisements of] things that belong to the realm of leisure, they are much more present” (Kozakai 1996, 31), he theorizes that the “desire” (*akogare*) for the west and for whiteness seen in Japanese media does not indicate a desire for complete assimilation to the western foreign. On the contrary, Japanese society does not easily allow foreign elements to enter those spheres that are most intimately connected with the formation of core identity, as doing so could possibly trigger an identity crisis. This is, for the author, proof of the fact that “in the end, in the deep of their hearts, Japanese people reject foreigners as an ‘alien substance’” (Kozakai 1996, 43).

Kozakai’s inquiry began in the mid-1980s – at least two thirds of the documents analyzed in this study thus precede it by ten to twenty years. It would thus be disingenuous to apply his conclusions retrospectively. Nevertheless, the present analysis can at least show the process leading to the historical situation that Kozakai investigated in his socio-psychological research.

In her work about the “western dreams” of Japanese women, Kelsky explains the word “*akogare*” (desire, hereafter without parentheses) as a “rather precise gloss” of Jacques

Lacan's formulation of the concept (2006, 26). There are indeed some significant overlaps between the two terms. First, even if it is possible to translate *akogare* as "desire", we just need to glance back at the dictionary definition to realize that it is not easily rendered by the common usage of the word. For instance, it is not used to refer to any sort of sexual desire (if anything, there is something about *akogare* that is quite far from sexuality, although it can be used to express romantic attraction), nor it is simply the want to act in a certain way. Secondly, the centrality of idealization means that Kelsky is correct in her assessment that *akogare* is "conditioned and structured by the very impossibility of attaining what one wishes for" (Allison 2000 cited in Kelsky 2006, 26). Just as Lacanian desire, *akogare* arises in response to a perceived "lack" in the self (as attested by the synonyms "aim, ambition" – the target possesses quality that the subject would themselves like to have). The idealized qualities that are needed to trigger *akogare* are also largely a projection of the self, and it is certainly possible to understand this feeling as a personal interpretation of the desires of something that is bigger than the subject – in this case, society.

The idealization that is central to *akogare* ties in neatly with processes of objectification. As we have seen in the dictionary definition, the positive feelings of *akogare* are not dependent on an objective evaluation of the reality of the target. This means that the "desired" object/person is not "seen" as what they actually are – their complexities, contradictions and negative aspects are eliminated in the process of forming the idealized image that is necessary to trigger *akogare*. Through the unconscious denial of its subjectivity, the target itself then becomes a prop; an "object" needed to sustain idealization (Nussbaum 1995).

Although in everyday understanding the term "objectification" has a negative



connotation, it is a very nuanced concept. Martha Nussbaum sees the act of treating a person as an object as something involving any of the following properties: instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership and denial of subjectivity (Nussbaum 1995). In her analysis of the ethics of objectification, Nussbaum establishes how some of these properties (such as violability – the legitimization to violate, maim or break an object/person and fungibility – the denial of the intrinsic uniqueness of the object/person) are considerably worse than others. At the same time, it does not mean that every objectification practice entails each of these notions: even among objects, some are handled with more care than others. Nussbaum makes the example of the art object, that is revered and appreciated even if it is not conferred any subjectivity. The objectification processes inherent in *akogare*, especially those which are consciously recognized with more ease, tend to be of this latter “positive” kind. However, precisely because of the disconnection with complexity and reality that is at the basis of these feelings, it is possible for them to transform into fetishism or, even worse, vilification.

Now that we have somewhat clarified what *akogare* is, it is time to consider who is the target of *akogare*. Kelsky only discusses the word in relation to the imaginary of the “west” – someone who is unfamiliar with the Japanese language and first encounters this word in her text would think that the “west” and *akogare* have a privileged relation. While it is true that the term is often used when talking about the “west” (and consequently, of the white body that so often is used as its visual marker), *akogare* is not necessarily tied to racialization. This means that any kind of body can become the target of *akogare* if the relevant conditions are met. For the sake of this analysis, *akogare* will be considered a visual (linguistic) style – one that is based on glamour-sublimation and

emotional distance, given by the fact that the “desired” qualities of the target are inevitably something that the audience-subject does not possess. Thus, as a visual style in advertisement, *akogare* is based on the premise of the impossibility of identification – something that is, however, promised if the audience-subject engages in the act of consumption. Naturally, this is a promise that cannot be fulfilled, something that the audience might also be aware of.

In everyday language, there are many words that can be taken as antonyms of the term *akogare*, such as *keibetsu* (scorn) and *genmetsu* (disillusionment). In the context of this analysis, however, “relatability” (*shinkinkan*) is the most appropriate term. If the visual style of *akogare* is based on elevating the object and making it a target of the viewer’s admiration, the opposite strategy would be to make the object as emotionally close as possible to the viewer, in order to recreate a sensation of familiarity or camaraderie. This lack of emotional distance corresponds to what Arima defines as *anshinkan*, feeling of security (Arima 2008). This comes from the confirmation of one’s identity or rather, the lack of threats to it. While both Kozakai and Arima focus on the correlation of Japanese cultural elements and “Japanese” models with these feelings, it is not impossible to think that “foreign-looking” models could be represented in a visual style that makes them feel relatable as well. Contrarily to *akogare*, which being based on an idealized image requires abstraction and the intentional omission of detail, the ability to relate to another person is fundamentally dependent on the possibility of imagining the other person’s life – the more information the reader has on the represented subject, the more relatable they will seem<sup>9</sup>. This is of course easier to achieve in magazine articles

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<sup>9</sup> In their methodological introduction to Multimodal Discourse Analysis, for example,

that are accompanied by lengthy text descriptions; however, the information does not necessarily have to be conveyed through words. A sensation of familiarity can be recreated as effectively through the use of visual cues, such as for example through the reconstruction of a situation that the viewer might have experienced themselves.

First person voices and viewpoints are also privileged when it comes to the construction of a relatable narrative: however, these elements can be particularly hard to convey through static images alone.

### *1.3 Literature Review*

The following section will be dedicated to discussing previous studies on the topics of race, the body and consumption.

#### 1.3.1 Race in the Japanese context

Much of the research on race in Japan has tended to emphasize one of the two theoretical approaches described in section 2.1.2: they would *either* focus on the influence of Eurocentric racial thought *or* accentuate Japanese ethnocentrism. This is particularly evident in the research that tackles the status of the white body, which would be hegemonic if following the first approach but peripheric according to the second. Because of this, the literature reviewed below will focus on how the white body (and in particular its image) has been understood in research about the Japanese

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Machin and Mayr (2012) note how personalization, individualization and specification bring the reader emotionally closer to the person described. All these rhetorical devices imply the insertion of specific details about the narrative object.

context.

Russell's (2017) research on race follows the first approach: he argues that, like in Europe and America, the white body is seen as a symbol for "universal humanity", which Japanese citizens have no problem identifying. In her research about Japanese women and their relationship with the (white) "west", Kelsky (2006) also follows the same paradigm. In the eyes of these women, the white "west" (and white men as a proxy) becomes an idealized society in which they can find refuge from the frustrations that come with living in a society where they do not believe they can fulfill their ambitions.

In English-language research, Ashikari and Creighton both make similar considerations. Ashikari (2005) explores the "whitening" (*bihaku*) cosmetic trend that started in the 1980s and states that becoming more proximate to the white body is not in the intent of the consumers, some of whom even hold negative opinions on the skin of white people. Creighton (1995), on the other hand, explores the uses of the white body in commercial advertisements. While recognizing the influence that the "West" has had on Japan since the Meiji era, she states that representations of the white body are usually flat, generalizing and tend to place them in liminal spaces – particularly in those images that have ties to sexuality. Both Ashikari and Creighton's papers do not look at these topics from a historical perspective, and they thus need to be supplemented by diachronic research. They also risk understating the fact that Europe and America were a hegemonic influence during the post-war period. However, they are valuable reminders that the actors in Japanese society have more agency than some of the above theories might have conceded.

Lastly, there is a third, more nuanced approach, which keeps in mind the influence of both eurocentrism and Japanese ethnocentrism.

The aforementioned Kozakai (1996) was perhaps the first to notice the co-existence of a deep-seated admiration (*akogare*) for the “west”, implied to be at the top of a global-scale hegemony, with a strong ethnic identity. This manifested itself in the need to keep western images at bay in those realms that are considered to be too close to self-identity. The white people (mostly women) who appear in media are projected images of difference that are distant from everyday life. This in turn distances them from the thorns of racism, that according to the scholar ensues when different groups are in very close contact with each other.

Kozakai’s theory shows the psychological mechanisms behind the use of “foreign looking” bodies in Japanese media. This dissertation, while drawing from his social psychology research, aims to further expand the inquiry into the Japanese perceptions of race by utilizing methodological insights from sociology and history, and will cover areas that were clearly outside the scope of his research, such as for example the historical reconstructions of the various discourses that surrounded racialized bodies.

More recently, Kawai (2023) has penned the most comprehensive introductory book in Japanese on the sociology of race. The text, while offering an international perspective, also carefully analyzes the developments in the perceptions of race in Japanese society. However, her research most closely follows theoretical developments – thus, it does not concern itself with analyzing textual or visual materials. On the contrary, the aim of my research is to offer new insights on how the concept of “race” is perceived in Japan through the consideration of texts that until now have never been systematically analyzed.

A nuanced perspective is also generally taken by the studies on “mixed-race”. These studies (Fish 2009; Iwabuchi 2014; Shimoji 2018) generally acknowledge the fact that

“mixed” Japanese – even those of white descent – can experience life as a minority in Japan. However, they also acknowledge a “hegemonic” (Ko 2014) image of “mixed race”, that sees them depicted as people of good looks and high social class, often having white roots.

The present research aims to follow this third approach while analyzing the way that the body – be it female or male, “Japanese”, “mixed”, or “foreign” – has been constructed and represented in female-oriented magazines. The following section will be dedicated to explaining the choice of this medium.

### 1.3.2 Foreign-looking bodies in women’s media

Although it is in no mean axiomatic, it is a common perception that the relation with images of the body is considered a central part of the experience of womanhood. In other words, the attainment of a body that is the closest as possible to the standards set out by society is believed to be a pressing concern for the people who are socialized as female. It then follows that much of the discussion about what is considered desirable (and what is omitted from social sanctioned forms of beauty) is carried on in media targeted to female consumption.

In Japan, too, concepts of race have been discussed in relation to the construction of an idealized body: this section will be dedicated to reviewing previous research on race in women’s media.

In Japan, some feminist scholars have been preoccupied with the presence of foreign-looking bodies in visual media that targets female consumers. Hanno, Isaji and Takeuchi (1989), Ochiai (1990) and Lee (2012) all agree that “foreign looking” (particularly white) bodies are frequently present in fashion magazines and advertising. Lee notes

that this is especially true for advertisements, where the reliance on symbolic images rather than descriptive acts can be higher. In her 2011 study cited in the 2012 article, Lee stresses how foreign-looking and white-mixed models appear in 90.8% of the “image” advertisements and 55.7% of the “descriptive” ones. Furthermore, she maintains that the usage of foreign-looking models in such advertisements reinforces the perception that they are removed from the audience’s ordinary life.

The prevalence of white bodies in “image” advertisements has also been confirmed by the preliminary data analysis carried out for this research project. However, this project differs from Lee’s in various ways. First and foremost, Lee’s study is a synchronic study that only considers material published relatively recently. Her research is also quantitative, and thus she has sourced her material in a way that significantly differs from the present research. She has surveyed the January 2009 issue of 31 different magazines whose readership ranges across varying age groups. On the contrary, this research project aims to be a diachronic study that considers fewer magazines but for a longer period, and it is also a historical research project. Finally, Lee’s research is not informed by theoretical understandings on race and ethnicity, nor does she delve deeply into questions of majority and minority. Thus, this research project is expected to yield significantly different results.

Ochiai’s 1990 article focusing on female representation in women’s magazines is also a diachronic historical study, as the analysis spans from the 1950s to the early 1990s. However, although the article offers a valuable starting point, it also has some limitations that are worth expanding in a more extensive project. Ochiai analyzes four magazines: *Shufu no Tomo*, *Josei Jishin*, *an-an*, and *non-no*; of these four, the latter three will also be analyzed in the present research project. However, she has selected the

issues according to a different criterion: she examined the May issues to purposely avoid summer, winter, and periods with many events, and she selected issues with a five-year interval between them. This selection means that the number of data analyzed is considerably smaller when compared with the present research project. There is also no meaningful comparison between magazines of the same decade apart from *an-an* and *non-no*, which were rival publications in the 1970s and the 1980s. Furthermore, her focus is broader – she is first and foremost interested in the representation of women, and the presence of racial difference is only a secondary concern. She also does not consider the possible gaps between the foreigners’ place in society and the effect or impact of their presence on magazine pages.

This research aims to address the gaps in the existing literature by 1) surveying a larger number of sources; 2) adopting a historical perspective (see section 4.2); 3) employing a more nuanced understanding about racialization in the Japanese context.

## *1.4 Methodology, Scope and Data*

### 1.4.1 Textual and Multimodal Discourse analysis

To analyze how the concept of race is reproduced in media, the core of this research will be focused on retracing how racialization processes have appeared in textual and visual representations. This analysis will be supplemented by examining discourses with a broader focus on body-making practices such as fashion and make-up undertaken by the “Japanese” majority. This project will thus employ qualitative research methods.

Since the concept of race is often equated with phenotypical differences, the study of visual images of bodies in advertising was the starting point of this research project and



remains at its core. However, it was difficult to ground the research in the analysis of images alone since the data collected is historical. Although the intended audiences are still alive, it is impossible to completely recover how they would be interpreted when they were first created. Thus, it is crucial to have a thorough and wide-reaching understanding of the historical context and analyze the discourses that were being formulated at the time. They can provide us with key concepts to understand what each image is referring to. The need for a wide-reaching understanding of the social structures and discourses that allowed the creation of each image is also stressed by media theorist Stuart Hall in his 1997 book *Representation*. Hall argues that the analysis of media representation is best done by mixing two different methods: the Foucauldian discourse analysis and the semiotic analysis of Barthian inspiration (Hall 1997). Following Hall, this research project will also make use of Foucauldian discourse analysis mixed with another methodological tool influenced by semiotic analysis: Multimodal Discourse Analysis.

Although Foucauldian discourse analysis and Multimodal Discourse Analysis have similar names, they are quite different in their applications. Authors such as Rose (2001) and Tonkiss (1998) state that discourse analysis methods are often vague and that a standardized methodology has never been made explicit. When explaining what exactly Foucauldian discourse analysis (hereafter discourse analysis) is, Rose (2001) starts by defining two of its central concepts: discourse and discursive formations. She defines the first as “a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it” and the latter as the “relations between parts of a discourse” (Rose 2001, 136). For this research project, the term discourse analysis will refer to a text-driven data collection method that aims to maintain the

broadest possible scope when gathering information on a specific subject to grasp intertextual connections (see Rose 2001). The collected data will then be carefully read to understand its structures, such as key topics, reoccurring patterns, association between topics, emphases, and omissions (Tonkiss 1998). In other words, discourse analysis will be used to understand the general picture, to grasp the relevant ideas and thoughts that structured the meaning-making practices of each epoch.

On the other hand, Multimodal Discourse Analysis (hereafter MDA) is more apt for understanding the meaning of a single piece of text. MDA is a method developed by Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996; 2001), and it follows a linguistic approach. It provides the tools to “read” images and texts by rigorously analyzing each of the functions of the source material. Since it analyzes the function of each sentence or visual element in the text, it produces very detailed analyses, and it is thus best utilized with selected pieces of very relevant data. The term “multimodal” explicitly refers to the fact that meaning-making is not only carried out through a single linguistic mode (for example, textuality), rather, signification processes happen through various modes. Thus, it not only gives us the tools for analyzing written text but also those to look in-depth at visual data. In this research, MDA will be used to analyze how each text fits into the discourses that have been individuated through the broader scope of discourse analysis and to understand how the dominant discourses of each epoch are reflected in the visual and textual structure of each document in question.

#### 1.4.2 The purpose of historical research

Most of the previous research on the foreign body in representation has a synchronic perspective. This research aims to take a diachronic perspective to observe the changes

in discourses and representations throughout Japan's post-war history: the data collected spans three decades, from the beginning of the 1960s to the end of the 1980s. These three decades could be said to be positioned between two periods that had seen explicit debates about race and ethnicity, which were discussed together with notions of citizenship and as a means of re-configuring the demographics of the country.

The aftermath of the Second World War was a period of intense debate on ethnicity and citizenship. Although Japanese citizenship had been conferred to all the citizens of the occupied territories, it was redefined only to include people born from a Japanese father (Shimoji 2018). This policy change meant that many former citizens effectively saw their Japanese citizenship removed and became foreigners overnight. At the same time, for a brief period immediately after the war, Japanese left-wing thinkers revitalized the term "*minzoku*" (ethnicity). They contributed to the spread of the idea that holders of Japanese nationality are of a "single ethnicity" (*tan'itsu minzoku*). On the one hand, this idea was instrumental in affirming the right to self-determination vis-à-vis US occupation, and on the other was seen as being opposed to the multi-ethnic qualities of the former Japanese empire (Oguma 2002).

However, this idea of Japanese "monoethnicity" was troubled as soon as the SCAP retreated in 1957. During this period, it became known to the broader Japanese public that many children had been born between Japanese women and US soldiers. This situation quickly became perceived as a social problem, dubbed "*konketsuji mondai*", the "mixed-blood children" problem (see Shimoji 2018).

Another trend was starting to emerge in the same period: consumer-oriented media was beginning to circulate images of American wealth. Iwamoto (1998) details how media in the post-war were propagating images of the US as a place where everyday life

was made easier thanks to technological advances. Many of these messages sounded especially promising to women, who dreamed of an enriched life made possible by electric appliances (Iwamoto 1998), which at the time were not commonplace in the household. Although the US was a racially diverse country, these messages were often transmitted through white bodies, such as the protagonists of the comic strip “Blondie” that Iwamoto analyzed.

The immediate post-war period was rife with debates and shifts regarding the perception and the use of race and ethnicity. However, things are assumed to have stabilized starting from the next decade. As Kawai (2015) notes, the critical qualities of the concept of “*minzoku*” faded away in the 1960s, leaving behind the idea of Japan as a “monoethnic country” which accordingly does not suffer from minority issues. Similarly, media reportage around the “*konketsuji monda*” lasted until the mid-1960s. Around the middle of the decade, the image of “mixed-race” started to change. Eventually, the term “*konketsuji*” itself was declared derogatory (Okamura 2017) and was replaced with the still-in-use katakana-English word “*hāfu*”. The white bodies who carried the messages of a “cultured” (*bunkateki*) lifestyle became a normalized presence in Japanese media.

The other end of the historical period here analyzed is 1990, and it could be considered another time of activity when it comes to discourses on race and the “Other” (Tajima 2006). Starting from the late 1980s, we see an increase in the country's foreign population, to the point that in 1992 “newcomers” represented 50.4% of the foreign population, a stark spike from 6.3% in 1952 (Tajima 2006). “Intercultural coexistence” (*tabunka kyosei*) also became a national concern from around the same time (Yamawaki 2009): accordingly, research and discussions on topics such as immigration became more prominent after the 1990s.

The “Other” was thus becoming more diversified. However, according to Kawai, the increasing presence of foreigners did not have any impact on the monoethnic self-image of the Japanese, whose “boundaries (···) stayed intact by treating *gaikokujin* or non-Japanese as the ‘disposable’ Other to accentuate not only Japanese ‘uniqueness’ but also ‘globalness’” (Kawai 2015).

The years from 1960 to 1990 are thus a period in which the mainstream perception of issues of race and ethnicity had stabilized. These issues were transported to a dimension that was separate from the ordinary life of citizens, and the presence of “foreigner-looking” people was relegated to specific kinds of visual representation. It is precisely because of the relative invisibility of the questions on a social level that it is interesting to analyze how racial concepts have been rearranged and inserted into the everyday.

A historical perspective is necessary to make a more meaningful analysis of the present. It allows the researcher to understand what, how and why something has changed, as well as what, how and why something else has not. These considerations help us understand how concepts of race and ethnicity influence contemporary society.

#### 1.4.3 Data

The core magazine data that has been collected for this research project is made up of two or three magazines from each of the three decades. Each of these magazines have been selected because they are thought to be significant in the history of the fashion magazine in Japan. *Josei Jishin*, *non-no* and *JJ* were the most popular women’s magazines of their respective times (Sakamoto 2019) and could boast a massive readership. On the contrary, *Sōen*, *Dressmaking*, *an-an* and *CanCam* were somewhat behind on sales compared to the most popular magazines of their respective times. Still,

they each have characteristics that make for interesting comparisons with the publications above.

Before entering into the specifics of each decade, some brief remarks on the data collected need to be made. I have not limited myself to strict ten-year spans, but rather took the term “decade” rather loosely. When considering the 1960s, for example, I have started from the last years of 1950, and some of the trends established in this decade persisted until the early years of 1970. Similarly, some of the most epoch-defining fashion events of the 1980s have their origins in the previous decade, and other currents extended until the first years of the 1990s.

In order to conduct this research, I had to place a limit on the material collected. Analyzing every issue of each magazine would have yielded a quantity of data that would have been impossible to sort out by myself. In order to strike a balance between the variety and the structure needed to have a comprehensive look at social phenomena, I have decided to limit the analysis to the magazine(s) issued in January, April, August and October – each month representing a different season of the year. Whenever necessary, the data has been supplemented with articles from issues released in different months.

All of the magazines that have been selected have the same target demographic in common: that is, young, unmarried women. One of the reasons for choosing this demographic is that by being single women, their consumption practices were likely to be primarily made in function of their individuality. Furthermore, women in their 10s-20s were the primary targets for those consumption practices that focused on the body, as there was more pressure to look good in order to get married.

I have obtained two kinds of data from these issues: strictly visual advertisement pages

and magazine articles with different degrees of visibility according to the medium. This core dataset has been further supplemented with other audiovisual material, such as a historical collection of television commercials for Shiseido make-up products, historical advertisement anthologies, articles from advertisement-specific industry magazines, as well as selected articles from weekly magazines aimed at the general public.

## 1960

To represent the 1960s, I have collected the dressmaking magazines *Sōen* and *Dressmaking* as well as the weekly magazine *Josei Jishin*. The rival publications *Sōen* and *Dressmaking* can be considered to be antecedents of the fashion magazine and were published by two famous design schools: *Bunka Fukusō Gakuin* and *Dressmaker Gakuin*. Their magazines were mostly centered on tailoring patterns and were published monthly. The weekly magazine *Josei Jishin* was more various in its contents, that went from gossip to life advice. It targeted women from their late teens to their mid-twenties, and it was among most popular media that catered to a female audience.

I have then supplemented these documents with two different collections of historical advertisements: the first one is the book *Nihon no Zasshi Kokoku: 60s*, that features pictures of commercials spanning different genres. This book was fundamental to understand the bigger picture: as the archival research that forms the basis of this chapter was focused on media targeting a relatively young female audience, there are many kinds of commercials that wouldn't have easily found space in those pages. A comparison between genres also helps relativize the position of the "mixed race" and foreign bodies that appear in advertisement, something that could be easily overstated if focusing on goods that could be characterized as being conspicuous consumption such

as fashion.

The other collection I relied on is completely opposite in nature: it is a video collection of Shiseido TV commercials spanning from the early 60s to the 2000s. Shiseido was arguably the most prestigious make-up company of the time, and this means that they were an active participant in the construction of ideas around “the body” and “beauty”. They were in a privileged position to decide which kind of body was desirable, and which kind of body was not – they also contributed to the creation of the technical know-how to make the ordinary body into a beautiful one.

Perhaps because of these deep ties to aesthetics, they were also very involved in advertisement, and many of their commercials are to this day considered to be milestones in Japan’s media history. There is then reason to think that Shiseido advertisements would have had a deep impact on the Japanese visual imagination. These were not the kind of commercials that one forgets after a quick glance, but rather they would keep the viewers glued to the TV screen. Furthermore, since many are considered masterpieces, it is likely that marketing students encounter them in the textbooks that prepare them to work in the advertisement industry. Because of this historical relevance, Shiseido commercials are a precious document that needs to be kept in consideration.

## 1970

For my analysis of the 1970s, I have chosen the magazines *an-an* and *non-no*. These magazines were founded right when ready-made fashion was beginning to spread, thus leading to a decrease in the popularity of actual dressmaking and the specialistic knowledge that magazines such as *Sōen* and *Dressmaking* could offer. *An-an* and *non-*



*no* are considered to be the first proper fashion magazines to have been published in the country, and because of their structural similarities and same target audience of (mostly) unmarried young women, they are often compared and analyzed together. However, the two have also enough differences to warrant their own character, which was often contrasting. Analyzing them both with a comparative perspective allows us to see different sides of the culture of young women of the time.

The magazine data has also been supplemented with the video collections *Shiseido no CM Vol.1 1961-1979* and *Shiseido no CM Vol.2 1978-1999*, as well as the printed collection *Nihon no Zasshi Kokoku: 70s*.

## 1980

Lastly, I have chosen *JJ* and *CanCam* to represent the 1980s. At the time, both were popular fashion magazines that targeted the same demographic as the aforementioned *an-an* and *non-no*. *JJ*, in particular, was considered to be the epoch-defining publication of the 1980s: towards the mid-1980s, it became the best-selling fashion magazine overtaking *non-no*. As a publication, it well encapsulates the consumption-centered Japan of the economic bubble. Class is a defining aspect of the magazine: its models are often college students with privileged backgrounds. *CanCam* was founded in 1981, and it also targeted university students, but it was less class-conscious than *JJ*. Thus, I believe it can function as a good counterweight.

The magazine data has also been supplemented with the video collection *Shiseido no CM Vol.2 1978-1999* as well as the printed collection *Nihon no Zasshi Kokoku: 80s*.

### 1.5 *Contributions to current scholarship and limits of the research*

This last section will be dedicated to the contributions of this project to the current scholarship, as well as the limits of the research.

There has not been much research on the processes of racialization carried out through media representation that take a historical retrospective. The same approach has been taken in the research Ochiai (1990) and Sakamoto (2019): however, their principal focus is tracing the history of female representation and the media discourses surrounding womanhood. Thus, the appearance of “race” is merely an accidental presence determined by the particular characteristics of each historical period.

On the contrary, the research that is focused on the intersections between “race” and “representation” has mostly adopted a synchronic perspective. We have seen some examples of this in section 3.1; other research worth mentioning is the pivotal study on “mixed race” edited by Koichi Iwabuchi (2014), John G. Russell’s inquisitions on the Japanese perception of Black people (1991), as well as Fabienne Darling-Wolf’s analysis of hybridity in *non-no* and *Men’s non-no* in the 2000s (2006). Another difference between this stream of research and the present project is the fact that they tend to focus on a single ethnic group, while this dissertation aims to consider all the forms of racialization that are carried out in the pages of the magazines analyzed.

Furthermore, according to Keane, the interest in Japanese social research for racial and ethnic relations has been deeply tied to forms of racism that entail violence (Keane 2021). This trend leads to a lack of interest in analyzing the discourses surrounding the people for whom “race” (apparently) works in their favor. However, as Keane (2021) notes, these are indeed phenomena that highlight the persistence of “racial thinking” in the cultural meaning-making that underlies all social activity and thus need to be

analyzed as such. Thus, this research project will also focus on those forms of racialization that might seem “positive” or even instrumental for political identities.

The historical perspective, the centering of racialization and the focus on the more mundane (and thus often ignored) facets of racializing discourses will hopefully offer new insights into the workings of Japanese society.

The biggest limitations of this research have to do with the nature of the methodology and the data. This dissertation mostly relies on qualitative methods to understand how discourses about race and the body have been constructed in Japanese society. However, the same data could as validly be studied using quantitative methods. The addition of quantitative data might offer a significant improvement to the project: this has, however, been difficult to achieve due to constraints of time and manpower.

This research project could also be expanded in many different directions. The temporal axis could be lengthened to include the following three decades, which have seen changes and continuities in the formulation of the social perception of race and racialization. Similarly important would be to expand the data in order to include media that targeted the male gender. This would be the most appropriate way to understand the intersection between discourses of racialization and the construction of gender.

## 2 Beauty culture after the end of the Occupation: the 1960s

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the racialization processes that took place in Japanese female-oriented media published in the 1960s. For Japanese society, this was a period of intense growth: the Japanese economy was in the middle of the economic miracle, which lasted until 1973 (Kingston 2013). As for its place in international society, the country was now also a strategic ally of the United States in the Cold War. Mega-scale events such as the Olympics also helped place Japan on the world map. The perception of the country shifted from the impoverished nation that lost the Second World War to a modernizing nation brimming with possibilities (Wilson 2012). This historical background was instrumental in shaping the discourses on the numerous foreign and “mixed-looking” bodies that appeared in mainstream media.

Back then, it was not uncommon to see mixed-race people of both genders in fashion advertisement, as they were a staple of the modeling and entertainment industries: this is the decade that saw the rise of “*konketsu*” (“mixed blood”) stars, the most famous of which might be actress Maeda Bibari. The Shiseido promotional posters featuring her glamorous beach body, a prime example of the “healthy beauty” that was considered to be the pinnacle of aesthetic ideals of the time, were popular to the point of being stolen by extremely enthusiastic fans.

The 1960s were a decade of change for the social positioning of “mixed race” in Japanese society. According to Shimoji (2018), the last governmental document to be released about the “*konketsuji*” is dated 1960<sup>10</sup>: thus, for the Japanese state this was the

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<sup>10</sup> In the dataset, media reports about volunteer citizen associations working with the

last period in which “mixed race” was officially considered a matter of national importance. Although the scholar repeatedly stresses how there is evidence that it was not the case, from that point onwards the “social problem” of the past decade was considered to be solved. Thus, new possibilities opened for the representation of “mixed race”, as it was gradually becoming a social identity deemed to be “interesting” enough to be ripe for exploitation by the entertainment industry. Indeed, in Shimoji’s overview of the history of “mixed race” in Japan, the three-decade period of the 60s, 70s and 80s is positioned as a period of glamourization, that lead to the forgetting of the history of discrimination and problematization that “mixed race” had experienced in the fifteen years after the Second World War.

This historical amnesia is reflected in present-day attitudes towards the people who are racialized as such. In today’s Japanese society, this history has been long forgotten, as “mixed race” is represented as something that the majority yearns for. Looking at a selection of monthly and weekly magazines targeted to female readers spanning from 1960 to 1970 gives further credibility to the claim that media and the entertainment business are to be held responsible for this phenomenon.

Shimoji argues that the collective forgetting of the “*konketsuji*” phenomenon is an effect of the appearance of “mixed race” entertainers. This in turn goes hand in hand with the increased consumption of American goods during the high growth period.

A particularity [of this period] is the proactive consumption of American culture. In the 1950s-1960s, Japan imported American cultural goods across various media, such

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“*konketsuji mondar*” appear until 1965.

as television, expositions, commercials, movies, music and fashion. As a result, it accelerated [the propagation] of a positive image of white people and fostered an image of longing and yearning for whiteness (Shimoji 2018, 148).

Shimoji also refers to a contemporary testimony from Wagatsuma and Yoneyama (1967), who state how the influence of American culture of post-war Japan had been quite more intense than any preceding historical period, including the contact with Euro-American culture that took place at the beginning of the Meiji period. According to the scholars, this was the catalyst for a change in Japanese beauty standards, that increasingly emphasized on double eyelids as well as a rounder bust and hips (Wagatsuma and Yoneyama 1967). We will see below how for industries such as modeling being of Caucasian origin was an advantage not only because they could be interpreted as a “cultural signifier” that represented America, but also because it was widely believed that bodies who had racial proximity to “westerners” (=white) would have an advantage when making western clothes (*yōfuku*) look good. In businesses such as fashion, advertisement and entertainment there was a very “material” understanding of what race is. Glancing through the magazines of the time it becomes apparent that it was widely believed that there were some different qualities that the so-called “Japanese” body and the so-called “White” body possessed, and that they would (should have) come together in the bodies of “mixed race” people. Which body would be then considered suitable for a certain media context would then be decided according to the cultural connotations of the bodies in question.

The “glamourization” of mixed race was a process: the image of “mixed” race entertainers still had some ties with the “social problem” discourse, especially in the first

half of the 1960s. As Shimoji states, the fact that the word “*konketsuji*” was used to refer to the “mixed race” entertainers of the time, signals precisely this: “while reporting on their brilliant career, [the media] was also mentioning the cruel and tragic past of those who were born [in the aftermath of the war]” (Shimoji 2018, 156). Indeed, it is not uncommon to see “mixed race” celebrities talking about their often-tragic past in media portrayals of the time. However, it is likely that this was not necessarily done to raise consciousness about the unfair treatment that “mixed race” people born in the aftermath of the war had to face daily. Considering that the more serious racially based discrimination (such as hate mail and death threats) that some of these stars had to face was routinely underestimated, it is possible that the “*konketsuji*” tragedy was in itself considered as a form of entertainment.

Lastly, Shimoji also talks of how “*konketsuji*” (and later, “*hāfu*”) entertainers were feminized, and contrasted to the emerging masculine discourse of *Nihonjinron*. While this interpretation and the contrast with the “*Nihonjinron*” discourse is undoubtedly useful, there is room for further investigation. It is likely that in the 1960s, female “mixed race” celebrities were more in number than “male” mixed race. However, that might also have been because of the demand for “mixed race” bodies by the beauty and fashion industry, that historically has mostly catered to a female customer base. In the sector of the beauty industry that catered to male consumers, there was possibly as much demand. Indeed, male “mixed” models started to appear in bigger numbers around the mid-1960s, and some popular cosmetic brands such as Shiseido used “mixed race” models in their campaigns targeted to men up until the 1980s. However, male models only appear sporadically in female magazines: because of this, the space afforded to them in this dissertation will be limited. Nevertheless, the influence that “mixed”

models had on male beauty standards should not be underestimated.

The numbers of “mixed race” in the model industry – big when compared with those of popular television celebrities, especially those like comedians that do not need to rely too much on being aesthetically pleasant, for example – hint at the fact that their bodily presence was one of the main incentives for the entertainment business to employ them. Therefore, the in/appropriateness and un/desirableness of the “mixed race” body will be the lens throughout which historical representations in Japanese media will be analyzed in this chapter. This in turn means that only analyzing written articles cannot be enough to understand the place that “mixed race” and foreign bodies had in society: as they were over-represented in the visual industries of fashion and advertising, they became a staple of the visual imaginary of the post war. In order to understand what symbolic meanings were associated with visible physical characteristics and the social underpinnings that led to the formation of that kind of empirical “knowledge” or belief, the analysis of discourse will be accompanied by the analysis of predominantly visual material: pictures and videos in which bodies with a wide range of phenotypical characteristics appear.



## 2.1      *1958 to 1965 : the birth of the professional fashion model in Japan and “mixed race”*

### 2.1.1      The birth of the Japanese model industry

The image of the “mixed race” body as desirable was largely propagated by the fashion industry. Indeed, although they were few in numbers compared to the present day, “mixed race” models have had a platform since modeling became a profession in Japan.

According to Imaida Isao, the former editor in chief of the fashion magazine *Sōen*<sup>11</sup>, modeling became socially acceptable in Japan after 1951, when Itō Kinuko historically landed third place on the Miss Universe beauty pageant (Sōen 1967-8). Itō created a sensation in the society of her time, as her win was the first instance in which Japanese beauty was formally recognized in the “west”. Furthermore, she contributed to the popularization of the word “eight heads tall” (*hattōshin*), which to this day is widely regarded to be the golden ratio for body proportions in the country (Josei Jishin 1970-10-17).

Not so long after, *Sōen* itself began to host auditions to find their own in-house (*senzoku*) models. According to Imaida,

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<sup>11</sup> Although the *Sōen* we can find in bookstores nowadays bears no difference in composition to other fashion magazines, the *Sōen* of the post-war is better defined as a dressmaking magazine, as it instructed its readers on the know-hows related to western-style sewing (*yōsai*). This is because at the time, trends in clothing and fashion were mostly of interest to the people who had the technical ability to make their own clothes, as readymade fashion was not yet readily available.

Bunka Fashion Academy, [the institution that] is issuing this magazine, recruited models a few times starting from Shōwa 28 (1953). This was the antecedent of the “Sumire” model group. Matsuda Kazuko and Imai Mieko, who are still active nowadays, were among the first to be recruited. Irie Miki appeared the third time around. (Sōen 1967-8, 152)

Debuting on *Sōen*’s pages in 1958 at only 14 years of age, Irie Miki, born Vera Il’in Motoki, would go on to have a successful career, and to be among the first women recognized as top models in her native Japan<sup>12</sup>. Born between a Japanese mother and a Russian émigré father with ties to the Russian aristocracy, she was also among the first mixed race women to work in the entertainment industry in the post war.

#### 2.1.2 “Funny faces” and “Conventional beauties”

Before turning to Irie Miki’s image, it is necessary to give an overview of some of the discourses that surrounded the practice of fashion modeling at the time.

As mentioned above, modeling as a profession was in its infancy, having been around for less than ten years. Although increasingly popular in status, it was still lagging behind conventional entertainment work such as acting and singing. Articles from the early to mid sixties also show that modeling did not necessarily guarantee a long spanning career in the fashion or entertainment businesses: the aforementioned pioneer Itō Kinuko convenes that modeling is “fleeting” in a conversation with Irie Miki (Asahi Journal 1965-5-9, 91). After her modeling days, she briefly transitioned to fashion

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<sup>12</sup> According to Shimoji, the first “mixed race” to be credited as a model is Helen Higgins, who was active in the mid-1950s. (see Shimoji, p.151)

design and eventually married, settling as an ordinary housewife (Josei Jishin 1970-10-17).

Secondly, “modeling” and “physical beauty” did not necessarily have to go hand in hand. Right when Irie Miki debuted, between the late 50s and the early 60s, there was a distinctive “type” of beauty that had been popularized by the modeling industry: the “funny face”. Having its origins from France and popularized by Audrey Hepburn’s movie of the same name, this beauty ideal was constructed in opposition to the “perfect” facial structure popularized by antecedent trends in Hollywood. A 1960 article from the weekly magazine *Josei Jishin* defines it in the following way:

If Matsuda (Kazuko) and Yukimura (Izumi) are to be considered “contemporary beauties”, the whole country should be full of beautiful women. That’s how common of a face it is. Or rather, if you look at the origins of the “funny face”, it originally meant “below the standard” (Josei Jishin 1960-4-6, 30).

“Funny faces” were found all over the entertainment industry: the aforementioned article refers to singers (Yukimura Izumi), actresses (Yoshimura Mari) and models (Matsuda Kazuko and Matsumoto Hiroko). However, considering that Matsuda and Matsumoto would eventually become giants in the Japanese model industry, recognized both inside and outside the country, it could be argued that the “particularity”, the deviation from a universally recognized standard that was at the heart of this trend, was in some ways congruous with modeling as a profession.

In fact, professionals at the time agreed that the most important quality to possess in order to establish a successful modeling career was the ability to make clothes look good

(Sōen 1967-4). Whether this meant that the model had to appeal to conventional beauty standards or be perceived as closer to the end consumer depended on broader fashion trends, on the fashion genre being represented/advertised and on who was imagined to be the end consumer.

Take for example the career path of Kawano Shiomi, a contemporary of Irie Miki, active in the early sixties. Kawano initially trained to be an actress but did not find success, because she was not considered to be “beautiful enough” for the profession. When she was invited to participate at a modeling show some time later, the tables turned. According to a source cited in *Josei Jishin* (1962-8-27), she had two qualities that made her perfect for the job. On the one hand, her physical characteristics were ideal – as the article puts it, “she has a good small face, and the thinness of her body is wonderful” (p.127). On the other hand, her not being considered “extremely beautiful” made her more relatable to her “BG” (female office worker) audience.

How, then, was “mixed race” model Irie Miki positioned in the fashion industry of the early 1960s? In a way, she represents the complete opposite trend to the “funny face”. She was considered to be the antithesis to Kawano Shiomi’s relatability, “the representative of [having a] beautiful face” (*Josei Jishin* 1962-2-27, 128).

The “orthodoxy”, as *Shūkan Gendai* (1964-6-25) puts it, embodied by Irie’s beauty, became trendy in 1964. In the same year she made headlines for being crowned as the most beautiful model at the International Fashion Show held in Los Angeles, where she participated as model for the up-and-coming Japanese fashion house Hanae Mori.

In the discourse of the time, the beauty ideal embodied by Irie Miki was inextricable from her ancestry and her race. Kōmura Masamitsu, author of the aforementioned *Shūkan Gendai* article, states the following:

I don't like the word "*konketsu*". Perhaps because the word brings to mind the sort of negative associations that are widespread in society. However, when it comes to the body, western European people have an advantage over pure Japanese. Thus, one must admit that having inherited [European] blood, "*konketsu*" are superior. (Shūkan Gendai 1964-6-25, 96)

He then goes on citing fashion photographer Akiyama Shōtarō:

I once said that after the war, the presence of "*konketsu*" women would increase in the modeling sector. It's obvious, since in fashion it looks better when you use foreigners (*gaijin*) rather than Japanese women. When it comes to Vera, I didn't think she would be a huge success at first. I just thought that she had an advantage since she is a "*konketsu*" (Shūkan Gendai 1964-6-25, 96).

"Phenotypically" speaking, "mixed race" individuals are an incredibly diverse group. Their racial ambiguity allows them to be categorized differently according to the context they are put in, and the information that the beholder has about them. Thus, even following the racist standard that sees the white physique as more suitable to the modeling profession, the notion of "mixed race" people having an advantage is less "logical" than it would seem to be. Indeed, this way of thinking was deeply influenced by the social circumstances of a period in which inter-racial marriage was not considered to be commonplace. Irie Miki was born in the middle of the war, when the country was closed off to (many) foreigners. She grew up during the American occupation, a period

when inter-racial unions, whether socially sanctioned or not, became increasingly commonplace. But what is perhaps more important for the trajectory that her career took, is that she lived in a period in which scientific racism, although condemned by the UN in the aftermath of the war, was still very much alive in everyday practice. Irie was the closest thing to the heavily racial and Eurocentric beauty standards that were, at the time, recognized to be “universally” sanctioned: as an article in *Shūkan Sankei* (1964-12-28) puts it, she was the only one that could fight in the same league as the models of Paris. This outlook is reflected in some of the campaigns that feature the model: one such example is the tie-up between Shiseido and *Sōen* for the former’s Sherbet Tone campaign<sup>13</sup>.

The *Sōen* (1962-4), tie-up with the Sherbet Tone campaign features two of the most popular models that worked with the magazine at the time, Irie Miki and Matsumoto Hiroko (Fig.1). The latter is considered to be the first Japanese supermodel, as she was scouted in the early sixties by Pierre Cardin to model for his atelier in Paris.

At the heart of the Sherbet Tone campaign is the matching of the colors of make-up and textile fabrics. As the name implies, the “sherbet tones” of the campaign are mostly cool, pastel colors such as blue, green and pink. *Sōen*, being a magazine focused on tailoring, gives more space to the clothes: they are modeled by Matsumoto in four pictures and by Irie in five.

However, there is also a single picture that is meant to showcase the make-up: it is a

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<sup>13</sup> This was the first large-scale campaign launched by a Japanese make-up company, and it was a collaboration between Shiseido and the textile company Teijin. Not only did they release advertisements for print and broadcast media, but they also did tie-up photoshoots in magazines, such as this example seen in *Soen*. (see Yamamura 2016)

close up of Irie's face (Fig.2). The model has a quirky expression: she is pouting and raising her eyebrows, putting an emphasis on her pink lips and purple-ish eyelids.

Although Matsumoto Hiroko was the one who ended modeling in Paris, it is evident that even in the earlier stages of Irie's career, she represented a type of model who transcended the function of the "mannequin", whose job was focused on the showcasing of clothes: she was the one chosen to sponsor the make-up. This association between race and aesthetics will become even more evident in the second half of the decade, particularly through Shiseido's advertisement strategies.

Although the passing of time and subsequent shifts in scientific/philosophical discourse have brought some change and refinement to the sentiment expressed in the quotes mentioned earlier, it could be said that these racialized "knowledges" about the body have survived to this day and have been in multiple ways reflected throughout the modeling and entertainment industries. With her career, Irie Miki gave way to a "type" of celebrity that in an increasingly multi-cultural and multi-racial contemporary Japan has become more ordinary, more widespread: that of the "beautiful mixed race", whose (white) DNA grants them access to the beauty standard. At the same time, in a society that believes itself to be "monocultural" such as the Japanese one, the "beauty" of "mixed race" individuals becomes inextricable from their racialization.

An advertisement featuring Irie for the make-up brand PIAS (Fig. 3) explicitly references this. The copy reads: "the birth of the charm of the 'mixed race' (*ainoko*)". Compared with the then-considered neutral term "*konketsu*", "*ainoko*" was more explicitly considered a racial slur used at the time. Indeed, being called such an expression is often cited as a painful memory in the life history of "mixed race" people of the time. Nevertheless, it is here used as a catchy word to sell make-up to a Japanese

audience, who does not have to bear the burden of negative associations to it. “Mixedness” is here paired with exoticism in the subtitle that reads “a new exciting color, golden mood”. As the black and white pictures of Irie surrounded by people looking at her and laughing around her signify, this “exotic mixedness” is the source of her charm, which the product promises to make available to the non-mixed majority as well. The irony of using a racial slur juxtaposed with the word “charm” perfectly exemplifies the position of the “mixed race” person in media, highly sought after but often portrayed with an exoticizing gaze.

As Shimoji (2018) mentions, “mixed race” celebrities are over-represented in advertisements associated with consumerism and luxury, such as fashion and make-up commercials. Indeed, in this particular period, these industries were choosing to rely on the symbolic meaning that is given to the body rather than on strategies that rely more on the representation of its actual consumers. In other words, the pictures of the body that were present in advertisement were linked to an idealized imagery that did not necessarily have to reflect the viewer. The producers of these images drew on ideas that they perceive to be widespread among their ideal consumers, but at the same time create and reinforce a certain worldview. The models’ bodies became an “object” through which this is done – and in the case of the fashion and make-up industries, it is even more evident how they are there to be gazed at, inspected in all their tiniest detail. It would be unfair to think that models had no agency at all<sup>14</sup>. However, it is likely that their power in shaping the imagery whose creation they were participating in was rather

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<sup>14</sup> Irie Miki herself declined to participate in a commercial that would have required her to kiss a male actor, as it went against her Orthodox Christian faith (Shūkan Sankei, 1964-12-28)



limited.

## 2.2 1960 to 1964 : “Gaikokujin ” before and after the Olympics

### 2.2.1 Racialized bodies in fashion magazines

Other than “mixed race” models, it is nowadays very common to see (often white) foreigners on advertisement billboards in Japan. Throughout this section we will discuss the place of the foreigner in the female-oriented magazines of the 1960s

*Sōen* and *Dressmaking* can be considered fashion magazines ante-litteram. Strictly speaking, they were tailoring magazines, as it was common for ladies in the middle-upper echelons of society to make or have their clothes made. This means that compared to the fashion magazines we are used to seeing nowadays, which rely on the existence of readymade clothing, the people involved in their production were well aware of the physicality of the body. This also meant being aware of the perceived differences in proportions across races, as testified by the overseas ventures of early haute-couture designers from Japan such as Hanae Mori. After a successful show held in New York in 1966, she stated that:

This time I used three Japanese models and five models from New York, and the thing I was concerned with the most was the fit on the foreigner (*gaijin*) models. If you don’t have a grasp of the average proportions of Americans, even if you get orders you won’t be able to deliver them properly. It is a good thing to get many orders after the show is over, but now we have to face the hurdle with understanding whether we can deliver something that will fit Americans (*Dressmaking* 1966-4, 199-200).

Coupled with the scarcity of international talent and the economic situation of the

country that had just began its rapid growth phase, this might have been a reason why “foreign” (white) models are never featured in the shootings produced in-house, that are often showing the results that can be obtained by making a certain pattern. They are, however, featured quite often in sections that might serve as an inspiration or as general knowledge. These are often bought from agencies that sell international media and are either pictures from the Paris Collections (featured every April and October) or excerpts from foreign magazines such as *WWD* and *Jardin des Modes*.

It can thus be inferred that the models of this decade had to represent the Japanese consumers while simultaneously having to make the clothing look good. Indeed, the covers from 1960 to 1965 tend to feature non-“mixed race” models. Among the data I have collected, *Dressmaking* only has one covers featuring Irie Miki. *Sōen*, on the other hand, features non-“mixed race” models until 1964, when starting from the April issue “mixed race” models become the only ones that are pictured in the covers. Tachikawa Mari has the highest count with four, followed by Oka Hiromi with two and Irie Miki with one. One interesting detail is that covers featuring “mixed race” models are more likely to be close-up shots rather than showing the full figure, as it was common in both magazines. This is particularly visible in *Sōen*, where the distance of the camera becomes suddenly closer in 1965. This might have signaled a shift of interest from clothing and the body to a more holistic conception of beauty, that included the face and make-up.

The fashion pages of *Josei Jishin*, on the other hand, featured white models more often. Unlike *Sōen* and *Dressmaking*, *Josei Jishin* was not centered on clothes, but rather on gossip. Although it was first produced as a fashion magazine created in collaboration with the American *Seventeen*, by 1960 it featured articles on a wide variety of topics

spanning from gossip to lifestyle advice. Its main selling point was, however, pictures and reportages on the Imperial house, with a particular focus on the newlywed Crown Prince Akihito. In the particular decade analyzed here, the magazine had an evident fascination for influential women, especially if members of the royalty. Among the foreigners who appear in its pages many are queens or princesses, followed closely by actors and actresses popular internationally, such as Audrey Hepburn and Alain Delon.

The covers of the magazine routinely feature white women. It is likely that these images are purchased from international press agencies rather than being made in-house, as the same models are consistently used throughout multiple covers.<sup>15</sup> The only cover in the data set that does not picture a white model is from October 5, 1963 and it features Tsugaru Hanako, who had just married the then second-in-line to the throne, Prince Masahito.

Four to five pages of the magazine were dedicated to fashion shoots. Up until 1962 they featured white models, but starting from January 1963 Japanese models begin to appear as well. From that point on, the style pages of the magazines would increasingly feature models from Japan. Following a general trend that is also seen in *Sōen* and *Dressmaking*, “mixed race” models begin appearing in 1965.

Overall, in the five years after 1960, *Josei Jishin* embodies a tension between the *akogare* for the white body and the necessity of representing the average woman. The interest in the white body and the signs it represents – wealth, America, “progress” – can be seen on the covers and in the relatively high rate of pages featuring white people (Ochiai 1990). There is also a certain fascination for the foreigners stationed in Japan at

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<sup>15</sup> There is no information on the models, so it is hard to establish how the covers were made.

the time, as a series of photography articles detailing the lives of expat wives and daughters demonstrates. This interest seems to be decreasing after the Olympic Games in 1965, but it might have been absorbed by the popular culture of the time in different ways – such as the use of “mixed race” models. At the same time, some of the articles published make it clear that while being more than willing to bank on it, the editors are skeptical of young women’s adoration for the “foreign” and “foreigners” (Josei Jishin 1964-10-5). The latter are also considered as a potential source of danger for its readership: in the time period leading up to the Olympics articles were published on how to avoid misunderstandings and dangerous situations involving white men (Josei Jishin 1964-1-27, Josei Jishin 1964-8-31). Although whiteness (and foreign-ness) was considered entertaining and a beautiful thing to look at, the producers, carefully treading the line between exploiting these sentiments for their personal gains and of “protecting” their readers from damage at the hands of the “foreigners”, were probably aware of the dynamics of class, gender, race and power.

### 2.2.2 The “foreign looking” body in visual representation

What were then the meanings associated with the non-“Japanese-looking” body? Consumerism, possibly associated with progress, is definitely one of them. Indeed, most “foreign looking” bodies that are found in this period are featured in advertisements of foreign multinationals, such as the underwear brand Lovable, the make-up brand Revlon and Helene Curtis. Max Factor, arguably the most influential foreign make-up company of the time, would feature both white and “mixed race” models. It was rather

uncommon for Japanese companies to use foreign models<sup>16</sup>.

An interesting example of a Japanese brand using a foreigner in its promotional materials is the following 1964 Shiseido advertisement (Fig. 4), featuring a model that eerily looks like Italian actress Sophia Loren. Here, the tagline is “*kokusaihin wo anata ni*” (foreign goods to you): however, by reading the caption closely one realizes that the goods that are being advertised are not “foreign goods” but rather Shiseido products, whose quality is said to be as high. Indeed, before the liberalization of imports and travel, foreign products were quite rare, and were also considered to be the epitome of quality. It was then important for a Japanese company like Shiseido to demonstrate that they are on par with the international standard.

Foreign bodies were also used to signify internationality, or better world-wide popularity, both by Japanese and by foreign companies. Interestingly, this was the only instance in which non-white bodies appear in advertisements of this time period. Examples include this 1960 Singer advertisement (Fig. 5), that features an Indian woman to signify the wide-reaching popularity of the Singer sewing machines – although in a somewhat contradicting move that exposes the white gaze behind this advertisement, the foreign languages that are reported in the caption to sustain this argument are all European.

Fig. 6 is an ad from textile company Karoran (now known as Mitsubishi Rayon) and could be considered an example of a Japanese advertisements that use this kind of “internationalist” imagery. Here, we see nine women all clad in a kimono: what looks like a Japanese woman stands in the center and looks directly at the camera, surrounded

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<sup>16</sup> The haircare brand Arimino, who constantly featured the same picture of the same white woman, stands out as an exception.

by a group of white women and a “mixed” looking Black woman. The tagline reads: “Connecting the world, the Karoran Kimono” and is followed by new years’ greetings in Japanese, Chinese, and a series of European languages. What supposedly connects them to the Japanese-looking woman, with whom the audience is invited to identify, is nothing other than the popularity of the kimono, the symbol of “Japaneseness” par excellence. We see here the beginning of the now very recognizable imagery that aims to achieve internationalism through brand nationalism (Iwabuchi 1994).

“Foreign-looking”, often white men become slightly more present in the period leading up to the Olympics. Take for example the following Pepsi and Coca Cola advertisements, published on *Josei Jishin* in consequent weeks of October 1964. In the Pepsi Cola (Fig.7) advertisement, the “Japanese-looking” man in the background seems to be showing the white couple where to look at. That is simultaneously Japan and the Olympics as indicated by the caption, that reads “Let’s watch Japan, Let’s watch the Olympics, Pepsi Friends come from all over the world”.

Here the two white people are both symbols of a western-dominant “internationality” and of the foreign. The catchphrase invites the audience, with whom the Japanese man in the background barely makes eye contact, to assume the viewpoint of the white foreigner as they look inwards to “Japan”. The man and the woman, who could be read as being a couple, are defined as friends, this bond being made possible by the common interest for the Pepsi Cola drink. Nevertheless, there is an evident barrier between them and the Japanese man, who appears to be closer to the background.

Although it keeps the distinction between native and foreign, the Coca-Cola advertisement (Fig. 8) presents a completely different set of relations. Here, “Japaneseness” and “non-Japaneseness” are represented through a duplicitous way that

is at the same time racialized and gendered. At the center of the advertisement we see a Japanese woman sitting down, clad in a Furisode-style kimono and holding a Coca-cola drink. It is evident by the clothing choice that she is representing her home country, a fairly common pattern. It is, in fact, often women that embody tradition through clothes (Goldstein-Gidoni 1999).<sup>17</sup> The woman is surrounded by foreign-looking men: the majority are white, but there two Black men as well. All the men are looking at her: some are leaning forward as if to take the coca cola drink she has in her hand, while another one, who we only see from behind, is taking a picture of her. This gendered portrayal is very explicitly created from an Eurocentric perspective. The woman, sitting and offering drinks to the surrounding men, looks demure compared to them: she is the image of a Japan that has an impeccable hospitality, but also that looks “weaker” when compared to the towering foreign powers that are approaching her. Lastly, this advertisement follows a narrative about Japanese “international” marriages that was also reflected on the pages of weekly magazines: Japanese women were considered to be in demand from what we would now call machistic foreign men because of how motherly and demure they were compared to “western” women (Josei Jishin 1964-1,-27). This discourse appeared rather uncritically in women’s media, where it was often depicted as a charm point that Japanese women possessed, as well as something to be protected rather than critically assessed.

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<sup>17</sup> Back in the 1960s this was also reflected by the fact that the kimono was worn by the female cabin crew of the international lines of the national airline. (Josei Jishin 1964-1-27)



## 2.3 1960~1964 : the stigma of mixed race in representation

### 2.3.1 Between pathology and celebration

Unlike what happens with “mixed race” celebrities in current days, the racialization processes were still very visible in media discourses of the 1960s. Indeed, Irie Miki debuted towards the late stages of a period in which “mixed race” children born as a result of the American occupation (1945-1952), the so-called “*konketsuji*” (literally, “mixed blood children”), were considered a social problem (Fish 2009, Shimoji 2018).

According to Fish (2009), the question of “mixed race” children was first discussed in the Diet in 1946 (p.46). The discourse about “mixed race” children as a social problem (*konketsuji mondai*) reached their apex in the years immediately following the occupation, due the relaxation of the censorship laws imposed by the GHQ (Iwabuchi 2014, Shimoji 2018). When the occupation ended in 1952, rumors that the number of “mixed race” children had reached 200,000 began to circulate in the media (Shimoji 2018). Subsequent investigations carried out by the Japanese government placed the number of “mixed race” children at the much lower figure of 3,490: however, Shimoji notes how these numbers only included the children who were born from a foreign father affiliated with a foreign army that did not have Japanese, Chinese or Korean heritage. This meant that the children born from a foreign mother and a Japanese father (who had Japanese nationality), as well as those born between a Japanese mother and, for example, an Asian-American father (who were “Japanese-looking” but did not possess nationality) were both excluded by the government’s definition of what a *konketsuji* was (Shimoji 2018).

By 1960, it had already been eight years since the end of the occupation. Yet, the

struggles that these children and their carers had to face still sometimes appeared in magazine articles. These were mostly centered on the perspective of the (often Japanese) people and institutions that were taking care of the infants, and their views – no matter how biased they might seem to the contemporary reader – were never put under any scrutiny: there is little in-depth coverage about the desires of the “mixed race” children themselves. The adults around them would often focus on solutions that they deemed more viable or socially accepted, the most extreme being international adoptions and re-settling on the other side of the Atlantic.<sup>18</sup>

Media coverage in the early 1960s featured the struggles of children of both white and Black<sup>19</sup> “mixed race” children, but the latter were undeniably over-represented in articles that emphasized the problematic aspects of “mixed race”. Black-Japanese children depicted as having more dramatic backstories, something that could be partially factual, since the intense racism present in the US Army permeated the Japanese spaces that were built around it.<sup>20</sup> However, stigma followed Black children even in young adulthood. In fact, the adults integrated in Japanese society in their proximity deemed their Blackness as an obstacle to be overcome in order to successfully integrate into

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<sup>18</sup> This was among the solutions proposed by Sawada Miki, the director of the orphanage Elizabeth Saunders Home. See Kamita, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Although it is not impossible that they existed, Asian mixed-race children were largely made invisible in these articles, showing how “*konketsuji monda*” was effectively a *racial* problem.

<sup>20</sup> This is visible in the division in “ranks” of bars catering to the US army (Josei Jishin 1963-10-7) as well as in the “entertainment districts” initially planned by the RAA – traditionally high-end pleasure quarters such as Shin Yoshiwara were destined to white soldiers (Mitsuhashi 2018).

society<sup>21</sup>. These stereotyped perceptions of blackness were coded differently according to the person's gender. For example, in a 1962 article published in *Jogakusei no Tomo*, Black boys were described as having bad grades and big, strong bodies. When talking about Black girls, the same article was quick in pointing out how the color of their skin was considered a problem when it came to marriage.

Black skin gets passed down to their children and their grandchildren. According to Hirano [Imao], Black-skinned households continue for 3,000 years. Is there a Japanese man that would willingly marry a Black *konketsuji* woman and raise a Black *konketsuji* child? (Jogakusei no Tomo 1962-6, 106)

This quote also makes clear how the racialized “knowledge” that sustained these claims was not indigenous, but likely came from the “west”. The above-mentioned Hirano Imao, himself “mixed” and of (white) French origin, was at the time involved as an activist in projects to support “mixed” children who were in difficult situations. His much-needed activism was at the same time animated by concerns that stemmed from the internalization of racist pseudo-science that came from across the ocean.

In the same article there are also some remarks about the Black body. Black male bodies were described in a relatively positive light as stronger than the “weak” Japanese

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<sup>21</sup> The Jogakusei no tomo article cites examples of how the stigmatization of Black skin affected the career choices of two Black young women. One decided to become a diver (*ama*) since the body suit would completely cover her body and make her Blackness unnoticeable, another decided to become a hairdresser in order to help others to become beautiful, since she perceived that she herself would never be considered as such. (Jogakusei no tomo 1962-6)

body and, anticipating a mentality that is very much evident in the present day, as good candidates to be Olympic athletes. On the contrary, Black female bodies were described as unfeminine and ungraceful, and as something to be hidden. Hirano talks of an episode where he advised a young Black girl to be useful to others to be accepted. The girl eventually decided to become a hairdresser:

My face is Black so I cannot wear make-up, my hair is curly so I do not need a perm. However, I can make other people beautiful. (Jogakusei no Tomo 1962-6, 107)

Her words, praised by Hirano for their altruism, show how deeply ingrained the negative perception of Black female bodies was.

These citations show how what you were “mixed” with created another layer of discrimination in the already maligned category of “mixed race”. Considering the impact that these discourses had on the perception of “mixed race” from the mid-1950s, it becomes clear why the quotes from *Shūkan Gendai* mentioned in section 2.1.2 showed an antipathy towards the word “*konketsu*”. It was a word that carried negative nuances and affects, a double-edged sword that brought up lingering affective scars associated with the aftermath of the Second World War in the mind of the (male) reader, and at the same time was used to place “mixed race” individuals themselves outside the monoracial normativity.

Although celebrities such as Irie Miki benefitted from their inherited whiteness, they were also not completely exempt from being associated with this stigmatizing discourse. Irie was born and raised in an environment that could not be further distant from that of the so-called “*konketsuji*”. And yet, many of the articles that were published about her

still manage to highlight her lingering between mainstream acceptance and liminality.

The January 1960 issue of *Jogakusei no Tomo* features an article allegedly written by Irie herself – at the time she was fifteen, roughly the same age as the intended audience. In it, she talks about her family history, her job, and her relationship with Japan. She opens the article with the difficulties that her parents had to face in the early stages of their relationship. Her father was a Russian man who lost his nationality after 1917 – on paper, not an enemy. This did not stop them from “(…) being followed by soldiers during dates, being thrown rocks from children in the street …” (*Jogakusei no Tomo* 1960-1, 269). This past is, to her admission, the only link she has with “her destiny as ‘mixed-race’” (*Jogakusei no Tomo* 1960-1, 269). She states how she has been lucky to be born after the war and raised in the upper-class, historically multicultural city of Yokohama: this spared her “the sufferings that come from being ‘mixed race’” (*Jogakusei no Tomo* 1960-1, 269). The lack of tragedy in her personal experience does not, however, completely shield her from liminality. Since her parents were legally married, Irie had been stateless for a long time: only recently she became “a complete Japanese”. Furthermore, there is something she has yet to achieve in order to be effectively recognized as one: mastery of the Japanese language. The article ends with Irie’s affirmation of her love for the country: her wish for the future is to marry a Japanese man and keep living there.

Liminality, language, identity and belonging: the same themes are present in an even earlier article, published in the monthly magazine *Heibon* in 1959. Irie, together with actresses Wanibuchi Haruko and Takahashi Emi<sup>22</sup>, participate in a dialogue led by all-

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<sup>22</sup> Sometimes her name is spelled Emiko.

around TV talent Micky Curtis. The main argument that the diverse members are trying to convey is summarized in the title: “‘Mixed race’ are Japanese too…” (*Konketsu Datte Nihonjin yo*…).

From the very beginning, the article highlights the tension between “Japan” and the “foreign country” that one of their parents is from. This is, however, quickly resolved into a nationalist identity:

Even if the color of our eyes and our skin is different, they are all Japanese teen-agers. Even if their father is from a far-away foreign country, even if their mother was not born in Japan, they all love Japan. (Heibon 1959-11, 188)

In the actual dialogue, it becomes apparent that each participant has different experiences when it comes to the country of their foreign parent. For Irie and Takahashi, it is something that can only be imagined, as Irie’s father is stateless, and Takahashi has no longer any contact with her American parent. For Takahashi, however, the idea of “America” becomes the destination of an escapist fantasy. In the end it is Curtis, the MC, that concludes the discussion by saying “I’m sure that in the end, Japan is the best” (Heibon 1959-11, 190). However, as good as Japan might be, everyday life was not exempt from troubles for “mixed race” people. Topics such as bullying and exclusion are also brought up: the irritation with being asked their origins is the one experience that most of them have in common.

Being completely centered on “mixed-race” celebrities, this article reaches a more positive conclusion when it comes to language and identity: although everybody can speak and write to different degrees, Takahashi remarks how:

We're all good, almost as good as Japanese... (laughs) Oh right, we are Japanese (laughs). (Heibon 1959-11, 189)

In media representations from the early 1960s, the positives and negatives of being “mixed race” coexist, and they are stated very clearly. Especially in this early period, there does not seem to be a tendency to reduce the “mixed race” experience as either positive or negative. This might be because of the temporal proximity to the “*konketsuji monda!*”, but at the same time, it shows a double function that media coverage might have been intended to have. As the two above pieces testify, articles about “mixed race” celebrities exist in between the need to dispel the stigma that comes from their backgrounds and the desire to make their racialized features and experiences an expendable feature in the entertainment business.

It is indeed the beginning of the “glamorization” and commodification of mixed race. However, the coming of the “Age of Celebration” (Ifekwunigwe 2004) was less of an event than a process, that came with its complexities and contradictions.

### 2.3.2 The intersections between gender, race and class

The aforementioned *Heibon* article features a somewhat diverse cast: although the members are all “mixed race”, it is hard to group them under a unique label.

The emcee Micky Curtis was born to English and Japanese parents. He was by far the oldest of the group, having just turned 21. Wanibuchi Haruko, 14 years old at the time, was the daughter of an Austrian woman and a Japanese violinist. She and Irie can be considered to be upper-middle class and were the only two participants whose parents

were still married. However, their circumstances were still quite different. As we have seen before, Irie was born without nationality and was brought up mostly in Russian and English. Wanibuchi, having a Japanese father, was born with Japanese citizenship.

Although not much is mentioned about Wanibuchi's upbringing, it is clear from the text that she was fluent in Japanese. Takahashi Emi was the only Black person in the room, and she was by far the youngest. Born and raised by her mother and her grandmother in Tachikawa, near the US army base, she had never known her father. At the time of the interview, she had just starred in the lead role of the movie *Kiku to Isamu*.<sup>23</sup>

The article does not go too much in depth into the negative experiences of the four participants. However, we can infer that Takahashi, who did not have the double guards of class and whiteness to shield her from the stark eyes of society, suffered the most. In the article, she mentions being victim to cruel bullying such as name-calling and being thrown rocks at. Curtis, Irie and Takahashi all mentioned not being recognized as "Japanese". Curtis mentions that it is often "those who read alphabet newspapers" that show the most interest and try to strike up a conversation in English. Takahashi's experience is perhaps more irritating: she mentions how, when eating sushi at a restaurant with her mother, she was asked whether she could handle raw fish. Not only the question assumes her unfamiliarity with Japanese cuisine, but the wording (*Sochira no kata, daijobu desu ka?*) implies that the staff could not imagine that Takahashi and her mother were family.

Takahashi is also represented as being the complete opposite of the beautiful and

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<sup>23</sup> See Ko's article for a detailed analysis of the movie. (Ko 2014)



gracious Irie and Wanibuchi. In a 1961 *Josei Jishin* article titled “Emi-chan, have faith in your Black blood!” (*Emi-chan, kokujin no chi ni hokori wo motte!*), she is depicted as a tomboy, that does not hesitate to fight with the boys that call her names: “Emi-chan is strong. She weighs more than 70 kilos. She’s not scared of some boys” (Josei Jishin 1961-4-11, 50). This, of course, is not so distant from caricaturized representations of Black womanhood that are found across the history of American media.

Takahashi’s whole career ended up being based on feelings of empathy (or worse, sympathy) that she was able to elicit because of her race. Indeed, *Kiku to Isamu* was a movie based on the *konketsuji mondai*, where she and Okunoyama George played two orphans, victims to a cruel society. The perceptions of her body as being quite distant from normativity might have robbed her of her future in the entertainment industry. Even at a young age she was a gifted singer, and eventually trained as a musician. However, she was met with rejection when she wanted to specialize in the typically “Japanese” genre of *kayōkyoku* instead of what the industry expected of her – Blues (Josei Jishin 1965-4-5). What we can see here is one episode in the process of the construction of “Japaneseness”, a racial project (Shimoji 2018) from which the visibly “mixed race” Takahashi was excluded against her will.

Very different were the trajectories of the other three. Curtis and Wanibuchi were able to have long-lasting careers in mainstream media that continue up to the present day. Irie left the entertainment industry after a high-profile marriage to orchestra conductor Ozawa Seiji. As we have seen before, she became one of the most successful models of her time and possibly left a permanent mark on the beauty standards of Japan.

## 2.4 1966 to 1973 : the “konketsu boom” and the body

### 2.4.1 The proliferation of “mixed race” models and the sexualization of “mixed race” womanhood

After Irie was crowned best model at the International Fashion Festival in Los Angeles, mixed-race models started appearing more frequently on the pages of glossy magazines such as *Sōen* and *Dressmaking*. Although they were featured sparsely before then, starting from 1965, the pages featuring “mixed-race” models increase to the double digits (between 15 and 45 pages, according to the issue) on an average of 250 pages. In the beginning, models that looked “non-mixed” were still in the majority. However, after 1967, changes in make-up trends and lack of information on the models themselves make it increasingly hard to determine who is and who is not “mixed race”. This is of course partly due to the fact that there is not a single “mixed face”, and that there is an enormous phenotypical diversity among “mixed race” people themselves. However, this was balanced out by the fact that most models of the time seemed to have at least three physical attributes – height, big eyes, and a rather tall nose bridge – that were, at the time, more so associated with Eurocentric beauty standards and racialized as foreign.

“Three-dimensional make-up” (*rittai keshō*), whose main characteristic was the addition of shadows around the nose bridge to imitate the chiseled features of the white face, was already in trend in the first half of the decade (Yamamura 2016). In the data, the use of nose shadows starts appearing in make-up advice in 1966 (*Dressmaking* 1966-4). These make-up columns themselves recognize there is an inherent diversity among Japanese people and not everyone “needs” to follow certain make-up procedures

to achieve the effect of having bigger eyes and a taller nose bridge, however these “European” looking features were unmistakably sought after in beauty practices such as make-up and plastic surgery.

After 1965, the use of eyeshadow started being normalized (Yamamura 2016), and it was used in a particular way that on Asian-looking faces had the effect of creating a double-eyelid looking effect. At the same time, there is a noticeable increase of the use of faux eyelashes, which according to their use might have the effect of making the eyes look bigger.

As much as these characteristics are visible in magazines from the late sixties, ideas about beauty were always contradictory and contested. See, for example, this exchange with a young female reader that appeared on *Sōen* in 1970. To her boasting that she had learned how to apply fake eyelashes in a way that recreates an effect similar to the double eyelid, the staff replied that while it is certainly possible to do so, she “shouldn’t forget that in France they are envious of almond-shaped eyes (*kirenaga no me*)” (Sōen 1970-1, 196). This statement shows an underlying sentiment that, while still reliant on the seemingly affirmative external gaze of Eurocentric exoticism, moves towards a positive re-evaluation of the ostensibly “natural” traits traditionally associated with the image of the “Japanese”.

In an interview from 2011, model Azuma Mari describes the state of the industry in the year of her debut (1968):

Their lines were thin. Delicate bodies were in high demand. Everybody was so thin!  
(...) Also, “*hāfu*” models were especially liked. (Face to face 2012)

Her account also reveals how Irie Miki's marriage affected the fashion industry. Azuma initially modeled for the shows of textile companies such as Teijin and Toray but was able to make her break in the upper echelons of the model industry because of the demand created by Irie's retirement.

Back then, [there was] a "*hāfu*" model that worked as a Japanese model, Irie Miki. She would walk for shows such as Yves Saint Laurent, but she retired after her marriage to the orchestra director Ozawa Seiji. (…)

At the same time, that meant that her "spot" was left open, so they started recruiting new models for haute couture. (Face to face 2012)

However, many of the "mixed race" models who debuted in this period are not remembered to this day. Even when looking at the printed media of the time, the gossip articles mentioning models are very sparse. Perhaps the reason behind this is the fact that, although they had the chance of working in advertisements and in magazines, walking in shows was the focus of their job. Very few models managed to make the transition to different roles in the entertainment industry, which would have required undergoing a completely different kind of training. Azuma also says:

NAOKI : (laughs) I'm sure there were fewer models, too.

Azuma Mari : They were quite few compared to nowadays. The market in itself was small.

Furthermore, there was also the "twiggy boom", and because of this the models were either "*hāfu*" or American. There was little demand for models. (Face to face 2012)

Since “*hāfu*” and American models were in high demand, it is possible that there was lower demand for models that did not (or could not be made to) look “mixed race”. With less competition, there was probably no need for the models of the time to venture into other professions in the entertainment business unless they really wished to do so.

Whatever the reason, this meant that except for supermodels such as Irie and extremely rare cases such as Azuma’s, there are very little records available about most of the “mixed race” models of the time – all that is left is their images in the glossy pages of the fashion magazines of the time.

Meanwhile the advertisement industry could rely on a wider pool of talent, that included actors, singers and dancers. It was among this latter category of entertainers that they found what is now remembered as the real star behind the “*konketsuji* boom” of the late sixties: Maeda Bibari.

The American Japanese Maeda was a dancer affiliated with Tōhō at the time. At only eighteen years of age, she was scouted by Shiseido to participate in their “*Taiyō ni Aisareyō*” (roughly translated as “Let’s be loved by the sun”) campaign (Fig. 9). When the posters came out in 1966, they became so popular that they were routinely stolen from the shopfronts (Shūkan Bunshun 1966-5-22, 116-119). The poster featured a bronze-skinned Maeda lying on the beach in a white bikini and a white beach cap. Although rather tame for the present times, media coverage implies that it was considered sexy for the time.

The following year, Toray released a bikini campaign featuring Morita Toshiko. Like Maeda she was a dancer, affiliated with Nichigeki. She was also “mixed race”, having Russian ancestry. According to an article published in *Shūkan Bunshun* (1966-5-22,

116-119), both women were chosen because of their body proportions. The text cites a Shiseido spokesperson saying:

The posters we use in summer must feature a picture of the model in bikini, however fashion models are too thin. They don't fit because they don't look healthily beautiful (*kenkobi*). So we set out to look for people that would be bearable to watch even when naked, and that is where Maeda Bibari's name came up. We met up with her and she was big and healthy, she matched the image we had in mind. So we decided to go with her. (Shūkan Bunshun 1966, 116)

Representatives from Toray said similar words about Morita:

Normally we would use fashion models, but the theme behind this year's campaign is a passionate Mexican look, so a normal model wouldn't work. We wanted somebody who not only had a beautiful face and body, but who could also embody an idea of beauty that is wild and healthy. As we were looking for somebody like that, we found Morita at Nichigeki. (Shūkan Bunshun 1966, 117)

The *Shūkan Bunshun* article then remarks on how when looking for subjects that would meet the same condition, that of "healthy beauty" (*kenkōbi*), both companies ended up with "mixed race" models. Indeed, the article seems to imply that the racial background of the two girls was the ingredient that made their bodies perfect for the job. A former classmate of Maeda interviewed for the piece is quoted as saying:

However, she was tall and slim like a stick until she was around 13 years old. Then, around fifteen or sixteen her breasts and bottom suddenly developed, and we were all very surprised. “*Konketsu*” are incredible, after all. (Shūkan Bunshun 1966, 117)

As it is clear from this quote, “healthy beauty” (*kenkōbi*) and “wild beauty” (*yaseibi*) are nothing but euphemisms for sexiness. The voluptuousness of Maeda’s body became her trademark in her early career, and the word “glamorous” a staple of her descriptions in the media.

The sexualization of the “mixed race” body wasn’t a phenomenon that was limited to Maeda and Morita’s image. “Mixed race” singers such as Yamamoto Linda, who also had her huge break in 1966, were also put under the scrutiny of the gaze of their mostly male fans. Previously a model for *Sōen* and *Dressmaking*, Yamamoto debuted as a singer with the single “*Komacchau na*” (“That puts me in trouble”). The song was written from the perspective of a young lady that for the first time received attention from the opposite sex. It was an immediate hit, and catapulted Yamamoto into stardom.

From the beginning of her career, Yamamoto’s body was one of the main factors behind her popularity. Articles focusing on her body were not uncommon, and once again, “beauty” and “race” became intertwined in her depiction by printed media. For example, an article from 1967 praises her “fortunate ‘*konketsu*’ qualities” (Shūkan Heibon 1967-6-8, pp.24-25). Yamamoto also had very “devoted” male fans, that at times went as far as to harass her (Shūkan Heibon 1967-10-26).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The person who threatened her insisted that they did not want Yamamoto to be popular because she had American ancestry. However, her management agency did not seem to believe their motive.

Even in press coverage about her, Yamamoto was not spared by the male gaze. In 1968, *Shūkan Heibon* published an interview article with thirty sexualizing questions that included information such as the color of her underwear (*Shūkan Heibon* 1968-7-11). Throughout the article, she says that she prefers to be addressed as “kawaii” rather than “sexy”, and by the end of it she even asks the journalist not to publish the racier parts. However, the article categorizes her as “*kamatoto*”: someone who is acting in a sexually provocative way while feigning innocence.

During the same year, another popular advertisement campaign surfaced on city streets. Launched by General Oil (*Zeneraru Sekiyū*), it featured “mixed” model Sugimoto Emma standing with her back towards the viewer and looking behind. She was wearing a cowboy suit with a very short mini skirt that made her underwear almost visible.

Sugimoto’s poster was also reportedly stolen. This was an even bigger feat than stealing the aforementioned Shiseido poster, since it was bigger in size: Sugimoto’s body was printed over a series of posters that were glued on boards (*Zōkan Josei Jishin* 1968-8-10). A 1968 *Zōkan Josei Jishin* article that covered the “incident” while introducing Sugimoto hypothesized that, as the image in itself was more explicitly sexualizing, most of the stolen posters would now be “in the bedrooms of young men” (*Zōkan Josei Jishin* 1968-8-10, 126).

It would not be surprising if the scandal-driven press industry of the time also benefited from Sugimoto’s disinhibited character. Having lost her parents at a young age, Sugimoto lived a childhood of poverty and emotional distress. She learned very quickly how to move in a world where adults “would only be kind because they wanted something in return” (*Zōkan Josei Jishin* 1968-8-10, 127). *Zōkan Josei Jishin*’s portrayal



of Sugimoto is that of a strong and precocious young woman who had to fend her way into a world that was often hostile. Reading the article, one feels as if the writers “used” this tumultuous background story as an explanation for her erratic, non-normative behavior as a model willing to participate in scandalous sexualizing photography.<sup>25</sup>

Like with Maeda, the extraordinariness of her body was tied to her racial background. Sugimoto is described as:

A so called “*konketsu*” raised in Osaka. She is a “mixed race” (*konketsu*) girl that looks like the prototype for superior genes: she has the beautiful proportions of a European, brunette hair, a deep-set face together with the beautiful skin of the Japanese. (Zōkan Josei Jishin 1968-8-10, 126)

Sugimoto’s portrayal represents very well two of the phenomena that accompanied the representation of “mixed race” bodies in the second half of the 1960s. On the one hand, media producers were on the lookout for a “genetically superior”, un-ordinarily beautiful “mixed” body. On the other hand, there was an extremely visible sexualization<sup>26</sup> of these “perfect” bodies, that were constructed and marketed for an

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<sup>25</sup> The Sugimoto interview contains other interesting details regarding the social perception of “mixed race”. First, it is the first instance I have seen the word “*hāfu*” in press: Sugimoto uses it to refer to herself and her peers. Secondly, her manager stresses how her future career prospects lie in the music industry, as acting possibilities for a “mixed race” woman were limited. This second point testifies how being visibly “mixed race” people were in demand for specific types of entertainment jobs, and because of their markedness were not considered suitable for those positions that required representing the average members of society.

<sup>26</sup> Sexualization wasn’t only present in the case of celebrities of white descent – it’s possible

explicitly male gaze.

The 1968 General Sekiyū advertisement featuring “mixed race” model Sugimoto Emma was one of the first that explicitly depicted a sexualized female body. Whether that advertisement was reading into pre-existent notions of the sexuality of “foreigners” or responding to the newly forming ideas of sexual liberation is hard to say, but it might have tied the non-Japanese-looking body to sexualizing representations. The following year (1969), General Sekiyū’s rival company Maruzen Sekiyū employed fashion model Ogawa Rosa for their hugely successful commercial “*Oh! Mōretsu*” (Oh! Fierce). The commercial was so popular that it became a social phenomenon and catapulted the model to stardom. In it, Ogawa is seen wearing a white dress with a flare skirt and a white cap while she seemingly drives a race car. Many are the shots that close up on her face and her legs: the sexualization becomes even more explicit in the last frames, where the camera shows the bottom half of her body while her skirt is blown away by the wind, revealing her panties. Interestingly, Ogawa has recently revealed that she did not know the contents of this final scene before filming (Ogawa 2021).

Ogawa is not “mixed race”, however her modelling persona was built around the idea of the “mixed race” body. Her katakana name was chosen by her uncle who thought her real, quite traditional name Shizuyo was not a good fit for her looks (Ogawa 2021): she is to this day described as “not looking Japanese” (*nihonjin-banare shita kaodachi*) (TV Tokyo, 2020). The casting of both commercials makes us wonder about the association

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that it went hand in hand with “foreignness”, as other “mixed” celebrities built their image on hypersexuality as well. One such example is Ou Ran Fan, of Japanese and Hong Kong descent. In the mid-sixties, she made the news with an extremely eroticized persona, who was very open about her sexual exploits.

of a certain physical appearance with sexuality. Both commercials had young men as a target, and this makes them fit to be scripted with the male point of view of the female body as sexual object.

#### 2.4.2 The ideal and the relatable in beauty advertisements

Commercials that featured “mixed race” models often employed them for their physical characteristics. In other words, they are there as an object of admiration (*akogare*) rather than being represented as a character with whom it is easy to identify. Naturally, the reduction of women’s bodies to an aesthetically pleasing “object” is far from being a phenomenon only associated with “mixed race” women, but there are some instances in which this objectification becomes more palpable. One particularly significant example is the 1969 commercial for Shiseido’s Pink Pow-wow rouge brand (Fig. 10). The 90-second advertisement opens with a shot of “mixed race” model Adelle Lutz walking through what is assumed to be Tokyo traffic, in an outfit “inspired” by native-American traditional clothes. The scene then moves to an interior shot, where the camera first closes up on the product, and then on the model’s face. We understand that she is in the care of a make-up artist, who is applying a different range of products to recreate the look she had in the earlier scenes. In the background, the narrator is explaining the make-up artist’s movement, and giving information in detail about the correct use of the tools and the effects that can be achieved. After we see the finished look, the narrator says “come on, it is your turn now!” as the scene goes back to the exterior shot of the town traffic again. Only this time Adelle Lutz is nowhere to be seen – in her place, we see the subject of the narrator’s interpellation, a group of six young “Japanese-looking” girls laughing and having fun. This last scene reveals the model’s role as a mannequin:

she is someone from whom to take the example, but only in so far that the “you” – the “Japanese-looking” consumer – can be center stage next.

Now, let’s compare this commercial with another Shiseido TV commercial, an advertisement for the brand’s Natural Glow Accent On Lashes aired in 1970 that featured Yamamoto Sumie. The camera opens with a close up of the model’s face, who is looking at her reflection in the glass walls of a telephone box. She is going back and forward, sometimes touching her lashes: the audience understands that she feels apprehensive about her look of the day. Then, the narrator begins to talk. “You apply your eye shadow, draw your eyeliner, glue the fake eyelashes… The first time you do your make-up, you might feel as if your face is the face of another”. We then understand why the model is loitering around the telephone box: the narrator’s voice is interrupted by a younger voice, that says: “Wow, Sumie! You look so cool! They suit you so well!”. The model’s friend, whom she was apparently waiting for, arrives. Yamamoto then breaks into an embarrassed laugh and starts talking to her friend.

Compared with the aforementioned Pink Pow-wow commercial, this one puts the model in a very different position. Here, it is clear that she is someone with whom the audience can connect at a deeper emotional level and recognize themselves in. She becomes a representative of young womanhood, and perfectly represents that hesitation that is normally felt when trying out new fashion trends that shy away from the familiar. Far from being depicted one dimensionally as a beautiful object, she is represented with emotional realism. This, together with the fact that very few “mixed race” models appeared in advertisement that represented scenes from everyday life, might indicate that those bodies who did not sufficiently look “Japanese” were thought not to be fit for representing the average person. It is, however, in this “average” that the ideas of

Japanese citizenship and, more broadly, of personhood often reside in representation.

#### 2.4.3 The narrativization of “mixed race”: the “tragic *konketsu*” and the “rich lady”

One of the most significant changes between the early and the late 1960s in terms of the “mixed race” population was the growth to adolescence and adulthood of the children that were born between American soldiers stationed in the archipelago and Japanese women. This was reflected in the entertainment business as well: the majority of the “mixed race” celebrities who debuted after 1965 were born as a result of the American occupation.

Among them, there was a consistent group of celebrities who were left orphaned or grew up in single-parent households. Such personal histories were often ripe for exploitation by the media industry.

Of the aforementioned celebrities, both Yamamoto Linda and Sugimoto Emma are part of this category. After her debut, Yamamoto was offered multiple chances to talk about her past (Kōichi Jidai 1967-9, Heibon 1967-6). These always put an emphasis on the loneliness of growing up without a father, and the strength that her mother was forced to have in order to raise her by herself. In an article published in Heibon (1967-6) she recalls how, after seeing a childhood friend riding on the shoulders of his father, she started demanding that she, too, would ride on the shoulders of her father. Still a child, she did not understand that her father was no longer with her.

Yamamoto also often talks about the bullying that she experienced as a child: this is a huge contrast with the white “mixed race” celebrities that debuted before 1965, who, as we have seen, remained mostly unscathed.

This happened soon after I became a first-year student at Shinbashi Elementary School. I was coming back home with my friends. Four or five elder boys were waiting for me at the bridge and started mocking me.

“Hey, American (*amekō*)!”

“Ainoko, Ainoko!”

“Whitey, whitey, whitey!”

As they were clapping hands, small stones flew my way together with their words. (Heibon 1967-6, 191-192).

Being surrounded by the Japanese side of her family since she could remember, Yamamoto always identified as Japanese. We can imagine that not only it was thus deeply hurtful to be called with racial slurs, but also when people would not recognize her identity. Indeed, what was most comforting for her was when her family reassured her that she *was* Japanese, and that she could think of herself as such.

“People who say that kind of things are pitiful. Ako<sup>27</sup>, you’re absolutely Japanese, so you should be fine no matter what they say. Ok?” I think that these words from my uncle were the reason why I could live without feeling too strongly the troubles of being a “*konketsuji*”. (Heibon 1967-6, 192)

Some years after this article was published, when asked about the pros and cons of being “mixed race”, Yamamoto would say:

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<sup>27</sup> Yamamoto’s birth name was Atsuko, hence the nickname “Ako”.

No loss or gain. When I was little, I went through a lot, but I am benefitting from it since I became a fashion model (Shūkan Heibon 1968-7-11, 108).

Here, Yamamoto is most likely referring to her visibly “mixed race” body. There is no doubt, however, that the entertainment industry of the day was profiting from her personal history as well. In fact, having a sad backstory was considered a “plus” for audiences consuming the images of these celebrities.<sup>28</sup>

As someone with an even less ordinary past, the early coverage of Sugimoto Emma also followed a similar pattern. The *Zōkan Josei Jishin* article mentioned above features lengthy descriptions of her tragic past and her sexual exploits. While narrating her history, Sugimoto also manages to carve some space to talk about her own identity. While she struggled with bullying when she was younger, she is now proud of being “*hāfu*”. Not only she has gained confidence in her identity, but she shows signs of an empathy that has never appeared throughout the interviews of other “mixed race” celebrities.

Black “*konketsuji*”, when they were young, tried to wash themselves so strongly that they started bleeding, thinking that their skin color would fade... I’ve cried hearing things like this. I couldn’t think of it as something that didn’t matter to me. (Zōkan

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<sup>28</sup> While this does not directly appear in articles related to Yamamoto, Sugimoto and Aoyama, there have been repeated instances in which the “melancholy of the ‘*konketsu*’” was cited to be an element of attraction to a certain celebrity. Incidentally, a similar discourse existed in Japanese media regarding Black music (for Blues, in particular).

Josei Jishin 1968-8-10, 126)

Her “*hāfu*” identity is something that she ties to the way she perceives her own body, as she first gained consciousness of this identity during adolescence. This mirrors the perception that society has of “mixed race” bodies, as we have seen above.

The culmination of this exploitative display of the tragedy of the “mixed race” celebrity came with the telephone “reunion” between singer Aoyama Michi and her estranged father. In 1968, news that her father was alive (and remarried) in America made headlines in gossip magazines, and a telephone call between the two was subsequently broadcasted nationwide. Aoyama broke down crying while talking. During the same year, she would often reappear in the papers. She was involved in multiple scandals, that included drug possession, an elopement, working in clubs that catered to Black soldiers, and eventually her marriage. She was only nineteen years old at the time.

The tension between the stigma of being “mixed race” and the glamour of being a celebrity continues to be present throughout the media portrayals of these celebrities. Unlike what happens in the present day, the struggles that “mixed race” celebrities had to face were often brought to the forefront. Limiting oneself to the representation of tragedy is, however, only slightly better than occulting its existence, as it can end up being exploitative. Not only it is easy to portray “mixed race” people’s suffering as that something that makes them desirable or successful, but often these depictions do not actively work to deconstruct harmful stigmatizing discourses that existed in society. Ideas that would now be considered controversial, such as Sawada Miyuki’s penchant for the relocation of “mixed race” young orphans outside of Japan, were presented without much criticism. Furthermore, depicting the success stories of “mixed race” people who



found a career in the entertainment system might have rendered invisible the barriers that those who were not as lucky might have faced in society due to their social identity.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, not all the “mixed race” celebrities who debuted in this period had a troubled past. Especially in the pages of glossy magazines, we see another “type” of celebrity that is nothing but glamorous: examples are the Lutz Sisters and Kishi Saori. Coming from middle- or upper-class families, these young ladies mostly worked as models, and many of them were featured in the advertising campaigns of major cosmetic brands such as Shiseido. Although articles about them are scarce, they are represented as beautiful and wealthy, people whom to aspire to.

However, their glamour comes at a price: their lack of “Japaneseness”. They often did not have Japanese nationality as their parents were still married. Furthermore, they were raised in mostly English-speaking environments and their Japanese abilities were mediocre at best. Media such as *Sōen* put less emphasis on this point, focusing also on the similarities between them and the readers (Sōen 1970-1). However, for more popular media such as *Josei Jishin*, the lack of fluency in Japanese language and culture is more clearly depicted as being a lacking point (Josei Jishin 1968-4-8). It is not surprising then that most of the media coverage about them comes from fashion magazines, who were also more invested in legitimizing their choices about models and presenting them as a source of inspiration for the trend-oriented reader.

This “glamorizing” representation can also be exploitative, especially in those instances

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<sup>29</sup> Shimoji (2018) mentions a testimony published on Asahi Shinbun roughly two decades later making exactly the same point. However, due to the lack of first-hand sources, it is hard to understand the impact that the representation of “mixed race” actually had.

in which we do not get to hear the voice of the models themselves. Their personhood becomes reduced to a “beautiful object”. The exaltation of the objectified “mixed race” body carries the risk of obscuring the social exclusion felt by many “mixed race” Japanese, while at the same time being potentially harmful to consumers with more pronouncedly Asian features, who possibly end up dissociating themselves from what they consider to be beautiful.

## 2.5 1960 to 1970 : representing the “Japanese”

### 2.5.1 Historical changes in the “Japanese body”

The constructed image of the “Japanese body” is the product of the historical consciousness of a change that happened in two acts, the second of which can be considered to be the years following the end of the war. This period was characterized by unprecedented contact with the “west”, and in particular American (pop) culture. Through advertisement and media, images from Europe and America became intertwined with consumption and thus permeated into everyday life. This led to the un-making and re-making of previous ideas of the “body” and “beauty”. As Yamamura Hiromi writes in her book *Keshō no Nihonshi*,

Under the influence of the America-praising Occupation policies, white women began to appear everywhere, from foreign movies to magazine covers to make-up advertisements, and the idea of the chiseled “foreign face” as the standard of beauty was imprinted in the minds of the regular women who were at the receiving end. It could be certainly said that this aesthetic ideal, historical differences notwithstanding, survives to the present day. (Yamamura 2016, 181).

It is hard to determine how intentionally or explicitly was this process carried out, however among those involved in the media industry there was likely an awareness of the change that was taking place.

In 1968, a hundred years after the Meiji Restoration, *Josei Jishin* published two retrospectives on the historical changes of Japanese beauty and fashion. The first was

published in the January 29 issue, and it is mostly focused on clothing. The second page opens with the title “Together with civilization and enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*), [clothes went] from the kimono to western clothes. Meiji and Taisho, times troubled by intense change” (Josei Jishin 1968-1-29, 146). The history shown through these pages is one of westernization, that starts from the kimono as the origin and focuses on the different styles of western clothes that have been adopted until the present day. Interestingly, it closes in a circular fashion with the return of the kimono, once again in fashion as a formal clothing style because of the anniversary of the Restoration.

As the title “Miss Nippon: changes in female beauty” (Josei Jishin 1968-4-1, 170-176) suggests, the April 1 issue of the retrospective focuses more so on the body. In the last page there is a small retrospective titled “From Meiji to the future! The changing figure of the beautiful woman”. Here, we see two figures from the Meiji and Taisho period juxtaposed to pictures of models representing beauty standards from the present and the future. Once again, the past is represented by traditional clothing and hairstyle, as well as physical characteristics such as an oblong face (*urizane-gao*) and a smaller stature (*rokutōshin*). In the pictures, the women from the Meiji and Taisho eras are Japanese people who were then famous for their physical beauty, while the “present” and the “future” are both represented by white models from the “west”. Clearly, Eurocentric notions of beauty were considered to be a reference point: however, the text seems to imply that it is possible for the audience to become like the British Twiggy and Moody, as it asks the reader the question: “what kind of beauty are you?”

The juxtaposition of “Japanese” and “Western”, “past” and “future” that is present in both retrospectives is crucial in the construction of the image of the “Japanese” (looking) body. The images of “traditional beauty” represented by the kimono-clad

beauties of the Meiji and Taisho eras become fixed in the visual imaginary as depictions of “Japanese” autochthonous beauty, and this makes possible the creation of oxymorons such as the “non-Japanese-looking” Japanese.

### 2.5.2 The relatable body

In the previous sections, we have briefly seen how “mixed race” looking models were more present in media associated with fashion and make-up, and less represented in advertisement for everyday life and household goods. In those genres of advertisements that have to rely on the identification of the audience with the person being represented the models are clearly “Japanese” looking.

A prime example is found in print media advertisements for financial institutions. These are advertisements for services that are essential for society, and thus tended to represent the average citizen in their commercials.

A 1968 article from *Josei Jishin* introduces model Kanomata Miyuki, who had appeared in the poster advertisements for Fuji Bank, as a “model that doesn’t look like a model” (Josei Jishin 1968-4-8, 130). The success of the Fuji Bank advertisements was believed to stem from the fact that she looked like an employee (Josei Jishin 1968-4-8, 130). From this, we can gather that relatability was considered to be an important element in the advertisement strategies of business-related sectors.

Fig.11, an advertisement from 1966, for example, features popular actress Yoshinaga Sayuri, whose beauty was considered to be more “Japanese-looking”. The following advertisement (Fig.12) from 1967 follows a similar strategy: this time we see represented a “Japanese-looking” child in an advertisement for a family saving plan. Although even when it came to child models it was not uncommon to see “mixed race”

people in fashion magazines, here the idealized family is represented through a different phenotype, one that it is more easily associated with “Japaneseness”.

This dichotomy in representation neatly overlaps with the “madonna” and “whore” stereotypical roles that are often given to women in media. “Mixed”(looking) bodies tend to appear whenever there is a sensual, modern and fashionable persona to be shown. On the contrary, whenever the emphasis is to be put on women’s role in the family, it is “Japanese-looking” bodies that carry this symbolic meaning. “Mixed race” and “mixed-looking” bodies were thus used to represent a facet of womanhood that is strong, charming and attractive, but at the same time also liminal and ripe to exploitation in a male-dominated society, where traditional ideals of sexuality were still hegemonic and life events such as marriage and childbirth were considered defining moments in a woman’s life.

### 2.5.3 “Japanese-looking” women, “foreign looking” men

Another visual trope that is present in the visual discourses of the 1960s is that of the (romantic) relationship between Japanese women and foreign (almost always white) men. Articles focusing on the lives of Hollywood stars, as well as pieces that introduced foreign media productions were a staple of female oriented media. However, the presence of non-celebrity foreign men in media images plummeted after the 1964 olympics. A notable exception to this trend is a series of advertisements dated from 1969 to 1970 for the shampoo brand Emeron.

In the 1968 ad (Fig. 13), we see two men and a “Japanese-looking” woman – represented by actress Shino Hiroko. One of the men is in the background, and his facial features are hard to grasp. The other man is closer to the actress and we can

understand from his hair color and his facial structure that he is white.

The image is constructed in a way to make the audience focus on the relationship between the men – in particular the white man with the guitar on the forefront – and the “Japanese-looking” woman. It is clear from his facial expression and his gaze that the white man has an interest in the woman, and the copy explains to us why. “The rhythm gets lively… because it’s Emeron”. The pleasant smell of the shampoo makes the woman attractive to the two men: the one in the back is in fact also looking at the scene, and his blurry gaze almost meets that of the audience. The “Japanese-looking” woman, however, does not return the gaze: she is smiling at someone who we cannot see. This puts her in a rather “powerful” position: she is liked without necessarily liking back, and that is proof of her charm. Needless to say, she is the one with whom the viewers are invited to aspire to.

The 1970 ad follows a similar structure, the only difference being the distance between the two men and Shino. This makes it hard to understand whether they represent “Japanese” men or not, however the possibility of being “foreign” is not completely ruled out. There is less sexual tension in the composition of the image, but it is still present in the wording of the copy: “the wonderful invite of Emeron hair”. It is implied that the invite (*sasoi*) is an intimate one – once again, the “Japanese-looking” protagonist is charming the two men.

## 2.6 Conclusion

The 1960s was a decade in which many “mixed race” celebrities entered the entertainment business, and it was a turning point for the representation as well as the (re)construction of the meanings behind “mixedness”.

Shimoji (2018) points out how this was a period of glamourization of “mixed race”, as it went from being a symbol of stigma to one enviable characteristic to possess. This is indeed the case: the “mixed” body in particular was glorified in the media as a sort of “superior” physique that was in part responsible for bridging the gaps between Japan and the “west”, at the time considered to be the beacon of civilization and modernity. It is likely that in the case of men and women alike, “mixed race” bodies were associated with beauty and youth. In advertisement, they were possibly used to create an image of manhood (and womanhood) that would be attractive for young consumers, as it was radically different from what they saw in their parents and in the adults close to them. Furthermore, the “mixed race” bodies that appear in advertisement were impossibly “beautiful”, and often closer to a Eurocentric beauty standard. The association of “mixed race” and this particular construction of beauty ties them to double-edged practices of sexualization and desire, that can be both empowering and objectifying.

However, the jump from the earlier “age of pathology” in which “mixed race” was seen as something negative to the later “age of admiration” in which “mixed race” was in turn seen as something desirable (Ifekwunigwe 2004) was a process riddled with contradictions. Indeed, throughout media representations from this decade we see a constant tension between the stigmatized image of the “*konketsu*” as a social problem and the glamorized image of the “mixed race” body as genetically superior. The contrast



between the two was also exploited by the media and entertainment industry, who profited from the creation of beautiful heroines with a tragic backstory such as Yamamoto Linda and Aoyama Michi.

With lack of testimonies from “mixed race” people who lived outside the entertainment industry, it is hard to establish whether the broader community profited from these representations. The stereotypes tied to the “*konketsuji monda*”, largely influenced by normative notions of gender and class, became less prominent as the social context of the immediate post-war became a memory of the past. However, they were substituted by a stronger perception of “mixed race” people being more like foreigners than like the Japanese, which was undoubtedly reinforced by the image of “mixed race” models such as the Lutz sisters. This, however, might at times create a different kind of psychological suffering for the “mixed race” people who identify as Japanese (Iwabuchi 2014). Furthermore, Black “mixed race” people were completely left out of this media fascination with “mixed race”. It is likely that Black Japanese continued to experience stigmatization, as there has been no sustained critical discussion on the negative perceptions associated with Blackness until the present day. Black and Brown bodies are also notably absent from advertisements, and are made virtually invisible from the second half of the decade. Even when it comes to “mixed race” models, darker skin colors are nowhere to be seen.

The increase of “mixed race” models in the 1960s also had a major impact on the construction of Japanese beauty standards. Although the hyper Eurocentric features that characterize this decade became somewhat less prominent in the following decades, they laid the grounds for the formation of a “type” of beauty that would periodically re-emerge. This type mostly appears in those fields that are easily associated with

consumer products that need diversification among objects of a similar nature and in which models are more of an “object” to look at and to yearn for (*akogareru*). The fact that foreign and “mixed race” bodies both appear in the same fields associated with conspicuous consumption such as make-up and luxury goods puts them in a paradoxical position where they are at the same time objects of desire and incapacitated to represent the “everyman”. Thus, for “mixed race” celebrities who were trying to make a name for themselves in the entertainment industry, their ethnic origins might have been both a blessing and a curse: a blessing because in a time when their looks were very requested, they might have helped their debut; a curse as it limited their career prospects and thus made it harder to adjust one’s image to the demands of the entertainment business.

The “type” of beauty represented by foreign-proximate bodies is constructed in opposition to the “Japanese-looking” body. The more “Japanese-looking” models are featured in advertisement that requires identification from the viewer, such as everyday items and scenes of family life. This racialized use of bodily image participates in the construction of the line between what is easily recognized as Japanese and what is not so. Furthermore, the use of “mixed race” people as in proximity to the “foreign”, might lead to the reinforcement of the idea of their non-“Japaneseness”.

Last but not least, “foreign” (mostly white) bodies are also constantly present in advertisements in this decade. The consistency is higher for products developed by foreign companies and imported into Japan, especially when it comes to fields such as fashion and make-up. In other types of advertisements, the interest for foreigners peaks around 1964-1965: after the Tokyo Olympics, non-celebrity “foreigners” are rarely seen in advertisements. When they do appear, it is often white men portrayed in relation to “Japanese-looking” women.

### 3 Fashion as avant-garde: *an-an* 1970-1972

The following chapter will be centered on the intersection between body, race and the emerging profession of the fashion model as they developed in the first period of the fashion magazine *an-an*.

Born from designer Horiuchi Seiichi's creative mind, the publishing of the first issue of *an-an* (1970) is considered to be an historical moment in the history of Japanese media, as it was the first "proper" fashion magazine to be published in the country: older publications, such as *Sōen* and *Dressmaking*, were still centered on dressmaking rather than fashion styling. The appearance of magazines such as *an-an* and *non-no*, however, marked the shift from tailoring to readymade clothing (Hiejima 2005).

The first two years of the magazine's history were marked by Horiuchi's avant-garde direction: the designer created an edgy, avant-garde publication that was unlike any other women-oriented media that Japanese female readers had seen until that point (Nanba 2009). Historically, these first two years almost perfectly coincided with the period that goes from the Osaka Expo (1970) to the first Oil Shock (1973). The Osaka Expo, together with the first Japanese Olympics (1964) was seen as one of the events that opened post-war Japan to the world. They were occasions where the country could demonstrate how rapidly it had recovered from the rubbles of the war and relocate itself as a place that was worthy of the interest of the international community (Wilson 2012). Overseas travel, which had been limited before 1964, had now been liberalized: while the numbers of Japanese who travelled abroad were still rather low, they were steadily rising (Yamaguchi 2010). Since the country hosted the Olympic games, the interest for

the foreign had remained high.

These were also the later years of the Japanese economic miracle, which eventually slowed down as a consequence of the rising in oil prices of 1973 (Kingston 2013). The younger Japanese generations were now used to a comfortable lifestyle and were starting to look at the possibilities offered by consumption. The now wealthy Japanese media industry was also ready to move its first steps outside of the country: this meant that collaborations with foreign magazines and the production of media contents in foreign locations were to become increasingly common.

Scholars such as Sakamoto (2019) have noted that new fashion magazines of the 1970s marked a shift from a textually oriented medium (like weekly magazines such as *Josei Jishin* had been) to one that was first and foremost visual. Indeed, when compared with the publications that preceded it, *an-an* had an impressive number of colored pages. It is clear that it was created with the intention of appealing to the viewers' eyes.

Part of the boldness of the magazine's artistic direction was conveyed through images of the foreign. *An-an* was at first conceived as a Japanese counterpart to the fashion magazine *Elle*, and each issue included some pages taken from the French publication. These pages were undoubtedly a strong source of fascination for those who did not have access to imported fashion magazines and were a huge stimulus for readers who had a strong interest in fashion. One reader from 1971 notes how:

The first thing that I excitedly look at are the *Elle* pages. How is it possible that the composition and the colors can be so vivid? Also, I admire the natural posing and expressions of the models. I compare these pages from *Elle* with the other fashion pages and they make me want to say: "work a bit harder, Japan"! (an-an 1971-1-4,

For the fashion-minded reader of the time, the French pages might have been perceived as more polished. Nevertheless, it is precisely those other, Japanese-made fashion pages that are nowadays considered to be epoch-making. Among the magazine's innovations was the consistency and the vast number of the shoots that were taken abroad. In the first two years of the publication, readers could truly feel as if they were traveling around the world with models Tachikawa Yuri and Akikawa Lisa.

*An-an* was also one of the first magazines where the models were presented as having a personality. This was not completely unprecedented – however, no magazine before had from the very beginning presented their models as a fully-fledged “character” with whom the readers could either identify or channel their aspirations for.

Last but not least, the switch from tailoring to ready-made meant a newfound attention for the body. The early *an-an* attempted to propose a new perception of body image that was on the side of the readers in all their different shapes.

### 3.1 *An-an and the foreign*

#### 3.1.1 The representation of foreign countries

The foreign, seen from a Eurocentric frame, was one of the core themes that formed the mythology of the first *an-an*. In the first issues in particular, the magazine's color-page articles were a mixture between fashion editorials and travel reporting, and they were often shot in Europe. These articles represented one of the first instances in which an all-Japanese team produced content on Europe on their own terms (Akagi 2007): in the previous decade, it was more common to buy images that had been created abroad and publish them as they were. Thus, these representations of the foreign hold particular significance in understanding how phenotypically different bodies were perceived in Japan at the time.

The magazine takes a Eurocentric approach to cultural geography. The locations that are most intensively featured are from Europe, and the only two non-European countries that the crew has visited are former European colonies, who were either popular holiday resorts (Morocco) or sanctuaries of hippie culture (India). It follows that, during the visit to these two countries, their gaze easily overlapped with the colonialist orientalist gaze. This is particularly evident in the descriptions of Morocco and the photographic representations of both countries, who heavily relied on the "ethnic" elements of traditional culture.

The majority of the people represented are children, followed by men in the Morocco and India articles. White European locals almost never appear, whereas there is a disproportionate representation of the non-white locals of Morocco, India and Nepal or

European minorities such as the Romani. The locals are furthermore often pictured in a way that makes the model stand out more – being a “prop” for improving the picture’s aesthetic qualities often takes priority to the representation of the locals’ more human qualities, such as their feelings or their experience of everyday life. On the other hand, we will see later how white Europeans *models* are overly represented: this representation might lead to a skewed perception of the ‘beauty’ of the Arab and Indian people represented versus the white European counterpart. Whereas the white body associated with Europe is more often used as a visual marker for beauty, the non-white, non-“Japanese” ‘other’ is represented as anthropologically interesting.

In the following section, we will observe how the image of a modern and cosmopolitan Japan was constructed through the representation of internal ethnic difference, as well as the stereotypes and characteristics associated with each ethnicity.

### 3.1.2 Representing foreign(-looking) people in Japan

Especially in its first year, the early *an-an* communicated a strong sense of cosmopolitanism, formulated in its most Eurocentric and elitist form. One way in which the magazine expressed this idea of multiculturalism is through the use of “mixed race” and foreign models. This sub-section will discuss the representation of different racialized bodies: we will see how “mixed race” and “foreign looking” bodies were represented: at times, they were depicted as relatable, while in other occasions they were represented as distant objects to be admired. This modulation of closeness functioned in a way that stimulated consumption (by offering the reader with idealized images and lifestyle) while avoiding alienation (by representing the people enacting these idealized images with some degree of relatability).

At the same time, there are some ambiguities left in the images of white and Black bodies: there is some lingering of bitterness in some depictions of the former, whereas the idea that the latter is stigmatized by the society at large has not completely disappeared.

The second issue (*an-an* 1970-4-5) introduces the readers to the new editorial room in Roppongi, Tokyo, through the eyes of three unnamed “models in training”. The three – one of them, Deguchi Monique, is “mixed race”; another one is Asian, and the third one is Black – have come to the offices to be trained by the magazine’s staff. The article is mostly composed of backstage pictures of them together with models Tachikawa Yuri and Mari – the variety of ethnicities reiterates the idea of a cosmopolitan publication, while functioning as an example of the kind of personnel that the magazine was looking for, a sort of “casting call” issued to potential creators and models.

In the 1970-11-20 issue the “House of fashion model” article gives the readers a glimpse of their life (*an-an* 1970-11-20, 30-35). Located in Roppongi, the same fashionable part of Tokyo where the *an-an* headquarters were, “12 people go in and out [of this house] (···) the truth is, that they are all popular fashion models” (*an-an* 1970-11-20, 30). We only see seven of them pictured: three of them are “mixed race”, two are white, and two are Asian, likely Japanese (Fig. 1). Of the four absentees, three are “mixed race”, one is Japanese, and one is Black. This sample is the most reliable example that we have of the racial make-up of the modeling industry of the early 1970s: white-adjacent “mixed race” models were the majority, followed by Japanese models. This also shows how in Japanese-produced media, the number of white models was slowly increasing. On the other hand, although the 1970s were the years in which influential Black models such as Grace Jones rose to the spotlight, the presence of Black



models in Japanese media was still rare.

The article is written from what reads as a third-person perspective, and the first model to be mentioned is none other than the aforementioned Deguchi Monique. Unlike the previous article where her name wasn't even mentioned, here they introduce her hobbies, her personality and her "social standing", in the form of the name of the prestigious international middle school she was attending (Fig. 2).

The model house is presented as a community of people with interesting characters and lifestyles. This is achieved by introducing some funny episodes between the girls, such as this episode between Takahashi Yumi and Kageyama Misuzu.

Takahashi Yumi had just been on set in Hokkaido when the Jumbo Jet's tires went flat in Haneda Airport. The return flight was three hours late, and she could not go back to her home because she lives in Yokosuka. So she fell asleep on this sofa. The next day when Kageyama Mirei came [to the office], Yumi was sleeping soundly, although she looked as if she was about to fall. [Kageyama Mirei] gently shook her saying "Wake up!!", and Yumi fell down from the sofa. (an-an 1970-11-20, 34)

This kind of narration invites the readers to see the models not only as an image to admire from afar. Instead, they present them as all-rounded human beings who have both charms and quirks. This representational strategy is used to elicit feelings of closeness and empathy between the reader and the girls. It also makes the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the model house look more realistic than it would have been if this, for example, was an image-only advertisement that relied on more abstraction-based representational techniques. Most of the pictures in the article can be divided into two

genres: pictures that close up on the model's looks and those who describe their life inside the Roppongi house.<sup>30</sup> The latter category, which comprises both pictures of the models interacting with their surroundings and of objects that metaphorically represent those activities, is particularly important as it functions in a way that "grounds" the models in what is perceived as a form of everyday reality. In other words, these pictures give the readers a definite setting that make the models life appear as vividly realistic as their own, instead of confining them into the realm of imagination.

Present at the time of the article there are two white models who came from abroad: the northern European Dita and Heidi, who is implied to be from central Europe. The two represent different kinds of foreigner tropes: Dita can speak some Japanese, loves the country, wants to marry a Japanese man, and loves sashimi. Heidi, on the other hand, cannot speak a single word and has gone through hard times because of that. "(...) She started feeling like she wants to go back to Paris already. Looks like her Japanese is really that bad" (an-an 1970-11-20, 34).

Regardless of their language abilities, most of the foreigners that we have seen represented so far in domestic media were Japan enthusiasts. Although the "foreigner who has trouble integrating" trope is dependent on the same paradigm of extreme, radical difference between Japan and the West, this representation of negative experience confirms the realistic, descriptive intent behind the article's structure.

The piece also mentions a Black model named Carol, who was born in a military family. Although her picture is not shown, the fact that she is mentioned signals a shift in the

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<sup>30</sup> The models are still objectified through their clothing - they're wearing shirts with their own name as if they needed a "label" to identify them. Since everyone is wearing the same kind of t-shirt it is hard to take it as a personal expression of identity.

reception of darker skin tones, which in earlier periods was often stigmatized.<sup>31</sup>

There are a few instances in which Black people are featured in the pages of *an-an*, either in fashion pages or in street photography for advertisement campaigns. However, their appearance is often framed in the context of the hippie cultural boom. For example, a reportage-commercial featured in the 1970-8-20 issue that conspicuously features New York's Black, Brown and Asian young population is titled "Fashion creates Love and Peace!": the text explains to the readers that "the young people of New York love the words <<peace>>, <<flowers>> and <<love>>" (an-an 1970-8-20, 122-123). In the same issue, "mixed race" musician Yamanaka Joe appears in the psychedelic rock-themed fashion issue, titled "Mojo in".

Yamanaka had appeared in an earlier issue (1970-7-5, 47-51), where he was photographed by Shinoyama Kishin. Here, he is described in a positive albeit fetishistic light:

Unbelievably pale grey eyes. A beautiful skin whose color feels impossible to ascertain with human eyes. Tightly permed hair that makes one experience the Rock'n'roll feeling with their eyes. An emotional screaming voice that makes one feel the message of indomitable humanity. The Joe who sings "Living-loving-made" on the stage is incredibly sexy. (an-an 1970-7-5, 51)

The phrase "tightly permed hair" refers to the Afro he was sporting at the time. This

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<sup>31</sup> This is, however, mitigated by the fact that the early *an-an* was a rather avant-garde publication, and because of this fact it might have been more inclined to see the Black body as desirable.

made his racialized characteristic conspicuous even if the black and white of the pictures sometimes made his skin (here referred with a roundabout expression instead of the word Black) look lighter.

There are two pictures in particular that are a striking comparison between his body and the physical appearance of his “Japanese” surroundings: the first (Fig. 3) shows him in the center of the page, walking among traditional Japanese buildings while seemingly blowing a harmonica. On the side of the road, an elderly woman is looking at him and smiling, functioning as yet another index that redirects our attention to the center. Visually, the two are opposites: Yamanaka is wearing Jeans while she is clad in a kimono, he is covering the lower part of his face putting an emphasis on his eyes and hair, who couldn’t be more different from the “Japanese-looking” elderly woman. They represent two different generations and lifestyles. Through this contrast the historically constructed “Japaneseness” relying on the visibility of traditional aesthetic and Yamanaka’s *difference* – his exclusion from the racialized nation, which is however also the reason of his charm and a vehicle for his artistic innovation – are highlighted at the same time. A similar process happens in the following picture (Fig. 4), where his face is put on the foreground of a group of hippie-looking people waving and looking at him/the camera. Here, the photographer manages to construct a prominent contrast in the skin color of Yamanaka and his audience, once again emphasizing his racialized difference.

The Black male body appears one last time in the March-April joint issue of 1972, the last to be directed by Horiuchi. Here, a man named Ronald Way is cast across Yuri as a character in an illustrated writing by Shiraishi Kazuko, titled “Days as Lolita” (Fig.5; an- an 1972-4-5, 76-81). The model, dressed in an at times girlish, at times sensual attire,

represents the titular character: the brief period of her life that is compared to Nabokov's *Lolita* are her days as a *pan-pan*, the lover of American soldiers stationed in Japan. Historically *pan-pan* have been subject both to stigmatization and admiration.<sup>32</sup> The unnamed titular character is represented as a strong young woman, and she is the one who holds all the agency. She knows very well, even better than the older G.I.(s), that their relationship will not last: and yet she still makes the soldier(s) "her prisoner(s)", making memories that she will soon after delete to make space for new ones. Post-war *pan-pan* entertained both White and Black soldiers, and their activities were regulated by intricate social norms that followed the United States' racialized society. It follows that those women who had relations with Black men were particularly stigmatized. Thus, the relationship acquires a higher "hip" value in a context that values originality and difference. This could be interpreted as the reason for the choice of a Black actor in the article's illustrations: by the 1970s the Japanese perception of interracial relationships had changed to the point that it was not uncommon to see (almost exclusively) white-Japanese couples on *an-an*'s pages. For example, a white man takes up the role of the titular "*lui*" (him) in the fashion pages of the 1971-10-20 issue (titled in French "*La vie avec lui*", life with him), once again accompanied by Shiraishi's poetry (Fig.6; *an-an* 1971-10-20, 22-23). While this poem also deals with love and relationships, "he" has no particular features but for the fact that he is a man. His whiteness becomes a symbol of the "avant-garde", "free" relationship of the female protagonist, who does not intend to get attached, but rather aims to live "as if they were cats". Although ultimately Shiraishi describes two relationships similarly centered on a

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<sup>32</sup> Yamanaka (2016) for example, notes how the *pan-pan* represented the fashion avant-garde of the years immediately following the Second World War.

strong and well-rounded female character, it is interesting how the figure of a white man was thought to not be suitable to convey the shocking, rule-breaking nature of the relationship between “Lolita” and the soldier. This also shows how despite the glamorizing/fetishizing that the hippie and the psychedelic rock subcultures had brought, negative perceptions surrounding darker skin colors were still alive, making the position of Black people an ambivalent one.

Although they are not many, there are some instances in the early *an-an* in which the body of foreign female models is juxtaposed to that of “Japanese-looking” men. The fashion shoot “Anti Bell Bottom” (1971-10-5, 11-17) is one of these. Diametrically opposed to the aforementioned “Life with him” fashion shoot, they represent the purely sexual one-night encounter between a white woman and a “Japanese-looking” man. The pictures follow a narrative sequence: the “cover” picture introduces us to the two main characters, the man standing next to the woman who is sitting and smoking a cigarette (Fig.7). In the next scene, we see her walking among a group of “Japanese-looking” men, who look at her while laughing. We turn the pages again to see her seemingly going out of a room, her clothes slightly open, leaving him lying on the bed naked in the background: the fact that he is asleep and lying on his belly makes him look particularly vulnerable. In the next frame, we see her leaving the room through the window (Fig.8).

We can easily read these pictures as symbolizing emasculation. The woman is taller than most of the men and has a stern expression on her face throughout the whole photoshoot - these visual connotations, together with the image of the man lying naked on (his?) bed, imply that she is stronger and perhaps more “masculine” than they are.

This article’s text is surprisingly political. It opens with a reference to the fact that it has been 26 years after Japan lost Second World War.

Inundating the country as if it were a tsunami, the American army left “the brilliant culture of freedom”, chewing gums and the *konketsuji*. Yesterday’s enemy is today’s friend. The war is now over. The young generations flap the sleeves of their jeans and live fashionably. However, what is the unbearable sense of humiliation that comes with wearing slim pants? I, who do not know the war, confuse the dangerousness and the sense of shame of the back streets that I have been walking for 26 years... Come to think of it, when thinking of this sense of shame one cannot avoid becoming conscious of colonized Japan and its place in the world in these 26 years (1971-10-5, 14).

It can be inferred by the references to “mixed race” Japanese – here narrativized as the children that the ‘winners’ had with the women of the ‘losers’ – that this short text represents the feelings of inferiority and emasculation that have followed the end of the war. The “I” is himself a young person who has no memories of that time period: yet these feelings of frustration and impotence have been somehow transmitted to him, and they manifest through the discomfort that “he” feels when wearing tight jeans, the “antithesis” (as seen in the titular ‘anti’) to the then fashionable bell-bottoms. This clothing item, worn by every character that appears in the picture, thus becomes the trigger that evokes the unlived but felt memories of a particular history and its consequences on “his” contemporary society.

Thus, the strong, masculine white woman is an obvious parallel to the “colonizer” of the text, America. This is an unusual, gender-reversed version of a narrative that more commonly focused on either the *pan-pan* or the “mixed race” children that they bore

with their American partners. It is made even more striking by the fact that this narrative is ideologically antithetic to the relations with the “foreign” that had been represented – and that will continue to be represented – on the magazine. It is possible that in a similar way to the previous decade, Japanese narratives of the foreign were split between the idealized (white-centric) cosmopolitan fantasy that was sold mostly to women through means such as fashion and subcultures and the male-dominated discourses that saw Japan as a “colony” of its former war enemy.



### 3.2 *Yuri, Lisa and Vero: the faces of an-an*

#### 3.2.1 Tachikawa Yuri and Akikawa Lisa's three-dimensional characterization

One cannot talk of the early *an-an* without mentioning exclusive models Tachikawa Yuri and Akikawa Lisa. Constantly featured on the covers and in the bigger fashion and travel articles, the two soon became the “faces” of the magazines – their character and lifestyle becoming synonym of the archetypical lifestyle of the *an-an* girl.

The very first article of the very first issue of the magazine introduces us to model Tachikawa Yuri (hereafter, Yuri) on a trip to France and Italy. Yuri is pictured with a wide smile, and her image is accompanied by the subtitle “Nice to meet you, I’m *an-an*’s representative!” (an-an 1970-3-20, 7).

Indeed, Yuri is at the center of the article. In an unusual fashion for magazines of the time, the text could be interpreted to have been written by her: the frequent use of colloquial expressions and onomatopoeias makes the article feel as if it was the travel diary of a young woman. In the pictures, Yuri is seen interacting with her foreign surroundings: Paris’s landscapes and Frenchmen appear in most of the pictures. They function as a frame that makes the model and her clothes stand out even more. While the text can be interpreted as being her travel diary, the same can’t be said for the pictures, which are centered on her figure and thus clearly taken by another person. There is thus a certain imbalance in the perspective of what is seen and what is read that is somehow reminding of monologues in visual media such as movies. This narrative style is a constant of the early *an-an*, especially of those articles where Yuri and Lisa appear as protagonists.

The other “face” of *an-an*, Akikawa Lisa (hereafter, Lisa) is first introduced in the

1970-8-5 issue of the magazine (Fig. 9). The article, aptly titled “*Lisa de gozaimasu*” (I am Lisa) (an-an 1970-8-5, 5-13), is also written from what could be arguably a first-person perspective. Here, the writers use the archaic form “*de gozaimasu*” to convey the model’s words, perhaps mimicking a speaking pattern that she had previously used in a TV commercial. This became, in a way, her trademark – it was later revealed that this was something that she was not necessarily happy about (an-an 1979-5-5, 28).

Unlike Yuri, who was closer to a more conventional kind of beauty, Lisa was considered to be quirky, and perhaps even a bit un-womanlike. Her self-introduction begins with the following words:

I am Lisa. I will introduce myself. For some reasons I get many comical roles, and I became famous because of my cheerful face, however, I am 18 years old. I fall in love. I cry secretly. I have dreams. I am a girl (an-an 1970-8-5, 12).

As a model, Lisa was a one of a kind. She was tall, and overall bigger than the average models – prompting the magazine to propose a more diverse idea of beauty. Her charm came precisely from the lack of “balance” in her proportions and facial features which, according to Koga (2009), had an influence on the emergent *kawaii* aesthetic.

Both Yuri and Lisa were “mixed race”. Yuri had started her modeling career in the 1960s, a time, as we have seen, where it was not at all uncommon for models to be of “mixed race” descent. If one looks closely at how their personal histories are narrated, it is implied that Lisa’s story somewhat overlaps with the “tragic *konketsu*”: she was born in a family of women and lived with her mother and strict grandmother. The 1970-11-5 issue introduces Lisa’s life-story (an-an 1970-11-5, 53-59). At the time of writing, Lisa

is 18 years old – and yet, she states that:

To be honest I live a life that is full of ups and downs. It's not uncommon for me to say things like I am tired of life already, I want to die. (an-an 1970-11-5, 56)

Even this kind of negative talk does not feel heavy. Lisa's comical way of talking creates a light-hearted atmosphere that makes it hard to take these words too seriously. In the world created on the magazine's pages, the model, with her cutesy and unbalanced looks, is supposed to take up a comical *sanmaime* role.

Although she does not go in-depth about what it entails, Lisa had come to understand that living as the daughter of a foreigner was "a teeny tad harder than [living as] a regular girl" (an-an 1970-11-5, 58). Her looks are, of course, the main reason why she was identified as being "the child of a foreigner" and are thus a significant factor in her life troubles. Her looks are the same reason why she is now working as a model. In the article, she hints at having a complicated relationship with her body.

At the same time, Lisa's popularity was undeniable. The article closes with the following paragraph:

Yesterday morning, I took a taxi. The driver said to me: "you look like the girl on the Shiseido commercial. She is rounder than you, though". I was happy. [Taxi driver continues] "What was her name again?" "I have no idea. But don't guys prefer someone like Henmi Mari?" "That's not true. I'd love to get married to that girl in the commercial". I was happy. (an-an 1970-11-5, 59)

Yuri's cultural "mixedness", on the other hand, is introduced right from the beginning. Right from her first appearance, she is said to be "more fluent in English than Japanese, but unable to speak French". Later on, the 1970-10-20 issue has a five-page feature on her life history (an-an 1970-10-20, 23-27). Born in Germany in 1946, Tachikawa Yuri returned to Japan with her mother and her sister Mari when she was 8 years old, in 1954. Unlike other articles that feature Yuri and Lisa, this one is clearly written from what could be considered to be the equivalent a third-person standpoint.

It is implied that Yuri comes from a wealthy family. As soon as she returned to Japan, she started attending Saint Maur International School in Yokohama, a prestigious international school with a history dating back to the Meiji era. Here, she first comes into contact with the modeling industry, as Irie Miki was among her seniors.

Eventually, Yuri herself would be scouted by an acquaintance, and would start working as a model. Through her career she met Kaneko Isamu, then an emerging designer – and so their love story began. Kaneko was closely involved with the production of *an-an*, as he was responsible for designing most of the clothes that appeared in the fashion pages. Their romance was also described as being something that transcended a simple relationship – they were partners in all aspects of life, including the creative sides of their jobs. Yuri's lifestyle and marriage were without a doubt portrayed as something that the readers should aspire to, and there indeed were some readers that admired her for that.

The article also goes into describing the identity struggles that Yuri experienced as a small child:

German children have an almost transparent white skin, green eyes, hair so blonde

that it looks white. Among them, we (Yuri and Mari) looked pitch black. Both our hair and our eyes were dark. We were children from another country. In Japan, my white skin and European-looking eyes also give the impression that I came from another country. Perhaps I might always be a citizen from another world. (an-an 1970-10-20, 25)

This “otherworldliness”, however, was perhaps the most important factor in Yuri’s career as an exclusive model for *an-an*, as it allowed her to cultivate the image of someone who embodies and pursues beauty. She and her husband are portrayed as a couple who lives in their own aestheticized world, one that closely mirrors and perhaps even personifies the aesthetics of the magazine’s pages.

Both Yuri and Lisa are characterized as being far from the average, although it is expressed in very different –even opposing – ways. And yet, they are not totally alien either. Through the diaristic style and the quirky speech patterns seen in the articles they appear in, they are represented as approachable mentors: it is not just their fashion, but their whole lifestyle that the audience can aspire to and imitate.

Yuri and Lisa function as a metaphor for the magazine’s “spirit”. Their “mixed race” looks and their fleshed out, interesting personalities could be interpreted as an embodiment of the editorial mission of *an-an*. Like much of the popular culture of the time, *an-an* was an active participant in the reinterpretation of “western”-inspired lifestyles, but it was striving to do so without losing its creative edge and without being excessively derivative. This delicate balance, mirrored in the tension between “ordinary” and “foreign” that is seen in the figures of Yuri and Lisa, is another way in which the magazine approaches the need to “keep up” with “(Eurocentric) modernity” while still

being grounded and relevant in the social reality of Japan. Perhaps involuntarily, this resulted in the two models being granted the most individuality that had been seen in fashion magazines at the time – they were, as fashion models, represented as more than just mannequins.

### 3.2.2 Vero: observing the foreigners who observe Japan

The same ideological stance can be a fertile ground for a certain kind of orientalist representation that relies on the visual dissonance between the “foreign (often white-western) looking” and the “national”, declined in its more traditional and folkloristic aspects. This particular aesthetic first appeared in a fashion shoot featuring Yuri and Vero, a French model that worked with the magazine in its first year.<sup>33</sup>

Veronique Pasquiat, known to the readers as Vero, was first introduced in the 1970-6-5 issue of *an-an* (*an-an* 1970-6-5, 6-17). This first meeting took place in France: in the article, she is immediately described as a “*mannequin* from Paris”. Her nationality was an important detail – in his book, Akagi recalls how him and Horiuchi had traveled to the country with the intention of finding a French model, and how this wasn’t an easy task since most of the models in Paris were actually foreign (Akagi 2007).

As with Lisa and Yuri’s aforementioned pieces, the text is written from a first-person perspective.

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<sup>33</sup> We will observe later how this representational strategy will eventually develop in the kind of imagery that fueled the *an-non zoku* subculture. Discussing the latter, Nanba notes how although the Discover Japan promotional campaign and the *an-non zoku* subculture explicitly focused on inbound travel, they had a peculiar perspective that resembled the gaze of the foreign (Nanba 2007).

*Ohayo gozaimasu* [Good morning]. I am Vero-*chan*. My real name is Veronique. *Yoroshiku onegaishimasu* [Nice to meet you]. “*Chan*” is a nickname that indicates closeness, right? The wonderful cameraman, Sabu-*chan* (···) taught me this. (an-an 1970-6-5, 6)

She then takes the reader on a trip around her town, Paris, introducing her modeling agency and a series of touristic places. These places were, of course, selected by none other than the editor himself. Akagi’s account of the backstage of this article is a reminder of how Vero’s image was carefully constructed by the magazine’s staff.

The adjective that one finds the most when reading what others say about Vero is “comical” (*sanmaime*) (Akagi 2007). Indeed, hers is far from the conventionally “beautiful”, symmetric faces that one sees in the *Elle* shoots. She has a long face, short hair and gives the same feeling of “imbalance” as Lisa’s features. Her face is also full of freckles – a feature that in Japan has often been considered more of an issue than a virtue. Her unconventional looks are further highlighted in the following issue (1970-6-20, 5-17) where she, after having moved the setting to the south of France, meets another Parisienne model with the same name – and with a more traditional “model look”. Later, Yuri describes her with the following words:

I think that if a panda and a hedgehog married, had a daughter, and she was magically transformed into a human, she would become Vero-*chan*. I wonder if Vero understands animal speak other than English and French. I’m sure she does!! That’s because she has this mysterious, unhuman-like cuteness... (an-an 1970-7-5, 35)

It is precisely because of her quirky looks and strong, off-the-wall character that Vero was the perfect candidate for *an-an*: she well represented the aesthetic of the magazine that, while Eurocentric, prized originality and individuality.

Vero was eventually invited to Japan to work as an exclusive model for a few months. The 1970-7-5 cover (Fig. 10) features Yuri and Vero wearing a monographed t-shirt with the magazine's title, that was meant to be gifted to the readers through a raffle. According to Akagi, many people applied: this was testimony to the girls' popularity (Akagi 2007). He also mentions how young Japanese girls would recognize Vero in the street, and how pleased she was with her fame. In his recollection, he attributes much of her success to her "lovable" and "bright" personality, which in the magazine was expressed both through writing and pictures. Fashion shoots that featured Vero would often see her posing in quirky ways and making funny facial expressions, while the accompanying text usually featured her "comically" incorrect Japanese.

The July 20 issue of the same year opens with Yuri and Vero traveling through Japan together with photographer Tatsuki Saburo (*an-an* 1970-7-20, 4-11). This time around, the destination was Kyoto. Old buildings, temples, traditional Japanese gardens, geishas – although it is a Japanese production, the article has that distinct, orientalist "foreign gaze". Yuri and Vero, in their vividly colored modern clothing, are pictured in ways that make them stand out against the very traditional looking backgrounds. The text also focuses on the oddball interactions between Vero and Yuri.



Kyoto: at the mountain gate of the *Nanzenji*

Tatsuki Saburō: A long time ago Ishikawa Gozaemon used to live in this gate and would say *zekkei kana, zekkei kana* [what beautiful scenery!] while looking down at the whole town of Kyoto. Try doing that.

Yuri: Sabu-chan, who is Ishikawa Gozaemon?

Saburō: A famous thief.

Yuri-Vero: *zekkei kana, zekkei kana*.

Vero: Yuri, what does “*zekkei kana*” mean?

Yuri: It’s too difficult for me. I don’t know. (an-an 1970-7-20, 4)

The comicality of this exchange from page four is based on the (lack of) understanding of Japan and Japanese culture. Tatsuki, the only person who is “fully Japanese”, introduces the landscape where the picture is being taken. The person he mentions, Ishikawa Gozaemon, is a well-known historical figure, and the phrase he mentions (*zekkei kana*, “what beautiful scenery!”) is a relatively easy to understand old Japanese sentence. However, the two girls are unable to follow Tatsuki’s conversation – unwillingly taking up the role of the “*boke*”, the air headed funny man of Japanese *manzai*-style comedy. They then proceed to shout what Tatsuki had asked them to shout, only for Vero to interrupt and ask Yuri the meaning of the words. The reader, upon understanding that neither of the girls understood what it meant, is invited to think something along the lines of “what, you didn’t know?” These exchanges between the two make them endearing to the readers, at the cost of highlighting their “foreignness” and making them look rather silly: it is an image-building strategy that is

sometimes used to the present day with foreign (and “mixed race”) celebrities in Japan.

Yuri, who is fluent in English, acts as an intermediary between Vero and Japan. However, she herself is depicted as being an imperfect guide.

It is implied that the reason for this is Yuri’s “in-between” status: living in Japan but having been educated in foreign institutions, she finds herself in a liminal space of Japanese society. At the same time, her inability of explaining those aspects of Japanese culture that draw the attention of foreigners is something that some of the readers might have shared as well.

Yuri had the most trouble answering when she was asked why in Japanese television they only show people who have a hard look on their face, stare at each other and cry? Yuri doesn’t know either. Somebody please explain.... (an-an 1970-7-20, 9)

Replying to a question such as this necessitates abilities that go beyond just having experienced or understanding life in Japanese society: these kinds of exchanges are a trope of interactions between Japanese and foreigners and are yet another example of the sort of self-reflexivity that the “foreign gaze” incentivizes.

As it often happens with foreigners in Japanese media, Vero’s presence becomes an invite to understand and re-interpret Japanese culture. She voices her opinions in awkward Japanese, that is then translated by the magazine. They are of course influenced by the orientalist understanding of Japan that was predominant in western discourses about the country, which privileges the mystic, the antique, and the traditional. See, for example, her reaction to matcha tea:

*“Oishii, mazui, non”*. This was Vero’s opinion on the matcha that she tried at Hosokawa Bettei. She did a face that looked like a corn cob that had a cold. She said that it is a very complicated and philosophical taste that cannot be expressed in terms of “good” or “bad”. (an-an 1970-7-20, 7)

In his book, Akagi defined this piece as the first “fashionable traveling” article: this genre will later become a staple of the magazine (Akagi 2007). Vero will be substituted by Lisa and Yuri first, and then eventually by unnamed models as the decade goes on. The pictures, too, will shift from the model-centric images of the first issues to photographs that privilege the scenery. These kinds of travel articles, which often featured national destinations, fueled the travel boom among young women of the 1970s, and formed the basis of a whole subculture.

The “*an-non zoku*” (an-non tribe, taken from the initials of *an-an* and *non-no*) was a media-created term that referred to young, female travelers who increasingly traveled for personal leisure. This was a new phenomenon – not only it was rather uncommon for young women to travel by themselves, but their association of traveling and fashion was unprecedented (Nanba 2007). While the traveling always took place inside Japan, Nanba notes how an intense desire for the “west” was a strong motivation in their choices of itinerary: this is very different from the travel-centered, hippie inspired subcultures that preceded the “*an-non zoku*” (Nanba 2007). Even though destinations that had strong ties to Japanese classical culture, such as Kyoto, were among the most popular, they felt similar to the orientalist perspective of western tourists who “cheered at the sight of exotic oriental people and buildings” (Harada 1984, 56). What Nanba calls an “internalized orientalist gaze” (Nanba 2007, 180) was, without a doubt, a

staple presence in the early *an-an*, and would eventually become a leitmotif of the whole cultural atmosphere of the 1970s.

At the same time, these traditional culture-centered sections were balanced with an opposing but complementary image of Japan that we can observe in other articles featuring Vero. Very different from the style of the “travel” section is the black and white article titled “Vero in Tokyo”. Written in the first person, this article reads as a travel diary and is centered on her personal experience as a foreign model for *an-an*. Tokyo is thus constructed not as a place to visit, but as a place where to live and work. The pages are filled with photographers, illustrators, editorial staff and the like. If the presence of Vero in the travel section functioned as an occasion for self-question and self-discovery, the experiences of Vero in Tokyo are like a western stamp of approval for the country’s “modern” lifestyle.

Vero’s presence in the magazine is yet another example of the cosmopolitan drive that *an-an* showcased in its early years. This cosmopolitanism, however, was not free from the political underpinnings of the time, as underlined by the fact that the outsider perspective is most explicitly represented by a white French model who appears to be the bearer of the perspectives of European orientalism.

### 3.3 *Race and the body in the early an-an*

We have previously seen how according to some commentators in the fashion industry, the rise of “mixed race” models such as Irie Miki was tied to the fact that their white-adjacent body proportions were considered to be conventionally more suited to the modeling profession. Ideas about the ideal body were thus interconnected with racialized understandings of physical beauty. How did the discourse surrounding the body evolve in the 1970s, and in particular, how did it manifest itself in the pages of the early *an-an*?

There are two important premises that need to be tackled to understand the relationship that the magazine had with the concept of body image. One is that the early *an-an* was in all effect a cutting-edge publication ahead of the times. As such, there was somewhat of a radical element in its articles – even though its radicalness was often filtered through Eurocentric paradigms. The other is that *an-an* was not aimed to readers who had sewing competence.

In the preceding decades, those magazines that only focused on fashion (and that first fueled the need for professional models) were dressmaking magazines, whose primary target was students of western style sewing schools. Unlike those publications, *an-an*’s editorial staff had no experience in sewing: the magazine was created at a time when a shift in the clothing industry was taking place – that is, the switch from tailoring to ready-made. Ready-made clothing had, in fact, been available from the previous decade, however it was considered to be of inferior quality when compared to tailored clothing (Sakamoto 2019). Hiejima notes how the sales of ready-made clothing overtook tailored clothing during the 1960s (Hiejima 2005). However, writer Miyake Kikuko’s account

shows how this was not perceived to be the case until the mid-1970s (Miyake 1977). Consequently, *an-an* (and the subsequently published rival magazine *non-no*) are often credited with having contributed to the process.

In his article, Hiejima notes how this change – which is a “hard” change related to material production rather than a “soft” change related to the meaning attached to a certain item – has had an impact on the attitudes that people of the time had surrounding the body. The reason being that ready-made clothing forces the consumer to compare their likeness to a “virtual” body, that is, the body of the size sampling created by the JIS system (Hiejima 2005). To demonstrate this, he analyzed some articles of *an-an*, to keep track of the progression of the representation of body image. His analysis shows how in the first years, the magazine had a forward-thinking approach to body image, and how it became more restrictive over time. This section will supplement his analysis by looking at how the body was represented in the Horiuchi years of the magazine, while considering how the “ideal body” constructed in its page was influenced by the choice of employing mostly “mixed race” and/or foreign (white) models.

The first article explicitly dealing with the body was published in the 1970-8-5 issue and was titled “Who cares if you gain weight!” (Fig 11; *an-an* 1970-8-5, 22-25). On the front page, it features a picture of Lisa, whose life experience is used as an example that gaining weight is, in fact, productive. Weighing 56,5 kilos at 170cm, Lisa is more or less considered to be a giant – the article juxtaposes her measurements to a description of Jumbo Jets, and of how they are the most reliable among airplanes. According to the article, the model weighed 7 kilos less when she started working, and she then started gaining weight. “Oddly enough, as the scales went up so did the amount of work [I got]

(…) Jumbo, that is, being big. Perhaps that actually means ‘cute’ (an-an 1970-8-5, 23)”.

The article then provides some contemporary and historical references for this aesthetic. In the present, it has been popularized by the Hippie subculture, while in the past, the plump body was a characteristic of 1920 art. In line with the hippie way of thinking, the article explains how “boys are deeply touched [by this body type]. (…)

Let’s think about it seriously. Sex between a skinny boy and a skinny girl. When the bones clash with each other, they make a chilling sound. And it also hurts… (…)

Loving each other, that means embracing each other!” (an-an 1970-8-5, 24).

As a matter of fact, it looks like an open-minded approach to body weight. However, if we look once again at Lisa’s measurements, we realize that she was slightly under the values considered healthy by the BMI scale – which means she was quite underweight at the time of her debut. What the article is then praising is more so very tall, average weight women – especially those who have curves in the right places, such as singer Henmi Mari and Lisa herself. With the average height being much shorter than 170 centimeters, this was probably a rather unrealistic body standard.

This article is among the ones cited in the “Sayonara *an-an*” (an-an 1979-5-5) issue, where it is noted how the magazine was always on the side of women when it came to body image. This is not completely false – even in later years, *an-an* dedicated a lot of space to discuss the worries that the readers felt towards their bodies. However, writer Miyake Kikuko later stressed how the protagonist of this article, Lisa, had a body shape that was very different from the average Japanese girl: even though her debut made “the life of many thicker girls brighter”, hers was without a doubt a “foreign looking” (*nihonjin-banare shita*) body (an-an 1979-5-5, 28). And indeed, it was precisely “foreign looking” bodies that were subtly presented to be the model to aspire to.

Body size is once again the topic of the 1970-11-5 article, “*An-an* supports short fat women!” (Fig. 12; *an-an* 1970-11-5, 22-27). The definition of these two words, “short” and “fat”, are given in the subtitle that comes immediately after: “155 centimeters, 55 kilos is the ideal body shape of a short and fat woman” (*an-an* 1970-11-5, 24). The pages are filled with the pictures, measurements and words of Japanese women who, according to the magazine staff, fit this description. Some seem to be average women, but among them we can spot figures such as Kuroyanagi Tetsuko’s. Although at times the article seems to stand true to this premise, the text is written in a humorous way that cannot be completely taken seriously. For example, a paragraph on page 25 reports the word of an elderly man from Fiji, who talks about how the meat of chubby female humans is the most delicious of all. The paragraph closes with the following sentence: “Oh, you say that we don’t eat human meat nowadays in Japan? My apologies” (*an-an* 1970-11-5, 25).

The ways in which “bigger”<sup>34</sup> women are to benefit from their size are also either ironic or parsed through a sexual, fetishistic gaze. There is, of course, the matter of sex – “of course, the clashing of bones is the dullerest thing ever, so... short and fat women are the best at sex, this is common knowledge” (*an-an* 1970-11-5, 24). The sexually stimulating effect that the right amount of body fat has on the male psyche is referenced multiple times throughout the article.

Towards the end, the article touches on the fact that the slim, tall model physique is very unrealistic. The average height of a 17-year-old Japanese girl in 1970 is estimated to be between 153 and 155 centimeters, and the average weight is around 51 kilos.

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<sup>34</sup> There is only one woman that would be considered fat by today’s standards.



Commenting on the ideal body standards of the time, the text says: “If you think that a smart physique is your height minus 110 and that you have to be eight heads tall, you’re going to make the Ministry of Labor angry!” (an-an 1970-11-5, 26). It then goes on by explaining how finding beauty in a slim body is something that only began from ten to twenty years before (an-an 1970-11-5, 27) and the dangerous consequences of using drugs and supplements to lose weight. These arguments are commonly found in articles that position themselves against diet culture. However, in a context that constantly praises those same unrealistic proportions – looking at Vero and Yuri’s body types, one quickly realizes that *an-an* isn’t an exception either – these statements might function as a double-edged sword, insofar they might provide someone with the knowledge to try out a dangerous diet that they did not know of. The writer seems to be aware of this fact, as it refuses to provide the name of the medicine that is considered most effective to lose weight.

Another text tackles the same subject in the same issue: the article “short, fat and happy” (an-an 1970-11-5, 10-15). This article is more serious in tone than the aforementioned one. Illustrated by the pictures of young actress Tasaka Miyako, it starts by questioning the dominant beauty standards of the time and the privilege that follows:

From a certain point onwards, being beautiful meant having a beautiful nose and eyes, a small waist, long straight legs, this is the accepted convention created by God-knows who———. Men think that if you’re not beautiful, you’re not allowed to cry a single tear. (….) Short and fat people!! They work hard with a straight face when they are suffering so much that they could die. (an-an 1970-11-5,10)

This juxtaposition between “beautiful women”, with their beautiful eyes and nose (implied, but not explicitly said to be big doe-like eyes and a tall nose bridge) and “short, fat women” acts as a hook for the emotional involvement of the reader, who, in the conventional reading of the article, is supposed to share this sentiment. The article goes on by praising the “short, fat” type, by saying that:

(…) However, to tell the truth… They are considerate, kind and warm – short and fat people are the best!! They understand people’s hearts the best! They’re marshmallows, the belly of a raccoon, *daigakuimo*, a mother’s breasts, rice with *umeboshi*. They are the most charming in the world. Ah, I am so happy to have been born short and fat! (an-an 1970-11-5, 10)

In a similar fashion to the previously mentioned discourses about sexuality, the “short and fat” woman is appreciated in virtue of those characteristics traditionally associated with the tender and the familiar. The juxtaposition between “short and fat” and “beautiful” women reproduces the mother-whore dichotomy that often appears in stereotypical representations of the feminine.

The article then proceeds to identify the reasons why “short and fat” women are undervalued.

O designers, why don’t you let us wear them. Those dresses with lace and ribbon decorations, those crispy georgette midi dresses, those safari suits with a lot of pockets, like the ones that men wear… Why do you say that they don’t look good on us. You only make us wear jumpsuits and jumpers, you’re old fashioned!

O photographers. Why can't we stand still looking down and wistful? It is weird if we just laugh with our mouth open, make a funny face, put your legs up, jump. Why won't you show our emotions in pictures? I can't understand. (an-an 1970-11-5, 12)

While both photographers and designers do play a big role in defining the ideal body type, the article conveniently glosses over the role of media. Interestingly, not all the pictures that appear in this article are, as the text appears to demand, photographs of a sullen and elegant Tasaka Miyako. On the contrary, the actress is smiling, moving around, doing weird faces in three out of five. Looks like the masters are set in their ways, after all.

The last page is a self-introduction written by Tasaka herself. She talks about her career, her hobbies, her body. Here, Tasaka reveals her size: she weighs 41 kilos at 153 centimeters. Although she herself will recall in the *Sayonara an-an* issue that this was the period when she weighed the most in her life, one can clearly see how her measurements fit the aforementioned formula to calculate a slender body – one's height minus 110 centimeters.

Once again, the magazine proves to be quite ambivalent – it is progressive as it tries to embrace a body-type that is quite far from the beauty standard, but it is not consistent in its advocacy, privileging white-adjacent bodies such as Lisa or bodies that on a second glance, are only partially distant from the ideal – such as Tasaka's, who is short but not fat.

Let's look at another part of the body that is cause of many woes among young women –breasts. In multiple occasions, the readers are led to see European sizing as the standard of beauty. As early as in the second issue (an-an 1970-4-5), we are introduced

to a photograph that shows how to measure the “ideal breast proportions” using a technique that was apparently developed by a Frenchman. The paragraph closes with the following quote:

Of course, this is the French beauty standard, so you shouldn’t be disappointed even if your size doesn’t match. Still, why don’t you try while looking at the mirror? (an-an 1970-4-5, 41)

The text shows a certain degree of self-awareness, as it explains how, in the end, these metrics are relative since the measurements are taken on a foreign (and thus, presumably “racially different” body). However, instead of creating another standard, or better yet explaining the relativity of every kind of standardized metric that human society could conceive, they push the reader to internalize this “French beauty ideal” by inviting them to try for themselves.

Elsewhere, we are shown Yuri gasping at Vero’s size, and feeling shy to be photographed alongside her, as she felt her breasts to be considerably smaller (an-an 1970-7-20, 7). Yuri is, of course, already “foreign looking” – yet her German ancestry wasn’t enough to shield her from the complexes that Eurocentric standards of beauty had a hand in creating.

Another radically progressive element that *an-an* incorporated was the representation of the naked body. In line with some of the major themes of the hippie culture of the time, the magazine hosted a photography series by Tatsuki Yoshihiro titled “Family Nude”. As the title suggests, the series was made up by two family pictures – in the first all the members would be wearing clothes, while in the second they would all be naked. The

pictures could be read as being both an ode to the human form as well as an attempt to rehabilitate (and perhaps to liberate) the naked body. The poses in the pictures were, in fact, the exact opposite of the sexualizing nude: they mirrored the clothed family picture, with some adjustments so that the littlest number of private parts would be exposed. This meant that the figures would not necessarily be shown in their most flattering shape: all the bodies shown in the family nudes were those of normal people. The similarity with the clothed picture also contributes to demonstrating that the picture is indeed worthy of being considered a family picture – even with the presence of the scandalous element of nakedness.

The 1970-10-20 article titled “My *omiai* picture – I am George” (Fig 13; an-an 1970-10-20, 54-55) also featured the nude picture of a young man – this time presented as a matchmaking picture. The titular George is pictured sitting on a throne-like antique chair, holding a bouquet of flowers on his legs. He stares directly at the camera and has a stern expression: it would indeed look like a typical matchmaking picture if not for the subject (a handsome “mixed race” man that could have easily been a model) and the nakedness. The latter creates a shocking effect that is in sharp contrast with the dignified, serious image that matchmaking pictures are supposed to convey.

The following page introduces us to George. He was raised in the coastal town of Atami, likes yachts and cars, is quiet, tall, slim. The pictures on the side show him smiling, eating, making quirky faces: quite the opposite from the stiff, serious-looking picture on the right. George is by all means the ideal matchmaking candidate, introducing the readers to a new form of “ideal” matchmaking. According to the text, “those who get worked up [over the fact that he is naked] are lagging behind”. The naked figure is “the way in which humans are born”, and because of that, it is beautiful.

It is worthy of being used as a matchmaking picture, which at the time, was arguably the single most influential picture in a woman's life.

Unlike the aforementioned family nudes, George's picture is not completely devoid of sexualization. He is, of course, being presented as someone who should be seen as a potential partner, and although the article stresses how natural the naked body is, it is clearly also answering to the readers' desire to see an attractive young man. And yet again, a "mixed race" person was chosen to represent physical beauty.

There is thus a tension, in the early *an-an*, between progressive, liberatory body-image ideals and the impossible challenge to imitate the Eurocentric beauty standard.

### 3.4 Conclusion

From the numerous representations of foreigners and the geographical foreign, we can understand that the early *an-an* had a marked cosmopolitan perspective (in its most Eurocentric understanding). The cosmopolitanism of the early *an-an* is mainly constructed through the representation of bodies perceived as “foreign”. White and “mixed race” Japanese bodies are by far the most represented. The majority of white foreigners are represented as having a strong orientalist fascination for Japan, while some of them are shown to have problems adjusting because of linguistic or cultural barriers.

The “mixed race” Japanese who appear in the magazines are almost exclusively either models or musicians. “Mixed race” *tarento* had been a staple of Japanese show business since the previous decade, and the trend was still going on strong. The “mixed race” Japanese who appear in the magazine as models are for the most part of white descent: the most egregious examples are models Tachikawa Yuri and Akikawa Lisa. Generally speaking, “mixed race” Japanese of white descent are represented as having some degree of “closeness”: they are often portrayed as someone with whom the readers could relate to, but they were at the same time distant enough to be objects of admiration. This “closeness” was generally communicated through their words or actions, while the “distance” was conveyed by their looks, as one of the prerequisites for their job as models was to possess a physical appearance that is out-of-the norm. There is, of course, no causal relationship between ethnicity and beauty: however, it is not difficult to imagine that the skewed exposure to “beautiful mixed race people” in the media might have created this peculiar image of the “mixed” Japanese that persists until now.

Musician Yamanaka Joe is the only “mixed race” Japanese of Black descent that is seen

on the early *an-an*'s pages. His representation feels quite different from that of the white-descent models that we have seen earlier: it is much more fetishistic and stereotyped. Hippie culture was a big keyword in the early seventies, and the magazine itself showed a huge fascination towards the subculture. It is, however, the only framework through which Black bodies were represented: this is also explicitly mentioned in the text that accompanies Yamanaka's photoshoots.

The early *an-an* was considered to be a cutting-edge publication. Through its lavishly designed pages, it envisioned a cosmopolitan cultural sphere with no interruptions between Japan and the (European) "West". After the ordeals of the Olympics (1965) and the Osaka expo (1970), the country was no longer isolated. At the same time, this perspective ushered a re-evaluation of "Japanese tradition" of markedly foreign influence. The magazine's cosmopolitanism was embodied by the two exclusive models: Yuri and Lisa. The two, both "mixed race", represent two opposite types of girlhood. Nevertheless, they have in common the fact that they are unique. There is a racialized element to this uniqueness, which is also built upon their markedly "different" phenotypical characteristics. Through the appearance of Lisa in particular, the magazine was also a proponent of standards of beauty that privileged rounder and bigger shapes. However, the radicalness of this body image can be put into question: not only it was often impossible to obtain for the readers, but text and visuals were often in contradiction.

The avant-garde bent of the early *an-an* gradually disappeared after 1972. However, the magazine continued to be influential for the rest of the decade. We will see how discourses about the body and race appeared in the magazine's pages in the following chapter.



## 4 Japan's developing fashion industry in the 1970s

This chapter will follow the shifts in the representation of the body in the 1970s, focusing on the shifting position of the “mixed race” body, the racialization of the “Japanese-looking” body and the various representations of the “foreigner-looking” body.

Hidaka (2022) notes how the 1970s have been overshadowed in the studies of Japanese contemporary history. This is because of their position in-between the 1960s and the 1980s: these two decades have been the subject of numerous books as they are often considered historical turning points.

The scholar, however, stresses how this decade is actually composed of a complex mixture of elements that are associated with the preceding and following periods. He notes how for example, events tied to strong political beliefs continued happening after the 1960s – often described as a period of intense political activity among the general population – and how the 1970s harbored the seeds of the consumeristic mentality that is more strongly associated with the following decade (Hidaka 2022).

The signs of this complexity are visible in the intersections between race and media representations. The advancement of consumerism is seen in the emergence of the fashion magazine proper, with the beginnings of *non-no* (1971) and the end of *an-an*'s high-brow days. This, in turn, led to a standardization in the representation of the body: the subversive aesthetics that might at time have appeared in the first two years of the magazine's history were now nowhere to be found. The role of the model also backtracked into that of the mannequin. A clear division, often but not always carried

along racial lines, was established between the bodies that were to be considered relatable versus those who were to be seen as objects of admiration.

The first issue of Shūeisha's *non-no* appeared on bookshelves on May 25, 1971. It had been approximately a year since *an-an* had first been published: this caught Heibonsha off guard, who had estimated that competitors wouldn't have easily appeared for a year of two (Akagi 2007). The two companies were long-standing rivals: even prior to the creation of these fashion magazines, they published various media competing for the same audience (Nanba 2009; Akagi 2007). Akagi recalls how after roughly a year and a half of having started to work on the conception of *an-an*, he received word of how "executive-level editors [at Shūeisha] were (...) analyzing *an-an* page by page" (Akagi 2007, 205).

As the "cuter, easier to understand version" (Nanba 2009, 49) of *an-an*, *non-no* has for the most part been the better seller of the two rivals. Despite the similarities, the two magazines managed to remain distinct enough to have dedicated fanbases. Even after the change of direction, *an-an* somewhat maintained a more high-brow perspective on fashion, dedicating many of its articles on reporting about foreign fashion and lifestyle. *Non-no*, on the other hand, seems to have been more conscious of the male gaze. Not only this was reflected in their fashion articles that would at times feature the opinion of men, but it also published more articles dedicated to themes such as love, romance and marriage.

At the same time, the 1970s was not yet a decade devoid of ideology, where self-interest and escapism into the 'virtual' took center stage. The strong ideological backbone of some of the pioneers of consumerism-driven industries such as advertising and fashion had an influence on their use and representation of racialized bodies

throughout their work. Creative director Ishioka Eiko's use of "foreign looking" models in advertisements was an answer to her questioning of societal ideals about womanhood. In fashion, the Japanese designers active in Europe solidified their position through the re-evaluation of the non-"western", in turn theorizing the racialization of the "Japanese".

The following section will also discuss the relationship between racialization and the emotional positionality of the bodies that appeared in fashion magazines and advertisements, in order to shed some light on their role in the creation of the boundaries between "self" and "other, "majority" and "minority".

#### 4.1 1973 to 1980: the racialized body between “akogare” and “relatability”

Fashion was the topic that took the most space in the pages of both *an-an* and *non-no*. In the 1970s, it was approached from a different perspective than the detailed and specialistic approach taken by the dressmaking magazines of the 1960s: with the advent of ready-made fashion, the focus shifted to the mixing and matching of clothing, as well as on finding the right piece of clothing for one’s own body shape, rather than creating the perfect dress based on one’s own measurements. This section will focus on the representation of the bodies that are shown in the magazines’ pages to guide the readers in their consumption activities.

Models were still required to be good mannequins: however, their perception slightly changed. The model’s image had to be synonym with beauty: in the words of an agency owner,

[The model] has to be beautiful. In many different ways. [...] In numbers, this means being 168-170 centimeters tall, and weighing 50 kilos. You need to have long legs and a body that makes clothing look good. (non-no 1977-10-5, 181)

With “fashion” itself becoming more popularized and more readily available, gone is the gap between society’s and the fashion industry’s perceptions of what is beautiful. Considering that foreigner (white) models steadily increased throughout the decade, it is likely that a correlation between whiteness and beauty was either established or reinforced. This does not mean, however, that whiteness was the sole prerequisite for beauty: the same period saw an increase of Asian-looking models (especially on the

pages of *non-no*),<sup>35</sup> as well as the emergence of an avant-garde fashion trend based on “traditional” Japanese and Chinese aesthetics.

In the same article, the agency owner defines models as “materials (*sozai*) that fit [the required] image” (non-no 1977-10-5, 181). This objectifying metaphor is quite revealing. Fashion articles had indeed reverted to the more de-personalizing, catalogue-like format seen in the publications of the 1960s. The “talking models” with strong and quirky personalities of the early *an-an* had completely disappeared by the middle of the decade.

#### 4.1.1 *Akogare* and relatability

The early *an-an*’s articles constructed their models in a way in which the readers could grasp their personality. One of the effects that this representation strategy had was to make Yuri and Lisa – two women with highly unconventional looks and lifestyles for the time – look more “human”: they were, to some degree, relatable.

After 1972, fashion articles completely dropped all their narrative components, featuring on the figure of the model and the clothing alone. This format is de-personalizing by nature: still, there are other strategies that were employed to make an article relatable.

First, we have articles that while focusing on fashion, still give us insight on the thoughts of the models. These often go no further than being opinions on the item

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<sup>35</sup> *Non-no* started recruiting models on the magazine’s pages in the mid-1970s. These advertisements generally featured pictures of the non-mixed models, thus extending their invitations to the readers who might not have identified their looks to be similar to those of the models of foreign origin.

being promoted. Nevertheless, the model is represented as someone who makes authoritative choices, and thus has agency. This contributes to some degree of humanization.

Secondly, some articles cast the models in situations that the readers could put themselves into. This is the case of articles where the models appear to represent a different type of body shape and to demonstrate how each piece of clothing is supposed to be worn accordingly.

Lastly, perhaps the easiest way to create a relatable article is to cast amateur models. The 1970s saw a rise in street photography and the birth of the “*dokusha model*” (reader model, hereafter without parentheses). Although *dokusha* models will become more prominent the following decade, they did appear in both *an-an* and *non-no*<sup>36</sup> in this decade.

On the contrary, the more the article focuses on the models’ physical likeness, the more they are likely to be cast to represent an idealized image. Readers are then likely to see them as “distant” and as “images” – the perception they might have of models as a “real person” starts to fade. *Akogare* demands that the object of one’s admiration is without flaws, and that they align completely with the idealized image of them that we create. The closer we are to a person, and thus the more “human” sides of them we are allowed to see, the harder it is to feel this particular emotion. Thus, there is a correlation between *akogare* and emotional distance – the opposite of relatability.

As we have also seen in the previous chapter, there seems to be a correlation between

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<sup>36</sup> Models recruited from the streets appeared more often in *an-an*. *Non-no*, rather than featuring *dokumo* once and then moving on to the next person, *recruited* models with lasting contracts from its readership.

racialization and relatability. “Japanese-looking” Asian models are more easily cast in the relatable position, while “foreign looking” (white) models most often appear to elicit admiration. However, whereas in the 1960s “mixed” models appeared more so in *akogare* imagery, starting from the 1970s they begin to appear in both positions.

It must be noted, however, that this relationship is in no way causative: the relatability (or lack thereof) of a model is not determined by their race. Indeed, there are instances in which “foreign looking” (white) people are represented with higher degrees of relatability. Conversely, Japanese models such as Yamaguchi Sayoko built their career on their ethereality and difference from the average Japanese person whilst maintaining a strong connection with a constructed image of “Japaneseness” and tradition.

In the following section we will see how this correlation presents itself in the pages of *an-an* and *non-no*.

#### 4.1.2 *Akogare*, emotional distance and the foreigner body in fashion articles

*An-an* continued its collaboration with the French magazine *Elle* throughout the 1970s. We have previously seen how popular with the public these pages had been in the early days of the magazine. After 1971, the contents of the letters from the readers changed drastically: the number of opinions dedicated to discussing the format of the magazine plummeted, and it is impossible to confirm whether there had been any changes in the insert’s popularity.

What did not change, however, was the format of these pages: they remained the same insofar they were the “catalogue-like” kind of articles that we are used to see in fashion publications. They only featured information on the clothing, and nothing on the models who wore them. While the Japanese fashion pages generally reported the models’

names<sup>37</sup>, this did not happen in the *Elle* pages – the models appeared purely as mannequins to be gazed at. Another aspect that went unchanged was the race of the models employed, who were for the utmost majority white. It is important to note, however, that the *Elle* articles were a small portion of the overall fashion articles published in the magazine, most of whom were produced in house and employed, according to the issue and topic, “Japanese-looking”, “mixed race” and white models.

*Non-no* also featured numerous articles illustrated by white models only. However, they were not fashion articles, but rather lifestyle essays. The magazine’s fashion pages featured all three ethnicities, with a preference for “mixed race” and, from the middle of the decade onwards, “Japanese-looking” models. Still, white and “mixed race” models had more chances to appear in *akogare* positions: most notably, they appear as the normative example in articles that heavily featured street photography.

Compared to *an-an*, *non-no* relied much more on reporting the fashion choices of the people in the streets. It was not uncommon to see articles on fashion, makeup and hairstyles featuring street snaps. The magazine did not, however, limit itself to documentation: the pictures were accompanied by the staff’s comments and at times from styling examples recreated in the studio. These would be featured inside layout frames that also contained textual information about the styling (*non-no* 1976-1-20, 33-43), in separate pages that featured detailed fashion advice (*non-no* 1974-8-5, 71-77), or in the center of the pages’ layout (Fig.1; *non-no* 1975-1-20, 161-166; *non-no* 1977-8-5, 45-51): in other words, they were always placed in positions that would catch the eye of the reader, establishing their place at the top of the visual hierarchy. They can be

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<sup>37</sup> Often, in the case of foreign models, only the first name was reported.



considered the “universal rule” juxtaposed to its particular applications.

As a general rule, fashion editorials provide a very abstract representation of the models they feature, as they contain little information about them as people. The visual register of the images is also quite abstract, as the models aren’t shown in the middle of doing something: they pose in unnatural positions, either contrived or stiff, whose primary function is to demonstrate the qualities of the clothing. When compared to their neighboring street snaps, these visual examples have another layer of abstraction: being studio pictures, they feature flat backgrounds, removing the human shape from its most natural settings. The more abstract a picture is, the more we perceive it as being detached from reality (Machin & Mayr 2012) – thus, the harder it is to find it relatable.

As for the street snaps, they mostly featured Asian-looking women, although you could sometimes spot the occasional foreigner. Although the magazine does not share much in terms of their personal information, they convey much better a three-dimensional feeling of reality because of the contrast with the studio pictures.

#### 4.1.3 The other side of the spectrum: relatable bodies

If the *Elle* articles represent the pinnacle of the *akogare* position, their opposite would be represented by “makeover” articles, in which regular people morph into beautiful women thanks to the expert hands of the magazine’s staff. The process of change is an integral part of the article, which has the double effect of both showing the efficacy of choosing the right fashion and makeup styles as well as explaining its uses. By presenting the “right” way to mix and match clothing, these articles make fashion more approachable to the readers, who do not necessarily possess expertise – this, in turn, stimulates in them the desire to consume.

For this strategy to work the readers must recognize themselves in the contents of the article to some extent. Thus, it is important to feature women that are relatable.

The 1974 article aptly titled “Another me” features young women allegedly recruited from the streets (an-an 1974-1-5, 22-33). The goals of the feature are stated both in the subtitle (“How much can you change through coordination?”) and in the introduction.

There are many young ladies who might be reading *an-an* walking in the streets. Whenever we pass by them, we think things like “ah, how nice”, “if the skirt was a bit longer”. It’s something like a habit of the fashion director. This time around, we tried putting into practice these thoughts. We recruited young ladies that we did not know and dressed them up (an-an 1974-1-5, 22).

Even before seeing who the women appearing in the article are, the readers are told how to categorize them. They are not fashion experts nor models, but regular people found in the streets. While there is no direct indication that they might be readers, they are described as “young ladies that might be reading *an-an*”: in other words, they are cast as representatives of the readers themselves. Lastly, the final sentence uses a word that is mostly associated with dress-up dolls, highlighting both the playfulness of the project and the power relation between staff and “models” (and by extension, the readers). It is the former who are the detainers of the knowledge necessary to effectively enjoy fashion.

The article then introduces to the four women: two of them are office workers, one is a high schooler, and one is only identified by her wealthy background. Other than their names and background, the readers are provided their sizes – another helpful piece of

information for comparison. “Before” and “after” pictures are also shown in order to appreciate the makeover process. The “before” pictures are mostly taken outside, in places that represent the women’s background. For example, the high-school girl is shown in uniform on her school grounds, while one of the office workers is shown at her work desk with a telephone in hand. The “after” pictures, on the other hand, are either shot in a studio or on location. The latter are often fashionable, western-style cafes or exteriors. The text then goes in depth to explain the women’s “good” and “bad” points, focusing on what can be improved and how.

The same structure is repeated in the second half, this time focusing on hairstyling and make-up. Though of course each of the girls is styled according to their own features, through the descriptions the readers learn to pick up what should be avoided, as well which faces are “easy” and “difficult” when it comes to make-up. The long-standing notions that mono-lids are “difficult” and make one’s face look “heavy”, and on the contrary, the idea that a “three-dimensional face” with a prominent nose bridge is “easy” and suitable for make-up are left unchanged (an-an 1974-1-5, 28-33).

The four girls are all conforming to the stereotypical image of the Japanese. They are “Japanese-looking” with no visible features that would be associated with “mixed race”, and their names are “standard” Japanese names. Thus, they have no racial or ethnic markers that would signal them to be any different than what is imagined to be “Japanese” by the prevalent monoethnic national discourses.

Similarly identified are the seven girls who appear in another article from 1974, titled “A dress that looks good on you” (an-an 1974-4-5, 4-7). Wearing fashionable-flower patterned dresses, they too were recruited from the streets of Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe. This time around, the process behind the pictures is not shown, but we

understand that they are amateurs being styled by the magazine's staff because of the subtitle:

The friends that we found in Tokyo – Kyoto – Osaka – Kobe are our models (an-an 1974-4-5, 4-5).

As well as the introduction:

People who are a bit fat, people with o-shaped legs, short people and tall people, we asked many different *an-an* readers that we met in many different towns to try on the dresses in vogue this spring (an-an 1974-4-5, 5).

Both texts position the seven women in a way that they are perceived as being close to the reader. The subtitle uses the word “fellow” (*nakama*), while the introduction clarifies what this fellowship entails – they also are “*an-an* readers”, and this is supposed to reduce the emotional distance between them and the readers. In other words, it is presented as a factor that makes identification possible, as if they were saying to the reader: “see, they’re just like you!” The variety of body types that these women represent – described both in the introduction and in each girl’s personal profile, where we can find information about their education, upbringing and most importantly, their three sizes – also functions as a way to engage in comparisons. The readers are presented with multiple possibilities of identification, and yet at the same time they feel very standardized. There are no overtly fat people, nor people with significant ethnic markers or backgrounds. Some of the girls are reportedly of short height, but this is not

easy to understand because they are mostly framed individually. While presenting the readers with a series of images that are believed to be easy to identify with the article reinforces the normative idea of monoethnic “Japaneseness”.

Similar “makeover” articles featuring the magazine’s readers also appear in *non-no*. Structurally they are quite similar, using catchphrases that reduce the distance between the audience and the amateur models such as:

(…) Why don’t you take inspiration from the metamorphosis of these 10 readers, and try to transform yourself? (non-no 1975-1-20, 153)

All of the makeover articles that have been found in *non-no* focus on hair and make-up rather than fashion styling. Furthermore, while the *an-an* pieces do not present a definite reason for the change – implying that fashion is to be enjoyed hedonistically for its own sake – the *non-no* articles invite the readers to change their image in occasion of their coming-of-age ceremony (non-no 1975-1-20, 153-157 , non-no 1978-1-20, 71-80) or to overcome one’s insecurities (non-no 1979-10-20, 73-82). The makeover is thus ultimately a response to the public eye.

The 1975-1-20 article titled “20 years, a chance to become more feminine” is structurally quite similar to the *an-an* articles seen above. The 10 amateur models are presented with their name, occupation and date of birth. We are then shown a small “before” picture and two “after” pictures of different sizing – more emphasis is put on the close-up showing the new hairstyle. Interestingly, each picture is accompanied by two comments: one from the girl, and one from the hairdresser that handled her hair. The latter describes in detail the reasoning behind the haircut, using explanations that

are seemingly logical in nature (such as, tying a certain facial feature to a certain kind of styling). The former is yet another device that reduces the distance between reader and model: it invites the audience to try to change their personal style by positively commenting the experience, making the reader think that maybe it would be pleasant for them as well.

The 1978-1-20 article has a very similar title, “The 20 year old’s metamorphosis”, and premise: however, instead of featuring many amateur models, it goes deeply into detailing the changes of two women only. As usual, we have “before” and “after” pictures, as well as their name and personal information. This time, they are treated more akin regular models: we are shown multiple patterns of clothes and make-up, one according to each different social situation. The text is written in the third person, and it only focuses on describing the direction of the stylists so that the readers can better understand the process behind it – in other words, no space is granted to the reader-models’ own words.

Indeed, the only reason why we are to understand that they are not professional models is through some words that appear in the introductory text of the first page: the keywords “OL”<sup>38</sup> and “student”, as well as the phrase “readers who turned 20” (non-no 1978-1-20, 71). The relatability of the two girls is completely dependent on their social standing, which, in a way, gives hope to the readers that they too might be in their position someday – whether that means going through the “ugly duckling” transformation or having the chance to be photographed and featured in a magazine.

A similar approach is taken by the article titled “Your face, it is actually beautiful”

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<sup>38</sup> Acronym of the word “office lady”, a kind of salaried woman worker.

(non-no 1979-10-20, 73-82). Seven readers, each one a “representative of a facial shape” (non-no 1979-10-20, 73), appear in “before” and “after” pictures that show the magazine staff’s make-up direction. Here, the objective is to “try to respond to each person’s doubts through hair and make-up techniques”: these are used as tools to overcome one’s insecurities. Although it is likely that make-up had already been used with such an objective in mind, it is the first time in the research sample that this practice has been explicitly addressed in a fashion magazine: the article was part of a larger feature that aimed to help the readers get over their feelings of inferiority. This well-meaning objective also demonstrates how the notion of an “ideal face” had by then been completely internalized, as only by envisioning a perfect appearance one could be conscious of their perceived imperfections. Indeed, the “perfect face” appears as the illustration of the front page of the article. Drawn as a sort of “Vitruvian man”, a Caucasian-looking face with big eyes, double eyelids, a small nose and petite lips graces the center of the page, surrounded by small pictures of some of the girls who appear in the following pages.

The article then proceeds to explain at length the process of the makeover. As usual, we get to read the names and some personal information of the amateur models, “before” and “after” pictures and the detailed steps of the make-up routine, both in visual and textual form. These are completed by an illustration that serves to further explain the important points of the make-up.

As was the case in *an-an*, all the women who appear in *non-no*’s makeover articles are believed to be belonging to the Japanese majority – there are no visual nor textual markers that may make the reader assume otherwise. In creating an image of relatability, the magazine is thus also subtly reinforcing the dominant stereotype of Japanese mono-

ethnicity.

The link between mono-ethnicity and relatability is made even more explicit in the advertisements aimed at recruiting models for the magazine. Although in the first two examples of such advertising (non-no 1974-8-20; non-no 1974-10-5) we see the appearance of “mixed race” model Carol Suzuki, she eventually disappears, making space for her juniors who had actually been discovered through such means. All of them were “Japanese-looking” and there was no mention of foreign or minoritarian descent.

The disappearance of Carol Suzuki also coincided with the increased usage of catchphrases relying on relatability. In one instance, the model Inoue Yumi’s charm is described as being her “relatable ordinariness” (non-no 1978-8-20). Another advertisement features the same Inoue explaining how:

There’s no need to be an experienced model from the beginning: on the opposite, I have been working with the intention of being fresh and easy-to-approach, a representative of the readers (non-no 1977-8-5, 126).

Yet another article strongly invites the reader not to feel as if they’re not up to the task:

Before you think “as if I could...”, try to apply. [The staff of] *non-no* will discover your potential and talent and will raise you to be a fresh new model. (non-no 1978-8-5, 126)

Surely enough, being a *non-no* model meant appearing in the magazines in roles that are positioned as rather distant from the audience of which these girls were allegedly



once part of. Nevertheless, their looks and their history made it so that they could still become a part of these advertising strategies relying on emotional closeness. It might have been by chance that only majority-presenting people had been chosen as models, yet, in these advertisements the two concepts of “relatability” and “mono-ethnicity” seem to be reinforcing each other.

#### 4.1.4 “Japanese-looking” bodies and relatability in advertisements

The association between the “Japanese-looking” body and relatability extended also to advertisements. We have seen in Chapter 1 how Asian models – employed to create the normative image of the average Japanese – were used mostly in advertisements of products related to daily life activities, such as food and beverages<sup>39</sup> and banking services. These commercials often relied on visual and textual imagery that referred to social activities such as friends or family. It was also common for them to address the viewer’s hobbies or future objectives.

Fig. 2, 3 and 4 show three advertisements for the banking services of Heart Bank, Kyōwa Bank, and Tōkai bank respectively. All three feature a medium shot of “Japanese-looking” models, here employed to represent the average “office lady”. All three invite the viewer to entrust their summer bonuses to their services. The first

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<sup>39</sup> With the notable exception of sweets, that sometimes would feature foreign models. The advertisement for “Chelsea” butter candy, for example, featured a white girl of elementary school age. Butter, as a culinary ingredient, had a strong correlation with the (white) west – to the point that “western-looking” people were referred to as “smelling like butter” (*batakusai*). Similarly, one commercial of coffee candy from 1970s shows a Japanese woman playing with a Black child. The ad was quite explicit in its association of the child’s skin color with the color of coffee.

makes a connection between thriftiness and womanhood by saying that “women are naturally thrifty” – and suggesting that bonuses are best kept for future plans. The nature of these “future plans” is more explicitly addressed in the other two advertisements: the Kyōwa bank one refers to international travel, while the Tōkai bank one also mentions marriage. The pictures included in all three advertisements are overall quite relatable: the models are smiling in all three of the pictures, and two out of three of them quite concretely show them holding their bank passbooks. The copy also reads as advice given from an older figure to a younger acquaintance, as it uses exhortative forms such as “how about…” (*ikaga*) or “why don’t you…” (*…shimasen ka*).

In beauty advertisements, “Japanese-looking” models appear very frequently in commercials of personal care products, items such as sanitary pads, deodorants, mouth perfume, skincare products as well as shampoo.<sup>40</sup> Popular brands such as Emeron and Kaō Feather (Fig. 5) generally feature “Japanese-looking” (including “mixed race”, as we will see later) models.

Advertisements for these everyday products are usually of the relatable kind, and they tend to aim to give an image of spontaneity and natural beauty. Unlike *akogare* ads the women represented could be described as girls-next-door: they are more conforming to pre-existing notions of femininity but are also “closer”, insofar that their likelihood can be more easily imitated without extensive research or the help of a professional team.

There are many visual patterns that these relatable advertisements can take. One particularly popular one is, however, a close-up of the model’s face with some natural scenery in the background, as seen in Fig. 5. This shampoo advertisement from Kaō also

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<sup>40</sup> This is consistent with what Kozakai (1996) found in his research about television advertisement, where he used data from the late 1980s.

features other elements that are commonly seen in relatable advertisements: the tone of the copy is rather informal and down-to-earth.

More rarely, the relatability is constructed through the model's actions in the picture and not through the use of familiar, easily liked visual characteristics, such as in Fig. 6. Here, we can see the model trying on a dress in front of the mirror, presumably worried of whether it will suit her or not. The copy, structurally similar to the Kaō advertisement of Fig. 5, is written in easy-to-understand language and invites the consumer to take care of the “invisible” parts of the skin as well – those that we can see barely covered by the dress.

Broadly speaking, the trend of using “Japanese-looking” models in relatable advertisements that employ familiar, everyday imagery continued unchanged from the 1960s. However, that does not mean that the “Japanese-looking” body was only used as a relatable stand-in for the audience. We will see later how innovative brands such as Shiseido started to employ more “Japanese-looking”, non-“mixed race” models in their *akogare* advertisements.

#### 4.1.5 Between relatability and *akogare*

In-between the *akogare* and the relatable fashion articles, there are pieces that have elements of both. One such example are pieces that explain to the readers the know-how behind fashion, sometimes even using scientific-sounding terms and techniques. Since tailoring had almost completely disappeared by the 1970s, many of these articles involved understanding one's own body shapes and the clothes' sizing. These articles were structured as a guide: the reader is meant to understand which category they fall into, so some degree of identification is necessary. However, this does not automatically

imply that everyday people are required to showcase the different variations of body shapes – that might on the contrary make the task harder, since it is possible that there might be more variation in the general population than these models, based on medians and abstraction, provide for. What happens in these cases is that a professional model is used to showcase each category.

The article “Silhouettology to dress well” (an-an 1975-8-20, 5-19) fits neatly into this genre. Written in a scientific-looking style, it is supervised by Hosono Hisashi, a tailor, who is referred in the article as Professor Hosono. Presented as a collection of the results of “his long years of research” (an-an 1975-8-20, 6), the piece introduces six types of silhouettes, each identified by a letter of the alphabet that is supposed to reflect the body shapes. These are first explained theoretically, through illustrations and a piece of text that describes the advantages and disadvantages of each. They are then illustrated through the practical examples of six *an-an* models.

The article is open about its intention of functioning as a guide. The subtitle, addressing directly the reader, reads:

What shape are you? Evaluate your body starkly and calmly, understand completely your weak and strong points!! (an-an 1975-8-2, 6)

This attitude brings back to mind the impartiality associated with the scientific method, reinforcing the “science-like” style of writing and thus giving authority to the contents being introduced.

Although more than half of the models are “Japanese-looking”, there is at least of them

that look “mixed race”.<sup>41</sup> Their inclusion in these articles signals that they could be placed as representatives of a share of the population. Unlike the imagery of the previous decade that saw “mixed race” people cast in roles that were more aligned with the image of the foreign, in the 1970s they started to be included into the imagined category of the “Japanese”.<sup>42</sup>

The idea of a “Japanese body”<sup>43</sup> often appears on the sidelines of these guide-like articles. Among the six body types identified by Hosono, one in particular is identified as being “especially common among the Japanese” (an-an 1975-8-2, 7). However, the question of the “Japanese body” becomes even more pronounced when dealing with the sizing of ready-made clothing, a field in which there had been notable advances but that still faced some troubles with customer satisfaction.

The 1975 article “Researching ‘comfort’” (an-an 1975-10-5, 57-79) seeks to provide a remedy for this problem. Explaining how the sizing of each brand was slightly different, it provided tables and images for the readers to compare them. The text also explains

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<sup>41</sup> In the same way that it is impossible to say whether a person that conforms to the majoritarian image of the Japanese is from an ethnic minority or not without biographical information, it is of course quite hard to establish whether someone has foreign origins or not based on their looks. Unfortunately, the majority of the people who worked as models in this time period did not go on to have careers in media and it is thus hard to find solid information about their biography – this is particularly true for the “mixed-looking” models with katakana names.

<sup>42</sup> With some caveats. Phenotypical differences between “mixed race” people themselves can be quite significant – the more a “mixed race” person conforms to the idealized image of the Japanese, the higher the chances of them being included. Notably excluded were all the “mixed” people of Black descent, whose media presence in fashion became virtually non-existent. “Mixed race” people of Asian descent were also made invisible and assimilated to the Japanese.

<sup>43</sup> As well as gendered notions such as “feminine” and “masculine” body types.

how the JIS standardized size – representing the average “Japanese body” was constantly changing, having been updated for the latest time in March. The acknowledgement that the sizes are constantly changing adds some nuance to the normative idea of the “Japanese body”, although by itself it might not have been perceived as a strong enough argument to put the notion completely under discussion.

Although her face is barely shown throughout the article, “mixed-looking” model Honey Lane is the one wearing the clothes, once again highlighting how “mixed-looking” people were increasingly accepted as representative of the “Japanese body”.

The 1976-4-5 issue of *non-no* also featured an article dealing with the topic of the appropriate clothing for each body shape, and the topic is dealt rather differently from *an-an*. First, the layout is structured in a way that portrays the white models as a normative example, as we have seen in the previous section. The practical examples, each of which is based on a certain kind of “negative” body characteristic, are instead modeled by “Japanese-looking” and “mixed race looking” models. Secondly, instead of using a pseudo-scientific tone, this piece takes an approach based on relatability.

Explaining the front-page picture, which shows “mixed race looking” model Takagi Mari in a bodysuit and information on her three sizes, the introductory text reads:

[This is] *non-no*’s exclusive model Takagi Mari. She’s cheerful and healthy, and she grew up so well that among the models is rather chubby. However, she wears fashionable clothes very well. Are you perhaps thinking “with my body type, I can’t wear fashionable clothes”? What’s important is dressing in a way that fits you. Come on, have faith in yourself. (*non-no* 1976-4-5, 13)。

Right from the start, the copy emphasizes how Takagi, even being a professional model, does not have the “perfect” body – like everybody else, she has imperfections. This rhetoric functions as a hook for relatability: if she too has flaws, there is no reason to think that insecure readers “can’t wear trendy clothes”. The text then continues, repeating the same message:

Even if you don’t have the perfect body, you can wear fashionable clothes well. We have chosen five pieces of clothing that are popular this spring and we’ll explain some techniques to wear them well according to your body shape. (non-no 1976-4-5, 13)

This closing remark mirrors the layout of the article. The following pages are structured by introducing the above-mentioned “ideal body shape” that the readers might not have, illustrated by one of the magazine’s white models. It then shows different styling patterns modeled by professional models according to the kind of self-doubts that the reader might have.

Visually speaking, the two types of images do not differ much. Both the white model and the others are shown in poses that can be said typical of catalogue-like fashion articles. The pictures are taken in the studio, thus there is no visible, realistic background. In both cases, the level of abstraction is very high. However, observers can pick up on the fact that these two images are being juxtaposed – positioned in different, even opposing groups. The white model is always pictured close to the textual description of the clothing in question, and it is placed in a way that contrasts the rest of the pictures. At times these pictures are bigger, with a transparent background and almost overlapping one of the other models. In other cases, they are significantly smaller,

almost hard to notice, with a darker background. The other models (generally four or five per section) are all grouped in the same frame, and their pictures have the same mono-color background. Under each one of the girls there is a definition of a “negative” body type, such as “small people”, “people with long torsos”, and “people with large hips”. As mentioned above, they are all “Japanese-looking” Asian models and “mixed race” models, once again demonstrating how “mixed race” models could assume positions with varying degrees of relatability, at times functioning as an abstract representation of the readers and at times appearing alongside white foreigner models to depict the idealized norm.

Lastly, there is another type of article that hovers in-between relatability and *akogare*: that is, articles where “small celebrities” such as models and stylists introduce their own clothing and preferences. Only one example has come up in the data set used in this research and it was published in 1975. The piece features 11 people usually involved with the magazine describing their fashion choices (an-an 1975-8-5, 21-33). The text is in the first person, which makes the reader feel as if they are being presented with the model’s own thoughts, thus reducing feelings of emotional distance. It is complemented by many pictures, the bulk of which focuses either on tiny details or on capturing the overall feeling of the look – never on making the person stand out. The pictures show the models in action or interacting with other people, thus having lesser degrees of abstraction. All these characteristics make it so that it is not the people themselves who are the focus, but rather their actions, in the guise of their stylistic choices. This in turn gives them much more agency than the average fashion shoot gives to its model. Of the 11 people, three are “mixed race”, and they are all models who regularly appear on *an-an*.



Similar articles are also present in *non-no*. In one case (non-no 1976-1-20), the models' fashion choices are presented after a series of street snaps. Although the title of the section ("Looking at the models' boots" [*moderu no bŭtsu haiken*]) makes it clear that it is a separate part of the article, their pictures are still taken in a street snap fashion. The models are posing in an unrecognizable city setting, making these pictures slightly less abstract than the normative studio pictures featuring white models that we have seen in the above section. Each snap is completed by a textual description of the styling, which makes the readers a little bit more knowledgeable about the models' stylistic choices, and by extension of their personality. The text is written in the third person: both text and pictures can be positioned in-between the larger distance of the normative pictures and the smaller distance of the regular street snaps. In this article, three out of six of the models are "mixed race".

There have also been articles that focused on the personal fashion choices of *non-no*'s models. One piece published in 1978 introduces the readers to "mixed race" model Janet White's "private fashion" (non-no 1978-4-20, 99-101). Although the article is certainly constructed as a regular fashion article, the pictures are taken in a way that seems to convey the reality of Janet's life. For example, on page 100 we see her posing in a studio, and on page 101 we see her at the hairdresser. Other pictures show her engaged in conversation with people that are cut from the screen, in settings such as cafes and bars.

Although the slightly contrived posing and the rather unrealistic props used in some pictures give away the fact that the pictures are media constructions, it is evident that they tried very hard to recreate a natural setting. The text also features quotations, and each picture is captioned by what seems to be a first-person description: these are all

devices used to reduce the emotional distance between what appears on the page and the readers.

There is, however, still enough distance for Janet to be considered someone to aspire to – for starters, her daily job of working as a fashion model, here presented as a banal everyday activity, is something that most of the readers were privy to. She is thus positioned in an in-between position that is both relatable and aspirational.

There is thus a tendency for positioning “mixed race” models together with their “Japanese-looking” colleagues in roles that need some degree of identification and to cast “Japanese-looking” amateurs in articles that prioritize relatability over everything else<sup>44</sup>.

#### 4.1.6 Shifting perceptions of the “mixed race” body

As we have seen in the preceding section, in the 1970s there was a gradual shift in the positionality of the “mixed” body. While in the 1960s it was more strongly used as a symbol of the “west”, “exotic” and “foreign”, in the 1970s we find more “mixed” people in the same categories as their more Asian-looking colleagues. This means that “mixed” looking people start appearing more often in roles that represent the “average Japanese” person.

This can be seen in all levels of advertising: “mixed race” women appear as representatives of the “average” both in high-end *akogare*-style commercials such as

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<sup>44</sup> However, this does not mean that it is an absolute rule: in fact, there is a single “makeover” article present in the data set (an-an 1976-1-5, 121-131) where “mixed race” and white models appear together with amateur, “Japanese-looking” models.

Shiseido's and in more relatable advertisements of everyday body-care products.<sup>45</sup>

One example is the following advertisement (Fig. 7) of Shiseido's make-up line Suprense, from 1975. The campaign consisted of five close-up pictures of different models, each making slightly different facial expressions. All of them have black hair, only black eyeliner on their eyes and red or orange lipstick. Unlike the flashy make-up seen in the advertisements of foreign brands, this look is indeed, what the people of the time might have seen on the faces of the young girls in the city. Media-savvy audiences might have also recognized this format as being similar to a different type of tie-in advertisement campaign of Shiseido's that appeared in those same years in the pages of *non-no*, which focused on the make-up habits of the brand's consumers.<sup>46</sup>

Shimamori Michiko, former editor of the magazine *Kōkoku Hihyō*, gives the following interpretation:

No, rather than being “amateurish”, they were intentionally expressing the image of the amateur. They do not let us feel the image of idealized womanhood, of [an] objective [to attain] that had been presented by fashion advertisements up until that point. In other words, this poster invoked [the audience] as if to say, this is “you yourself” (・・・) The sixth woman of this series is you, and me. It had such a nuance.

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<sup>45</sup> However, they do not seem to appear in advertisements for banks or food: there is thus a limit to the extent to which they can represent the “average person”. Ultimately, they end up appearing more in those advertisements that have some sort of connection with physical beauty, once again confirming the intersections between racialization and mainstream beauty standards.

<sup>46</sup> Unlike the models featured in the “That girl, she's shining” campaign, they were actually ordinary people who subscribed to Shiseido's *Hanatsubaki* club service.

(Shimamori 1998, 84-85)

She further argues how the intention of creating an image of “ordinariness” is also reflected in the fact that each of these faces, in all their differences, ends up creating a unified image. This mirrors a commonly occurring phenomenon where people end up becoming similar among each other while chasing trends in order to express their own individuality (Shimamori 1998, 84-85).

When analyzed through the lenses of race and ethnicity, this campaign is the perfect demonstration of how arbitrary visual notions of “mixedness” are. Indeed, by only looking at the models’ faces, it is hard to make any racially based distinctions. The pursuit of an image of “ordinariness” means that those features that might lead to racialization are not emphasized – because of this, it might come to a surprise to know some of the models are likely “mixed race” (Hōsō Library, n.d.).<sup>47</sup>

Advertisements for male cosmetic lines also show their “mixed race” image models as “average people”, but in a different way. If the campaign analyzed above has the objective of recreating the image of the “average Japanese girl”, the MG5 campaigns from 1972 and 1973 show “mixed race” model Kusakari Masao engaging in social activities. An advertisement from 1972 (Fig. 8), for example, shows him waving his hands among a group of foreign-looking hippies. The copy “Oh, Brothers” (*Oo, Kyōdai*) also highlights the communal aspect that is illustrated by the picture.

Shortly after, the brand’s campaigns started to feature three regular models (Kusakari

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<sup>47</sup> This is inferred from their names. Factual information about the models is, unfortunately, very difficult to confirm. Model Koshinaka Sally’s birthplace (America) was the only information I was able to obtain.

Masao, Sometani Hisao and Aoyanagi Masako) in different everyday situations. The three are represented as a group of friends enjoying their youth – an aspect that is evidenced by the copy “Right now, Youth”. In an advertisement from 1973 (Fig. 9), the models are pictured smiling and hugging each other – their body language implies that they are all very close. The three are wearing their swimsuits in front of the sea: going to the beach can be considered one of the typical summer leisure activities that the younger generation of the time used to partake in. These advertisements fall in-between the *akogare* and relatable categories: on the one hand, the highly curated artistic direction makes the setting and the models stand out as extremely idealized. On the other, they present situations of social life that give a context for their actions and cast them in situations for which the audience can establish emotional understanding.

Brands that relied on more “relatable” or “cognitive information” types of advertising, such as Lion’s Emeron Brand and Kaō’s Feather brand, also started using “mixed race” talent as well. Lion was responsible for introducing what is considered to be Japan’s first *gravure* model<sup>48</sup>, the Hawaiian Agnes Lum, to Japanese show business. The 1975 TV commercial for the hair treatment Minky portrays her as the fresh-faced, girl-next-door type: she is shown walking down the street wearing a blouse and a very feminine mid-sized floral skirt. Although she is best known for her *gravure* pictures, which draw attention to her generous proportions, her face is the focus in this particular commercial. The last frames of the commercial show her doing a quirky gesture, emphasizing her youthful cuteness.

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<sup>48</sup> A genre of modeling heavily featured in tabloid-style weekly magazines as well as manga magazines aimed to men, where the models are pictured in bikini or scantily clad and doing slightly erotic posing.

This advertisement for Kaō's Dresser hair treatment (Fig. 10) also features a "mixed race" celebrity: singer-songwriter Ann Lewis. This commercial is at the same time relatable and explicative, and it is not in any way different from the advertisements we have seen above featuring "non-mixed race", "Japanese-looking" models.

#### 4.1.7 Agnes Lum and *gravure*

The aforementioned starlet Agnes Lum was probably the most prominent "mixed race" starlets of the 1970s. She was scouted by a Japanese talent manager in her native Hawaii, reached peak popularity between 1975 and 1976 to then disappear a couple of years later.

Although she was catapulted to stardom after appearing in the commercial for a haircare product, Lum became popular for her bikini pictures. As she had no acting nor singing nor modeling credentials, she is often credited as being Japan's first "gravure idol".

Of Chinese, native Hawaiian and white descent, Lum was not perceived in the same way as "mixed race" Japanese. However, according to photographer Nagatomo Kenji, who was involved in shooting her early bikini pictures, one of the reasons for her popularity came from the fact that she was the perfect "middle ground" between white and Japanese women.

Indeed, in that period "nude" pictures were still rare. Even if actresses and idols wore swimming suits, the amount of exposed skin was akin to that of today's marathon runners. Nude meant gravure pictures of adult entertainers or of white people. However, the Japanese were lanky and the white people felt distant. A person like

Agnes, with that body and cute face, shows her cleavage confidently and even elegantly. The shock was enormous. (Nagatomo 2001, 19)

While not being “Japanese”, Agnes was considered to be “Japanese-like”. Nagatomo cites a weekly magazine of the time:

“To put it bluntly, she is very Japanese-like. She has this homely feeling and is not the kind of girl to wander around until night.” Echigo’s statement hits a sore spot for Japanese girls. (Heibon Punch 1976-4-26, cited in Nagatomo 2001, 20)<sup>49</sup>

“Japanese-like”, but “foreign” enough to cover those bases that the “Japanese body” couldn’t offer. The discourses around Agnes Lum’s body are oddly reminiscent of the words that in the 1960s, photographer Akiyama Shōtarō used to describe Irie Miki’s ascension as a top model.

At the same time, Lum’s foreign-ness made her effectively harmless to the male ego. Unable to speak Japanese, her only means of communication was her childlike smile. Both Shimamori and Nagatomo point out the contrast between her and the increasingly vocal feminist groups of the time, who were starting to make their voices heard (Shimamori 1998, 87-90; Nagatomo 2001, 32).<sup>50</sup>

Eventually, her being “harmless” became a synonym with being “boring” and “shallow”

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<sup>49</sup> Nagatomo explains that the Echigo of the citation is photographer Echigo Hiromasa, who shot the poster for the Emeron ad.

<sup>50</sup> Nagatomo mentions how during the same years a commercial for House Foods’s curry brand came under fire for sexism for its reliance on stereotypical gender roles.

when she was forced to appear on Japanese television in winter 1978. Nagatomo writes about the decline of her popularity:

In the seventies, Hawaii was the resort destination of dreams for the Japanese. Agnes's image was that of a distant and dreamy person (*tōi akogare no sonzai*) who lived on a "tropical island". However, the more popular she becomes in Japan, the more [fans] want to see her true self. (···) What [the fans] loved was the dreamy Agnes. Not her acting skills or her singing voice, but her figure in the world of images. (Nagatomo 2001, 39)

The "Agnes Lum boom" ended with a popping of the bubble, the shattering of the illusion of *akogare* – ironically built on the image of a relatable, child-like, and harmless sweetie. The public quickly moved on, substituting Lum with other "homegrown" bikini beauties who could manage to craft interesting characters through their acting and television appearances.

From the mid-70s onwards, there is a slow decline in the buzz surrounding the "*hāfu*" category. This is not because "mixed" people suddenly disappear from Japanese media, as they keep being active in modeling throughout the decade. It is possible, as Shimoji (2018) also hypothesized, that with the fading of the memory of the war the "novelty", or rather the entertainment value of the "mixed race" identity had decreased. On the one hand, this meant that the boundary between "Japanese" and "mixed" was becoming blurrier – it was no longer surprising for "Japanese people" to look "mixed". On the other, it led to an obfuscation of the "mixed race" identity, which was gradually made invisible.



It is also likely not a coincidence that *nihonjinron* theories started being discussed in the period from the 1970s to the 1980s (Iwabuchi 1994). At the end of the 1970s there are very few ads with mixed models: as we will see in the following chapter, the 1980s are generally categorized by a strong polarization between “Japanese” and “foreign”.

In the following section we will turn to the racialization of the “Japanese” body, which during the 1970s was carried out by the Japanese creatives who were active in Europe.

## 4.2 *1973 to 1980: the racialization of the Japanese body*

### 4.2.1 The “Japanese body” and the “foreign body”

In the previous section, we have seen how the use of “mixed race” models shifted from being a signifier of the Euro-American “Other” to a more ambiguous placement where they could take up both the role of the outsider and that of the insider. This change was helped by the fact that in the 1970s, we can observe a higher number of white foreigner models working in the Japanese fashion industry.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact reason for the increase of white models working in Japan, but it is clear that in the 1970s the country was a much more interesting place for Euro-American foreigners than it had been in the previous decade. Now an economic powerhouse, the yen’s purchasing power had started to increase, and it was no longer impossible for magazines and modeling agencies to employ foreigners. We have previously seen how *an-an* quite spectacularly announced its contracting of French model Véro: what was believed to be unprecedented in 1970, will become a more feasible option with the passing of time.

Foreigner agents themselves were starting to take notice of Japan. Françoise Morechand, who returned to the archipelago in the mid-seventies after ten years in her native France, notes in her autobiography how Japan was by then considered to be an extremely interesting market by European fashion houses (Morechand 1991). The interest that the Japanese consumers had for luxury, fashionable European products was matched by the desire of foreign companies to export their goods to yet another unexplored market.

At the same time, Japanese fashion designers were making their foray into the Parisian

catwalks: names such as Kenzo, Issey Miyake and Yamamoto Kansai became well known internationally as representatives of Japanese fashion. It is important to note that the three of them showed their new lines at Paris Fashion Week, which was then considered to be the center of what we might consider to be “high fashion”. The fashion shows of these extremely influential designers opened the pathway for Asian models to walk on European catwalks, however that did not mean that they weren’t also employing white models. *An-an* reports of a Kenzo fashion show with 22 Japanese models and 6 models from Paris (*an-an* 1978-4-5, 141-145), and pictures from the TD-6<sup>51</sup> spring-summer fashion show of 1979 shows an even bigger number of white models.

Paradoxically, the question of foreigner (white) models appearing in increasing numbers in the Japanese fashion industry was discussed in 1978 in *an-an* (1978-10-20, 8-16) - which, as a fashion magazine could have been easily held to be partially responsible for the phenomenon. Part of a larger article dedicated to the relationship between body and fashion there is a section bluntly titled: “Is it impossible to wear fashionable clothes well if you’re not a foreigner model?” (*an-an* 1978-10-20, 14). Rather than being self-introspective and analyzing the practices of the magazine, the text relies on the opinions of four fashion insiders, working in different departments of Japanese clothing brands. Fukuda Chiwako, an employee of the advertisement department of Shinjuku Takano, explains how:

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<sup>51</sup> I haven’t been able to find reliable information on TD-6, but it is likely the predecessor of Tokyo Fashion Week, which was officially created in the following decade. The *an-an* article (1979-1-5, 77-83) shows collections from many popular Japanese designers who had the country as their primary target at the time, such as Inaba Yoshie, Koshino Junko, Kaneko Isamu, Yamamoto Yohji and Kawakubo Rei.

It's true that in shows and in magazines foreign models work better to express the image of the clothes. It's natural that they're good, since the history they have with clothes (*yōfuku*) is different. The length of their legs and the difference in the skeletal structure also plays a big part [in this]. It could be said that foreign models are used to enhance the performance of the show. (an-an 1978-10-20, 14)

There was then a widespread acknowledgement of the “positive effect” that employing white models had on the show. They were considered to be more suitable as models because of their ability to make clothes “look better”. This was due to both cultural reasons (the aforementioned historical links between foreigners and western-style clothing) and supposedly phenotypical reasons, such as their longer legs. These remarks also make it apparent how the word “foreigner” is nothing but code for “white” and “European” – conspicuously absent is the figure of the non-white foreigner, especially if they are Asian.

It is important to stress how these assumptions are stated by Fukuda as objective – she even resorts to the use of the word “truth” (*jijitsu*). The only statement that is conveyed in a way that suggests subjectivity is the last comment on the use of foreigner models in order to improve the effectiveness of the show – the sentences that define the white body's characteristics and the way that they relate to clothes are not taken critically into question.

An employee at the fashion brand Nicole, Kōga Mariko, explains the increased effectiveness in fashion shows with the following words:

When it comes to body proportions, the Japanese models lose to foreigner models. Especially this Spring-Summer season, there are mostly feminine clothes with a defined silhouette. When it comes to [trends like] this, the glamorous curves of the foreigner model are more appropriate to convey the message of the designer. Furthermore, the black hair of the Japanese is too strong on the catwalk, and it is a fact that [because of that] the new clothes do not stand out. However, these are only the standards for fashion shows. (an-an 1978-10-20, 16)

Not only there is a link between foreigners, reduced to essentialist stereotypes, and the presentation of the clothes – there are clear gendered and sexualized notions tied to the shapes that are believed to be typical of the white body. Furthermore, the enunciation of these characteristics serves also to define what the “Japanese body” is and is not. What the foreigner models are believed to have (glamorous curves) is thought to be lacking in “the Japanese”, and vice-versa, black hair is considered a prerogative of “the Japanese” only, not to be found among foreigners.

At the same time, in a paradoxical logic shift, these “objective truths” are not to be taken too seriously. After interviewing Fukuda, the text continues:

However, it’s normal that [the models] look good, since they are professionals of wearing clothes beautifully. Fukuda told us that it’s old-fashioned to give up on wearing clothes because of [the characteristics of] the Japanese and the foreigners, basing [one’s perspective] on the comparison [between professionals and people who are not]. In fact, the clothes that the foreign models (whose average height is 170 centimeters) wear in the show sell very well. This means that even in Japan, there has

been an increase in the women who have the same proportions as foreigners. (an-an 1978-10-20, 14)

The last sentence partly contradicts Fukuda's statements above by underlining how the body proportions of "the Japanese" have gotten closer to those of their foreign counterparts. This implies that the "Japanese body" had "gotten better" at wearing clothes well – a discourse that has been repeatedly appearing since the 1960s.

Kōga, too, follows up with the words below:

Even though the body of the foreigner models is different, there are more fashionable Japanese who wear the clothes in an interesting fashion. [Clothes] fit the people who are able to wear them well. (an-an 1978-10-20, 16)

Clearly, the objective of the article was to convince its presumably Japanese readers that race was not a determining factor for enjoying fashion. It is not having a foreign body that makes you stylish, but rather the way you wear the clothes according to your own lifestyle and body shape, in a way that suits you (*kikonashi*). At the same time, the article does not provide a logical explanation as of why it is so. There is a clear lack of balance between the statements about the foreign models' (white) bodies, which are presented as being objective and refer to measurable or documentable concepts such as proportions and history, and the statements about the increasingly fashionable "Japanese", which mostly rely on observation and personal opinions.

#### 4.2.2 New “Japonismes” in Europe

Meanwhile, another current had been emerging in Paris and London: a new taste for Asian aesthetics. This was in part fueled by the creative activity of Japanese designers such as Kenzo and Yamamoto Kansai.

Yamamoto Kansai is known as the first Japanese designer to show their creations in London. His 1971 show catapulted him to stardom in the British capital and led to fruitful collaborations with pop star David Bowie. His early designs drew considerable inspiration from Japanese traditional aesthetics: some of his pieces referenced graphic motifs from Edo-period woodblock prints (T JAPAN 2017), others visually referenced costumes used in traditional cultural spectacles such as the *shishi-mai* (lion dance) (ibid). Yamamoto was also the one who introduced to the western fashion scene the person widely recognized as the first Japanese supermodel, Yamaguchi Sayoko (Sports Hōchi 2019), as well as “mixed” supermodel Marie Helvin (Arrowsmith 2015).<sup>52</sup> Fashion photographer Clive Arrowsmith, who collaborated with Yamamoto on several occasions including two articles published in Vogue UK in 1971 (Thian 2014), wrote in a 2015 blog post how “Kansai chose his own models and wanted the sessions to be ethnically mixed (and rightly so), but this was very much the exception for the time” (Arrowsmith 2015). There is no doubt that his successful first show paved the way for the recognition of Asian models’ legitimacy on international catwalks.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Born in Tokyo from an American-Japanese couple and raised in Hawaii, Helvin started her career in Japan, where she was scouted while on vacation at 15 years old. She stayed in the country for a few years in the early 70s modeling for companies such as Kanebo and magazines such as *Sōen* and *an-an* before moving her career to London (TheLuxuryChannel 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Yamamoto was not the first Japanese model to work in Europe: in the 1960s, Matsumoto

Although they explicitly referenced aesthetic traditions originating in Asia, it is hard to gauge how to which extent Yamamoto's designs were appreciated in virtue of their exoticism. Nowadays, he is remembered for his vibrant use of colors and materials and the influence he had on the extravagant aesthetics of 1970 glam rock – qualities that, in virtue of the enormous popularity achieved by his minimalist successors Miyake Issei, Yamamoto Yōji and Kawakubo Rei, are by some recognized as the complete opposite of the aesthetics of Japanese fashion design (T JAPAN 2017).<sup>54</sup> Perhaps more influential in the diffusion of this newfound Japonisme was the work of designer Takada Kenzo, who first arrived in Paris in the mid-1960s.

Kenzo himself had a strong penchant for everything that was, from a euro-centric point of view, seen as exotic: this included but was not limited to Japanese tradition. His first atelier, named “Jungle Jap”,<sup>55</sup> had a jungle scene painted on the walls. In 1978, he is quoted in *an-an* saying that he likes “the sea, the jungle, the wildness” (*an-an* 1978-4-5, 142). His early collections were inspired by the long journey from Japan to France (Jebb 2020): when he first arrived in the country in 1964, air-traveling was not available to most. It was not uncommon to spend a couple of months at sea before reaching Europe. Drawing from these out-of-the ordinary experiences, Kenzo wanted to create a dreamlike, escapist atmosphere:

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Hiroko had been employed as couture model for Pierre Cardin, and Matsuda Kazuko had walked the catwalk of the Paris Fashion week. However, neither of the two reached the international cult-status that Yamaguchi Sayoko enjoys to this day. (AnOther 2016)

<sup>54</sup> Japanese retrospectives tend to underline Kansai's traditional influences a bit more. See, for example, this website from a 2008 exhibition at the Edo-Tokyo Museum in Tokyo. (Edo-Tokyo Museum 2008)

<sup>55</sup> Later renamed to the mononym KENZO because of the negative connotations of the word (Jebb 2020).



We don't have dreams and freedom from pressure in our everyday life. That is why I think it would be nice if I could provide everyone with things like dreams, fun and romanticism. (an-an 1978-4-5, 142)

The inspiration from traditional Japanese garments did not come until the 1970s. In a 1972 article from the New York Times, he is quoted as saying:

“Before, I didn't like Japanese styles much, but this time I noticed that the cutting of a kimono is simple, beautiful. It is going to affect my work”. (Morris, 1972)

Kenzo did not, however, limit his inspiration to the traditions of his own country, but rather drew from the aesthetic cultures of the whole of East Asia. An article published in *an-an* in 1975 about “Chinese-style clothing” (an-an 1975-10-5, 12-15) identifies him as the originator of this look, which was recognized as trending “world-wide” in that same year. It is possible that the European markets (which are likely the ones that the article referred to when using the word “world-wide”), were reacting favorably not to *Japanese-inspired* fashion, but rather to every kind of exoticized Asian aesthetic, that was lumped together in an orientalist fashion. Designers such as Kenzo and Yamamoto Kansai were both in the position to capitalize on this; likewise, bodies such as Yamaguchi Sayoko might have been as easily read as a representation of Asia rather than interpreting a constructed tradition of Japan in its particularity.

The *an-an* article is quite cautious when it comes to recommending this trend.

Chinese-like clothing made of silk-like textiles. It is often [worn to] enjoy an oriental mood, together with the type of make-up and bob haircut worn by Yamaguchi Sayoko. You dye your lips and the eyelid in red. The shoes and bags also remind of Hong Kong. This style is only fun when taken up with a playful spirit. However, in normal days, [wearing] Kenzo's Chinese-style clothes in shocking pink with red make up and an Asian style hairstyle is too extreme. At the very least, people will turn around. (an-an 1975-10-5, 14)

In a fascinating game of mirrors, the “oriental mood” embodied by the Japanese models and designers in Europe – what might have been born from an authentic reflection on their identity in the Eurocentric and white context of the Paris and London “centers” – was seen as an escapist fantasy in their native Japan. Not only that, the magazine's argument is further complicated by another notion, explicitly racial in nature:

There is another problem. Japanese people are Asian (*tōyōjin*). [Our] bare face and body is (obviously) too Asian. The Chinese-style clothes that are supposed to feel trendy end up looking actually Chinese. If [one gives off] the atmosphere of a flower-seller or an entertainer from Hong Kong, it is no longer fashion, but a costume. That's what happen to a lot of Asian people when they wear Asian-like clothing.

The atmosphere changes a lot when [these clothes] are instead worn with a western, Paris-like, Elle-style... hairstyle and make-up. (an-an 1975-10-5, 14)

The use of the word “costume” reminds us of present-day discussions about cultural

appropriation. In 1970 Japan, however, the mix-and-match of different cultural inspirations that was being undertaken in Europe was not considered offensive, but rather a generative force, a productive ground for the creation of a new culture. Rather, it was inappropriate for a Japanese – because of their phenotypical Asian characteristics – to become too seriously entrenched in the reproduction of this fashion trend, as it would have transformed the wearer into an anachronistic character. On the contrary, the white body could have not possibly been read as a “flower seller from Hong Kong” or as a “female entertainer”, automatically transforming the Asian-style clothes into a fashionable item. To avoid this unflattering position, the article advises to balance the “Asian-ness” of the clothing with “western-style”, French inspired makeup and hair styling. This is further emphasized in the closing paragraph:

[The trend of] Chinese-style [clothes] is only an event in the world of western-style clothing (*yōfuku*). The actual Chinese-style clothes are beautiful, but we must distinguish between them and the Chinese-like clothes that are in vogue now. Where did Kenzo create this image from? Perhaps he concentrated and mixed many styles, such as those from Arabian countries, Hong Kong, and the China of Chairman Mao. His is a new and personal style of a new “country”, that crosses distances and time. We have to be original when wearing [his clothes], too. (an-an 1975-10-5, 15)

Quite different was the reaction to the kimono-inspired clothing introduced in an article from the following year (an-an 1976-1-5, 40-41):

Right now in Japan “*newtra*”<sup>56</sup> is in its heyday, but in Europe and America, especially among the high-fashion sphere of Paris, they are showing much interest in the Japanese kimono. When seen from the point of view of westerners, the exotic likeness of the kimono is surely fascinating, however it is not at all rare [for them] to try and wear the kimono as it is, or to arrange it a little – it is something that has been happening from the “time of the Occupation”. What is interesting is the fact that they are using the patterns of the kimono in western-style clothing (…). This gives off a fresh impression and is being imported back into Japan. (an-an 1976-1-5, 40)

Here, the text makes an effort to dispel the exoticization of the kimono carried out by the west, by emphasizing how just 20 years before it was more common to wear traditional clothes. At the same time, precisely because of its ordinariness, the kimono was placed somewhat outside of the bounds of “fashion”. It is the *mélange* between tradition and modernity – the kimono and western-style clothing – that was fashionable and interesting. The article closes with the following statement:

After all the traditional patterns and colors of the kimono fabrics are our *esprit*. In this there is no way we would lose to the Parisiennes. You should go out in the city feeling confident. (an-an 1976-1-5, 40)

The text does not take a condemning stance against the use of the kimono textiles that was happening in European fashion, but it does stress how it is a cultural heritage of the

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<sup>56</sup> A preppy fashion style popular between the 1970s and the 1980s. See chapter 5.

Japanese, whose links with these artifacts go well beyond simple notions of appreciation and are instead of an intangible, spiritual nature. Because of this, wearing kimono-style patterns is described as an action that the Japanese readers can do *better* than their Parisian counterparts. Perhaps obviously, there is no need to defer to the “west” when it comes to the incorporation of one’s own tradition.

Let us now circle back to the 1975 article on Chinese-style fashion. The text was quite clear about the need to carefully balance Asian and Western influence, drawing comparisons to anachronistic and perhaps even degrading images of stereotypical Asian womanhood such as the “flower selling girl from Hong Kong”. This does not happen in the 1976 article on kimono fabric – in no way is traditional Japanese clothing associated with negative images or with backwardness. So where, exactly, does the “problem” with Asian-ness lie? The 1975 article itself stresses how “[the “Japanese”s] bare face and body is (obviously) too Asian” (an-an 1975-10-5, 14) – it does not seem to phenotypically distinguish between Japan and its neighboring countries. At the same time, “the Chinese” are implicitly racialized through a *cultural* distinction. While on the one hand it is understandable that there would be discomfort in being misidentified as belonging to a different ethnicity or nationality, the use of stereotypical imagery makes it so that these remarks could be interpreted as reinstating an ethnic hierarchy between Asians. There has been, after all, no particular discomfort in the adaptation of “western” clothing. The feelings that we can observe in this text bear some resemblance to the discomfort that has been felt by western expatriates when wearing local traditional clothes – the discomfort that comes with the fear of “going native” (Wilson 2001).

#### 4.2.3 Yamaguchi Sayoko's modeling work

The 1970s have been recognized as a decade of change for Japanese beauty ideals. The turning point has been often identified in the year 1973, when CM director Sugiyama Toshi, who had directed the Shiseido TV commercials since the 1960s, unexpectedly took his own life, and model Yamaguchi Sayoko was first cast in the company's autumn campaign (Yamamura 2016, Shimamori 1991, Yabumae 2015). Before we delve into the modeling work of Yamaguchi Sayoko and the other "Japanese beauties" who followed her steps as Shiseido muses, we must stress that this was by no mean a drastic nor linear change. Shiseido did indeed invest more resources into the creation of this "new" image of ideal womanhood that was highly reliant on notions of traditional Japanese artistry. However, the company's advertisement strategy was varied. Not only did each different brand employ different advertising techniques – quite marked is the difference between male and female cosmetic lines, but also between different perfume lines – the same "Chiffonette" line that cast Yamaguchi in her first modeling role for the company turned again to "mixed" models in the following year (1974) and presented yet another strategy relying on the image of the "average woman" in 1975 (Fig. 12), which was in a different way antithetical to Yamaguchi's anachronical and yet futuristic image of "traditional beauty".

It is then unlikely that Yamaguchi's appearance, while undoubtedly influential, instantly led to a radical re-evaluation of beauty standards and practices. We have seen above how fashion magazines such as *an-an* were initially wary of uncritically adopting the orientalist trends of Paris' fashion walks. It is likely that Yamaguchi's style, while rooted in Japanese (and broadly speaking, East Asian – Sayoko herself was interested in the artistic expressions of the whole region) tradition, was considered avant-garde, and

co-existed with more popular make-up styles, which evolved from the trends of the 1960s and continued emphasizing big eyes, a tall nose bridge and a sculpted face.

A Kanebo advertisement from 1976 (Fig. 11) discusses this question at length in its copy. The text opens with a simple question: “Is eye make-up [used to] make the eyes bigger?” It then provides two different types of answer – “Yes” and “No”.

The “No” camp presents an argument that is evidently influenced by Yamaguchi’s style, as well as the orientalist trends of the Parisian catwalks.

I think that eyes wide open like a western doll are unnatural. I naturally emphasize the black eyes I was born with. Sharp, cold eyes that look as if they were drawn with coal. This is the oriental that is trending in Paris and New York. (non-no 1976-10-5)

On the other hand, the “Yes” camp’s beauty ideals are a direct continuation of previous trends and their European (white) influences.

The eyes of Sophia Loren. They were my dream (*akogare*) since I was little. Big and wide. Those watery eyes that stare intensely, they are very confident. That is what I am aiming for with my eyes. (···) Maybe that is a bit derivative when considering what is trendy right now, but I am definitely for the European eyes. (non-no 1976-10-5)

It is then important not to overstate the popularity of these new beauty standards that were being incubated through the work of the Japanese creative minds in Paris, Yamaguchi’s character, and Shiseido’s newfound artistic direction. Nevertheless, this

“turn to tradition” was undoubtedly very influential for the history of Japanese fashion. For the people who were at the frontlines of the industry, it provided an occasion to innovate while being recognized from the cultural center. Yabumae cites Shiseido honorary chairman Fukuhara Yoshiharu saying:

“Under the danger of the oil reserves running out, Japan had to start living on its own. During [that period], when [everybody] was thinking ‘what is Japan?’, Sayoko appeared, and [we] thought ‘ah, this might be one of the forms that Japan takes’” (Yabumae 2015, 187).

At the same time there was an undeniable external motivation in the use of Yamaguchi and “traditional” imagery. Yabumae once again cites former Shiseido commercial director Nakao Yoshinobu, who stresses the importance of the fact that “those Caucasians welcomed us with respectful eyes” (Yabumae 2015, 187). Indeed, as we have mentioned already, Yamaguchi Sayoko’s debut in Paris coincided with a rise of interest in the “Other(s)” – one of which was represented by East Asian aesthetics, which were in part spurred by the creative activities of Japanese designers such as Kenzo, Kansai Yamamoto and Issey Miyake. By 1974 she was cited in Newsweek Magazine as one of the top models of the time. She became the inspiration behind a mannequin model, and her French colleagues in the backstage would ask her how to replicate her eye make-up.

Yamaguchi’s “Sayoko make-up” (Fig. 10) overtly emphasized the almond shape of her eyes. The black liner was applied obliquely and created a particularly sharp cat’s eye shape. Her lips, on the other hand, were always in red. The colors black and red are reminiscent of the make-up used in traditional Japanese doll-making: the model’s



resemblance to a Japanese doll was completed by her trademark black bob.

Although many of these visual elements of her make-up appear since her earliest days, her looks were largely the fruit of a collaborative effort between her and Shiseido make-up artist Tomikawa Sakae. Her first appearances in Shiseido's campaigns (Fig. 12, Fig. 14) were less explicitly tied to visual images of "Japan" and "tradition". Fig. 14, for example, is among the most "relatable" Shiseido advertisements. Here, Yamaguchi is pictured wearing western clothes while having what seems to be western-style breakfast. The copy directly addresses the viewer. Through the use of these visual and textual elements, the directors "tried to find a way of conversating [with the audience]" (Shiseido 1979).

The model's image became increasingly tied with tradition from 1975. In the television commercial for the Benefique brand aptly titled "*Kyō-ningyō*", we see a doll maker applying make-up on a traditional Japanese doll. The frames keep switching between the doll-maker and Yamaguchi's face, establishing a clear equivalence between her and the doll. In this commercial, the model was clad in a kimono: her eye make-up, however, did not make her eye shape as almond shaped as later iterations. The following year, she was shown taking part in tea ceremony activities in the Benefique commercial. Once again, she was wearing a kimono – the tail of her cat's eye had also gotten slightly longer. After these two commercials, the connection between Yamaguchi's character and "Japanese tradition" had solidified.

The advertisements were also becoming less "relatable" and more of the "*akogare*" type. The two aforementioned TV commercials created an out-of-the-ordinary space precisely in virtue of their usage of traditional elements, which were by the 1970s far removed from the ordinary reality of the average Japanese citizen. The 1976 tea

ceremony commercial highlights this point in the narration, by saying that the tea ceremony space is “not somewhere young women would visit often”. Yamaguchi is thus clearly presented as an exception to the lived reality of the young girls of the time.

Later advertisements (Fig. 13 and Fig. 15, both from 1978) are distinguished by strong artistic direction and a higher degree of abstraction. At this point, Yamaguchi’s image had been completely formed. Her beauty was at the same time familiar and unnatural: the influences of traditional aesthetics were easily recognized as part of the audience’s cultural heritage, but they were also anachronistic, and because of this, avant-garde at the same time.

Her make-up artist, Tomikawa Sakae, highlights in an essay the constructed nature of Yamaguchi’s aesthetic:

The almond-shape eyes that have become synonymous with Sayoko, that mysterious gaze, was born through her fringe and the make-up technique of her eyes. I drew the eyeline while fighting with Sayoko. Through Sayoko’s eyeline, I learned infinite possibilities. It changes with just one millimeter in-out, long-short, thin-bold, up-down-straight. In that negotiation, Sayoko’s gaze changes into kind, stern, mysterious, and her soul enters in her made-up face – I will never forget – her glance, walk, her whole appearance change (Sakae 2015, 110).

Yamaguchi Sayoko’s image was constructed through her intentional and personal efforts. Her artistry as a model was refined through the cultivation of her “Japanese” aesthetics, that had, by then, become a symbol of her individuality (*kosei*) (Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo 2015).

Shiseido would go on to cast more “Japanese-looking” models towards the second half of the decade. In 1976, the then fifteen years old Shingyoji Kimie was cast in the Wavering Gaze (*Yureru manazashi*) (fig. 16) campaign (Shimamori 1991).

She appears in western clothes and an abstract setting, thus making the link with “Japaneseness” less direct. However, there is a clear continuum with the make-up aesthetic established by Yamaguchi Sayoko in the black straight fringe, red lipstick and black eyeliner. The link between “Japaneseness” and a “cool”, “unique” image of beauty had become a trope in fashion advertising.

### 4.3 1971 to 1980: representing the foreign

As fashion magazines became less experimental, the number of catalogue-like article increased. Nevertheless, the fascination with the “foreign” persisted. Throughout this section we will look at how the white body, the non-white “foreign-looking” body and “foreigners” in Japan are represented in magazines.

The “foreigner-looking” body was also a staple of advertisement. The cosmopolitan outlook that appeared in the early *an-an* was still alive in the epoch-defining advertising strategy of the department store Parco, especially in the campaigns directed by artistic director Ishioka Eiko. The final part of this section will focus on her work to see how she used Black and white bodies to propose alternative visions of womanhood.

#### 4.3.1 Fashion, lifestyle and the white body

Both *an-an* and *non-no* featured articles that showcased the everyday life of “foreigners” in a fashionable way.

The 1975-1-5 issue of *an-an* featured a lengthy article titled Life of the Lycéennes (*an-an* 1975-1-5, 6-29): this feature will transform the French word “*lycéenne*”, meaning high schooler, into the name of a fashion trend and a lifestyle.<sup>57</sup>

Subtitled in “La mode au lycée” in French and “The fashionable campus life of French high school girls” in Japanese, the article was a sort of documentary detailing the school life of female high schoolers in Paris, who in the pictures are represented as being white. The text features very detailed descriptions of life in the French high school, starting

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<sup>57</sup> The “*lyceenne*” fashion had a small bout in the mid-1970s but was later popularized in the next decade by the magazine “Olive” (also from Heibonsha/Magazine House), which targeted high schoolers.

from an explanation of the inner workings of the French secondary education system. The article also painted a general picture of female high schoolers, at time explicitly comparing their habits to their Japanese counterparts.

The next pages are dedicated to following the everyday life of two *lycéennes* in particular. Their life, daily schedule, hobbies and interests, love life as well as their hopes for the future are described in great detail. These detailed descriptions surely offered the readers an opportunity to find differences and commonalities. The representation of both the *lycée* (the high school) and the *lycéennes* (the students) was overall quite positive: the few remarks that could be interpreted negatively, such as a generalized lack of knowledge towards Japan, are brushed off without any remarks. Thus, it is very possible that the readers felt a sense of fascination (*akogare*) for the high schooler's life in Paris. The distance between the readers and the girls represented in the article is balanced in a way that this feeling of fascination is elicited in a way that is not too superficial. On the one hand, there is quite some distance between the two parties, as it was very unlikely for the average Japanese schoolgirl to meet their French counterpart (and vice versa). The *lycéenne* then exists first and foremost as a “flat” media phenomenon, rather than as an all-rounded “real” person with positive and negative sides: this article does its best to ensure that the French girls are seen as human beings. This bit of relatability might have functioned as an incentive to actively pursue or imitate the *lycéennes*' lifestyle.

Over the following months (and later again in the 1980s), “*lycée*” became a keyword for a certain kind of fashion style in Japan.

An article much more focused on fashion appears some months later in the 1975-4-5 issue (an-an 1975-4-5, 5-43). This time, the pictures feel less like a reportage and much

more like a fashion shoot. Since the unnamed models are white, they could have still been local high schoolers, but it is clear that they were hand-picked by the magazine's staff. They are virtually indistinguishable from the professional models that appear in the rest of the pages. Although most of the text focuses on clothing, the lifestyle descriptions are still quite detailed. This time, the staff visited a *lycée* located in Angers, by their definition a "countryside town". Once again, the article emphasizes their tight allowance and "a frugality that Japanese girls cannot even imagine" (an-an 1975-4-5, 21). And yet, the pictures of the article make their clothes look refined and stylish, perhaps suggesting that style does not depend on having fancy and expensive clothing.

Afterwards, articles about America start appearing as well. In the 1976-4-20 issue, two of the magazine's models (Ann Baarman and Kenny Saari) are flown to the Californian town of San Luis Obispo to shoot an article aptly titled "Highschool girls" (an-an 1976-4-20, 5-16). In this article, too, the pictures look as if they have been carefully selected and do not have a documentarist style. The bigger pictures, whom the viewer is most drawn to, are almost always focusing on the two models, while the more "descriptive" pictures depicting the locals, their life and their surroundings are generally quite small. These are concentrated in the first two pages and in the last two, where the text is denser. Pages six and seven serve as an introduction to the town of San Obispo and High school life in America. Like the first article focusing on *lycéennes*, we can observe some sporadic comparisons to their Japanese counterparts, often to comment on the similarities between the two. On page seven, for example, the article stresses how "both in America and in Japan, young girls' efforts in fashion are the same". For the most part, however, the text limits itself to descriptions, presumably leaving the act of comparison to each reader.

Demographic data from 1977 shows that the population in the San Luis Obispo County was overwhelmingly white (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2023). This is reflected both in pictures and text: only a fraction of the locals that appear in the article are Black. There is also one instance in the text in which the word “*hakujin*” (white) is used as a general marker to describe the high schoolers. When talking about the P.E. classes, which were held outside when the weather allowed for it, the article makes the following remark:

Still, I wonder how they don't become black even if they are in the sun every day. Are white people like that? [They are] kind of pitiful, [and yet we feel] kind of envious.  
(an-an 1976-4-20, 10)

The phrasing completely erases ethnic minorities from the “American average”, adopting the standpoint of the white majority. Five to six years later, the fascination for Black culture, associated with radicality, that transpired in the very early issues of the magazine is nowhere to be seen. The text also shows an ambiguous attitude towards whiteness – tanning during the summer was still very much in vogue, thus whites, who have some difficulties in getting darker, are said to be “pitiful”. At the same time, white skin was generally thought to be more beautiful during the rest of the year – making the ease with which white Americans maintained the color of their skin something to be envious of. Tanning as a practice was also beginning to become a minority practice: maintaining porcelain-white skin even in the summer months will become more popular beginning from the mid-1980s (Ashikari 2005).

Some five years later, *non-no* featured a fashion editorial featuring the working women

of New York (non-no 1980-8-20, 7-22).

As the subtitle, “we met with fashionable OLs that are just as good in their careers!” indicates, the focus on the American metropolis is in large part due to its image of having a big population of working women. This was very much in touch with the times: as far as media representations are concerned, working women were among the protagonists of the decade that was about to begin.<sup>58</sup> New York’s working women are depicted as being the “main characters” not only in life, but also in fashion:

New York is the starting point of the career woman, the working woman. This is not an easy life, but the women who are living it seem to be glowing! Their faces, their posture, their gestures and their fashion are all marvelous. Their figure is [representative of] the fashion styles in vogue now: they wear no-frills, simple clothes skillfully, not the snobbish fashion that is known in Japan as “New York fashion” (non-no 1980-8-20, 8).

The women who appear pictured in this article have no name, and their words do not appear on the page. The text does introduce the lifestyle of the New York career woman: this image is, however, a composite picture created from countless sources that

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<sup>58</sup> Japan signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1980 and ratified it in 1981. This led the revision of the former *Kinrō fujin fukushihō* (Act on the Welfare of Working Women) (1972), that became the *Koyō no bunya ni okeru danjo no kintō na kikai oyobi taigū no hojīnado joshirōdōsha no fukushi no suishin ni kansuru hōritsu* (Act on Equal Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment, often abbreviated in *danjo koyō kintōhō*) in 1985. There was thus widespread media attention given to working women.



are not mentioned anywhere. It is a very generalized picture of the “average” working woman. Interestingly, of all the pictures that appear in the article, only one depicts a Black woman. The “average American career woman” is thus racialized as white.

The text also presents numerous comparisons between the working women of New York and their counterparts in Japan, comparing practices at work such as Japan’s seniority wage system and the US’s performance-based wage system (non-no 1980-8-20, 11), cultural differences such as how differently from Japan the word “cute” is not considered a compliment from the women of New York, who would prefer being called “great” or “gorgeous” (non-no 1980-8-20, 12), and physical differences – such as how blue eyes are weaker to sunlight (non-no 1980-8-20, 14).

The American working woman is here presented not as an individual, but as an image formed from collective experiences and common knowledge. It functions first and foremost as a mirror through which the readers could look into at themselves, not only to obtain style hints but also a chance to re-examine their lives. However, the text does not necessarily portray the lifestyle of these New Yorkers as aspirational. The last page, that describes in detail the life of the women who work in the city, is titled “A story about how us Japanese OL are very lucky”. While avoiding being exceedingly critical, the text explains how the main motivator for work in New York is none other than the high cost of living: it is impossible for a new graduate to enjoy their free time doing leisure activities (non-no 1980-8-20, 22). The contradictory title might be explained by the fact that leisure and consumption were starting to be considered important activities for self-fulfillment: these ideas will eventually culminate in the consumption-driven lifestyles of the unmarried working women in the final years of the 1980s (see Sakamoto 2019).

To summarize, the lifestyle of “foreigners” living in foreign countries often appeared in the magazine in conjunction with fashion. Sometimes this meant that the fashion of the “foreign” girl themselves would develop into a national trend, such as in the case of the *lycéennes*. Other times the “exotic” location was used more similarly to a prop to make the clothes, starkly different from the ones worn by the locals, stand out even more. In either case, the representation of the “foreign” was quite different from those seen in the early issues of *an-an*: on the *akogare*-relatability spectrum, the young girls and boys appearing in these pages are portrayed as more relatable. The main reason for this is that the articles often delve into in-depth explanations of their lifestyles, showing aspects of everyday life such as school activities and hobbies. This information allows the readers to compare their own life experiences with that of similarly aged girls living on the other side of the world, an action that depending on the person could have created either feelings empathy or distance.

At the same time, the textual representations were mostly an abstraction: there was nothing in the text that could have grounded them in everyday reality, such as interviews. The readers do not get to hear the voices of the students themselves, and this makes them closer to a one-dimensional image rather than people of whom we can perceive the reality.

The “foreigners” who appeared in these articles came from rich Euro-American countries that were culturally very influential, and they were overwhelmingly white. While it would be impossible to establish any causal link between their race and the positivity of the representations, they were generally quite favorable. Thus, by reading these articles only, the perception of “distance” that might have arisen among some readers could have been easily transformed into *akogare*. In the next section we will see

how is the non-white, “foreigner-looking” body is represented instead.

#### 4.3.2 Non-white “foreigners”

Foreigners racialized as something other than white are completely absent from the fashion pages of both *an-an* and *non-no*. They do, if rarely, appear in articles of different subject matter, such as general knowledge or travel. It is very difficult to compare these articles with the aforementioned pieces. However the very fact that the non-“Japanese-looking”, non-white body does not appear in fashion reportage tells us that these bodies were not seen as being fit to become a vehicle for hedonistic consumption – in other words, they were excluded from the logic of *akogare*. Having a look at some examples of the representation of the non-white, non “Japanese-looking” body helps us understand how the non-white “Other” was located in the imaginary created by mainstream media.

An article about Cambodian children was published in the 1980-4-20 issue of *non-no* (*non-no* 1980-4-20, 72-76). More than the country itself, which was going through a war with neighboring Vietnam, the article focused on the refugee children in Thailand. The text is framed as a letter written by a female photographer, Ōishi Yoshino, to her young female friend in Tokyo. Beginning with an explanation of the situation of turbulence that had plagued Cambodia since 1975, and of how many have been displaced as a consequence, it then proceeds to describe some of the characteristics of the Cambodian people.

The first time I came in contact with Cambodia was roughly ten years ago. I even went to visit the giant ruins of the Khmer culture, Angkor Wat. A few kilometers away

from the city center there are never-ending fields where the villagers spent their days peacefully. The natural environment was [so rich that they] were known as the people who don't know hunger. To my eyes, the Khmer people looked calm, modest, shy: they show respect to people and are devout Hinayana Buddhists.

I remember that their ideal of beauty was a round figure: “beautiful women” with a round face and Indian-like big eyes and mouths laughed in the showcase of the town's photographer. (non-no 1980-4-20, 75)

Described in the past tense, thus conveying a sense of distance from the present moment, the Khmer people are represented as a rural population that lived off their agricultural gains. Not many words are spent on describing the urban settings, and the author seems much more interested in conveying the rich natural resources of the country. Their collective and abstract character is stereotypically essentialized as being kind and gentle – two characteristics often associated with the “gentle native” stereotype. Here, it functions as a device that inscribes the Khmer people in a time frame that is historically behind the present reality of the reader based in Japan. At the same time, it reinforces the idea that their condition of suffering is unjust, and that they do not deserve it – thus making them worthy of the readers' compassion (Höijer 2004).

The perceived “backwardness” of the Khmer people is further emphasized by a rather unnecessary description of Cambodian beauty standards: presumably rather far from Japanese aesthetic ideals due to their focus on the roundedness on the body, they are explicitly framed as a “condition” dictated by the structures of society. Yet, at the same time, the word *bijin* (beautiful woman) that appears in between inverted commas in the last paragraph, signals that there is a “truer” ideal of beauty that the Cambodian

standard does not correspond to.

Overall, the way that this article represents the non-white, non-Japanese foreigner is far from the pornography of poverty (Nathanson 2013). Nevertheless, it still retains some problematic elements, of which the erasure of the adult population is perhaps the most significant. This, however, is not an exclusive characteristic of articles that deal with humanitarian causes such as this one. Rather, the exclusion of men and more broadly of adults from visual representation is a consistent phenomenon when depicting non-western countries: in a series of advertisement articles written for JAL that often featured exotic destinations such as New Caledonia (non-no 1975-8-20), Fiji (non-no 1977-1-20) and Tahiti (non-no 1979-8-20), men were underrepresented in pictures, while women and children appeared more often. Locals were also scarcely represented in text, but in the few instances they were described, the text portrayed them with the same tropes that we have seen in the article above.<sup>59</sup>

There is a huge difference in the portrayal of the people from white, Euro-American rich countries and the people of color living outside of the “west”. The article on Cambodia is perhaps the strongest example that shows us how a hierarchical, euro-centric lens influenced by a history of colonialism found its way into the text. This is of course not necessarily a prerogative of Japanese journalism, but it is nonetheless worth to mention that similar discourses existed outside of Europe and America as well. Having gained confidence as a rich and developed nation, Japan was now in the place to internalize colonialist frameworks without much critical judgement.

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<sup>59</sup> In the Tahiti article (1979-8-20) for example, the locals are referred to as “simple people” (*soboku na hito*).

#### 4.3.3 Foreign models in advertising

Above, we have seen the different ways in which “foreigners” were represented in fashion magazines. The following two sections will focus on the representation in advertising.

When it comes to “foreign looking” models in advertising, white women appear in larger numbers. This is a continuing trend from the 1960s. In the category of beauty advertising, this is particularly true when it comes to advertising campaigns are produced by foreign companies. Major players of the time such as Max Factor, Helena Rubinstein, Revlon (Fig. 17) and L’oreal rarely used non-white models: not only are Black and south Asian models completely absent, but “Japanese-looking” models are also severely underrepresented. Some brands, such as Maybelline and the now defunct LOVE cosmetics (Fig. 18), employed racially ambiguous models who could have been seen either as being white or mixed.

Although there are exceptions, many of the advertisements created by foreign companies follow a rather standardized composition that has *akogare* and explicative elements. Visually, they feature a close-up picture of a white model’s face sporting rather heavy make-up, that was quite different from that observed in the make-up articles of fashion magazines. The nature of the copy generally depends on the company – some, such as Max Factor, tend to prefer vague and somewhat poetic catchphrases, while others, such as Revlon, strongly emphasize the product’s quality or ease of use. In the later part of the decade, companies such as L’oreal (Fig.20) and Maybelline (Fig. 19) start to employ an advertising strategy that mixes the explicative elements with relatability. The pictures often featured the models smiling, with natural-looking makeup and surrounded by greenery, whereas the copy would focus on the

characteristics of the product or the proof of quality that was guaranteed by the French origin of the brand.

Casting foreign (white) women in advertising was not a prerogative of foreign companies only: in the 1970s, the number of foreign (white) women in commercials for Japanese companies also increased. This process went hand in hand with the increase of foreign models in fashion magazines and was without a doubt influenced by the fact that these companies had more disposable income when compared to the previous decade.

In the beauty industry, companies such as Kanebo had a very distinct policy of using foreign white models in their higher-end makeup and skincare lines (Fig 21, 22). These advertisements were often located in the first few pages of the magazine and were thus among the most visible. As for their lower-end skincare and haircare lines, the company tended to use “Japanese-looking” models and relatable advertisement models.

The ads featuring white models tended to be on the *akogare* side of the spectrum. The *if* series that ran in the earlier half of the decade, for example, featured a selection of smaller pictures – these mostly represented foreign locations, with some interludes where the model’s face could be seen (Fig. 22). The composition presented the viewer with a narrative structure, the contents of which had to be interpreted by the audience: the textual parts of the advertisement introduced another seemingly unrelated narration, either in a diaristic first-person form or in a more conventional third-person form with an advisory tone. Like the pictures, these passages also tend to take an emotion-driven approach, which is at times *akogare*-like and at others more relatable. They are constructed around two themes. One is romantic relationships: an unnamed “boyfriend”, which is either the reader’s or the writer’s, appears without fail. The other is a description of the product. These advertisements tend to focus on what comes across as

a personal interpretation of the qualities of the object in question. These also tend to be intangible qualities such as elegance and trendiness rather than price, durability, or technological advancement.

White models also appeared in the brand's high-end skincare line Irene (Fig. 20). Once again, the pictures presented different degrees of abstraction: they often featured monotone backgrounds and artificial compositions such as extreme close ups or multiple frames of the same situation.

Kanebo would continue employing this marketing strategy in their magazine advertisements until the 1980s. Their rival Shiseido, on the other hand, only started actively using white models towards the end of the decade, in the advertisements for their high-end perfume line Inoui (Fig. 23). The company will, however, start employing famous foreign celebrities in the following decade.

#### 4.3.4 Ishioka Eiko's borderless women

Foreign models were also often featured in the advertisements authored by one of the most influential creators of Japan's advertising history: creative director Ishioka Eiko.

We have already encountered one of her influential works in Chapter 1: she was the designer responsible for the artistic direction of Shiseido's 1966 hit campaign *Taiyō ni aisareyō* ("Let's be loved by the sun"), featuring actress Maeda Bibari. Ishioka left Shiseido some years later<sup>60</sup> and founded her own design agency in 1970 (Kawajiri 2020). She was then introduced to entrepreneur Masuda Tsuji, who had recently founded the department store Parco for the Seibu Department Stores group, and who was looking

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<sup>60</sup> According to Kawajiri (2020), she was contracted by the company until 1969.



for a “strong artistic director” (Kawajiri 2020).

Ishioka started to get closely involved with Parco starting from 1973, the year of the opening of the Shibuya store, and was assigned the artistic direction of the Spring, Summer and Autumn campaigns (Kawajiri 2020). One common feature of her campaigns was the use of a “single-line message accompanying pictures that featured white and Black foreign models or actresses” (Kawajiri 2020, 132). According to Kawajiri, the impact of these advertisements was so strong that they would always become a popular conversation topic shortly after they were released.

Ishioka Eiko’s advertisements for Parco could be considered her own interpretation of what womanhood should have been. Ishioka had a fascination for strong women, who she viewed as being in opposition to the “stereotypical image of the beautiful woman”, the “doll-like” women that often appeared in advertising campaigns before 1965 (Kawajiri 2020, 85). There was undoubtedly something racial in her visualization of this stereotypical female image: Kawajiri hypothesizes that her choice of Maeda Bibari for the Shiseido campaign back in 1966 was partially motivated by the fact that she “felt an un-Japanese (*nihonjin-banare shita*) strength from her name” (Kawajiri 2020, 85),<sup>61</sup> he also writes that those Parco campaigns that featured kimono-clad Japanese beauties were completely opposite to Ishioka’s worldview. According to Kawajiri, copywriter Nagasawa Takeo, who worked for Parco in the same years, described the 1975 winter advertising campaign, “I want to be a woman until I die” (Fig. 24) as representing “the complete opposite of the female image that Ishioka was trying to express” (Kawajiri 2020, 149). Ishioka herself is quoted as saying:

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<sup>61</sup> The name “Bibari” was not common at the time and might have been a Japanese transliteration of the English “Beverly”.

Japanese women really aren't enjoying their womanhood (...). The characters who can express what I am looking for change according to the narrative: they can be African, Indian, or actresses from New York. (Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo 2021, 48)

Although she also employed foreign models to realize her vision of womanhood, the imagery that Ishioka utilized was, in fact, quite different from what we have seen in the commercials above. The 1975 spring campaign (Fig. 25) is a product of Ishioka and Nagasawa's reflections on the characteristics that made women unlikeable (Kawajiri 2020). Indeed, the copy "A model is more than a pretty face" points to an ideal of womanhood that is not only based on physical beauty. The model appears in a dynamic, if rather contrived pose, and is wearing what Kawajiri terms "tribal clothing" – styled for the occasion by none other than Issey Miyake.

Together with the serious look on her face, this set-up makes her look as if she was an explorer in the desert and encourages the viewer to embrace the out-of-the-ordinary. Similarly, the Summer 1975 (Fig. 26) campaign invites the viewer to "get naked" instead of looking at naked bodies – another nonconformist proposal. The model is French actress Aurore Clement, who, according to Kawajiri, accepted Parco's offer after her movie *Lacombe, Lucien* had been a worldwide success the year before (Kawajiri 2020). Nagasawa described the copy (his creation) as "something he himself does not really understand" (Kawajiri 2020, 141): it was his spontaneous answer to the difficult problem of copywriting an advertisement whose theme was the nude body. Ishioka later explained the meaning of this campaign with the following words: "It was my way to

criticize the hidden psychology of Japanese women, who want to strip naked other people's souls without baring their own" (Kawajiri 2020, 141).

Kawajiri reports how Ishioka Eiko's work with Parco was often described as "hard to understand", and thus "ridiculed as being 'feeling-based advertisement'" (Kawajiri 2020, 149). This sentiment is echoed in a small piece that appeared in *an-an* in October 1975, which commented on the popularity of the Parco campaigns. Referring to the aforementioned summer campaign, the article states:

I don't really get it, but the men were happy and many women went to Parco thinking that they needed to be brave in fashion. (*an-an* 1975-10-5, 92)

Indeed, Ishioka's work for Parco represents what is perhaps the pinnacle of *akogare*-type advertising of the 1970s: it ties together a highly curated artistic direction, strong messages in the copy and pictures representing out-of-the-ordinary situations. These three elements are probably powerful enough to make these advertisements interesting to the present-day viewer, but Ishioka's desire to put into question the idea of womanhood of the time further adds to their appeal.

In the years 1976-1978, Ishioka shifted her subject matter from white bodies to non-white (and non "Japanese-looking") ones. One example is the 1976 campaign "The nightingale doesn't sing for anyone but herself", of which Fig. 27 is perhaps one of the most widely reproduced images.

Model Dorris Smith is pictured in a squatting position, her arms and legs forming a rhomboidal shape. This contrived pose has the effect of highlighting her toned arms and legs, emphasizing the statuary beauty of her body. The expression of her face – she has

her mouth open as if she was vocalizing the sound “ho”<sup>62</sup>– connects her to the nightingale of the copy. The words remind the viewer that the aesthetic pleasantness of the female shape does not exist to please others – the original Japanese copy uses the verb “*kobiru*”, which is often used to describe the attitude taken by women in order to ingratiate themselves to men. Instead, the beauty of the female body has a self-serving purpose: it is to be enjoyed by women themselves.

Ishioka’s casting wasn’t casual: the models had appeared in Issey Miyake’s fashion show “Miyake Issey and 12 Black Women” (*Miyake Issey to 12-nin no kuroi onna-tachi*), held in 1976 at the Seibu Theater, for which she had worked as artistic director. The show is known for having featured Grace Jones, who had just started her musical career in Paris: Jones was also featured in the Parco advertising campaign. Miyake and Ishioka shared a fascination for strong women: Miyake is quoted in a 1977 article published in *an-an* as saying:

I don’t like when women aren’t strong. I want them to live boldly, every person who is born as human, should live a wonderful life. It’s boring to live serving men or inside a role provided by somebody else. I like the women who can also live by themselves, and that desire to have such a life. Being taught that women should be in a certain way and bound by common sense… [People might say] Having a personality, it’s just self-indulgence. [However], I want to change the word self-indulgence into “originality”. I want the people who are being led astray to be freed from everything and become able to find their lifestyle freely. (an-an 1977-4-20, 188-189)

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<sup>62</sup> The first syllable of the word “*ho-hokekyo*”, the onomatopoeia used in the copy to indicate the singing of the nightingale.

We can see how Miyake's philosophy might have resonated with Ishioka, who, as has been mentioned above, hated "stereotypical women" and wished for women to be able to enjoy themselves more.

Another thing that the two creators had in common was the appreciation of Leni Riefenstahl's work, which they likely associated with the idea of the "noble savage". The same article cited above explains Miyake's fascination for the Black body with the following words:

Behind the abstract theme that is "clothes for women who live strongly" there is the admiration for the tribes that live making their pitch-Black skin shine. The person who took these pictures was once said to be Hitler's lover. She has lived for a long time in Africa and is taking the pictures of these naked people while living with them. (an-an 1977-4-20, 188-189)

Although she is not explicitly named, the passage clearly refers to Riefenstahl and her work with the Nuba, an indigenous tribe from Sudan. Infamous for her propaganda work for the Nazi Regime, Riefenstahl had recently published two books of photography of the Nuba tribe: this was her professional comeback after years of inactivity due to her links with the German dictatorship<sup>63</sup>.

Kawajiri mentions how Ishioka first stumbled across the book in 1973, during a visit to New York. In her recollections of the event, she writes how she was fascinated by the

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<sup>63</sup> These books have been amply criticized, most famously by her contemporary Susan Sontag, who maintained that the artist's aesthetic practices had not changed significantly from her Third Reich days.

fact that “each picture captures tremendously [well] the source of **human physical beauty** (*nikutaibi*)” (Kawajiri 2020, 262. Emphasis mine).

Riefenstahl’s research for beauty in the physical was precisely what attracted Ishioka. Perhaps she associated this depiction of a strong and cultivated physique with the vitality that she saw lacking in the “Japanese women who do not enjoy life” and nullified in the representations of femininity that she had been wanting to destroy since her Shiseido days. Nevertheless, this inspiration came with the internalization of Riefenstahl’s “noble savage” ideological framework, which was, without a doubt, Eurocentric and self-referential in origin.<sup>64</sup>

This can be seen in the aforementioned campaign as well. Although the pictures have been taken in a studio, presumably in Japan, they still carry signifiers that can be associated with the image of the “savage”. Smith, pictured in Fig. 26 above, is only wearing a black bikini, which becomes almost unnoticeable in the overall composition. This has the effect of highlighting her sculpted body, which, importantly, is represented in a non-sexual way. The model becomes more similar to the athlete than the pin up. Her make-up uses primary colors such as red in the eyes, which is perhaps best associated with a vague and stereotypical image of the “past”. Her pose and expression

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<sup>64</sup> Faris (2007) and Ludewig (2006) do not go as far as Sontag in defining Leni Riefenstahl’s later art fascist. The former in particular is wary of defining her art axiomatically fascist in virtue of her former ties with the Nazi government: citing the examples of photographers such as Sebastiao Salgado and Susan Meiselas, he stresses how she might have been better received if she had been free from the negative perceptions of her past. Nevertheless, both scholars are in agreement on the fact that Riefenstahl’s art is Eurocentric and objectifying, reducing her subjects to static artifacts of a contemporary past. Faris’s descriptions of Riefenstahl’s selection of photographic subjects (she would refuse to portray anyone who was wearing “modern” clothes, for example), further reinforces this point.

might also be interpreted as being a step of (the stereotypical image of) a “tribal” dance. All these elements contribute to locating her in an idealized space-time dimension that is clearly separated from that of the ordinary-but-modern life of the consumer-audience.

Fig. 28, featuring Grace Jones is also consistent with this pursuit of statuary physical beauty. Here, the lightning makes half of the model’s face almost disappear – taking the viewer’s eyes away from her facial features. The eyes are instead redirected to the white dress she is wearing, which stands out in contrast to her black skin. The cut is reminiscent of the clothing of classical Greek sculptures, and the textured materials reinforce this impression. Here, Jones is embodying another type of fixation with the perfection of the body – the neoclassical ideal. This visual language also relegates the model in a temporal dimension that is of the past, which even if imbued with the “universalism” that is typically associated with whiteness, still remains a culturally removed one.

Ishioka’s legacy is complex. On the one hand her advertisements can be considered positively as agents of change in virtue of their progressive messages and their reflection on the state of womanhood. On the other, her perspective risks objectifying and fetishizing the “Other”.

#### *4.4 Conclusion: the 1970s between continuity and change*

The 1970s were the years in which the fashion and advertising industries solidified their positions in the Japanese mediascapes. These processes were accompanied by the retaining and shifting of the various discourses surrounding the racialization of the body. We have seen how the “foreign-looking” body kept being positioned as a distant source of inspiration. “Foreign-looking” models appeared, for example, more often in the “example” in *non-no*’s pages which were shot in ways that were more noticeably staged when compared to the street snaps of “average people” that were juxtaposed in the same page. The placing of the “foreign-looking” body in this decade is directly influenced by an Eurocentric perspective centered on white supremacy that has also been observed in the representation of “mixed race” in the 1960s. However, the “distance” afforded by the non-“Japanese-looking” body also made possible the vehiculation of innovative, at time even inspirational messages that were believed to be somewhat opposite to the perception of “traditional Japanese values” in the advertisements directed by Ishioka Eiko.

At the same time, there were some shifts in the perception of the “mixed race” body, which was now considered relatively more proximate. “Mixed race” models continued appearing together with white “foreign-looking” as distant objects of admiration. However, they were also increasingly present in representations that placed them as members of the average population, possibly creating a shift in the visual image of the “Japanese”.

Outside of the country, the international activities of Japan-born designers led to a re-evaluation (and a racialization) of the “Japanese-looking” body, which was not devoid of



orientalist stereotypes. This depiction of the “Japanese”, anachronistic and idealized, was quite different from the relatable bodies that were represented by the earlier prototypes of the *dokusha* models, which were more grounded in the social reality of the time. Nevertheless, these tendencies might have been an important stepping stone towards the re-evaluation of all things “Japanese”, which will be an important factor in the cultural activities of the following decade.

In the next chapter we will continue to follow the construction of the “Japanese body” as it unfolded in an intersection between racialization, internationalism and cultural identity throughout the years that saw the apex of Japanese wealth – the 1980s.

## 5 The age of opulence: the 1980s

The present chapter will analyze the relationship between race, the body and representation as they unfolded in the 1980s. By then, post-war Japan had reached economic maturity and was headed towards the consolidation of its position in the global economy and international society. The 1980s were years marked by confidence and perceived wealth: there was a newfound bolstering confidence in the qualities of Japan, the “Japanese, and the goods made in Japan. These years saw the resurgence of cultural nationalism that is often discussed with the name of *nihonjinron* (theories of the Japanese), which equated Japanese uniqueness with the idea of a monoethnic Japan (*tan’itsu minzoku*). An illustrative anecdote from this period, which illustrates the reception of these theories among the political elites, is former prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro’s infamous remark about literacy and American minorities (Landler and Horvat 1986), when he argued that Japan’s higher results were a consequence of its racial and ethnic uniformity.

At same time, the 1980s were a period of political regression that Hidaka (2022) compares to Thatcherism in Great Britain. This was the decade where the first big liberalization projects were undertaken, with public companies such as the Japanese Railways, the Tobacco and Salt Public Corporation and the Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation eventually dissolving into private companies.

If the 1960s are often considered a period in which political activity at the grassroots level flourished, the 1980s are often referred as a time in which political apathy spread among the younger generations (Hidaka 2022). Indeed, consumption was one of the

biggest pursuits of the youth of the period, and this is reflected in the media environment of the time.

As *an-an* and *non-no* became established names in Japan's media industry, new magazines targeted to young women were being created. Of these, one in particular will have a profound impact on the popular culture of the 1980s: Kōbunsha's *JJ*. First issued in June 1975, it was initially conceived as an expansion to *Josei Jishin* and eventually developed into a full-fledged publication of its own.

From its beginning, *JJ* differentiated itself from *an-an* (whose defining characteristic was the introduction of “high” fashion trends inspired by London and Paris<sup>65</sup>) and *non-no* (which translated those trends into outfits wearable by the general public) through a series of innovative editorial decisions. Beginning with the iconic first article of the first issue, which covered the *Newtra* fashion trend, *JJ*'s editorials have often focused on movements that can be considered “grassroots”<sup>66</sup>; through the popularization of the category of the “*dokusha* model” (reader model, nowadays often shortened to *dokumo*), they created a media space in which “average people” took center stage. The trends that appeared on its fashion pages were thus dictated by popular consensus rather than being the result of the creative efforts of a professional of the fashion industry (Sakamoto 2019).

The “average people” who appeared in these street snaps were, however, not so average after all. There was, in fact, a strong class element to the fashion introduced in the

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<sup>65</sup> Nanba (2009) reminds us of the strong fascination that *an-an*'s founder Horiuchi Seiichi had for “western” media; these feelings formed the backbone of the magazine's atmosphere and survived his departure from the editorial department.

<sup>66</sup> In the sense that it comes from the people (as elite as they might be) and not from the mind of fashion professionals.

magazine's pages. As we have seen previously, the *Newtrad* trend had developed in areas of Japan that were home to the country's wealthy (and not coincidentally, that had links to the country's resident "expat" population), such as the centers of Yokohama and Kobe. Sakamoto cites former editor-in-chief Ushiki Masaki:

"an-an" and "non-no" were what would be now called trendy, however these trends were actually a hiding spot for people who came from the countryside, and even among the people who were called creators there were few people from the city. The ladies who grew up in proper families were wearing better clothes. (Sakamoto 2019, 256)

*JJ* immediately advocated for a taste for expensive brand items such as Louis Vuitton bags, which, as Nanba notes, were in a different league from the products showcased in other magazines (Nanba 2007). Talking about the relationship between brand items and *JJ*'s audience, Ushiki explains:

Before, when it wasn't so easy to travel abroad, there were the so-called rich women who could go abroad spending a lot of money. (...) The people who saw those women while they were going to work and desired becoming like them, they became university students. [At the same time] travel tours like the JAL pack started coming out, and it became possible to go abroad with a certain amount of money. Because of this, it became easier to get hold of those things [brand goods] and they suddenly started to have an impact. (Sakamoto 2019, 259)

Last but not least, the fashion taste of the *dokusha* models was described as being inherited from family – in particular, from their mothers. It is thus a manifestation of the young women’s cultural capital (Yonezawa 1999). Clearly, the young ladies (*ojōsan*) who appeared in the magazine’s pages did not reflect the whole population; rather, they were a mirror of a small community of elite women who the average reader could only aspire to.

Although in its beginnings *JJ* featured both students and working women, it gradually developed into a magazine aimed to university students. The 1980s were a decade in which women’s university attendance increased dramatically. Statistics cited in Kobayashi show that in 1980, the women who attended four-year universities were 12.3% of the 18-year-old population; that number reached 29.4% in 1990 (Kobayashi 2020). Considering that two-year university attendance, which had doubled from 10.3% in 1970 to 21.0% in 1980, remained stable at around the 20% mark, more than 40% of the female 18-year-old population was receiving some form of university education by 1990. The same period saw unprecedented media attention towards female university students (*joshidaisei*). Kobayashi cites a producer of the TV program “All-night Fuji”<sup>67</sup> saying:

At the time everyone thought they were middle class, everyone put their daughters in Women’s universities, so private Women’s school increased the number of universities. To the point that, because of an increase of the people who thought “I want to have my daughter go study in America” the Japanese campus of Temple

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<sup>67</sup> A late-night program broadcasted on the Fuji TV channel, which from 1983 started featuring heavily female university students (see Kobayashi 2020).

University was created, and it led to the phenomenon of “being able to enter an American university without being in America”. Those were the times. I thought it would be interesting to create a stupid program with the same vibe as a school festival by lining up all kind of female university students, from those that studied in top universities to those who went to schools that nobody knew (…). (Musicman 2009)

As the mention of “*JJ* girls” in Tanaka Yasuo’s award-winning novel *Nantonaku, Kuristaru* (1980) testifies, by 1980 *JJ* had become a signifier for a certain type of university student, one that lived their life between campus and modeling gigs, dedicating their free time to leisure and consumption of expensive goods (Nanba 2007). Tanaka, whose novel was supposed to be a parody of the catalogue-like magazines of the 1980s that *JJ* was also part of, describes his generation<sup>68</sup> with the following words:

(…) I think that today’s youth live a life that is empty of meaning. (…) Tokyo is brimming with young people that have no worries and spend their days while buying, wearing, eating things that somehow feel nice. (…) However, we can’t say that they are lost in this rich consumerist culture. The ability of dividing information into noise and signal is something that the preceding generations did not have. The light entering a crystal changes direction according to it. I think that the crystal way of life is that of people who want to treasure their personal perception, that allows them to divide random information. (Chūō Kōron 1981, cited in Nanba 2007, 226)

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<sup>68</sup> Named the “Crystal tribe” (*Kuristaru zoku*) after Tanaka’s novel.

And again:

Everyone misunderstands, they think that being part of the crystal tribe means having at least one branded item and going to hang out in Roppongi. It's not like that. I think that the crystal tribe are those people who have grown up with mental wealth. (...) The youth of today are expressing themselves with brands. (...) Today we are in contact with a lot of information, but young people are the ones who choose. They choose what is right for them and make it into their own. The word "somehow" [comes from the fact that] we do not fear the starving or death of the war, so we live by feeling. Even a 100-yen coffee is good, if it feels good. (JJ 1981-4, 171)

Supported by this consumerism-loving generation, learning from the success of *JJ* and riding on the media buzzword of the "*joshidaisei*", publishing giant Shogakukan issued the competitor magazine *CanCam* in 1982. The title, an abbreviation of the phrase "I can campus" (Tanaka 2011) makes it clear that university students were to be the intended audience. As for its contents, *CanCam* was less focused on the reproduction of class-inherited aesthetic values and privileged a view of fashion that was strongly influenced by the male gaze. According to Tanaka, throughout the 1980s "(...) *CanCam* set as a target the "imaginary stage of university life" and attempted to direct the boys and girls who appeared there towards an identity that aspired to heterosexual love" (Tanaka 2011, 33-34). This accent on romantic relationships was more pronounced when compared to *JJ*, which focused less single-handedly on the opinion of the opposite sex and more broadly on fashion styles that were deemed likeable by anyone who could be considered of a higher social rank, from family to potential husbands and bosses.

By 1986, *CanCam* was considered to be a magazine aimed at “second-rate rich university students, university students who came from the countryside and want to act as if they were rich” (Nanba 2009, 69). However just ten years later it was perceived as a publication with its own identity, starkly contrasting the “*ojousan*” readers of *JJ* (Nanba 2009).<sup>69</sup>

The analysis in this chapter will be based on data spanning from 1980 to 1991 sourced from both *JJ* and *CanCam*. We will examine how the discourse surrounding racialized bodies changed amidst the social, political, economic and media events of the 1980s. The media’s re-centering of its perspective on the “average” girl-next-door coincided with an increase in travel and exchanges with foreign countries, as well as with the years of the Plaza accord and an increase in the population’s spending power. Consequently, the 1980s were a time in which there was much discussion about the characteristics of “Japanese people” and the relationship with the foreign, particularly with the “west”.

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<sup>69</sup> *CanCam*’s golden age will come sometime later in the early 2000s, when *senzoku* model Ebihara Yuri became hugely popular (Tanaka 2011).



## 5.1 1975 to 1987: “majority” and “minority” in JJ and CanCam

### 5.1.1 Kobe, Yokohama and *Newtra*

Before analyzing the contents of the two magazines, it is worth considering the history of the fashion styles that made *JJ* such a hit in the first place.

Yokohama and Kobe were considered to be fashion hot spots from the midst of the 1970s to the early 1980s. The *Hamatra* and *Newtra* trends that originated in these two cities were considered to be native to Japan, and to be particularly suitable for “Japanese” body shapes. It might be surprising for some to observe how these two Japanese-born trends originated from towns that were so strongly associated with the (white, upper-class) “foreign”; these port towns once functioned as the contact zones where foreign technology was passed into Japanese hands, and this is believed to have led to the development of a more acute fashion sensibility.

An article from *non-no* published in 1975 reports how:

The students of the Canadian Academy high school, frequented by the businessmen and diplomats that live in Kobe, go to American universities after they graduate; those young foreigners who come back to Kobe during their vacations wear their beloved jeans happily. However, the girls born and raised in Kobe that go around the town are fashionable and chic. Their figures when they are walking with their boyfriends on the paved roads of the hills of Kitano-cho are worthy of a *mademoiselle* and emanate a fresh elegant mood. (non-no 1975-10-5, 111)

Although the foreigners themselves might not be a symbol of refined elegance, the link

between Kobe's fashion and sophistication is recognized to be linked to the city's historical ties to the foreign. It is then passed from generation to generation to the young girls of today. The article explains how:

After the opening of the port of Kobe, European quality goods were imported earlier than anywhere else, and came to be loved by its inhabitants. In Door Road there are haute couture shops opened in the Meiji era, and even now they have grown by introducing new fashions and top European fabrics. The ladies raised by their modern (*haikara*) grandmothers must have refined their sensibilities and established an elegant fashion. (non-no 1975-10-5, 111)

Similar discourses existed about the other port town, Yokohama:

[...] The "*hamakko* sensibility", which introduces new things before anyone else while respecting the old, might be fostering the most metropolitan shops of Japan, that aren't either in Tokyo or Kobe. (non-no 1979-4-5, 167)

It was not just the Europeans who possessed technology that the Japanese could learn from. These port towns always boasted a conspicuous Chinese population as well.

The sewing methods of western-style clothing, the technique of the barber; it seems that in the beginning, the Japanese learned these crafts from the Chinese. The clothes worn by functionaries and the fashionable people of the time were almost all tailored by the Chinese... Still, the hands of the Japanese are skillful. They learned those trades

quite soon. (non-no 1974-8-20, 78)

As mentioned above, the fashion cultures that emerged on the streets of these fashionable port-cities were called *Newtra* (a portmanteau of the English words “new” and “traditional”) and *Hamatra* (a mix of “Yokohama” and “traditional”). Stylistically conservative in nature, they were first noticed by magazine editors as styles popular among the “old money” girls who frequented prestigious all-girls universities in the two towns, such as Ferris Women’s University and Kobe Women’s University. Nanba mentions how these young women had access to their wealthy mothers’ clothes *and* cultural capital, and thus naturally possessed the know-how on how to dress elegantly (Nanba 2009).

*An-an* published a guide on the *Newtra* lifestyle in 1978 (an-an 1978-10-5, 16-19). The article did not limit itself to explain how to recreate the perfect look but documented the cultural products that the *Newtra* girls enjoyed, their favorite meeting spots, as well as their aspirations for the future.

Largely oblivious to the major European catwalks, the conservative fashion of this new trend was heavily inspired by the outfits seen in American tv shows such as *The Bionic Woman* and movies like *Charlie’s Angels* (an-an 1978-10-5). The American west coast was the *Newtra* girl’s reference point, and they looked up to an active lifestyle where leisure and sports took the center stage (an-an 1978-10-5).

*Newtra* was considered to be a rather easy-to-approach style. The article explains how, unlike the clothes that one usually sees in designer shows, this trend is more suited to people who are not skinny and have a healthy, sporty constitution. It is not important to be of tall height, either. The emphasis on sports and a healthy constitution meant a

revival of the sun-tanned skin, although it had to be moderate and needed to be accompanied by proper hair care; pitch-black hair was preferred to the reddish-brown hair, that sometimes happened as a result of tanning (an-an 1978-10-5).

Perhaps paradoxically for a trend that so actively looked to the other side of the pacific, the article stresses how the “*Newtra* face” had to be “Japanese-like”:

First, apparently a very “foreign-like” face doesn’t look good. The face that looks best in *newtra* is “a beautiful face that looks good in Japanese clothes”, a Japanese-style face. Looking like a rich girl is the rule. (an-an 1978-10-5, 17)

Interestingly, the racialized “Japanese face” is here tied to notions of class. The “rich young woman” is imagined here as a “mono-racial Japanese” person.

*Non-no* reported about *Hamatra* in 1980 (non-no 1980-8-20, 24-40). The trend is described as being a combination of “a brand polo shirt+a skirt on the short side+thin navy long socks” (non-no 1980-8-20, 28). The colors used are mostly red, navy and white, and the outfit is almost always complemented by a bag, sometimes of an expensive brand. The bulk of the text is formed by an interview from a “person who is 0% *Hamatra*” to girls who have embraced the trend in Yokohama, commented through the use of parentheses. The lack of appreciation by the magazine transpires through the repeated underlining of how the interviewees value the opinion of their polo-shirt loving boyfriend above everything else, the fact that their only aesthetic canon seems to be “cuteness” (*kawaii*) and their obvious desire to look as if they belonged to the upper class. However, there is one positive aspect of the trend, highlighted in the conclusion with the following words:

To be honest I can't approve of the way in which clothes are coordinated and the use of colors in *Hamatra*. However, I thought that the fact that it is a trend unique of Japan, that is nowhere else in the world and that is not a look created by any designer must be appreciated. I wonder where this young, strong energy will go from now on. (non-no 1980-8-20, 29)

*Hamatra* is an originally Japanese, "grassroot" trend. It is not seen either in Paris or New York, nor it is the product of the work of a famous designer. It is precisely this originality that is considered to be the strongest point of this style.

All the pictures in the *an-an* and the *non-no* articles are snaps of non-professional models, who can be all described as "Japanese-looking". Some pictures are taken in the streets and do not provide any sort of identification, others are of reader-models, and we get to see their names. This is yet another way in which *Newtra* and *Hamatra* are tied to "Japaneseness". It is not, however, the "Japaneseness" relying upon traditional aesthetics that had been proposed by the Japanese designers based in London and Paris – hard to incorporate into everyday life and thus more easily associated with *akogare*. Rather, it is an aesthetic created from the bottom up. The "Japanese doll-like" visual aesthetic of Yamaguchi Sayoko, with her black bob hair, porcelain white skin and bright red lips could have not been more different from the healthy, conservative but easily approachable fashion sense of the *Newtra* and *Hamatra*. Yet, they were both two different ways in which monoethnic "Japaneseness" was being recentered in Japanese fashion.

### 5.1.2 *Dokusha* models

The fashion magazines of the 1980s are recognized as having brought the “*dokusha* model” (reader-model) to the center stage. Their role is diametrically opposite to that of the professional model, often referred as “*senzoku* model” (exclusive model) because of the restrictive contract ties that they establish with each magazine, effectively becoming its representatives. According to Furuta:

[Exclusive] models function as a *signifiant* that represents a perfect idealized figure that completes the shortcomings of the women outside, and it is a sign [used] in order to make the women outside the fashion magazine receive the *signifier* one-directionally. They are understood through the frame of the “professional model” and they have no self. Before they realize it, the women outside the fashion magazine start desiring what the models represent and wanting to become like them, however it is not easy to reach that level. Professional models are inside the fashion magazine from beginning to end. The women outside cannot enter [this group] and they realize that there is an explicit boundary between outside and inside; they do not even think of crossing this boundary. (Furuta 2008, 151)

Furuta draws a link between professional models and westernized looks; since Japanese fashion magazines were created in Japan in a period in which women were driven to magazines as a source of contact with the more “progressive” western culture (Furuta 2008). We have previously seen how even in the previous decades, the picture was not as simple, and how the tendency to desire and consume the “west” coexisted with the necessity of seeing relatable figures that bore a closer resemblance to lived experience. It

is however important to note that it is a fact that “western-looking” mixed people, as well as white foreigners, had a definite presence in the modeling industry until the 1980s.

The concept of the *dokusha* model had already been invented in the 1970s: *non-no* was actively recruiting models from its readership, and articles featuring street snaps (in other words, portraits of what Furuta calls “temporary *dokusha* models”) appeared in both *an-an* and *non-no*. However, the magazines of the 1980s differ from their predecessors in that they gave the *dokusha* models as much space as they gave to the professional models, meaning that for the “average reader” the chances of appearing in the pages of *JJ* or *CanCam* had become drastically higher compared to the previous decade.

Although not all the articles where *dokusha* models appear are necessarily street snaps, there are no repeater *dokusha* models in the magazines of the 1980s.<sup>70</sup> Furuta defines these temporary *dokusha* models with the following words:

For the women outside the magazine, a woman that does not change much from themselves is there. The only difference is that they are inside the magazine. It is quite possible for oneself, rather than that person, to be there. In other words, if one thinks about it, we could say that these women represent the living women of today more than professional or *tarento* models. (Furuta 2008, 154)

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<sup>70</sup> Later on, the term “*dokusha* model” will be used to refer to amateur models that recurrently appeared on the pages of the magazines. The term is still used today with this meaning, although it is starting to be replaced by the word “influencer”.

Furuta argues that the more realistic (and more relatable) mode of representation offered by these temporary *dokusha* models might have a precise function in the magazine media environment:

The temporary *dokusha* models appear while carrying reality on their backs, however [the readers] can receive some sort of relief from them. It's tiring to constantly aim higher while trying to chase professional and *tarento* models. Thus, I believe that these temporary *dokusha* models work as a presence that the women outside the magazine can see themselves in while feeling reassured. (Furuta 2008, 154)

The temporary *dokusha* models of *JJ* and *CanCam* might give an impression of accessibility, but naturally that is not the case. In the magazine's "Mail Box" section, a reader writes:

I am a student of Shōin Women's University, which appeared in the Campus Report<sup>71</sup> section of the August issue of *JJ*. I saw the way that everyone was on their toes when the cameraman from *JJ* came. Everyone would walk back and forth in front of the cameraman, and before that they would go to the toilet and tidy themselves up. They were also desperate to be called by the cameraman. However, it is quite hard as expected. Seems like the majority of people wouldn't be called. I myself am talking

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<sup>71</sup> The "Campus Report" pages showed the daily life of the students enrolled in the numerous universities of the country. Like the "All night Fuji" television program mentioned above, these articles did not discriminate in their subject choice and visited campuses from the countryside to the center of Tokyo.



like this about other people, but I was also nervous. (JJ 1983-10, 283)

The people who actually had the chance of being interviewed had something special about them, and there was inevitably a divide between them and those who were eager to appear in the magazine's pages. As Tanaka Yasuo argues:

The readers who support *JJ* often go to two-year colleges that no-one has ever heard of. The girls who appear as *dokusha* models in *JJ* are [girls who have entered] Shirayuri, Ponjo [Japan Women's University], Seishin after going to the affiliated middle and high schools. They ostensibly are prettier than the average. However, they are the kind of girls who end up buying *JJ* because they, their friends and their school appears on the pages of the magazine, even if they think that the magazine is stuck in a rut. The people who actually support [the magazine] are those who while thinking that they would like to get photographed by *JJ* get called out in the streets by Kodansha's *Miss Hero*<sup>72</sup> (Tanaka 1984, cited in Nanba 2007, 238).

There is thus a degree of selection and careful construction behind the image of the "average girl next door" that the *dokusha* models embodied.

We have mentioned before how historically, there has been a degree of overlap between looking "western" and being a professional model. Needless to say, "mixed race" and white people are almost never represented among the *dokusha* models,<sup>73</sup> nor there were

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<sup>72</sup> A less influential magazine published for the same age cohort.

<sup>73</sup> An exception being those "Campus Report" articles that focused on the student body of universities that historically catered to "westerners", such as Sophia University and the

ever signs that pointed to them belonging to other ethnic minorities. This creates an image of the Japanese population that is consistent with the monoethnic (*tan'itsu minzoku*) discourse, and that has the effect of obfuscating the diversity within the country. This concealment is made even stronger by the fact that the boundary between the *dokusha* models and the *senzoku* models was at this point very thin.<sup>74</sup> Many of the models were themselves university students, and, as Sakamoto notes, none of them were “western” looking (Sakamoto 2019). According to former editor Ushiki Masaki, this was because they selected people “who would be felt as “rich” and “ladylike” (*ojousan*)” and who made the “normal clothes” introduced by the magazine look good (Sakamoto 2019, 256). The image of the “highly educated ‘uptown girl’” that the magazine was aiming for overlapped with the “above average” university students mentioned earlier by Tanaka Yasuo. While still maintaining some degree of separation from the masses, the *dokusha* models were a completely different genre from the professional models of the past, whose role was to embody an ideal of beauty far removed from everyday reality.

### 5.1.3 The construction of “Japaneseness”

The editorial decisions taken by magazines such as *JJ* and *CanCam* led to a re-centering on “Japaneseness”. In its initial phases, however, this was not a conscious decision, but rather an effect of the conflation of the “average” with a definite segment

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International Christian University.

<sup>74</sup> In the 1970s *JJ* did employ “mixed” models, some of whom also graced its cover. The often-seen cover of the first issue, for example, featured “mixed” model Yoshikawa Keren. However, they were completely gone from the magazine’s pages by the 1980s, and slowly started to return only by the 1990s. *CanCam*, on the other hand, was founded in 1982. Possibly because of *JJ*’s hegemonic influence, it never employed “mixed” models throughout the whole decade.

of the population.

In the pages of *JJ*, this “Japaneseness” was also constructed through an emphasis on the “natural”, which was considered to be a prerequisite of the elegant style that was the signature of the magazine. From the very first issue, the magazine stated their views on make-up with the following words:

*JJ* wants to assert: make-up has no meaning if it doesn’t make your smile beautiful. If it’s not your face, even if you wear make-up, it’s pointless. (*JJ* 1975-6, 52-53)<sup>75</sup>

The same could be said for hair permanents, which were to be approached with caution:

Even make-up and perms, which could be said to be the helpers of beauty, become enemies which ruin the beauty of healthy hair and skin if you get something wrong. (*JJ* 1980-4, 133)

*JJ*’s signature “*ojōsan*” style was also defined using the rhetoric of the “natural”. In an article from 1985, hairstylist Tanaka Chikashi stresses the importance of the basics:

If you say “young lady”, the age range gets limited a bit. If you raise the age a bit, other compliments such as “good woman” become more appropriate. In this sense, the [phase of the] lady is the first step in fashion, and it is [when] you should learn

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<sup>75</sup> Interestingly, the models that appear in this article are “mixed” – the visual discourses of the 1970s were still in full swing.

the basics. The basics do not change with the times, however by knowing them the efforts done to emphasize your own personality becomes a part of your charm. (JJ 1985-10, 40)

Hairstylist Okisasaki Noriyuki stresses the importance of emphasizing one's natural features:

This is something of an exaggeration, but you don't have to apply foundation, because if you lead a healthy life you shouldn't need it. Personally, I think that even the eyeshadow and lipstick should be of a color that it is hard to notice because it doesn't stand out. However, everyone has different colors that look good on them so you should make the effort to understand what works for you. Don't fixate too much on the eyes, draw your eyebrows in a natural way, [paint] the lips in an elegant way. Intelligence and elegance are important. (JJ 1985-10, 40)

This does not mean that one should avoid make-up altogether. Instead, what the magazine is suggesting is to maintain a delicate tension between the use of cosmetics and one's bare face. As explained by resident make-up artist Akaishi Naomi:

When I was little, I heard from someone that "the people who come from good families don't go out with their bare faces". Thinking about it now, they might have meant that it is important to dress properly, but I think that a distinction like that is important for ladylikeness. Of course, heavy make-up is not appropriate, it is enough to think about changing one's lipstick. However, putting too much work into making

up the eyes gives an impression of frivolity. (JJ 1985-10, 40)

This emphasis on the basics and “naturalness” goes hand in hand with the “normality” of the clothes that appeared on the magazine. As mentioned in the above citation, all these are characteristics of the clothing worn by the elites of the postindustrial capitalist societies: in other words, what is commonly known as the “preppy” style of fashion (Lingala 2013). It is also diametrically opposite to the western-influenced make-up styles that were popular in the previous decades, which, like the fashion that the media of the time championed, were supposed to be fashionable and distant from everyday reality (Suzuki 2021).

*CanCam* also vouched for natural beauty, although it did so from the slightly different angle of the male gaze. In its early years, the magazine published articles in which they asked male university students to evaluate their female peers’ fashion. Asked about what kind of hairstyle he liked, a university student from Keio University replied:

Subtle, natural hair is the best. I’d want [them] to avoid a hairstyle that is too artificial, that looks like the hair has been bullied. Even for men, it is obvious whether [women] are taking care of their hair or not. It’s odd how it feels like [women] with good hair also have a good character. (CanCam 1983-4, 63)

In the eyes of these boys, that natural image was conflated with precise gendered ideals. Another student says how he likes:

Absolutely semi-long hair. Long hair like the princesses of the past looks heavy, and

extremely short hair is a bit... It seems like there are many fans of the semi-long hairstyle among men. However, anything goes if it looks good (...). (CanCam 1983-4, 63)

It is evident how in both magazines the image of the female university student is not a pure descriptive representation, but it is a construction shaped by discourses of class and gender.

The first to consciously associate the visual styles created by *JJ* with Japan were those readers who had the opportunity to study or live abroad. See for example, this letter<sup>76</sup> written by a reader living in America that appeared in the January 1985 issue:

**Listen, whenever I show *JJ* to my friends, they are always surprised at how cute the clothes are, and they ask me “how do you order them?”.**

**(...) Japanese clothes have a nice design and are sewn well. I love them.**

Last year I was chosen as Best Dresser. Because of this, whenever I go back to Japan in the summer once a year, **my friends often say to me “Buy me the clothes on *JJ*!”.**

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<sup>76</sup> We can assume that the readers' opinions had, to some degree, received a “seal of approval” from the editorial staff – although we cannot establish for sure if that really means that the staff agreed or if they just believed them to be interesting enough to be worthy of publication. In any case, the magazine's “Mail box” section is very evidently a tightly controlled part of the magazine – although this happens in every publication, it is more evident than other similar spaces such as in *CanCam*. We can deduce this from the fact that all the letters are written following a similar pattern. They generally open with praise for the magazine, and often reference the themes that are dealt with in its pages: university life, work, marriage, diets, brand clothes, study abroad and travel. On the contrary, the contents seen on similar sections published in past and rival publications are more varied, sometimes to the point of randomness.

However, I always forget because I buy too many clothes for myself. (…)

**I have two more years until graduation, but I can't wait to enter Japanese university. I wonder if I'll appear on JJ when I'll go to university. I can't wait.** (JJ 1985-1, 326) <sup>77</sup>

What is implicit here is the comparison with America – Japan is no longer a “developing country”, its products are on the same level (if not better) than those made in the US.

This letter from 1987 also praises the quality of “made in Japan” clothes:

(…) However, what I miss right now are Japanese clothes!

In America, to save what they can on the price of manufacture they don't attach a lining and they don't even put zippers.

You have to wear the dresses from the head, and when you're in a hurry it's so hard.

Most clothes are of bad quality, and even the stitches are rough.

The quality and design of Japanese clothes is the best. Lately I truly think that next time, I want to go back to Japan to buy clothes.

It would be amazing if Japanese clothes were imported in America, like cars and electronic goods!

(…) Whenever I show JJ to my American friends, they are blown away by the quality of the content, the design of the clothes and the quality of the paper.

All Japanese products are amazing! (JJ 1987-10, 316)

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<sup>77</sup> Bold font applied by the author.

The late 1980s were a period in which there was much media attention on Japanese trade. The exports of the industries mentioned here, in particular, had increased drastically; the automobile exports in the US had risen in the late 1970s due to a combination of decreasing manufacturing costs in the previous decades and the effects of the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 (Ito and Hoshi 2020). The electronics industry, which had already had a steady presence among exports in the previous decades, became culturally influential in the 1980s, with products such as Sony's Walkman and Nintendo's video game hardware becoming defining cultural icons of the period. Iwabuchi (2007) notes how these products were "culturally odorless" – they were manufactured and sold by Japanese companies but were not necessarily recognized as culturally Japanese. The Japanese clothes introduced in *JJ* and *CanCam* were mostly from Japanese brands that focused on the domestic market, and it is likely that their products were not developed with the foreign market in mind.<sup>78</sup> However, they still had at least enough "cultural odor" to be picked up by these Japanese readers living abroad.

The following letter, also published in the January 1985 issue, comments on the differences between America and Japan:

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<sup>78</sup> In this they were quite different from the DC brands that appeared in *an-an* in the same years, which all showed their products in Paris and aimed for international recognition. In the previous chapter I have described how many designer brands actually relied on "Japaneseness" (= "cultural odor") in their design/marketing strategies. Even in those cases where it was not explicit at the level of say, patterns, like in the case of the innovative tailoring of Issey Miyake and Comme de Garçons, these innovative characteristics were still considered to be the byproduct of a "Japanese mind".

On the contrary, the "trad" style clothing of *JJ* was very "normal": design wise, it was probably considered to be not as different to the clothing you could find abroad, especially considering that it was directly influenced by English-American fashion.



(...) I am attending high school here. There is no uniform, so every day I have to think about what to wear. American girls are very flamboyant. And many of them don't look sixteen or seventeen. In Japan, they think I'm older and take me for an 18-year-old girl (because I like *JJ*).

However, since coming here, they think I'm younger than I am!? (I don't know if I should be happy or sad). The girls in the house where I'm doing my homestay said that *JJ* is cute when I showed it to them. I think that Japan is as good as America...

(JJ 1985-1, 326)

The last sentence perfectly sums up the above-mentioned nationalistic sentiments. She is also more overt in her comparisons between America and Japan.

This difference is noted also in a letter from the following year:

(...) I often feel that there is almost no cultural lag between Japan and America, however when it comes to fashion there indeed are some differences.

In America, even the most conservative of girls want to wear clothes in a sexy way, however Japanese girls seem to be hiding what they have inside through their clothes. American clothes are always bolder than those of Japan, and many of them are like a blank piece of paper hat you can change yourself. (...) (JJ 1986-10, 286)

The "peculiarity" of Japanese fashion trends was also noticed by those few readers that studied abroad in destinations that were not English-speaking, as seen in this letter published in the January 1986 issue:

(...) Brazil is on the opposite side of the earth when compared to Japan, and it's heading towards summer. However, there are many places that are warm all the year, so the fashion of Brazilian girls is always colorful and bold!

Even while thinking "I wouldn't wear these colors in Japan", here under the strong Brazilian sun, bright colors look very good. (...)

Whenever I show *JJ* to my Brazilian friends, they ask surprised: "Japanese students are always wearing these elegant clothes?". (*JJ* 1986-1, 310)

To summarize, these letters published in the "Mail box" section of *JJ* show how Japanese citizens that moved transnationally were active participants in the construction of "Japaneseness". In the process of relying their thoughts and observations, they focused on the differences between their study abroad destination and Japan, and singled out those characteristics that they believed to be particular about what is implied as being their home country. This focus on particularity and difference, rather than similarities and universality, is the mechanism that creates the idea of cultural specificity that forms the basis of cultural nationalist discourses such as the *Nihonjinron*. This association between "Japaneseness" and nationalism is indeed already present in the texts showed above, that often stress the positive foreign<sup>79</sup> reception of Japanese culture, here represented by the fashion trends showcased in the magazine. To once again

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<sup>79</sup> It is important to stress that "foreign" is here synonym with "western". This is of fundamental importance for the cultural nationalist discourse, as it is based on the assumption of a three-sided relationship between "the West", Japan, and "the rest" – the latter being overwhelmingly represented as other East and South-east Asian countries, but possibly including every so-called "developing nation" (See Iwabuchi 1994). This triangular scheme sees Japan as inferior to "the West" and superior to "the rest".

borrow the words of one of the readers cited above, they all agree with the fact that Japan is “as good as America”.

The readers living abroad helped make the connections between the cultural nationalism influenced image of “Japaneseness” and the visual images created by the magazine(s). At the same time, racialized discourses about the “Japanese body”, which described its characteristics in scientific-sounding terms, were being kept alive in sections such as the beauty advice columns.

Both in *JJ* and in *CanCam*, the advice given in these sections was often validated by the invocation of science, through the use of language and the appearance of technical advisors. The topics covered are broad, ranging from diets and body-shaping exercises to methods for dealing with sweat and instructions for choosing the right shoes. What they all have in common is the centrality of the body, which is seen as a vessel that can be molded to achieve the best version of oneself.

The logic of self-improvement that is behind these sections is nicely summarized in the articles that deal with diets. Self-control is generally represented in a positive light as one of the driving factors behind success. This “beauty labor”, however, had to be grounded in knowledge about what needed to be changed. Because of the impossibility of giving personalized advice, these columns often rely on generalization; this includes giving information on what is often seen among the Japanese.

The following statements are excerpts from *JJ*'s beauty advice segment, taken from different issues.

**The Japanese** are said to have a terrible walk. If you don't keep the right posture and don't walk in the correct way, there are no positive effects from walking. (JJ 1981-8,

162)

Whites and Blacks have a strong body odor. **Belonging to the Mongolian race, the Japanese** are said to be close to odorless, but roughly 10% of them have a slight smell like the foreigners. (JJ 1983-8, 183)

Among the effects of ultraviolet rays, the scariest is that it becomes easy to contract skin cancer. However, this is only true for white people, and **the yellow races, such as the Japanese** have almost zero reasons to worry. (JJ 1985-4, 200)

In Europe and America there are many people who even if they have a bigger bust, have slim legs. However, **in the case of the Japanese**, if the body starts accumulating unnecessary fat, the legs inevitably become bigger. (···) Many Japanese have O-shaped legs. This is also one of the reasons that legs become ugly so be careful. (JJ 1986-1, 201)

**The hair of the Japanese** is thick and hard compared to that of foreigners; straight hair suits this hair type. If you pour water on hair that hasn't been dyed or bleached, the water is repelled, and it dries slowly. (JJ 1986-8, 187)

The color of the teeth of almost every Japanese is said to be ivory. This is because the color of the teeth changes according to the quantity of melanin. **This means that the teeth of the Americans, who are of the white race, are naturally white, and if the Japanese, who are of the yellow race, aspire to them, it's nothing but asking for the**

**moon.** Of course, just as the color of the skin is different among the Japanese, there is a range of individual difference for the ivory of the teeth as well. (JJ 1990-1, 200)<sup>80</sup>

It immediately jumps to the eye how the subject of all of the above sentences is “the Japanese”. In this type of discourse about the body, the inhabitants of Japan are grouped together irrespectively of inter-group differences. These discourses also do not keep into account the presence of minorities, who are made invisible. This use of “the Japanese” as a monolithic category is none other than a rhetorical device of Japanese ethno-nationalism (*nihonjinron*).

As in the letters analyzed above, the particularity of “Japaneseness” is often constructed through the juxtaposition with different races, ethnicities and nationalities. It comes to no surprise that in most of these passages there is some sort of comparison with “foreigners” (*gaijin*), whose identity is at times made explicit through the words “Euro-America” (*ōbei*), Americans (*amerikajin*), white people (*hakujin*) and Black people (*kokujin*).<sup>81</sup>

While the “Japaneseness” constructed in the readers’ letters was first and foremost a *cultural* notion, the “Japaneseness” seen in these advice columns is more explicitly a *racial* notion. As demonstrated by the use of words such as white/Black (*hakujin/kokujin*), “yellow race” (*ōshoku jinshu*) and even “Mongolian race” (*mokō jinshu*)<sup>82</sup>, they reference ideas of race as a biological notion. This invocation of race,

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<sup>80</sup> Bold font applied by the author.

<sup>81</sup> Although Black people are included in the catch-all category that the word “*gaijin*” can become, white “western” people are taken more often as the term of comparison.

<sup>82</sup> The inclusion of “the Japanese” into the “Asian” racial category is somewhat contradictory with the logic of *Nihonjinron*, which strives to separate Japan from the rest of east Asia.

which is not often mentioned so clearly in other contexts, might perhaps be explained by the “scientific”, logic-based rhetoric adopted in the articles.

Similar passages appeared on the pages of *CanCam* as well:

**The skin of Japanese women is much more sensitive than the skin of whites.** Most foreign make-up products are tested on white skin, so be careful when you bring them back as a souvenir. However, when it comes to perfumes and *eau de cologne*, if you don’t use them directly on the skin there is nothing to worry about. Also, the foreign brands that make their products in Japan research and test them so that they work with Japanese skin, so you can use them without worrying. (CanCam 1985-1, 141)

Doesn’t it come from the fact that, as one might expect, **the thigh muscles are much less developed in the Japanese than in the people of Europe and America?** (CanCam 1985-8, 40)

However, a **characteristic of the Japanese** is that the calves are inevitably fat, and that they are short from the knee below. (CanCam 1986-4, 191)

They say that there are many people with O-shaped legs among the Japanese, but there are very few people whose bones are actually curved. Most people have unnecessary fat on the external side of the legs, and this looks like an O-shape. This is

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However, this is balanced out by the fact that the rest of east Asia is almost never taken into consideration. Even in those segments where other east Asian nationalities are mentioned, the text stresses differences rather than similarities.

the result of a wrong, sloppy way of walking. (CanCam 1988-10, 188)<sup>83</sup>

Unlike those seen in *JJ*, the beauty advice columns of *CanCam* tend to be structured as a conversation between professionals and laymen, often represented by people recruited from the audience. Because of this, they tend to have less of that scientific-sounding tone that we have observed in the excerpts taken from *JJ*, and this, in turn, leads to the disappearance of any explicit mention of the concept of race. Nevertheless, it is evident that the above passages are part of the same discursive formation that racializes the “Japanese” body by eliminating internal differences and making it a singular, essentialized entity and comparing this construction with the “foreign” (that is, white and “western”) body, which is seen as inherently different.

To summarize, “Japaneseness” was implicitly constructed on the pages of *JJ* and *CanCam* through an association of the models with the concept of “natural beauty”. This image was in turn explicitly recognized as “Japanese” by the readers who had transnational experiences in mostly English-speaking, “western” countries such as the United States. At the same time, the beauty advice columns of both magazines presented a more explicitly racialized image of the “Japanese” body, which was constructed through generalization, unambiguous references to the pseudoscientific notion of race in the biological sense and comparison to the inherently different, racialized body of the “foreigner”, often a stand-in for the “western” white body.

Now that we have established the processes through which the image of the majority was constructed, it is time to move on to the representation of the people who, because

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<sup>83</sup> Bold font applied by the author.

of their phenotypical characteristics, could not/would not have been inscribed into the “Japanese” category.

#### 5.1.4 Foreigners and “mixed race” people

Unlike the fashion magazines of the past, both *JJ* and *CanCam*’s fashion pages only featured models that could be read as “Japanese”. This meant that “foreign-looking” white and mixed models no longer appeared in the magazine’s most important content. However, this does not mean that “foreign-looking” people had disappeared altogether. As we will see below, foreign models were still quite represented in advertising: the commercials of the 1980s tended to feature either “Japanese-looking” models or “foreign-looking” white or Black models. The demand for “mixed race” models, however, had likely decreased, as they were not nearly as present as in the previous decades.

The “mixed race” professional model might have now been a thing of the past, but that did not mean that “mixed race” people were completely gone from the mediascape. Their presence was reduced to big-name celebrities such as actors Kusakari Masao (see chapter 3) and Haga Kenji (who debuted in 1981), disc jockeys and radio personalities like John Kabira and Michael Tomioka, sportspeople such as Suzuki Aguri as well as *tarento* like Mari Christine and Marianne.

Sometimes, their media appearances reflected tropes that had already been established in the 1960s. There is the case of an introductory article about Haga Kenji that appeared on *JJ*, which showcases his personal life history in a way that is reminiscent of the type that painted the “tragic *hāfu*”.



It could be said that for him, that is, for Haga Kenji, it was a fight with the stigma of the *konketsuji*. He closed his long-lashed eyelids as if to squeeze out the past, while saying that the years up until middle school were the worst. When he was in the second year of elementary school, he transferred from a school in the base to a local elementary school. Only speaking Okinawan and English, he soon became the target of the children's bullying.

“Children have no fault, but they are the cruelest, right. Also, the land of Okinawa was under the control of America after the war, so there was even more discrimination towards *konketsuji*. From elementary school to middle school, it was fight after fight. I would often come home covered in blood.”

(…) In the first year of middle school, they made fun of the fact that he didn't have a father and that my mom was a sex worker, and after a big fight he was stabbed in the leg with a kitchen knife. For this 174-centimeter-tall boy with an exotic face, these were surely not just fights but battles for survival. His mother was a sex worker to provide for him, and he himself earned his school fees by delivering the newspaper from the second year of elementary school all the way to his high school graduation.

(JJ 1984-4, 206-207)

The text juxtaposes the tragic elements of Haga's life, such as his identity troubles, the bullying he experienced at school and his family's financial hardships with sentences that highlight his beautiful appearance. In doing so, they link two different tropes associated with “mixed race” people: the “tragic *hāfu*” character type and the stereotype that “mixed race” individuals are endowed with physical beauty. Indeed, his attractiveness is associated with his ethnic background; long eyelashes, beyond average

height and an “exotic” face are all markers associated with the stereotypical image of the “beautiful *hāfu*”.

We will later see how the representation of other celebrities points to the emergence of a new trope related to “mixed race” people. Mari Christine and John Kabira, for example, appear as people who are fluent in both languages, and that consequently have the ability of moving with dexterity between Japanese and “foreign” (that is, American) culture. Mari Christine held for two years her own column on *JJ*, where she would give tips on international travel. This included introducing foreign customs, her experiences abroad, as well as some simple sentences for English daily conversation. She thus acts as a bridge between the readers and the world outside of Japan.

## 5.2 1988 to 1990: “Japanese” versus “foreigners” in the *kokusaika* period

The later years of the 1980s are known for being the period of Japan’s economic bubble, a period that culturally was characterized by excesses never seen before. During this period, there were dramatic discursive shifts in the self-perception of the country, as well as its relationship with the United States, Europe, and the “rest of the world”. These processes were kickstarted by an event that is often cited as being one of the pivotal occurrences that led to the forming of the asset bubble: the Plaza Accord of 1985. In particular, it is the appreciation of the yen that followed that lowered the bar required to enjoy leisure activities such as international traveling and the consumption of foreign goods. These had once been available only to the more privileged sectors of society. By the end of the decade, they had become easily accessible for the general population as well.

The driving factor behind the Plaza Accord was a growing trade deficit between Japan and the United States, who considered the former’s economic prosperity to have been caused by unfair labor practices (Kingston 2013). It was believed that by allowing the yen to gain value, the volume of Japanese imports was bound to decrease – this, however, did not happen, and the deficit kept rising. Japan came out unscathed from the stock market crashes of 1987. However, it became under pressure to keep growing in order to rescue other economies from economic recession, and this led to a situation in which access to capital was made significantly easier (Kingston 2013). This, in turn, created the asset bubble, which lasted until 1991.

During the 1980s exports dramatically increased, making Japan’s economy one of the biggest of the world – at its highest point in 1993, Japan’s GDP factored for 18% of the global GDP (Ministry of Trade, Economy and Industry 2020). It follows that the

operations of globally oriented Japanese firms, such as those in the automotive and electronics industry were under the spotlight. Accordingly, the demand for people who possessed the cultural know-how to navigate “international” settings grew. Even in the previous decades, there had been a certain prestige associated with the ability to communicate with the rest of the world, especially when this meant having the ability of navigating the richer and culturally central spaces of the “west”. During the 1980s, there was an intensification of this dynamic; as the sons and daughters of the Japanese workers who had pioneered the internationalization of their companies were now returning to the country as adults, there was now an increased familiarity with (the idea of) biculturalism. At the same time, bicultural Japanese were often seen as being “different”; whether this difference was glamorized or demonized depended on the context in which it was encountered in. Be it through travel or through temporary relocations, the encounters with the “foreign” were said to have an impact on the Japanese parties involved. This, in turn, highlighted the boundaries of “Japaneseness”.

The internationalization of Japan was also being carried “from the inside”; economic prosperity meant that the country had now been placed on the map as an attractive destination for immigration. From the late 1980s Japan had to grapple with the question of multiculturalism, which was being posed by both “newcomers”<sup>84</sup> and “oldcomers”<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>84</sup> The term “newcomers” refers to the foreigners who arrived in Japan after 1980 and it is used to differentiate them from the people who settled in the country as a result of Japan’s colonial enterprises.

<sup>85</sup> In the 1980s, there were numerous advancements in the field of minority rights in Japan. Permanent residency was extended to the people originally from Taiwan and Korea. In the case of the latter, permanent residency was already allowed to those who had chosen to take South Korean nationality after the war, but it was precluded to those who did not choose to do so (referred in Japanese as *chōsenseki*). Furthermore, inclusion into the social welfare

The influx of foreigners was also reflected in media, with the coming of a second “*gaijin tarento*” boom, with names such as Dave Spector among the ones who debuted in this period.

At the same time, the confrontation with the foreign worked as a stimulus to reflect on the nature of “Japan”. We have seen how this process had already begun at the grassroots level in the first half of the decade; towards the end of the 1980s, the nationalistic discourses commonly known as *nihonjinron* delved into the mainstream. This phenomenon manifested itself in different ways. On the political level, discourses of Japanese superiority such as those proposed in novelist-turned-politician Ishihara Shintaro’s book *No to ieru Nihon* (The Japan that can say No, 1989) broke into the mainstream. On the everyday level, there was a renewed interest in the consumption of Japanese products; while this carried some similarities with the increased interest towards “traditional Japan” that had been a characteristic of the “*an-non*” boom of the 1970s, the interest in the local was now grounded in the perception that the quality of Japanese products was good, and they were more suited to the “Japanese”. It was no longer a matter of appreciating Japan through a western gaze.

During the 1980s, Japan started to acquire cultural relevance on the world stage. This, on the other hand, allowed media discourses to reposition the center from the “foreign” towards the “national”. This does not mean that foreigners disappeared from Japanese media, but the contrary. The “foreigners inside” – those who lived in Japan and had enough cultural and linguistic proficiency to carve their own niche in Japanese society –

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system was no longer dependent on having Japanese nationality. At the same time, issues such as the status of third generation *Zainichi* Koreans were being debated and would not be resolved until the 1990s.

became a media spectacle of their own. At the same time, the “west” kept being a big source of attraction, especially for the Japanese young women who longed for independence and professional success. In between the global and the local, figures such as the *kikoku shijo* and the occasional “mixed race” personality, represented a new kind of Japanese citizen who easily crossed national boundaries. In the following section, we will tackle the discourses surrounding the “national” and the “foreign” by looking at processes of international mobility, such as overseas travel and study abroad.

#### 5.2.1 *Kokusaika*: Japan’s internationalization

During the later years of the Showa era (1926-1989), the ideology of internationalization (*kokusaika*) reached the popular masses. Iwabuchi argues that *kokusaika* had been a government-created slogan issued in 1970. In this context, the term could be taken to mean “a Japanese version of the discourse of globalization” (Iwabuchi 1994, 65). Iwabuchi also stresses how the government-sponsored ideal of internationalization was inseparable from nationalism, since its ultimate function was to promote the interests of the large Japanese international companies that had gained a significant status in the globalized economy (Iwabuchi 1994).

However, *kokusaika* manifested in a starkly different way in the everyday life of Japanese citizens. Clammer notes how its “practice, insofar as it exists, takes place mostly through consumption activities – eating in restaurants that specialize in ‘ethnic’ foods, consuming foreign products, and learning (or pretending to learn) foreign languages, especially English” (Clammer 1997, 5). Similarly, according to Mouer and Sugimoto, “most people could not point to [the meaning that *kokusaika* had for them], although they associated it with various means of achieving *kokusaika*, such as ‘learning

English', 'learning about foreign countries' or 'stop behaving like an economic animal'" (Mouer and Sugimoto 1986, 380).

In practice, for most people *kokusaika* meant an internationalization of their consumerist choices and lifestyle experiences. In the next chapter, we will look at a phenomenon that is representative of this process: the increase in international mobility, both in the long and short term.

### 5.2.2 Crossing the border: from international travel to studying abroad

The 1970s had seen the resurgence of tourism; domestic travel, in particular, became a popular activity among young people, and for the first time, young women were traveling on their own without the companionship of family or partners. In the following decade, sightseeing was as popular as ever: the destinations, however, had changed from being predominantly domestic to international. The 1985 Plaza Accord made the yen stronger than foreign currencies, and thus it made it easier for people to travel abroad rather cheaply, but even before that, we can observe an interest in international travel. By 1981, the number of travelers who left Japan for sightseeing purposes was over 3 million, up fivefold from 1971 (Immigration Services Agency 2023). The process of popularizing of outbound destinations that had begun with the liberalization of airway travel in the mid-1960s was now complete.

On the pages of fashion magazines, international travel was often tied to consumerist practices such as obtaining perfumes, make-up and luxury brand items. In the early 1980s there was already mention of readers having bought the products they introduced when they were traveling abroad. In 1985, an article on *JJ* defined "brand bags that you cannot find in Japan" as the must-have accessory of the *ojō-san*. From the year before it

had been publishing advice columns on how to effectively shop outside of the country. Around 1986 and 1987, both *JJ* and *CanCam* sent their models on trips in foreign countries: once again, shopping occupied a large part of the articles.

By the late 1980s, the image of Japanese young women lining up in the luxury fashion stores of destinations such as Hawaii was an established trope. The readers themselves noticed a difference in attitude between them and their younger siblings, as demonstrated by the following excerpt from a letter published in 1988:

Some time ago on *JJ* there was an article called “*JJ* models’ private shopping unveiled, shopping travel in Hong Kong”. At the time, I read it while thinking “So nice that they can go to Hong Kong…” “It’s a bit of another world? I’m envious…”. However, now my sister ended up saying “I want to look at it [to plan my trip], where was it again?”.  
(*JJ* 1988-10)

At the same time, these young women were starting to become targets of criticism and ridicule. In an article from 1987, pop singer Anri is quoted as saying how proud she is that her favorite places in Hawaii are not touristic, as she recounts how a Louis Vuitton store in the state had to be closed because of the sheer number of Japanese tourists who visited. She comments, slightly judgmentally, how she understands their feelings, but there are many interesting, less known shops (*CanCam* 1987-8, 243). The vitriol towards these young women would further increase in the following years as the numbers of Japanese tourists abroad were steadily rising.

For example, the 1989-8 issue of *JJ* featured a discussion between comedian Lasalle Ishii and advertising director Kawasaki Tōru about the manners of Japanese tourists



abroad. In the article, the two listed some examples of bad manners:

- They act loud in groups. The Japanese have an especially loud voice.
- Maybe because of the comfort that comes from being in a group, all the people of the group end up taking away the forks and knives of the airplane.
- They take a lot of pictures, even in places where it is forbidden by the law.
- They do not respect the queue. For example, when they are at the front office in the hotel, they ask “where is the bank?” without thinking too much even if the person in front of them is asking something to the staff.
- They don’t think about time, place and occasion when choosing clothes.
- In restaurants, they don’t wait for the staff to take them to the seats and go straight away.
- They spend a lot of money without restraint to buy branded goods in famous stores. They take the products from the shelves on their own. (JJ 1989-8, 232)

Many of these behaviors were associated with young women. For example, it was mostly them who rushed into famous brand stores – it is thus likely that the reader, when told about a Japanese person who behaves badly in expensive stores, would have imagined a girl in her twenties. The same goes for the remark about clothes: Ishii follows up by commenting how all the Japanese women he saw in New York had the same attire – *bodycon*, that is, tight fitting clothing, and *wanren* (long, black hair trimmed to the same length). This was seen as unoriginal and perhaps even a little bit silly when compared to the women of New York, who were all wearing different clothes (JJ 1989-8).

Surprisingly, the statement about pictures is also a remark about female tourists. Ishii cites an unusual photo spot whose appeal the locals struggle to understand: singer Go Hiromi's apartment in New York. It was of course his female fans that would stop in front of what was otherwise an unremarkable building to snap a picture (JJ 1989-8).

Ironically, the article itself is not necessarily convincing the readers to acquire the most impeccable travel manners: towards the end, Kawasaki criticizes those Japanese permanent residents and returnees who criticize the tourists in order to assume an air of superiority. Ishii follows up by saying that "you shouldn't cause trouble to the locals but enjoying the friction [caused by the differences between the Japanese tourists and the local foreigners] is one of the real treasures of traveling" (JJ 1989-8, 234). Yet at the same time, the article certainly does not go out of its way to disassemble the image of the childish and insensitive young female tourist that had been constructed by Ishii's recollections.

Columnist Ishihara Machiko paints a similar negative picture in her January 1990 piece titled "Be patient and smile with Japanese customers!?" (JJ 1990-1, 143). The phrase used in the title is, according to the author, used as a slogan in certain American stores, and it reflects the fact that the Japanese customers pay well, but their manners are quite bad. Once again, the ill-mannered tourists are described as:

Four girls that are still wearing *bodycon*. They have occupied the accessory section, and are taken by the evaluation of the goods, which they take into their hands and take out one after another. They look like middle school students walking around Takeshita Street. (JJ 1990-1, 143)

The tourists are described as childish, rude, and behind the times – still wearing *bodycon* even though it is out of fashion. Not only that, but they are also the kind of people who act kind to foreigners and look down on Japanese people.

As had been the case in the 1960s, the media both enticed and chastised the women who, for a reason or another, were drawn to the “foreign”. As more women traveled abroad, there was renewed attention on those women who had a strong fascination for the Euro-centric west, to the point of desiring to establish themselves in Euro-America and/or having strong preferences for foreign, often white, men when seeking romantic relationships. In a column published on *CanCam*, writer Watanabe Kazuhiro calls this group of women “foreigner-blood” (*kecchū gaijin*), referring to the fact that they were “Japanese outside and foreigners on the inside” (Cancam 1991-4, 242). Watanabe himself draws comparisons with the women who in the aftermath of the war married American soldiers and came back to Japan boasting about the comforts of American life, unaware of the fact that life in their native country had become just as comfortable. The foreigner wannabe he talks about in the article is Yoshimoto Yumiko, a young vocational school student he met in the Suginami area of Tokyo. Her desire for the west was so strong it reflected on her outward appearance; the author even wondered if she was mixed.

Basically, Yoshimoto (···) was a very foreign-looking (*batakusai*) person, but she was born in Tokyo. When she was in high school, she thought that she could stay in Japan and become an office worker. When she was in her second year of high school, she did a home stay over there [in America] and thought that she wanted to leave her Japanese high school (a girls’ school) and stay there forever. After coming back to

Japan, she became one of those “Americanful people” that keep saying “America, America” for everything: America is better, life there is more open, it’s [like] family, and so on. (Cancam 1991-4, 242)

When trying to understand what made her want to go abroad so badly, the writer assumed three things: she must either have been molested by Japanese men, have had a difficult family situation or have been unpopular. However, all of these assumptions proved to be false. After having pried into her sentimental relationships, which included a three-month liaison with an American Navy officer, he resorted to asking the girl directly why she wanted to go abroad, to which she replied that:

“I don’t really know, but I want to try speaking English” (···) “White people have something that I don’t have”. (Cancam 1991-4, 242)

The article closes with the following remarks:

After hearing that, I thought it was best to stop asking. I was once like that as well: young people act without reason. If anything, if she stays in Japan, she wouldn’t be able to meet what she doesn’t have, and it’s best for Japanese boys too if she’s not here. I thought it was best for her to stay there and not come back until she was around 24 years old. (Cancam 1991-4, 242)

Anthropologist Karen Kelsky’s book *Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams* studies precisely the life narratives of women such as Yoshimoto. According to

Kelsky, these women's strong desire (*akogare*) for the "west" – a feeling that could in no way be considered politically progressive or subversive – is in no small part a consequence of the oppressive and patriarchal nature of the Japanese society (Kelsky 2006). Indeed, media portrayals of Europe and America gave the impression of liberal and egalitarian societies, free from the suffocating structures that pervaded Japanese society. We can see this perception in Yoshimoto's words too, when she says that "life over there is open". However, the writer approaches her while rooted in his own prejudices, and eventually dismisses her actions as nonsensical and driven by the lack of rationality typical of youth. The desire for the "west" of these young women was at the same time exploited by the various industries that made a profit out of it and scorned by the male-dominated cultural elite.

The 1980s also saw a sharp rise in the number of Japanese people who studied abroad; more than 14,000 people left the country to study in 1981 compared with only around 5,700 ten years before (Ministry of Trade, Economy and Industry 2020). We have seen how this was reflected in *JJ*'s "Mail box" section, that often published letters from readers who were studying abroad. However, study abroad experiences were not nearly as represented in *CanCam*'s correspondence pages; it is likely that in the first half of the 1980s only a select few were able to afford to study in a foreign country. This will change towards the end of the decade; in 1989, the number of people who left the country to study abroad passed the hundred-thousand mark. Around the same time, both magazines started to publish in-depth articles about studying abroad. *JJ* published two articles on studying abroad in the April and August issues of 1990. The former introduced various forms of study abroad options, ranging from shorter language-focused stays to more intensive university courses (*JJ* 1990-4, 227-231). The latter,

titled “Study abroad for self-improvement”, focused more on full-fledged experiences, such as university and technical school degrees (JJ 1990-8). *CanCam* had also published an article on a similar subject the year before (CanCam 1989-1) and interviewed 90 people who had experience studying abroad for the August 1990 issue (Cancam 1990-8).

From the articles emerged that studying abroad was very a popular topic among the magazines’ readers. The young women interested in the more intensive programs tended to do so in order to obtain new skills that they could put to use in the workplace (CanCam 1989-1), but it was not uncommon for studying abroad to be an extension of a leisure trip (JJ 1990-4). Nevertheless, both magazines tended to encourage the readers to “use the opportunity to expand [their] horizons” and “make plans that won’t make [them] regretful” (JJ 1990-4, 227). Although development in the telecommunication sector had gone a long way, going abroad was no easy task to undertake in the years before the internet, and reading the experiences of other people who had already departed was likely reassuring.

The information provided by these students often focused on practical aspects such as living expenses, accommodation, food and culture. However, it sometimes happened to see mentions of the racial discrimination to which the Japanese students abroad were subjected to, as well as their overcoming of their own prejudices towards other races.

To summarize, the 1980s were a decade that saw increased international mobility, both in the form of leisure and for study purposes. The young women who were reading *JJ* and *CanCam* were active participants in this phenomenon. Their transnational movements were often motivated by a perceived lack in the roles they could obtain in Japanese society, where the possibilities to flourish were considered to be more limited. At the same time, as we have previously seen, these experiences with the foreign were

fundamental in shaping the image of “Japan” and “Japaneseness”.

### 5.2.3 “Mixed race” Japanese and *kikoku shijo* (returnees) as the model international citizens

The government’s idea of internationalization, centered on advancing the global presence of the most well-known Japanese firms, increasingly called for workers who would be able to bridge the cultural and linguistic differences between Japan and “the west”. This led to the re-evaluation of the position of two “minority” groups: “mixed race” people and the “*kikoku shijo*”.<sup>86</sup>

An example of this new social positionality afforded to certain “mixed race” individuals is seen in John Kabira’s interview with *CanCam* (Can-Cam 1989-8, p. 151). The son of an Okinawan television producer and an American woman, at the time of the interview he was working as a disc jockey for the J-wave radio station. Because of his language proficiency, acting as an intermediary between Japan and the rest of the world became at times an integral part of his job. The interviewer promptly asks him about his English-speaking abilities: first, they ask how he learned it, to which he replies that “unfortunately [for the reader]” he was born with it. He then asks other questions, such as the circumstances in which he uses English and Japanese, and how does it feel to switch between the two languages. This attention to “mixed race” people’s foreign language speaking abilities is nowadays a popular trope, and it is often rebuked by “mixed race” people themselves, since there is no causal relationship between one’s ethnicity and speaking the language associated with it. The interviewer’s attitude

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<sup>86</sup> Hereafter without commas.

reflects the increasing attention that “internationalization” (*kokusaika*) was receiving at the time. If in the early 1980s communicating with foreigners was mostly presented as a useful skill to have in order to engage in leisure activities such as shopping and travel, in the later years of the decade it becomes a necessary skill to have in order to be the kind of world-minded citizen that the country, at the height of its international influence, prized the most.

The term *kikoku shijo* (returnees) refers to the sons and daughters of Japanese expatriates, who have spent some part of their formative years abroad. Iwabuchi defines the *kikoku shijo* as representing an “internal threat” for Japan’s homogeneity (Iwabuchi 1994). He explains how returnees had been singled out by the media as a “social problem” in the 1970s, as their “excessively westernized” manners made it difficult for them to assimilate in the Japanese classroom. Nevertheless, the situation changed quite drastically since the discourses of internationalization started taking steam, and they gradually became the ideal candidates for becoming the agents of globalization that Japanese companies were looking for (ibid). Associated with creativity and English proficiency, being a *kikoku shijo* became a glamorizing status.

Writer Shinagawa Ryo, himself a returnee, describes the *kikoku shijo* image with the following words:

Either way, there is a shared perception of the characteristics of the “*kikoku shijo*” being the lack of consideration for the particular “social relationships” of “Japanese culture”.

By the way, what “language” are they “very good at”? (···) When one thinks of the common international language, it is unmistakably English. Therefore, one might say,



isn't English the language that "*kikoku shijo*" are good at? (Shinagawa 2017, 5-6)

He then continues to explain how in reality there is a considerable variation among the *kikoku shijo*, depending on which country they have been stationed to, for how long, and how well they have integrated into the host society. This variety leads him to divide the *kikoku shijo* into two groups. On the one hand there are those who possess prized characteristics such as bilingualism and life experience in "western", possibly English-speaking countries; they would very well fit into the category of "global citizen" mentioned above when discussing "mixed" people. On the other hand, there are those who have none of these traits; they can only speak Japanese and have lived in countries that are of little interest to the average person because of the lack of glamorization by the media, such as the so-called "developing countries".<sup>87</sup>

The most famous *kikoku shijo* celebrity is likely *idol* singer Hayami Yu, who was scouted in Hawaii in 1980 and debuted in as an *idol* singer two years later, after having returned to her native Japan by herself. Radio DJ and columnist Chappy Kato writes about Hayami's most popular song *Natsuiro no Nancy*:

In the middle of this song, there is a part with an English chorus, but Hayami complained about it. "The grammar of this sentence does not make sense in English".

At the time, it was unheard of for idols to have an opinion. However, for Hayami, who was raised in Hawaii and was educated under the American system, it was normal to

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<sup>87</sup> In a similar way, attention to the intersectional nature of identity, and to the way in which a person's background might be received differently from society, is often given in the context of "mixed race" studies and activism as well. See Iwabuchi (2015), Shimoji (2018).

say that “what is wrong is wrong”. Her opinion was taken into consideration, and the lyrics were changed to a natural-sounding English [phrase] that she came up with. (Chappy Kato 2023, 36)

Hayami’s image was also constructed to reflect her upbringing. Kato notes how in the Coca-Cola advertisement where the song was used, she looks like “a free American with Japanese looks” (ibid). In the commercial, Hayami is seen running through the beach in a swimsuit and going around on roller-skates while wearing short shorts.

At times, ordinary people were also allowed media appearances in virtue of their experience as a *kikoku shijo*.

In 1986, *JJ* published an article titled “The stylebook of overseas returnees” (*Kikoku shijo no sutairubukku*), where it introduced the lifestyle of two female university students who had spent parts of their life abroad. The article positions the two *kikoku shijo* as possessing the best of the two worlds, a natural result of the exposure to the “foreign” during their youth.

The things learned when one is small, the habits one has acquired, they are not easily forgotten. Even more so when they are foreign. The *kikoku shijo* with their somehow different aura. How did they cultivate the bases of their lifestyle and their point of view? We reported their active life, which takes the good parts of [both] Japan and foreign countries. (*JJ* 1986-11, 223)

Needless to say, the two interviewees come from extremely privileged backgrounds. They are shown enjoying pastimes such as horse riding, golf and tennis. In this, they

blend in well with the image of the *ojōsan* that was central to the symbolic world constructed in *JJ*'s pages. Indeed, in an era in which language abilities were starting to be perceived as a useful tool, particularly for women, to climb the social ladder, the *kikoku shijo* possessed “something” that differentiated them from birth. As the mother of one of the interviewees mentions, “it is not enough to have your English understood; to actually blend in with [the people] over there, you have to start from when you’re little” (JJ 1986-11, 225). This intangible cultural capital was inseparable from the socio-economic capital acquired through belonging to the upper class.

The article “It’s somehow different – the style and upbringing of the *kikoku* BOYS” (*Dokoka chigau — kikoku BOYS no sodachi to sensu*), which was published in the August 1989 issue of *JJ*, is another example of media representation of the *kikoku shijo* (JJ 1989-8, 149-151). The titular boys are presented as attractive ideal partners that possess an impeccable sense of style because of their transnational upbringing. Each of them introduces a part of their lifestyle: not only clothes and accessories, but also leisure venues such as restaurants and clubs. They also briefly mention their experiences abroad; it is no coincidence that all of them but one had returned from English-speaking “western” countries, such as America, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. The image constructed through this article is one of wealth and excellence, traits that fit nicely with the image of the upwardly mobile global citizen of a newly “internationalizing” Japan.

Strictly speaking, the *kikoku shijo* are not subjected to the processes of racialization. However, their proximity to the “foreign” has the effect of highlighting the perception of “Japaneseness”. While their Japanese nationality cannot be denied, the way their life experience is represented and consumed makes it clear that there are elements that do

not align with the shared image of “the Japanese”. In the next section, we will once again turn to the construction of “Japaneseness”, a process that was now even more explicitly entangled with the relationships that the country entertained with the rest of the world.

#### 5.2.4 The Japan that can say “NO”

Iwabuchi points out how Japan’s internationalization was tightly linked to nationalism – and how this nationalism involved the self-exoticization of an imagined past (Iwabuchi 1994).

We have seen how the first experiments with self-exoticism happened in the early 1970s, with the self-orientalistic gaze of the early *an-an*, which earnestly tried to reconstruct the fashionable atmospheres associated with France. This was reflected in the adapting of an external, “western” perspective when depicting Japan; instead of showing the bustling, “modern” streets of Tokyo, the white-adjacent models of the magazine would go to the countryside, exploring a side of “Japan” that was seemingly stuck in a different temporal dimension, but represented the country’s “authentic” spirit, untainted by westernized modernity. The same concepts were being developed by the National Railways’ (*Nihon Kokuyū Tetsudō*, often abbreviated to *kokutetsu*) influential “Discover Japan” campaign.

Fourteen years later, *Kokutetsu* launched another similar campaign – this time with the catchphrase “Exotic Japan”. The concept was similar; to look at Japan, the country where the audience was born and raised, as if it was a foreign country – to see its exoticism. In the commercial, the actress is portrayed in front of a *mandala*, staring at a buddha statue that gradually starts to shine. The copy, “I met Indian gods on Mount

Koya”, exoticizes a location that has a strong association with one of the most famous Buddhist monks of Japanese history, Kūkai, by underlining the foreign origins of the religion.

Comparing the two campaigns, Iwabuchi notes how in contrast with the “Discover Japan” campaign:

(...) 'Exotic Japan' was written in katakana as 'ekizochikku japan'. Katakana is square Japanese syllables used mainly for words borrowed from foreign languages. The use of katakana both signifies an indigenisation of the foreign and marks a difference from Japanese tradition. Katakana-written "japan" signifies that "Japan" has indigenised westernisation to an extent that there is no longer a traditional Japan anywhere. (Iwabuchi 1994, 70-71)

The “westernized modernity” represented by the “mixed” models of the “Discover Japan” campaign has become the norm so much that there is no need to make it explicit through the use of the racialized body as a signifier. Instead, the “Exotic Japan” campaign tries to establish a link between “exotic foreign-ness” (represented through the signifier of the “Indian gods”, thus evoking an image of exoticism that is rooted in a western-centric point of view) and “traditional Japaneseness”, reversing the commonplace notion that only through the encounter with the “foreign” one’s “authentic identity” becomes apparent. Encountering the “authentic Japan” of the past becomes a way to experience the foreign.

This mirror-like relationship between Japan and the foreign, most often associated with the “west”, could be considered one of the leitmotifs of the late 1980s. One

manifestation of this phenomenon is the newly appeared wave of Japan-centric nationalist thought, represented by Ishihara Shintarō's book *No to ieru Nihon* (The Japan that can say No). Published in 1989, it was a collaboration with Sony executive Morita Akio, who had extensive experience and networks in the United States. The book argued that Japan should advocate for recognition as a world power, even if that meant causing conflicts with the USA. Japan was described as the superior country, especially in virtue of its advancement in the technological sector; as such, it should have a place among the world's leaders. In a way, the book could be even said to take an anti-Eurocentric stance. However, Miyoshi notes how this stance is at risk to reproduce another hegemonic pattern, that sees Japan as the leader in the Asian region (Miyoshi 1991). This scheme is reminiscent of the colonialist ideology of the Second World War.

Taken out of the Japan=West=Asia triangle of political relations, the image of a superior Japan that Ishihara projects in his book would have ceased to exist; this is perhaps the main difference between the self-orientalizing discourses about Japan in the 1970s and the 1980s. In the past, the "western" gaze was always assumed, but never made explicit. Be it in the "Discover Japan" campaigns or in Yamaguchi Sayoko's aesthetic, the self-orientalizing exoticism was only made explicit through a confrontation with the viewer's everyday life. The actors that participated in the processes of exoticization were rather earnest in their incarnation of what they believed to be an "authentic" Japan. On the other hand, the "Japan" of the 1980s is temporally in the present, and only becomes apparent through confrontation with difference. As we have seen in section 5.1, this was the stance adopted by those readers who wrote back to *//*singing the praises of the "Japanese" aesthetic that was being constructed in its pages. Between the end of the decade and the beginning of the 1990s, the magazines

consciously adopted these discourses. *CanCam*, for example, published in 1990 an article where journalist Torigoe Shuntarō interviewed Japan-based reporter Chris Field<sup>88</sup> about what Americans liked and hated about the Japanese (*CanCam* 1990-8, 244-245). The piece is for the most part a collection of stereotypical opinions; the “unhuman-like”, “robotic” working style of the Japanese is cited as being disliked, while food, their seriousness and the population’s high educational level are given as qualities. Torigoe also indulges in comparisons between the United States and Japan. When explaining the reason behind *ishin-denshin*<sup>89</sup>, which in Field’s opinion is another fascinating aspect of the Japanese, he mentions how Japan, compared to America, is a very homogenous country, and thus the Japanese do not need to rely on debate as much as Americans do (*CanCam* 1990-8, 245). These statements evoke the *tan’itsu minzoku* (monoethnic) discourse, which essentializes the demographic composition of the country and dissolves its diversity into the majoritarian category of “the Japanese”, thereby effectively making minority groups invisible.

The article was the ninth issue of a series and was supposed to be educational in content. Nevertheless, it persisted in the reproduction of a stereotypical, self-orientalistic image of the country created through the encounter with the “foreign”, here represented by a white American male that is well accustomed to the country.

On the pages of *JJ* we can observe a different, if related, phenomenon – the increased attention for the “Japanese body” as a racialized entity. We have previously seen how the magazine was one of the first to stop casting “mixed” models in the earlier years of

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<sup>88</sup> Credited in the article as a newscaster working for Fuji television’s FNN Super Time.

<sup>89</sup> A Japanese word used to refer to the ability to understand each other without explicitly talking.

the decade, and how the style(s) introduced in its pages were strongly associated with a local aesthetic that was different enough to not be considered a derivative of global fashion trends. These processes were carried out without explicitly mentioning “Japaneseness”, although they were recognized as representing it by the readers who had experiences abroad (and perhaps more in general by the audiences that had enough fashion literacy to compare it with other fashion publications). However, in 1990, the magazine started consciously addressing the “Japanese body”.

Let’s look for example at the article “I want [you] to pay attention. The clothes MADE IN JAPAN” (JJ 1990-8, 54-61). The text gives the following reason as to why the readers, whose consumption had been up until then centered on luxury brands from Europe and America, should now turn their eyes to the garments made in Japan:

The popularity of imported clothes knows no boundaries. However, precisely because we know the quality of imported clothes, we might have come to the point of introducing rationally the good parts of the clothes made in Japan. The people who can wear Japanese clothes with pride are the most fashionable. (JJ 1990-8, 54)

Once again, the “good” of Japan is vehiculated through the foreign. It is the accumulated wealth of experiences with imported goods that has given the readers the ability to understand the quality of Japanese products.

The quality of these clothes is attributed to a technological advancement that is typical of the country. Not only that, according to the article, these products also offer an advantage as they are less expensive and tailor-made to fit the “Japanese body” (JJ 1990-8). Last but not least, the ability to partake in nationalistic sentiments is described as



one of the joys that accompanies the consumption of Japanese goods:

Whenever a foreign friend asks “where are these clothes from?” I want to be able to say with confidence, “they’re Japanese”. Thinking that it is unfair to only put the spotlight on foreign brands without knowing the Japanese brands which are being shown even in the Parisian catwalks, *JJ* has reported on six unique brands that leverage Japanese-like sensibilities. They are all brands that we’d like to make ours. (*JJ* 1990-8, 61)

Thus, by the end of the decade the concept of “Japaneseness” had started to be consciously addressed even in more mundane settings, such as the consumption of fashion. It is no accident that while this was happening, Japan was grappling with internationalization both on the outside through the dispatching of personnel to their companies abroad, and on the inside, thanks to an increase in immigration. The next section will cover the discourses surrounding the foreign “newcomers” who had settled in Japan.

#### 5.2.5 The lights and shadows of multicultural Japan

After the end of the Second World War, Japan took a negative stance towards migration. The people who had come to the country from Korea and Taiwan had their citizenship removed and were expected to return to their homelands or to renounce their roots and take a Japanese name (Shimoji 2018). During this period, the intelligentsia developed the discourse of Japan as a mono-cultural nation as a response to the expansionist ideologies that had characterized the colonial period (Shimoji 2018,

Kawai 2023). Furthermore, thanks to the baby boom of the 1940-50s and continuous migration from the countryside, the country was able to industrialize without relying on external migration (Kondo 2015). All these factors contributed to creating the widespread image that Japan was only inhabited by the “Japanese”.

However, this started to change in the late 1980s. According to Kondo, the economic bubble and labor shortage made Japan an attractive destination for migrant laborers: this sparked the first debates on whether Japan should open its doors to foreign migration (Kondo 2015).

The article “Is Japan a paradise for Asian migrants?”, published in *CanCam*’s January 1990 issue, fits nicely into this debate (CanCam 1990-1, 244-245). The article featured a conversation between journalist Torigoe Shuntarō and NGO representative Tsujimoto Kiyomi,<sup>90</sup> discussing the ethical legitimacy of Japan’s attitudes towards migration. The introductory paragraph states:

The number of Vietnamese refugees arriving to our shores has exponentially increased this year. It has turned out that many of them are actually Chinese disguised as Vietnamese, and the question has become more complicated. Why do they aim to come to Japan? Is it fair to say that “the Chinese must be deported?” This, together with the people who are coming to work in Japan from the Philippines and other countries, are the problems that are testing the real meaning of our internationalization (*kokusaika*). (CanCam 1990-1, 244)

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<sup>90</sup> Now a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan.

The article frames the issue of migration as the “true meaning of internationalization (*kokusaika*)”. This implies a juxtaposition with a less authentic practice, which, although not explicitly mentioned, could be inferred to be the “ethnic boom” that Tsujimoto mentions in the conversation. As mentioned above, the consumption of food and products from different countries, together with language learning, were some of the activities associated with the everyday practice of “internationalization”. Instead of concentrating on these leisurely activities, the article redirects the readers’ attention to those sides of being a central player on the global stage that might not necessarily be “convenient” or “pleasurable”. Indeed, one of the journalist’s main points throughout the article is that the “problem” of migration is a direct consequence of Japan’s attitude towards difference:

When coming to Japan after having lived some time abroad, we relax. I think it’s the same feeling that one experiences when coming back from a trip abroad. It’s not just because we can speak Japanese and eat Japanese food. I believe it’s the feeling of security that comes with having returned to one’s homeland, where [everyone speaks] the same language, [has] the same culture and thinks in the same way. This uniformity of the Japanese is a fertile ground for the birth of a unique culture, but on the other side, you should know that it harbors trouble, and even ugliness (CanCam 1990-1, 245).

Torigoe’s view could be taken as representing what at the time was the dominant attitude to immigration policies on the left side of the political spectrum. Although sympathetic to the pleas of the migrants, it was nonetheless built upon the assumption

of a monocultural (and by extension, monoethnic) Japan, thus eliminating the diversity that even after the war had never truly gone away.

There is a strong class connotation to the “Asian migrants” being discussed here. Japan had ratified the Refugee convention in 1981 (Kondo 2015) and began admitting refugees (*nanmin*) who were fleeing their countries because of political persecution, the main representatives of which were those fleeing from communist Vietnam. What was being problematized in the public discussions of the time was the emergence of groups who pretended to be Vietnamese but turned out to be economic migrants. Torigoe also mentions the practice of coming with tourist visas and working illegally, which had become more diffuse after 1985. The article further explains how these migrants ended taking up the so called “3K” jobs; that is, jobs that were dangerous (*kiken*), dirty (*kitanai*) and hard (*kitsui*).

The Japanese policies, however, did not intend to address this type of transnational movement. According to Kondo, “since 1998, the Minister of Labour has continuously confirmed [that the] (···) admission of (···) unskilled labour will be cautiously examined” (Kondo 2015). According to the article, this reflected the Japanese population’s opinion on migration. Torigoe mentions how “more or less, 4/5ths [of the people interviewed in a television show] were against it. The Japanese have a very strong rejection towards foreign countries, different ethnicities, different cultures” (CanCam 1990-1, 244).

This view is, however, in contradiction with much of the content published by the fashion magazines of the time, which published pieces that dealt with some form of contact with the “foreign” – be it through the consumption of foreign brands, music, movies or through international travel. Essayist Minami Shinbō puts the question into a slightly different perspective in another article published in *CanCam* some months later

(CanCam 1990-8, 260). What the Japanese of the 1980s had strong negative feelings towards was not (only) the migrants' foreign-ness, but their association with the lower-class position implied by the 3K jobs:

- Do the things that others do not like to do!
- Do the things that others are scared to do!
- Think the things that others do not think!

Indeed, there was a time when these [thoughts] were considered to be cool. However, what is considered cool is now different.

This is why the 3K jobs wind up to the people who cannot say no. There are people who cannot say no, even if they would say if they could. They are foreign workers. Seeing that they can't refuse, [the employers] even try to make their salary cheap. It might be cheap for the Japanese, but for broke foreigners it is pretty good money.

Thus, in the eyes of society, the rank of the 3K jobs goes down further. One just needs to think a little about it to understand how embarrassing it is. (CanCam 1990-8, 260)

Minami then concludes by criticizing the lack of moral of the "present-day Japanese", while reiterating a rather common-sense ethical position:

It's logical to thank and respect the people who do what you cannot. If anything, one should at least not save on their salary. I think.

I'm not saying that one should be of the mindset of always respecting and thanking, but today's Japanese respect people because they have luxury. (CanCam 1990-8, 260)

Like Torigoe's statements above, Minami's position could be interpreted to be a progressive viewpoint shared by the left-wing politics of the time. Minami is also sympathetic to migrants, whose ethnicity is here unspecified. However, he ends up reproducing a paternalistic scheme that sees "the Japanese" as the wealthy citizens of a technological country, thus implying they might be superior to the "foreign workers", who because of their unfortunate circumstances, do not have the power to refuse even the lowest of jobs.

In the final paragraph, Minami points out how "the Japanese of nowadays" are inclined to respect whatever is considered to be of high-status. In migration, these are represented by the "expats", who often possess either some technical skills<sup>91</sup> or enough wealth to guarantee a comfortable life abroad. And while the lower-class migrants were racialized as "Asian", "expats" were mostly represented as white.

The satirical piece "Map of the trendy foreigners (*gaijin*) of Tokyo" (*CanCam*, 1989-1, 246-249) pokes fun at the "expats" living in Tokyo, as well as the girls who are interested in them. The article shows the caricatures of five different types of foreigners: "the student", "the delinquent", "the executive", "the model" and "the artist" (*CanCam*, 1989-1, 246-247). All of them are white men, and they are pictured with their Japanese girlfriends.

The following two pages are titled "How to date a trendy foreigner (*gaijin*)" and are divided in four sections: "Learn 'trendy foreigner Japanese'", "Understand the different nationalities of the trendy foreigners", "A list of the places where you can meet trendy

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<sup>91</sup> Kondo (2015) notes how the government intended to "actively admit" specialized and technical workers (158).

foreigners” and the quiz “Are you a ‘foreigner inside’ (*kecchū gaijin*)?”. Despite the title, the text is riddled with stereotypical and in some cases racist depictions of the white foreigners living in Japan. See for example the text of the second section (“Understand the different nationalities of the trendy foreigners”):

When talking about foreigners, one instantly thinks about blue eyes, blonde hair and big xxx, however when you divide them into races they come in all colors, shapes and sizes. I will lecture the right way to recognize them. First, Italians are easy. They all try to hit on you so you can tell them from their behavior. They like chatting, like extravagant things and eat a lot.

The French. In reality there are few like Alain Delon, and many who are tall and with a hunched back. They also think that fashion is something to export only, so their clothes are for the most part plain.

Anglo Saxons. The type you can find in Japan always wears a regimental tie and a shirt. This is their trademark. On their days off they also wear cotton trousers and loafer shoes, so they’re easy to spot.

The Jews are hard to recognize. Their distinctive characteristic is their hooked nose. They like money, so you could try to drop some in front of them. (Oh, I’m sorry.)

It’s hard to distinguish them, right. Foreigners, too, think that Japanese, Chinese and Koreans are all the same, so it’s hardly any different. (*CanCam*, 1989-1, 248)

The above article placed white male foreigners in an ambiguous position. On the one hand, it recognized the potential appeal that they had for the readers. On the other, it made fun both of them and of the “foreigners inside” who tended to look away from

Japanese men when choosing their partners. This might signal the want to profit from the appeal that white men have for a determinate segment of Japanese women, while at the same time putting them in a position that is not too threatening.

Other than having a “respectable” profession, the “good” foreigner had to be proficient in the language. The January 1990 edition of the voting contest “CanCam nice man files” (CanCam 1990-1, 232-233) featured “the excellent (*yūryō*) foreigners who can speak Japanese”. Before introducing each person’s profile, the article opens with the following introduction:

“Can you speak English?” Nowadays, English is the must-have item of the fashion leader. To become the *bilingirl* of your dreams you need foreign (*gaijin*) friends. I want to learn English with this wonderful *gaijin*-san!”. (CanCam 1990-1, 232)

The glamorized “western expats” end up being an instrument to acquire the ability to speak the English language, which is not seen as a tool to communicate with others, but rather as a fashionable accessory.

In between the negatively viewed “Asian migrants” and the glamourized “western expats”, there was another category of foreigner living in Japan: the “talented migrant”. Among the internationalization policies undertaken in the 1980s there was the 1983 “Plan to admit 100,000 foreign students” (*ryūgakusei 10man nin ukeire keikaku*) (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2002). According to Takeda, this plan was conceived by former prime minister Nakasone after he noticed during a state visit to Southeast Asia that the people who had been educated in Japan were looking at the United States for their children’s education (Takeda 2006). It could



be thus argued that this policy was conceived as a means to extend Japan's hegemony in the cultural sphere.

This discourse extended outside the perimeters of the policy itself. Soccer player Ademir Santos, for example, could be considered to be among the people, who, despite not being targets of the governmental aids that were provided through the "100,000 students" program, fit nicely into the idea that the government had for its foreign students.

Born in Brazil, Santos was a student at Tokai University First High School in Shizuoka and playing for the Yamaha Motor Soccer Club when he appeared in an article on *CanCam* in 1987 (CanCam 1978-8, 184-186). Coming to Japan after having spent a childhood of poverty, his was the typical rags-to-riches story, and he was depicted as the "model migrant". The following words are a description of his high school coach:

He is more polite than the Japanese and is a very good kid. In these two years, his attitude has not changed. I thought he's the kind of man that doesn't show his true colors. The only times he's impolite is when at meals, he has the bad habit of playing the rhythm of the samba with his chopsticks. (CanCam 1978-8, 184)

Here, we can see stereotypical images of Brazil associated with the discourse of the "good migrant", which in Japan is often expressed by saying that the person is "more Japanese than the Japanese".

Santos's background might have been unsettling in a society that viewed poverty in a negative light. This was remedied by describing him as an exception:

However, from him you cannot feel his poor upbringing. Like Coach Mochizuki said above, everyone testifies that he is a polite, intelligent, kind and cheerful boy. If you didn't know that he was raised in poverty, you would rather think that he was raised in a rich family. (CanCam 1978-8, 184)

These statements effectively separate the “good” (and “useful”) migrant from the “bad” (and “threatening”) economic migrants.

### 5.3 1980 to 1990: Race and the visual aesthetics of advertisements. “Akogare” and “relatability”

#### 5.3.1 Between idols and models: a new age of relatability

As we have seen, *JJ* is famous for having popularized the “*dokusha*” model, and throughout the eighties the professional models who appeared in its pages were all of Japanese descent. It will perhaps come as a surprise to observe how the covers featured “mixed” models up until the April 1981 issue. These earlier covers also had a tendency to close up on the face of the model rather than showing their overall figure. The distance between the model and the camera gets progressively bigger, to the point that by the middle of the decade we can see the model(s)’ full figure. In the latter half of the decade, popular celebrities started appearing more than the magazine’s models. The distance of the camera also becomes more flexible: we can find very close shots next to full-body images.

*CanCam*’s first issue was published in 1982: its covers follow the patterns established the previous year by *JJ*. One important difference was the fact that *CanCam* featured celebrities more heavily from the very beginning: Matsuda Seiko, for example, appeared on the magazine’s cover 9 times throughout the whole decade (Hirata 2021), she appeared on *JJ*’s covers only once in 1988 (Nakamura 2022). By the time she was featured on the latter she had been in the music industry for 8 years and was no longer an *idol* of the “girl next door” kind but a *mamadol* juggling her music career with motherhood and married life.

It is not easy to reduce the different facial features of each model to a common

denominator. We could say that broadly speaking, the beauty standard created by *JJ* and *CanCam* required black hair of medium or long length and a natural make-up style, which, unlike some of the make-up trends that had been popular in the previous decades, did not aim to alter the facial features of the person (Fig. 1, 2, 3). We thus see natural, often thick eyebrows and a variety of eye shapes, that do not strive to be rounder and bigger as was trendy in the late 1960s, nor try to recreate a narrower and sharper shape than the one they were endowed with.

Idol singers were another popular reference point for beauty ideals – although they might have been more appealing to younger demographics. Unlike other kinds of entertainers, idols are characterized by their youthful appearance. Idol culture began in Japan in the 1970s with the popularity of audition TV programs such as “*Star Tanjō*” (NTV, 1971-1983). Among the many popular singers scouted through the program was the “top idol” of the 1970s, Yamaguchi Momoe. Her success was determined by a carefully constructed image that mixed the sexually explicit themes of her lyrics with the melancholia that came from having a difficult family situation, of which she herself was only made aware after her debut. Yamaguchi retired in 1980 – the same year that labelmate Matsuda Seiko debuted. The latter had a completely different image: she was cheerful, sunny and feminine, to the point where she was criticized for faking her cute demeanor (*burikko*). The passing of the baton from Yamaguchi to Matsuda signified a shift from an era in which the “dream girl” was mysterious and beyond one’s reach to a period in which ordinariness was the most important characteristic to strive for (Wakamatsu 2023).

Matsuda Seiko’s appearance proved to be highly influential in the early 1980s. Her trademark haircut was imitated both by her young audiences and her colleagues: most of

the idols active in the first half of the 1980s had the same blown-out layered cut, which was apparently a rendition of American actress Farrah Fawcett's hairdo (Wakamatsu 2022). The idol look was a girl-next-door look; nobody had bleached or colored hair, and make-up was minimal. Idols generally had a "cute" face and big puppy eyes – a look that while "Japanese" (in virtue of its being natural) was quite distinct from the Japonesque aesthetic of the likes of Yamaguchi Sayoko. Although each idol had a distinct, slightly different look – Koizumi Kyoko, who from the middle of the decade started to consciously reference and deconstruct the image of the idol adopted a very short haircut just a year after her debut; Hayami Yu, a returnee who was brought up in Hawaii, had a slightly more tanned skin - there was, overall, a certain similarity between them.

Both idols and the models of *JJ* and *CanCam* represent a stark departure from the visual aesthetics that dominated the previous decades, which was caught up in a dichotomy between incorporating the "west" and a reinterpretation of a western-created, rather orientalist image of the "east". This focus on the "natural", in turn, created a beauty standard that was familiar to a vast majority of readers, and with whom they could, to some extent, identify. As we have seen, this beauty standard was then coded as "Japanese" because of the increased mobility of these young audiences, who were increasingly exposed to first-hand experiences of life in Europe and America. This does not mean that the aesthetics of the 1980s were completely free from "western" influences; on the contrary, "western" elements such as high-end brand items, the "preppy" fashion of the ivy league as well as the tropical atmospheres of islands such as Hawaii were at the center of the cultural objects that defined the decade. One important difference from the previous decades is that these elements are re-packaged in ways that

are functional to their use in Japanese society. The fashion magazines of the previous decades were still to some degree re-creating “western” paradigms quite faithfully, even if that meant that the fashion that they introduced would be considered over the top or impractical. The popularity of *JJ*, *CanCam* and idol culture shows how in the 1980s the demands of the consumers seem to have taken priority, and how this meant “translating” elements that were globally trendy into cultural artifacts that were in turn with the sensibilities of the local society.

### 5.3.2 The advertising industry in the 1980s

The 1980s were a turning point for advertising in Japan. Advertisements began to attract attention as a cultural product, and the copywriters – the “masterminds” behind their creation – were increasingly under the spotlight as people who were able to understand very well the “feeling” of the times. Himself among the people on the frontline of the “copywriter boom”, Nakahata Takashi understands the phenomenon as a consequence of the advent of late-stage capitalism. In this decade, society reached the culmination point of the economic expansion process that had begun post-war. Japan had become a rich and technologically advanced nation, and accordingly, the quality of the products on the market had reached a plateau; it became impossible to diversify the goods on the shelves of supermarkets based on their characteristics alone. Because of this, brand image became of vital importance in the marketing strategies; it was now the narratives created by the advertisements that allowed each product to be recognized and chosen by the consumers (Nakahata 2009). At the same time, consumerist choice had become a form of self-expression in the 1980s. Nakahata, interviewed in 1987 in *JJ*’s “culture club” section (*JJ* 1987-8, 257-258), explains how it is up to advertisers to create

that “additional value” that allows for identification.

Music, art direction, catchphrases and a good actor; these are among the elements that participate in the construction of the brand image (Nakahata 2009). Back 1987, Nakahata stated how he didn’t rely on logic when choosing who to employ in his advertisement campaigns, but rather selected people who would feel “interesting according to the feeling of the times” (JJ 1987-8, 258). He cites, as an example, the 1985 campaign for the cold medicine “Benza-ace” featuring *idol* singer Koizumi Kyoko. This advertisement is representative of the postmodern qualities of the copywriting of the decade. Nakahata’s writing is impactful because of its witty straight-forwardness, that instead of trying to embellish the objective of the campaign – that is, to sell the product – it is presented it in an upfront manner (Inamasu 2009). On *JJ*’s pages, however, the author states how such a technique is highly dependent on Koizumi’s image; as a person who well embodies the “spirit of the times”, her body was in itself a “good medium” (JJ 1987-8, 258). In November of the same year, Koizumi had released the single “*Nantetatte Idol*”, in whose lyrics she “deconstructed” the image that female idol singers had at the time.

It could be said that all these concepts had, in a way or another, appeared in the previous decades as well. We have seen in the previous chapters how advertisements that relied on feelings (be it *akogare* or relatability) have appeared consistently in the data. In the 1980s, the tendency to use these communicative strategies grew stronger. A third “feeling” became increasingly popular throughout the decade; a sort of unpredictable, at times even bordering on the weird, “amusement”. In the pages of *JJ*, Nakahata defines it as “weirdness without a point” (JJ 1987-8, 258). The high level of consciousness that society now had about the advertising medium, demonstrated by the

exposure that copywriters had in media<sup>92</sup> pointed at an increased “literacy” of the audience, which made communication devices such as irony, subversion and weirdness particularly effective. Furthermore, it enabled the construction of a complex web of meanings mediated by the body of each *tarento* celebrity, that was constantly referred to in the advertising. This is particularly true for those advertisements that relied on domestic celebrities, although it could be also said for the use of Hollywood stars.

In the following section, we will look at how the “Japanese body” appeared throughout the decade in advertising targeting young female consumers, with a particular focus on *idols* and *dokusha models*.

### 5.3.3 The “Japanese” body in advertisement: between *idols* and *dokusha* models

Since the previous decade, idols had been a staple in the advertising of personal care products such as shampoo and face cleansing foam. Although there were exceptions,<sup>93</sup> these items often called for relatable advertising. Idols were the perfect candidates for this type of commercial because of their relative emotional proximity with the audience: emotional proximity is more easily established in the case of idols because of their numerous appearances on television programs coupled with very extensive coverage in teenage and gossip magazines. We have seen how not much information was provided about the models who did not pursue a career in television, and even more so for the

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<sup>92</sup> Some examples of this have also come up in my data: celebrity copywriter Itoi Shigesato had his own column on *JJ* in the first half of the decade.

<sup>93</sup> In the early 1980s, Shiseido’s Basbon line had an approach that was more on the *akogare* side. Some products, like the Timotei shampoo brand, constructed their whole branding on an idyllic image of a foreign (presumably “European”) countryside: the models featured in the advertisements had long, blonde hair. The Pure shampoo line from Kaō recreated an image of suburban America by employing “mixed race” model Leilani.



advertisement-exclusive foreign models. Because a lack of knowledge about their persona makes it harder to feel empathy and relate to them as a person, it is likely that these models were consumed primarily in terms of their visual appearance. On the other hand, it was undoubtedly harder to separate an idol's look from their persona due to the sheer volume of their media presence.

From the mid-1980s, however, idol singers started to appear in make-up advertisement as well. The turning point was Kanebo's 1984 Bio *Kuchibeni* commercials, featuring Matsuda Seiko. Stylistically speaking, the commercial leaned toward the *akogare* type: however, they are at the same time built on the media image that the idol has constructed over the years. In one version, the camera zooms on a smiling Matsuda, who is wearing a pastel-pink dress and holding a bouquet of flowers. She seems to be walking down a street that the audience cannot see, as she is surrounded by a group of similarly dressed young women. At a certain point, she turns left, smiling and waving in the same direction. The setting is so abstract that her actions only make sense in virtue of her status as a famous singer. The screen text ("Seiko's lipstick") further reinforces the dependence on Matsuda's image.

The other version has an even more abstract setting; the singer is standing in front of a blue colored background. This time, she speaks directly to the audience, explaining the qualities of the lipstick. By acknowledging the people behind the screen, she attempts to establish some form of emotional connection. In both versions, Matsuda's persona is referenced through the lyrics of the CM song, sung by the idol herself: "Pure pure lips/Wait, please/I will fall in love/In a petal-colored spring". The themes of spring, love and purity recall a youthful and girly image.

In the following years it became more common to see idols in this kind of television

advertising. Shiseido, while remaining firm in their use of mixed and foreign talent, employed Nakayama Miho and Harada Tomoyo in their make-up testimonials. Kanebo, who employed Japanese actresses more regularly, also used idols such as Kokusho Sayuri, Koizumi Kyoko, Minamino Yoko, Asaka Yui and Kudo Shizuka.

Among creators, idol advertisements were not immune to criticism: they were perceived as lacking in the creative department, as the most important rule that advertisers had to maintain when creating this kind of commercial was to “show the idol’s face as much as it is possible in the span of a 15 seconds commercial” (Hosogane 1987, 8). Likewise, the copy did not have to be particularly imaginative, and had to appeal to the audience’s emotions by working as an invite from idol to fan. Nevertheless, they were considered to be incredibly popular with the viewers, especially the younger ones (Hosogane 1987, 8).

It was far less common to see amateur models involved in the production of commercials. One such advertisement was made for Lion Oil’s Emeron conditioner (1983), and it was a follow-up to a popular advertisement series from the previous decade. In the original series, which was first aired in 1970, a male reporter was shown from behind interviewing young women on the street and asking them if they know about the product. In the final minutes of the video, the reporter would ask the girl(s) to turn around for the camera.

In the 1983 version, the camera once again follows the silhouette of a young woman from behind. This time around, the reporter is substituted by the off-screen voice of a woman, who introduces the mysterious woman as one of the girls who appeared on screen twelve years before. The video then shows clips from her first appearance, while the voice wonders how much she will have changed. In the final seconds, the girl(s)

once again turn around for the camera.

A striking difference between the two commercials is the girls' attitude towards the camera. While in the 1970s it was not uncommon to see bashful reactions, with some women even running away from the reporter, the people who appear twelve years later show much more confidence. This could be attributed to their own personal growth, as it is implied that they are now in their late twenties to early thirties. However, it also tells something about the familiarity that people now had towards both audiovisual technology – it was far more common to see and use video recorders in the 1980s than the 1970s – and with mass media. *JJ's dokusha models* had now been around for half a decade, and they had entered the mainstream of young women's culture.

There were also commercials that referenced the concept of *dokusha models* while still casting popular celebrities, such as Suzuki's commercial for their Alto car (1988-1989), which featured idol singer Asaka Yui (Fig. 4). The copy (*Aruto no moderu wa, anata ga ii.*), that could be translated both as "You're the best model for the Alto" and "We want you as a model for the Alto", refers to the possibility to customize the car's parts: at the same time, it is a wordplay that relies on the widespread practice of recruiting amateurs for modeling jobs. The television commercial (1988), that juxtaposes black-and-white close-up shots of the faces of multiple women with colored shots showing Asaka and the red car. In it, the singer recites the slogan "Our lifestyle changed this car. *Fashion model change*", another wordplay based on the dual meaning of the word "model", which could be referred both to the car and the profession. The recognition of the influence of the *dokusha* model practice signals to increased attention given to the female consumers and their demands. With the rise of disposable income given by the advent of the economic bubble and of the delay of marriage, the "average women" who both

consumed and participated in the production of female-oriented media had become a demographic that was hard to ignore.

#### 5.3.4 Towards a “Japanese”/“Foreign” dualism

When it comes to the models’ bodies, the tendencies in advertising tend to mirror those in fashion magazines. Looking at the pages of *JJ* and *CanCam*, we can observe how in the 1980s, particularly from the middle of the decade, there was an almost-complete binomial split between white (foreigner) and “Japanese”.

Up to 1985, companies such as Shiseido and Kose still used “mixed” looking models, particularly in their bigger campaigns. The “*me*”-*gumi no hito* (“the person from the “me”<sup>94</sup> group”, 1983, Fig. 5) is among Shiseido’s most memorable from this time period. Featuring Tori Mendoza, a “mixed-looking” model of foreign origin, it is now remembered for the tie-up song, which gained immense popularity. It was also among the commercials that were created in open competition with the other giant of Japanese cosmetics, Kanebo, whose summer 1983 campaign featured YMO’s music and casted model Aida Sumio.

In the television advertisement, Mendoza is shown wearing what seems to be a haori sleeve over a Japanese-style patterned swimsuit. Her hair is pulled up and decorated with two simple *kanzashi*, giving her a “Japonesque” look that contrasts with the model’s very strong Caucasian features. In the last frames, a young female voice shouts “summer festival!” before a male voice introduces the name of the product. Afterwards, the backs of two young men wearing colorful *fundoshi* appear behind Mendoza; although we do

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<sup>94</sup> The title is a wordplay: the “*me*” *gumi* was a group of citizen firefighters of the Edo period. However, the word “*me*” also means eye.

not see their faces, we can infer from their hair color that they are “foreigners”.<sup>95</sup>

Visually speaking, the ad plays on the discrepancy between the model(s)’s appearance and the Japanese cultural elements. Mendoza does not stand in for the “average” girl but is rather used as a white-adjacent symbol of breathtaking beauty. The unexpected mash-up of “foreign looking” bodies with “traditional” culture creates a contrast that has the effect of simultaneously highlighting both – it draws the attention towards the model’s eyes while recasting elements from the ordinary into a fresh, stylish aesthetic. The same Shiseido, however, did not shy away from using popular Japanese talent to advertise other products. In 1982, Yamazaki Senri acted as a mature young woman who was the object of infatuation of a younger male student passerby in an advertisement for the skincare line Simonpure. For their Ekubo facial cleanser line they used a youthful Yamada Yukiko in the guise of a teenage schoolgirl. Last but not least, idol Hayami Yu appeared in the commercials for the company’s Koi Colon shampoo line from the year of her debut. Shiseido’s use of “Japanese” or “foreign-adjacent” models seems to have been more influenced by the nature of the product rather than the emotional distance spectrum. Personal care products (shampoos and facial cleansers), as well as items that affect the skin in its “natural” form (skincare products, cleansers) tended to feature local, well-known celebrities with whom the viewers could have a higher degree of familiarity – even in the instances where the communicational strategy adopted relies on feelings of *akogare*, such as in the aforementioned Yamazaki Senri ad. On the other hand, make-up products that could be used to alter one’s facial features, as well as those products that altered the “natural” look of the skin (such as suntan oils and lotions), were more often

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<sup>95</sup> In the version that appears in the collection *Shiseido no CM vol.2 1978-1999*. There is another version of the advertisement where the two men are likely Asian.

advertised by using white-adjacent bodies, which could be interpreted as being a marker for the global standard of beauty. After 1985, Japanese celebrities started to appear in larger numbers. Idol singer Nakayama Miho was cast in two campaigns from 1986, and for a couple years towards the end of the decade, actress/singer Imai Miki became the face of the brand.

Kose followed a similar strategy to Shiseido; in their bigger campaigns, they used many white and white-adjacent “mixed” models until the middle of the decade and then increased the number of Japanese talent after 1985. Towards the end of the decade, the company employed older idols such as Hayami Yu and Imori Miyuki (Fig. 6), who debuted in 1982 and 1985 respectively.

Interestingly, Kose took a different approach with the advertising campaigns for its Sports Beauty line (Fig. 7). The brand first appeared on the market in 1981 (KOSE Corporation, n.d.), and as the name implies, it focused on products that were resistant enough to withstand the changes in the environment that the skin went through while doing physical activity. Accordingly, the advertisement campaign featured young women doing all kinds of sports, from tennis to swimming. For the whole decade, not a single foreigner has appeared in the advertising for this particular line, perhaps because of its emphasis on functionality rather than the aesthetic benefits of using make-up.

To summarize, “mixed race” looking people appeared in make-up advertising up until the middle of the decade, after which their numbers were drastically reduced. Nevertheless, the perception of a binary split between “Japanese” and “foreigner” is accentuated by the fact that outside of the make-up category, the number of “mixed race” professional models starkly decreased in magazine advertisements and the most

noteworthy campaigns.<sup>96</sup>

In the latter half of the decade, whenever “mixed race” people appeared in advertisements, they were often people who became famous of their own right. F1 racer Suzuki Aguri, for example, appeared in a campaign for the Nissan Langley in 1989 (Fig. 8). In the previous decade, the Langley had been advertised using a white couple as “Paul and Paula’s Langley”. Suzuki’s look worked well as an extension of this previously established image. His racing career, referenced in the copy “The days when Aguri isn’t a racer” (*Aguri ga rēsā shinai hi*), gave further credibility to the quality of the product.

Fig. 9 shows another advertisement from 1989, this time featuring mother-daughter pair Kishi Keiko and Delphine Ciampi: while the latter is indeed “mixed race”, her appearance in this commercial is likely to be grounded in her preceding fame as 1) the daughter of a very famous Japanese actress 2) who was born in Paris, the capital of fashion. Therefore, she was doubly qualified to testify to the quality of the product sponsored here – Japan-made leather goods. The theme of the mother-daughter relationship also reminds of the cultural capital that is inherited by the “*ojō-san*” of *JJ*.

It is thus no longer enough to have a “pretty face” as a result of one’s ethnic background: the “mixed race” body is only appealing when grounded in a different kind of status.

In fashion advertising, the models are either “Japanese” looking or white – with the latter category appearing in bigger numbers. Licensed brands from abroad often featured foreign (white) models, but so did Japanese denim companies such as Bobson.

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<sup>96</sup> Such as for example those recognized by the Tokyo Art Directors’ Club (ADC) prize, which from the 1950s has been awarded to advertisement campaigns whose artistic direction was worthy of note.

On the contrary, especially towards the end of the decade, “Japanese” models sporting the *wanren* hairstyle<sup>97</sup> typical of the bubble period are only spotted in the ads for the rather tight, shoulder-padded suits that were strongly associated with the working women of the time. In other words, whiteness was used whenever it was beneficial to create an image of legitimacy that was associated with WASP culture – such as ivy/trad fashion and sports such as tennis and golf.

Although the 1980s could be said to be a decade where the aesthetic axis was shifted toward local sensibilities, the idea of the white body representing an orthodox beauty was still alive and well. In magazine advertising this is exemplified by the fact that white people very often appeared in advertisements for beauty centers such as TBC and Takano Yuri Beauty Clinic, as well as in advertisements sponsoring obscure beauty treatments and utensils. These commercials often focused on the “raw” parts of the body, and showcased sculptured and slim figures that still maintained curves where it would have been considered desirable to do so. Fig. 11 depicts an advertisement found among the pages of *JJ* for the aesthetic salon Takano Yuri Beauty Clinic, featuring a white model clad in a swimsuit. Slim but busty, she represents the ideal body that is supposed to be offered to prospective clients if they undergo the various treatments that the clinic has to offer. The objectification of her body is further accentuated by the use of many small pictures of her in different positions, often cut up, where she always has her eyes closed as if to avoid any sort of impression about her feelings or mental state.

“Japanese”-looking models do appear in advertisements for aesthetic procedures such as hair removal, as well as advertisements sponsoring products that would be conducive

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<sup>97</sup> Long, black, straight hair cut at the same length.



to an improved physical shape. There are, however, slight differences in the representation of the “Japanese” body, the more obvious of which is the degree of exposure of the body. For example, a “Japanese”-looking model is used in Fig. 10 to advertise “diet pajamas” – a beauty product whose advertisement does not entail showing the skin at all. Even when the model is wearing a swimsuit, such as in Fig. 12, it is a one-piece swimsuit instead of a more revealing bikini. The models in these advertisements are also often shown with their gaze directed towards the camera, and they sometimes smile. These are all signs of engagement with the viewer, which makes them seem more “human” and less objectified.

To summarize, during the 1980s the number of “mixed race” talent used in advertisement started to decrease. In the first half of the decade, they were still represented in the big seasonal campaigns of make-up companies such as Shiseido and Kose (whereas Kanebo almost completely abandoned “foreign-looking” talent starting with their “Lady 80” campaign). However, as the bubble period approached, the “mixed race” people who appeared in commercials were celebrities that had other reasons to be famous – such as a career in sports or a famous parent.

The faces seen in advertising could now be neatly split in two categories: “foreign-looking” (which in almost all cases meant “white”) or “Japanese-looking”. Both “foreigners” and “Japanese” were used to represent beauty. On average, “Japanese-looking” models and Japanese celebrities such as idols were more often employed to take on roles that would entail the establishment of some sort of “emotional connection”. White models, on the other hand, more often represented the globally accepted standard of beauty, but they were also more prone to objectification. They were also used in fashion advertisements to signal the legitimacy that came from Euro-America,

that is, from the places where “western clothing” originated from.

In the following section, we will look at another phenomenon that was on the rise during the 1980s: the employment of foreign celebrities such as Hollywood stars in Japanese advertisements.

#### 5.3.5 Foreign celebrities in advertising

In Sofia Coppola’s 2003 movie *Lost in Translation* there is one scene where the protagonist Bob (Bill Murray), is shown acting in a commercial for a Japanese whiskey (implied to be Suntory). Murray portrays a once famous actor whose fame was on the decline, that had been flown to Japan by his management to make some “easy money”. The scene reflects the existing perception of Japan’s advertising industry as an entity that does not possess enough cultural capital to create works that are artistically relevant but offers highly lucrative enterprises for the Hollywood actors who work in it.

One cannot talk about the presence of foreign stars in Japanese advertising without mentioning a commercial from 1970 for Tanchō’s Mandom male cosmetic line. It featured actor Charles Bronson in various scenes commonly associated with hard-boiled masculinity: he is a cowboy in the desert, a CEO in his office, a gentleman in the club. The commercial proved to be so popular that the following year, the company changed its name to the product’s name (Katayama 2022). From that point on, it became more common to see household names from American and French cinema on Japan’s little screens. The country’s creative industries now had enough economic capital to hire the stars that they looked up to from afar: with the advent of a wealthier society in the 1980s, the number of Hollywood faces in advertising was bound to increase.

Indeed, some of the most epoch-defining commercials from the eighties feature foreign

celebrities, such as Seibu Department Stores' "*Oishii Seikatsu*" (delicious life) campaign (1982). Featuring movie director Woody Allen the advertisement signaled the advent of a new age of prosperity, which valued the immaterial (the cultural/social properties of the object) more than the material. Copywriter Itoi Shigesato explains how:

The message [behind the copy was that] both the jewelry on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor and the *takuan* in the basement have the same value as long as they are what you want. It was an invitation to [lead] a "delicious" life instead of the "better" life [that people had been striving for] in the past. (Itoi 2000)

This message was perhaps even more convincing when heralded by Allen, whose fame as a witty director of romantic comedies preceded him. In the pictures, he gazes directly at the camera clad in Japanese attire while holding a banner with the copy written by hand, as if he was proclaiming his new year's resolution – and trying to convince the audience to join him in the pursuit of cultural consumption.

Incidentally, Black people only appear in the advertisements featuring foreign celebrities. Among the most well received by the critics was an advertisement for Xerox<sup>98</sup> featuring gold-medal winning athlete Carl Lewis. The advertisement campaigns, which started in 1983, heavily relied on showcasing Lewis's sculpted body in motion, and compared the abilities of their copy machines to the athlete's physical prowess. The advertisements were listed among the Artistic Director's Club prize's annual

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<sup>98</sup> According to an article published in September 1988 on Sports Illustrated, Lewis also had sponsorships with other brands such as Suntory, shoemaker Mizuno and express courier Sagawa. (Geringer 1988)

competitors for three years consecutively from 1983 to 1985.

Even the “King of Pop” Michael Jackson appeared in advertisements: he was the mascot for the Suzuki “Love” scooter in 1982. The magazine advertisement featured a tuxedo-clad Jackson holding a white model who is enacting the “femme fatale” role while standing behind the scooter. The copy, “Love is the message”, nicely ties together the name of the product (“Love”) with the singer’s profession – it is implied that “Love” is the message of Jackson’s songs. At the same time, his playful interactions with the white model visualize the meaning of the word “Love”, which instead of being interpreted as platonic takes a distinctly sexual connotation.

The television commercial features the singer’s track “Don’t stop till you get enough” and showcases his dancing abilities. As in Carl Lewis’s case, it is clear that Michael has been chosen because of his profession: unsurprisingly, male athletes and musicians are over-represented among the Black celebrities that appear in advertising. Black women, on the other hand, rarely appeared on the little screen.

One big exception is biracial<sup>99</sup> model Jennifer Beals, who was cast as the face of Shiseido’s Perky Jean line between 1983 (the year of her “big break” as the heroine of the hit movie *Flashdance*) and 1986. This was the make-up line that sponsored *JJ* and *CanCam*.

Beales was then substituted by another Jennifer, American actress Jennifer Connelly, who at sixteen had just starred in the fantasy coming-of-age movie *Labyrinth*.

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<sup>99</sup> It could be argued that her biraciality shielded her from being seen as “Black”. Indeed, we would have to wait until the mid-nineties and the rise of supermodel Naomi Campbell to stardom to see the first advertisements seeing an unmistakably Black body used as a signifier for beauty (TBC, 1996).

Stylistically speaking, the advertisement campaigns featuring the two “Jennifers” are similar, in that they rely on their star power to convey their messages. This is particularly evident in the TV commercials, where the highlight of the commercial is their uttering of the product’s name in a native English accent. Connelly will continue working as the mascot for the make-up line until her substitution in 1988 with singer Imai Miki.

Whereas Kanebo had been more proactive in using local talent to sponsor their products, they did produce some advertisements featuring foreign celebrities that are worth mentioning. In 1979 the company hired actress Olivia Hussey, who had caused a sensation in Japan the decade before when she starred as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. Kanebo had been using white models for the whole decade, but it was the first time they employed a famous actress. Later, this campaign would be remembered as the occasion that led Hussey to meet Japanese singer Fuse Akira, who provided the theme song for the commercial. The following year, the two would marry; it was the first high profile marriage between a Japanese star and a Hollywood celebrity.

From 1980 onwards, Kanebo used Japanese talent for most of their commercials, with the exception of a 1982 campaign featuring Brooke Shields. The actress was a household name, already known to the audiences for her appearance in movies such as *Pretty Baby* and *The Blue Lagoon*, and the campaign once again relied heavily on her popularity. The copy “Violet September Love”, which referred to the seasonal colors of the make-up products, was accompanied by the phrase “On the eyes, on the lips, on the cheeks. Brooke’s violet”. In the TV commercial, Shields is depicted with even more distance than the aforementioned actresses, as she is only shown dancing and smiling to the camera – she does not even utter a word.

The 1980s were a decade of increasing economic prosperity. Japan's advertising industry was financially secure enough to be able to cast foreign celebrities without much trouble. The foreign stars who appeared in the Japanese advertisements of this period were always very popular and easily recognized by the audiences. Although there are obvious exceptions to this, such as the aforementioned "*Oishii Seikatsu*" ("Delicious life") commercial, this meant that in most cases, the effectiveness of their use could likely be attributed to their star power rather than the artistic qualities of the commercial in itself. In this regard, it could be said that there are some similarities between idol commercials and the advertisements that employed foreign celebrities. When it comes to beauty advertising, however, the big difference is in the kind of aesthetic ideal that the two represent. Whereas the former could be considered to be the epitome of a domestic and perhaps more easily attainable standard of beauty, the latter were a symbol of a globally hegemonic interpretation of physical attractiveness.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

A shift in the visual representation of beauty went underway in the 1980s. Fashion magazines such as *JJ* and *CanCam*, centered on the lifestyle of university students, increasingly relied on the figure of the *dokusha* model. Being at the same time reader and model, these young women acted both as relatable and idealized figures for the audience. Closer to the “average” but still different enough to be taken as a reference point, their presence created the illusion that anybody could have their moment of glory in the magazines’ pages. This pursuit of the ordinary extended to regular models as well: the boundary between amateurs and professionals was now weaker.

“Foreign-looking” people, including “mixed race” Japanese, were excluded from this newly created image of the “girl next door”. The presence of “mixed” Japanese in particular was greatly reduced compared to the previous decades: it was no longer as common to see “mixed” people working as professional models. Although celebrities of “mixed” descent would sometimes appear in virtue of their professional achievements, the discourses shifted from the hyper-visibility of the 1960s to a state of obfuscation.

Indeed, the 1980s were also the years of cultural nationalism – what is often referred to as *nihonjinron* in academic circles. There is somewhat of a convergence between the visual image of “ordinariness” created through the *dokusha* models and the nationalistic notion of Japanese particularity. The main actors in the creation of this image of “Japaneseness” were the readers stationed abroad, who had several occasions to compare their lived experiences abroad with the media images that they were consuming from afar. At the same time, the “Japanese body” was also conceptualized through explicitly racial paradigms. This image of “Japaneseness” survives to this day, and it is still conflated with the image of the ordinary citizen.

The second half of the decade was defined by the two concepts of internationalization and nationalism. These two narratives can be considered to be two sides of the same coin, each feeding into the other. An important characteristic of Japan's internationalization, however, was that there was an unmistakable element of self-interest: the encounters with the "foreign" were desirable only insofar they brought some sort of betterment for the "self".

The people who were proximate to the foreign were judged positively or negatively according to this self-centered logic of the *kokusaika* paradigm. There is thus a positive re-evaluation of (upper-class) "mixed race" people and the *kikoku shijo*, who in virtue of their cultural background and language abilities were able to take up a much-needed mediating position between Japan and "the west". On the other hand, the Japanese women who had a strong interest in the foreign and/or who traveled abroad for hedonistic pursuits tended to be the victims of media bashing. These women were often deemed responsible for the negative image of Japan in foreign countries, although the foreigners themselves seemed to prefer them to the "virtuous" Japanese businessmen. Both the *kikoku shijo* and the women interested in the foreign are categories that showed the boundaries of the "Japanese".

This period also saw an increase of migratory movements towards the country. Once again, the foreigners who settled or temporarily stayed in Japan were seen as desirable or not according to their "usefulness". This process went hand-in-hand with racialization and gendered representation. Although they themselves were not immune from scorn, white men were represented as being the most glamorized and desirable foreigners. These foreigners possessed qualities or abilities that the "people" (as constructed by the magazine) might have been wanting for themselves – among others,



the prestige associated with English-speaking abilities and “whiteness”. On the opposite side of the spectrum, the undesirable migrant, that is, the economic migrant in search for a better life, was often racialized as coming from the impoverished countries of Asia. In between the two categories, foreign students represented a kind of migrant that was desirable not only because of their raw potential, but also because they could function as a tool to assert the hegemony of Japan in the global stage.

The influences of the discourses about “Japaneseness” and internationalization were also felt in the imagery of the advertisements. The 1980s were marked by yet another re-positioning of the “mixed race” body; this time, it vanished almost completely from the visual discourses, leaving behind a structure where an “indigenous” beauty standard represented by idols and the models of *JJ* and *CanCam* was juxtaposed to a “global” beauty standard represented through the white body.

The decade also saw the rise of celebrity testimonials. As the audience’s media literacy increased, it was no longer enough for the bodies in advertisement to represent an idealized image of beauty. The advertising industry started employing celebrities who also embodied some other kind of meaning, constructed intertextually through their media appearances.

## 6 Conclusion

The following section will be dedicated to summarizing the findings of the previous four chapters.

The objective of this thesis has been to scrutinize how racializing discourses have appeared and changed in the social context of post-war Japan. From the analysis of fashion magazines, a medium that until now has not been comprehensively studied from this particular perspective, we can gain new insights on the ways in which race is understood.

There is, in Japanese society and in research, a certain tendency to avoid the subject of “race”. After 1945, the Japanese intelligentsia retreated themselves into the idea that Japan was a “mono-ethnic nation”. This had the effect of making race appear to be invisible, a non-problem in a society where all the people were “the same” (Kawai 2023). Nevertheless, while “race” was no longer discussed as a topic pertinent to Japanese society, this does not mean that “race-thinking” had disappeared or been critically deconstructed. Indeed, encounters with the “foreign” often warranted the repetition of previously existing patterns of “race-thinking”, slightly amended to better function in the historical context they were appearing in. These shared understandings about race were particularly apparent in media contents that focused on the body, of which fashion magazines are a prime example.

Section 6.1 below will overview the ways in which the concept of race is constructed in fashion magazines. Meanwhile, section 6.2. will deal with the processes of construction of the self and the other enacted through the representation of relatable and aspirational bodies. This is particularly relevant in so far the shared understandings about race were

also tied to the notion of national belonging; the “sameness” that characterized the “mono-ethnic” nation of Japan was constantly constructed through the comparison with “different” kind of bodies.

Sections 6.3 and 6.4 will recap how the political forces of Eurocentrism and nationalism shaped the processes described in sections 6.1 and 6.2, the former will recapitulate the relationship between concepts of eurocentrism, autochthonous nationalism and the beauty standard(s). It might sound strange to focus on seemingly “leisurely” topics such as aesthetic ideals when discussing “serious” topics such as race. However, beauty standards can be taken as yet another way to signal how should the ideal citizen be.

Section 6.5. will expand the discussion outside the boundaries of the discursive practices surrounding the body to summarize the representations of the inhabitants of “global” and “local-national” spaces, as well as those instances where the “global” and the “local” intersect. Last but not least, section 6.5 will discuss the contributions and limitations of this research.

### 6.1 *The construction of “race”*

Throughout the analysis, we have seen how when looking at the intersection between beauty, womanhood and the body, discourses on female bodily aesthetics were preceded by assumptions about the validity of the pseudo-scientific concept of race. This was especially evident in the 1960s; almost twenty years after the war had ended and the biological notion of race had been disproved by the scientific community, “mixed” models such as Irie Miki were still considered to have an advantage in virtue of their racial make-up. Not only these discourses reproduce the euro-centric hierarchical relationships determined by “race science”, but they also tend to erase the fact that there is diversity among “phenotypically similar” groups – that just as there are more or less beautiful “Japanese” and “white” people, there are more or less beautiful “mixed race” people.

These discourses, while not necessarily explicitly mentioned in text, were taken for granted in the 1970s. And in the following decade, a clearly racial image of the “Japanese body” was constructed in beauty advice columns, often through juxtaposition with the “western” white body, which was implied to be inherently different.

The persistence of this understanding of race must be kept into consideration when discussing which bodies were represented as being part of the nation, and which bodies were represented as “foreign”. It is also reflected in the beauty standards that have emerged throughout the three decades.

## 6.2 *Relatable bodies, desirable bodies: constructing the “people”*

The representational aesthetics of “relatability” and “desire” (*akogare*) determine which bodies could be perceived as being proximate to the imagined audience (and thus, representative of the nation) and which bodies were instead assumed to be appealing, but distant from the reality of everyday life. The association between “relatability”/“desire” and race was most evident in the 1960s, when white and “mixed race” bodies were mostly employed in *akogare*-type advertisements that placed them at the pinnacle of the aspirational. While this might have superficially contributed to the rehabilitation of the stigmatized category of the “mixed race”, it also emphasized their difference from the “average Japanese”, thus excluding them from the image of citizenship.

“Mixed race” bodies, however, start to become slightly more relatable as with the influx of white models working in Japan in the 1970s. Beginning with the relatable characters of Yuri and Lisa in the early *an-an* up until the girls of Shiseido’s Suprense campaign from 1975, there are many instances in the 1970s visual media where the gap between “mixed” and “non-mixed” bodies is narrowed. At the same time, a new type of aspirational body image starts to emerge; that is, the unmistakably “Japanese” aesthetic represented by Yamaguchi Sayoko, whose anachronistic beauty was constructed on historical notions of Japanese beauty. This aesthetic was in the ambivalent position of being “Japanese” (thus “close”) but out of the ordinary, because of its distance from the aesthetic of the mainstream.

Yamaguchi’s appearance does not mean that previous readings of the desirable body are completely overwritten; “foreign-ness”, this time around inclusive of the Black body, continued to be represented as aspirational in Ishioka Eiko’s epoch-defining campaigns

for Parco.

The 1980s could be considered to be the age of relatability. The aspirational body of the decade was to be found inside the relatable aesthetic of the university student *dokusha* model. “Foreign-looking” people, including “mixed” Japanese, were excluded from this image of the “girl next door”. This could be understood as signifying that the inclusion of “mixed” race Japanese into the representation of the “average” body did not mean to challenge the mono-ethnic discourse, but simply changed its face into a more “modernized” and refined version of “the Japanese”, erasing any sign of the multicultural and the multiethnic in the process.

### *6.3 Eurocentrism versus autochthonous nationalism in the creation of beauty standards*

Between the 1960s and the 1980s, the standard(s) of beauty have oscillated between eurocentrism and autochthonous nationalism. The euro-centric point of view saw Europe (and particularly France) as the center of fashion and taste, and thus aimed to conform to what was considered beautiful in the European continent. On the other hand, privileging the autochthonous meant to prioritize the popular, local taste rather than what was imposed by the center.

The dominant beauty standards of the 1960s tended to the eurocentric, meaning that the white body was at the top of the aesthetic hierarchy. “Mixed race” models were instrumental in their construction; the models’ height, big eyes, and their rather tall nose bridge were, at the time, associated with eurocentric beauty standards and racialized as foreign. The same could be said about the “healthy” (meaning, “sexy”)

beauty personified by models such as Maeda Bibari and Sugimoto Emma. Eurocentric beauty was so pervasive that Japanese models such as Ogawa Rosa constructed their celebrity image on their “non-Japanese-like” appearance.

The eurocentric association between whiteness and beauty persisted throughout the 1970s, with the recognition of the influence of *an-an's Elle* pages and the increase of white models working in Japan both in and out of the fashion magazine. Discourses about the superiority of the white (looking) body were both upheld and contested. On the one hand, they were naturalized through the use of the pseudo-scientific rhetoric of race. On the other, their applicability was limited to the realms of photography and media – there were thus spaces in the everyday life of the readers where the “average Japanese body” could be reclaimed as beautiful.

Eurocentrism and autochthonous nationalism converge in the Japonesque aesthetic of Yamaguchi Sayoko. While it is the result of a historical collage meant to represent a uniquely Japanese aesthetic, this standard of beauty was created as a response to the fashion movements that were happening in Paris and London. Unsurprisingly, Yamaguchi's beauty was well accepted among the European fashion elites, while in Japan it never broke into the mainstream. The more popular make-up styles of the decade still emphasized big eyes, a tall nose bridge and a sculpted face – although they abandoned many of the contrived and un-natural looking techniques that were used in the previous decade.

The 1980s saw a re-centering of natural beauty, that went hand in hand with the emphasis on the local-national-relatable. The “mixed race body” vanished almost completely from visual representations: it was the white body (yet again a symbol of the global standard) that the “Japanese” body was juxtaposed to.

#### 6.4 *Representing the “global”, the “national” and the intersections between the two*

Racialized bodies were also used to represent the “global”, the “local-national”, and the intersections between the two. In other words, it sometimes served as an occasion to represent the relationships between Japan and the rest of the world.

The eurocentrism of the beauty standards had its grounds in a strongly felt hegemony of the “western” world. Throughout the three decades, the global was often equated with the “west”, which was in turn represented by the white body. The inhabitants of the “global” were most often represented as aspirational, although there have been instances in which they have been represented as threatening, such as in the wake of the Tokyo Olympics of 1964.

Representations of the non-“western” global are few, but interesting nonetheless. Those bodies that are neither white nor “Japanese” are seen and described through a eurocentric lens that puts them in a weaker position in the hierarchical ladder of hegemony. The mainstream, consumerism-oriented media analyzed here has a tendency to adopt the viewpoint of whiteness instead of forming alliances with the oppressed. There are also instances in which the non-white, non-“Japanese” body is lumped together with white bodies to represent either the “global” (most notably in the wake of the Olympics and with the rise of immigration in the 1980s) or an aspirational image (such as in Ishioka Eiko’s and Miyake Issey’s aesthetics). However, they are always placed as a juxtaposing the “other” in the construction of the Japanese self.

On the other hand, an outsider gaze was often instrumental in the depictions of the local-national. The “Japaneseness” of the inhabitants of the local-national space was at



first defined through a western-european gaze, as seen in the French model Veronique Pasquier's adventures in Japan, published in the early *an-an*. In the following decade, "Japaneseness" will be pieced together in the thoughts and experiences of the Japanese girls who have studied abroad and have thus obtained a viewpoint from which to compare the characteristics of their own culture. It is important to keep in mind that most of these young women were studying in anglophone countries. Their construction of "Japaneseness" is thus in great part dependent on the juxtaposition with their experience of the "west".

There have been instances in which the intersections between the "global" and the "local-national" have been presented as entertaining information. In the 1980s, a period in which Japan willfully embraced processes of internationalization, there was a positive re-evaluation of those figures (such as some "mixed-race" and some *kikoku shijo*) who possessed the ability to seamlessly travel between the two spaces. However, similarly to what happened with the "*hāfu boom*" of the 1960s, this newfound spotlight might have had the effect of creating/reinforcing some limited aspects of the "mixed" and *kikoku shijo* identities, while further alienating them from the image of ordinariness that is at times helpful to facilitate processes of inclusion.

The 1980s were also a period of increased immigration to Japan. The foreigners who settled or temporarily stayed in the country were sorted into categories of desirability that were tied to their perceived "usefulness" to Japanese society. This process went hand in hand with racialization and classism. The image of the desirable migrant was represented as being rich, educated and often as a white male. On the other hand, the undesirable migrant was constructed as being poor and lacking education. Although it must be recognized that looking at different types of media might have yielded a

different result, in the magazine articles that have been collected they were often racialized as coming from impoverished parts of the Asian continent.

#### *6.5 Locating “race” and “the body” in Japanese history*

In doing this research, the objective has been to provide a different view on the historical views of the body in post-war Japanese society. There are many things that could not be done in the limited time/space allotted to this research project. First, this investigation is worth expanding temporally towards both anterior periods like the 1950s and posterior periods such as the 1990s. The former includes the last years of the American occupation, a period in which “race thinking” was presumably even closer to the daily lives of the people living in Japan. The latter was a period where sustained immigration was combined with the consumption of foreign trends, aptly re-imagined through the Japanese social context. The analysis could also be expanded in a different direction by including male-oriented media. It is likely that issues that have only partially emerged such as female sexualization might have been encountered more often if the data was not limited to magazines targeted to a female audience. Furthermore, it might have been possible to understand more clearly if (and/or how much) the idealized image of masculine aesthetics was as much influenced by the “foreign” as feminine aesthetics were. A comparison between these gendered images might offer further insight on the dynamics between racialization and power.

Last but not least, this research lacks inquiry into the media representation of people with East Asian heritage. My exposure to these images has been limited, and I can only draw some limited hypotheses about what sort of interesting results could be found. For

example, in the same period when “mixed” models were at the forefront in the 1960s, models of Chinese heritage also appeared quite often in dressmaking magazines. Furthermore, in the 1970s and in the 1980s there was a number of artists coming from Taiwan and Hong Kong that were quite active in the mainstream media. Analyzing the ways in which they were portrayed in the media might tell us something about the perceptions surrounding the “foreign” that did not emerge in the present research.

However, I believe the historical approach undertaken by this research project might help to shed a light on how certain ways of conceptualizing race and the body emerged in the Japanese context.

The three decades that have been taken into question were periods of intense change: the 1960s were the years of the economic miracle, and the misery of the immediate post-war was finally becoming a distant memory. By the 1980s, the country had become an economic powerhouse. It follows that the perception of “self” and “other” (which we have seen is also formulated through “race thinking”) underwent various shifts throughout these decades. There is, however, a considerable continuity between the ways in which theories about race have been formulated in these years.

This is particularly easy to see when considering the discourses about bodily aesthetics. Each period saw the popularity of a different beauty regime; however, this does not mean that previously existing beauty standards had been completely overturned. Indeed, many of the aesthetic ideas formulated in these three decades are alive to this day. For example, some fifty years after the rise to stardom of “mixed” models in the 1960s, “*hāfu* faces” (Okamura 2017) and “foreign like hair” (Pellicanò 2018) were part of the beauty aesthetics of the 2010s. This is testament to the fact that bodily practices continue to be a fertile terrain where issues of desire (“what do I want to look like”) and national

belonging (“what do ‘Japanese people’ look like/how can they aspire to look like”) keep intersecting with racializing paradigms.

The mechanisms of *akogare* and relatability, too, are to this day linked to the racialized bodies that appear in advertising (Pellicanò 2021). As the number of foreigners living in Japan continues increasing (NHK 2023) and the country becomes increasingly described as an immigrant country (Liu-Farrer 2020), it is possible that these mechanisms might be affecting the daily life of the foreigners as well as those people that, in virtue of the biological links to non-Japanese residents, might also be branded as “different”.

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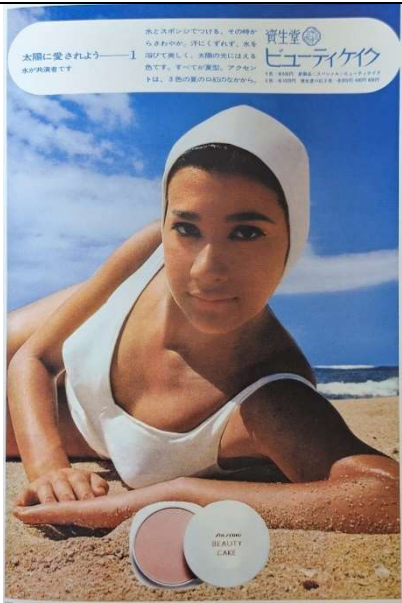
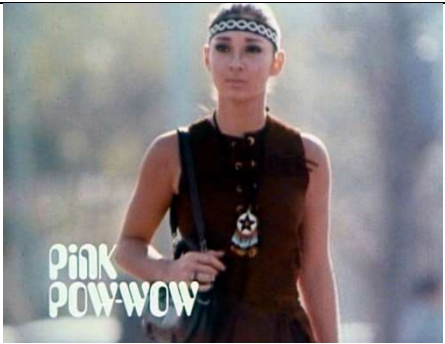

8 Appendix: Figures

Chapter 2

Figure	Source	Description
 <p>Fig. 1</p>	<i>Sōen</i> 1962-4. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppankyoku, 69.	Irie Miki and Matsumoto Hiroko in the Sherbet Tone tie-up campaign.
 <p>Fig. 2</p>	<i>Sōen</i> 1962-4. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppankyoku, 74.	Close up of Irie Miki's face in the Sherbet Tone tie-up campaign.

	<p><i>Sōen</i> 1960-1. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppanyoku.</p>	<p>Advertisement for the make-up brand PIAS featuring Irie Miki.</p>
	<p><i>Sōen</i> 1964-1. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppanyoku.</p>	<p>Advertisement for the make-up brand Shiseido.</p>
	<p><i>Sōen</i> 1960-4. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppanyoku.</p>	<p>Advertisement for the sewing machine brand Singer.</p>

 <p>世界をつなぐカロランきもの      明けましておめでとう      A Happy New Year!      Frohe Neujahr!      Bonne Année!      Feliz año nuevo!      Tanti Auguri del Nuovo Anno!      O wrode nowa, i znowu chrześcija!      吉賀新年!</p> <p><b>カロラン</b> 和装品</p> <p>三菱商事株式会社</p>		<p><i>Dressmaking</i>          1963-1. Tokyo:          Kamakura Shobō</p>	<p>Advertisement for          the textile brand          Karoran.</p>
 <p>世界の ペプシで乾杯! ペプシコーラ</p> <p>日本を見よう オリンピックを見よう 世界中の国々から ペプシフレンドが やって来る</p> <p>★ペプシコーラは、世界で最も愛飲される飲料です。日本でも、1959年10月1日より、毎日、100%純粋な原料から製造されています。</p>		<p><i>Josei Jishin</i> 1964-          10-5. Tokyo:          Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for          Pepsi Cola.</p>
 <p>ようこそ日本へ! 世紀の祭典をコカ・コーラで 飲んでも変わらない。さわやかなその風味——</p> <p>ご愛用ください。どこで 世界を結ぶ飲み物です</p>		<p><i>Josei Jishin</i> 1964-          10-12. Tokyo:          Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for          Coca-Cola.</p>



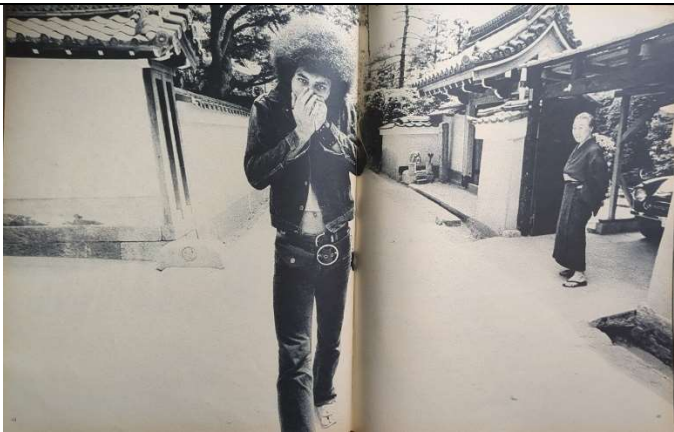
 <p>Fig. 9</p>	<p><i>Nihon no Zasshi Kōkoku</i> 60s, 2010. Tokyo: Pie Books, 21.</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement featuring Maeda Bibari.</p>
 <p>Fig. 10</p>	<p><i>Shiseido no CM Vol.1</i> 1961-1979, 2009</p>	<p>Shiseido TV advertisement featuring Adelle Lutz.</p>
 <p>Fig. 11</p>	<p><i>Josei Jishin</i>, 1966-8-26. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Nihon Sōgō Bank featuring Yoshinaga Sayuri.</p>









 <p>あなたが種をまく＝三井が2倍にみのらせる</p> <p>三井のファミリー積立預金で、資金づくりのあつ きけをつくります。いままでの貯蓄コース (積立貯蓄)より、貯蓄ははるかに増えます。おまけに 、おまけのボーナス(積立貯蓄と連動)がもらえます。</p> <p>三井銀行 家族ファミリー積立預金</p>	<p><i>Sōen</i> 1967-10. Tokyo: Bunka Shuppanyoku.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Mitsui Bank.</p>
 <p>リズムがはるむ...エメロンのはだから</p> <p>エメロンシャンプー</p>	<p><i>Josei Jishin</i> 1968-4-28. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Emeron advertisement featuring Shino Hiroko.</p>
 <p>エメロンヘアのすてきなささい</p> <p>エメロンシャンプー</p>	<p><i>Josei Jishin</i> 1970-1-10. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Emeron advertisement featuring Shino Hiroko.</p>






## Chapter 3


 <p>モデルたちの家</p>	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-11-20. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 30-31.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “House of fashion model”, showing the models who frequented the house.</p>
 <p>HOUSE OF FASHION MODEL</p>	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-11-20. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 32.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “House of fashion model”, focusing on model Deguchi Monique.</p>
	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-7-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 48-49.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “Mojo in”, featuring Yamanaka Joe. On the background, an older Japanese woman wearing kimono.</p>

	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-7-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 50-51.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “Mojo in”, featuring Yamanaka Joe. On the background, a “hippie looking” crowd.</p>
	<p><i>an-an</i> 1972-4-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 76-77</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “Days as Lolita”.</p>
	<p><i>an-an</i> 1971-10-20. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 23.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “<i>La vie avec lui</i>”.</p>




		<p><i>an-an</i> 1971-10-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 11.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “Anti bell- bottom”.</p>
		<p><i>an-an</i> 1971-10-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 14-15.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “Anti bell- bottom”.</p>
		<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-8-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 5)</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “<i>Lisa de gozaimasu</i>”.</p>





	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-7-5, 1.</p>	<p>Cover of the July 5, 1970 issue of <i>an-an</i>, featuring Tachikawa Yuri and Vero.</p>
	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-8-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 22-23.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “<i>Futottatte ii ja nai!!</i>”, featuring Akikawa Lisa.</p>
	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-11-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 22-23.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “<i>An-an supports short fat women!</i>”.</p>

 <p>Fig. 13</p>	<p><i>an-an</i> 1970-10-20. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 54.</p>	<p>Excerpt from the article “My <i>omiai</i> picture – I am George”.</p>
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## Chapter 4

 <p>知的に流行を取り入れ 現代を感じさせる女性に</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1975-1-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha, 166</p>	<p>An example of the <i>akogare</i>-reliability structure of <i>non-no</i>'s articles. On the right, two pictures of model Carol Suzuki taken in the studio, on the left, snaps taken from the street.</p>
 <p>ボーナスが引いても、しまり吊さん。</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1977-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Heart Bank.</p>
 <p>夏のボーナスで頑張って、わたし、旅立ちます。</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1977-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kyōwa Bank.</p>

	<p><i>non-no</i> 1977-7-2. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Tokai Bank</p>
	<p><i>non-no</i> 1975-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for the Kaō Feather shampoo.</p>
	<p><i>non-no</i> 1974-10-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Nivea.</p>



	<p><i>an-an</i> 1975-11-20. Tokyo: Heibonsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Shiseido's Suprense make-up line.</p>
	<p>Shiseido. 1979. <i>Shiseido Sendenshi II: Gendai</i>, 33.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Shiseido's MG5 line (1972).</p>
	<p>Shiseido. 1979. <i>Shiseido Sendenshi: Gendai</i>, 33.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Shiseido's MG5 line (1973).</p>



 <p>Fig. 10</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1976-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kaō's "Dresser" hair treatment line, featuring Ann Lewis.</p>
 <p>Fig. 11</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1976-10-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kanebo's If make up line.</p>
 <p>Fig. 12</p>	<p><i>non-no</i>, 1973-12-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement featuring Yamaguchi Sayoko.</p>

 <p>Fig. 13</p>	<p>Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (ed.) 2015.  <i>Sayoko Yamaguchi: The Wearist, Clothed in the Future</i>, 111.</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement from 1978 featuring Yamaguchi Sayoko.</p>
 <p>Fig. 14</p>	<p>Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (ed.) 2015.  <i>Sayoko Yamaguchi: The Wearist, Clothed in the Future</i>, 101.</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement from 1973 featuring Yamaguchi Sayoko.</p>
 <p>Fig. 15</p>	<p>Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (ed.) 2015.  <i>Sayoko Yamaguchi: The Wearist, Clothed in the Future</i>, 103.</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement from 1978 featuring Yamaguchi Sayoko.</p>

 <p>Fig. 16</p>	<p>Shiseido. 1979. <i>Shiseido Sendenshi II: Gendai</i>, 65</p>	<p>Shiseido advertisement from 1976 featuring Shingyoji Kimie.</p>
 <p>Fig. 17</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1973-4-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Revlon from 1973.</p>
 <p>Fig. 18</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1974-8-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for LOVE Cosmetics from 1974.</p>

 <p>きれいな言葉で しゃべりましょう</p> <p>Maybelline メイベリン</p> <p>新発売</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1975-11-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Maybelline.</p>
 <p>ミニバーク、ブラッシング ロレアル</p> <p>髪にやさしく、とってもナチュラルな仕上がりです。</p> <p>brushing LOREAL</p> <p>コ-ロ ロレアル サロン LOREAL DE PARIS</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1979-4-5. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for L'oreal.</p>
 <p>新発売</p> <p>イレーヌ サンデー</p> <p>...やっとつきた、涼しい夏のスキンケア。</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1976-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kanebo's Irene skincare line.</p>






 <p>やさしい彼だから激しい愛の色。</p> <p>if</p>	<p><i>non-no</i> 1974-7-20. Tokyo: Shūeisha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kanebo's If make up line.</p>
 <p>INOUÏ</p>	<p><i>an-an</i> 1978-7-5. Tokyo: Heibonsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Shiseido's Inoui perfume line.</p>
 <p>死ねまで女でいさいのです。</p> <p>PARCO</p>	<p><i>Parco no ado-wāku</i> (<i>Parco Ad Works</i>). Tokyo: Parco Shuppan, 72.</p>	<p>“I want to be a woman until I die” Advertisement for Parco.</p>



Fig. 25

*Eiko Ishioka: Blood, Sweat and Tears — A Life of Design.* 2021. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 40.

“A model is more than a pretty face”. campaign for Parco directed by Ishioka Eiko.




Fig. 26

*Eiko Ishioka: Blood, Sweat and Tears — A Life of Design.* 2021. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 42.

“Don’t stare at the naked, be naked” campaign for Parco, directed by Ishioka Eiko.

 <p>Fig. 27</p>	<p><i>Eiko Ishioka: Blood, Sweat and Tears — A Life of Design.</i> 2021. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 45.</p>	<p>“The nightingale doesn’t sing for anyone but herself” campaign for Parco, directed by Ishioka Eiko and modeled by Dorris Smith.</p>
 <p>Fig. 28</p>	<p><i>Eiko Ishioka: Blood, Sweat and Tears — A Life of Design.</i> 2021. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 44.</p>	<p>“The nightingale doesn’t sing for anyone but herself” campaign for Parco, directed by Ishioka Eiko and modeled by Grace Jones.</p>

## Chapter 5

 <p>Fig. 1</p>	<p>JJ 1981-7. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1</p>	<p>JJ cover featuring model Takahashi Ryoko.</p>
 <p>Fig. 2</p>	<p>JJ 1984-3. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1</p>	<p>JJ cover featuring model Kashimoto Chieko.</p>
 <p>Fig. 3</p>	<p>JJ 1985-1. Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 1</p>	<p>JJ cover featuring model Kaku Chikako.</p>



 <p>The advertisement for the Suzuki Alto features a black car parked on a street. Below the car, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a red top, is smiling. The text 'BEST ALTO' is prominently displayed in large red letters on the left. Smaller text and a smaller image of the car are visible on the right side of the advertisement.</p> <p>Fig. 4</p>	<p><i>Cancam</i> 1985-1. Tokyo: Shōgakukan.</p>	<p>Suzuki Alto advertisement featuring Asaka Yui.</p>
 <p>The advertisement for Shiseido's 'Me'-gumi no hito features a close-up of a woman's face. She is wearing a dark headband with white polka dots. A hand is visible, adjusting the headband. The background is a solid blue color. The Shiseido logo and product name are visible in the bottom left corner.</p> <p>Fig. 5</p>	<p>Tokyo Art Directors Club. 1983. <i>Annual of Advertising Art in Japan</i> 1983. Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppan-sha.</p>	<p>“<i>Me’-gumi no hito</i>”, advertisement for Shiseido featuring Tori Mendoza.</p>
 <p>The advertisement for Kose's Quest lipstick features a woman with dark hair, wearing a pink top and a large pink flower headband. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. To her left, several tubes of Quest lipstick are displayed. The word 'QUEST' is written in large, stylized letters at the top. The Kose logo is visible in the bottom right corner.</p> <p>Fig. 6</p>	<p><i>JJ</i> 1989-5. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kose featuring Imori Miyuki.</p>

	<p>//1989-12. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Kose's Sports Beauty line.</p>
	<p><i>CanCam</i> 1989-1. Tokyo: Shōgakukan.</p>	<p>Nissan Langley advertisement featuring Suzuki Aguri.</p>
	<p>//1989-12. Tokyo: Kōbunsha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for the Tokyo Tanners Association, featuring actress Kishi Keiko and her daughter Delphine Ciampi.</p>



Fig. 10

//1986-11.  
Tokyo:  
Kōbunsha.

An advertisement  
for “diet  
pajamas”.



Fig. 11

//1986-11.  
Tokyo:  
Kōbunsha.

Advertisement  
for Takano Yuri  
Beauty Clinic.



Fig. 12

//1986-11.  
Tokyo:  
Kōbunsha.

Advertisement  
for the “slim  
roller”, an  
exercise tool for  
aesthetic  
purposes.



 <p>Fig. 13</p>	<p>Tokyo Art Directors Club. 1982. <i>Annual of Advertising Art in Japan 1982</i>. Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppan-sha.</p>	<p>“<i>Oishii seikatsu</i>” advertisement for Seibu Department Stores, featuring Woody Allen.</p>
 <p>Fig. 14</p>	<p>Tokyo Art Directors Club. 1984. <i>Annual of Advertising Art in Japan 1984</i>. Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppan-sha.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Xerox featuring Carl Lewis.</p>