Face value: Cosmetics and Japanese performances of ethnicity

Bonnie Schenk Darrington

The University of Montana

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Face Value

Cosmetics

and

Japanese Performances of Ethnicity

by

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Date
Cosmetics is a global multi-billion dollar industry with important racial implications. Cosmetics use and advertising are implicated in the performance of ethnicity, as well as of gender and nation. The face highlights cultural and racial identity.

Though pale skin has been historically valued for Japanese women, the contemporary currents surrounding the beautifully pale (*bihaku*) Japanese face are not simply a continuation of this historical trend. In Japan, there is a marked discontinuity between discourses surrounding Japan (*nihon*) and the West (*seiyâ*), and in general, people are able to indicate which cultural items constitute the discursively traditionally Japanese and the discursively modern or Western. Cosmetic use is an excellent example of a phenomenon that, on the surface fits this dichotomy: whiteface (*o-shiroi*) used by geisha and kabuki artists is traditional; Clinique and Shiseido are modern.

However, the *bihaku* face of a Tokyo secretary was not made up in order to copy the *o-shiroi* of a geisha, but is an answer to an increasingly globalized Western (read white) beauty aesthetic. The lines between Western and Japanese are not only affirmed in fashion magazine advertisements, but are also challenged by blue-eyed Japanese models. The Western beauty aesthetic has been domesticated by Japan, and is not indicative of foreignness. Appearance effectively undoes blood “race” and cultural status; ethnicity (race and culture) becomes a performance.

This thesis explores the phenomenon of ethnicity and cosmetics in Japan, first in terms of consumerism and of my own discussions of cosmetics with expatriate Japanese women studying at the University of Montana. Race was at the forefront of many of our talks, without my guiding us to that particular subject. Next, I will describe Japanese paradigms of race and U.S. ambivalence toward Japan. Finally, I will discuss fashion magazine advertisements for cosmetics, drawing the conclusion that the white Japanese face is not indeed a foreign face, but a Japanese face after all.
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All mistakes and errors are, of course, my own.

Bonnie Schenk Darrington
1 June, 2000
Introduction
Cosmetics and Ethnicity at Face Value

Borders and Identity

This thesis will explore the performance of national-cultural and cultural-racial identity where a border has been crossed. Borders are more tenuous than ever in the (post)modern world, but they still exist very really in the minds of many people all over the planet. National-cultural identity and cultural-racial identity are invoked as explanation of behavior in some cases, and ignored as factors entirely in many others. I am exploring one of the cases in which national-cultural and cultural-racial factors are rarely overtly invoked: Cosmetics.

In this study, I will examine the place of the global, multi-billion dollar cosmetics industry in the individual lives of Japanese expatriate college students living in Missoula and attending the University of Montana. I will use integrated anthropological and cultural studies analyses. The current section, the introduction, will introduce the thesis. It will discuss the relationship between anthropology and cultural studies and the insights they can bring to scholarship and to one another.

Part I is something of an introductory section, introducing the reader to the subject of consumerism among girls and women in Japan. Chapter 1 will be an ethnographic essay on consumerism among different groups of consumers (with an emphasis on women), including such diverse groups as teenagers, geisha (traditional Japanese party entertainers), and female theater-goers in Japan. A discussion of these

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1 On national culture (kokumin bunka), the inextricable twentieth century linkage between nation and culture, see Ivy 1995:3-4 and Robertson 1998:29. I follow Ivy in hyphenating national-cultural to emphasize this linkage in the contemporary mind. I also hyphenate cultural-racial for the same reason. In the (post)modern world, culture and race are often conflated, and culture is often invoked when race is the unspoken referent. I analytically define ethnicity as the national-cultural and the cultural-racial. However, in chapters 3 and 4, ethnicity will be discussed in terms of ethnographic / cultural definitions of difference in Japan and the United States, respectively.
three groups is necessary to put the final section of this chapter, that on young, single, working or college-going women, into perspective. Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the issue of cosmetics use in everyday life by expatriate Japanese college students. This chapter will rely most heavily on my interviews of Japanese women at the University of Montana, all of whom have crossed the border from Japan to the U.S.

Part II departs somewhat from the topic of cosmetics in order to for the reader to obtain a basic understanding of Japanese paradigms of cultural-racial difference, and an alternative interpretation of Japanese ethnicity in an American-made film. Chapter 3 will discuss generally Japanese cultural-racial conceptions of borders and gray areas, or more specifically of outsiders and marginals, using white and black Westerners and zainichi (residing-in-Japan) Koreans as case studies. Chapter 4 will center on the European assumption of the "primitiveness" or "nativeness" of non-white groups, taking as my theory the discourse on the primitive posited by Torgovnick (1990), and taking as my text the film Baraka, in which various "primitives"--including metropolitan Tokyotes--are shown in a supposedly everyday context. I will examine the implications of European and Euro-American racist stereotypes and backlash against "the white man's burden," in which white Westerners no longer try to force Western culture upon "primitives," but endeavor to withhold it from them, using the Japanese as a cautionary example.

The conclusion on Gaijin Fascination will discuss the face and cosmetics as portrayed in Japanese fashion magazines. I will examine the topics of advertising in Japan and advertising cosmetics in Japan (there is a difference). I will also analyze cosmetic advertisements for the brands Estée Lauder, Clinique, and Shiseido, as well as document the reactions of female University of Montana Japanese students to the preeminence of white Westerners in ads in Japan, in order to assess the nature of "gaijin fascination," and whether it exists at all.
In the rest of the introduction, I will first discuss the question, "Why the face?" and then discuss anthropology and cultural studies.

**Face Value**

I called this thesis "face value" for two reasons. The first is that the apparently transparent realm of cosmetics is often considered trivial. I wish to urge the reader not to take cosmetics at face value—which leads us directly to the second reason for a scholarly preoccupation with the face. While assertions of national-cultural and cultural-racial affiliations are often based on nationality, cultural background, or blood lineage, the issue of appearance is as important (possibly even more important) to ethnicity as are any other factors. Indeed, as I point out repeatedly in Part II, the assignment of ethnic affiliation in the United States is based to a great extent on skin color (despite the invocation of other factors), and the ability to pass as Japanese in Japan is enhanced by the fact that there are no real physical differences between Koreans (as well as other minority groups such as the burakumin and Okinawans) and Japanese people--despite the ideology concerning the blood-based difference of these peoples. On the other hand, highly visible white and black people are denied the ability to master anything Japanese, based on visual--not cultural--difference. The face (skin, eyes, hair, etc.) displays all the visual cues necessary to make assumptions about someone’s ethnic status.

However, it would be a mistake to think this thesis is exclusively about the face. Though, as Kondo notes, the face is the "primary external, bodily locus of identity" (1997:25), one cannot invoke the face without thinking also of the entire physical body. Thus, I often consider the face as part of the body, as is the general rule in chapter 4, where I introduce the concept of the colonized body, or in chapter 3, where skin and visual alterity are discussed. However, in cosmetic terms, one cannot forget that the
body is also part of the face—that is, part of the identity one chooses to express. Thus, cosmetics are used not only in the form of visible makeup on the face (e.g. lipstick, mascara, eyeshadow, blush, foundation, etc.), but also in the form of invisible or less visible creams and preparations for the body, such as hand and body lotions, sunscreens and self-tanners, whitening creams, and firming / lifting creams (e.g. breast-defining creams, thigh-reducing creams). Also, facial cosmetics are often applied to the body, such as when women accent their cleavages with blush or foundation, or when cosmetic preparations for the face, like facial exfoliating masks, are applied to the legs before shaving. Furthermore, much invisible work is done on the face in the guise of skin lotions, astringents, acne medications, wrinkle-reducing creams, etc.² Furthermore, though cosmetics is often thought of as a feminine domain, men also use cosmetics, in particular in the form of aftershave lotions and acne medications, as well as body lotions and powders.

Despite popular views of the frivolity and transparency of cosmetic usage, cosmetics are highly implicated in ethnic hierarchy and power.³ This thesis will explore the implications of cosmetics for national-cultural and cultural-racial factors.

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² It is arguable, as well, that the hair is also part of the face (or externally performed identity), as both men and women spend significant amounts of time and money combing, washing, and treating it. Hair will not, however, constitute a major topic in this treatise. Perfumes and antiperspirant / deodorants could also constitute a significant portion of the face. However, I have decided to concentrate on the visual in my analyses.

³ Another argument that could be made for studying cosmetics is that makeup and other cosmetic products constitute a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide, rivaling even clothing fashion in some contexts. (See e.g Darden and Worden 1994 for some revealing statistics). For example, Paris’ couture houses are arguably the most prestigious in the world because their made-to-measure garments are worn by millionaires, celebrities, and aristocrats. However, they always lose money on these garments (Skov 1996:143, Kondo 1997:97n9). The real money, besides being in ready-to-wear garments in standard sizes, is in the sale of cosmetics, perfume, and accessories—the items that middle-class people are most generally able to afford from the expensive fashion houses (Skov 1996:143).
A Thesis on...Cosmetics?

Research that centers on cosmetics, according to many minds, is nothing short of the pinnacle of frivolity aspired to by academia these days. The looks of shock and disbelief I received from people who inquired after the topic of my thesis have convinced me of this. The lukewarm reception of makeup as a serious research topic has been noted by other authors as well. Historian Kathy Peiss (1998) writes of this same reaction from her aunt: "How could such throw-away feminine objects be the stuff of serious investigation, my aunt wondered" (1998:x). Dorinne Kondo (1997) also mentions the negative reactions she received from coworkers within the academy on her explanation of her studies on couture4 (1997:15-16). She attributes this dismissal as indicative of the

...masculine gaze [which] reinscribes the conventional binaries of surface and depth, appearance and reality, and holds in suspicion those of us who are recognizable feminine gendered subjects.5 Can you wear lipstick and still think? Can you care about design, color, texture, cut, draping, drafting

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4 Couture is related to, indeed not entirely divorced from cosmetics, as the fashion shows and magazines which display the latest in garment design also display the latest in cosmetic design, use, and aesthetic.

5 Beausoleil (1994) argues "Among everyday appearance practices in contemporary Western society, 'visible' makeup clearly marks the production of 'womanhood' and 'femininity': overall, women are the ones who wear makeup, men do not" (1994:33). White (1993) notes that Japanese adolescent boys do sometimes wear makeup, especially if they are attempting a "cute" (kawaii, burikko) look: "Cute boys and girls both may use makeup, but keep to pale tints and natural tones. Schools almost invariably forbid makeup, so even these light cosmetics are relegated to weekend or evening use. Makeup kits for young teens resemble American children's play makeup kits and obvious makeup is rarely seen [on teenagers]" (White 1993:129). Male use of cosmetics and cosmetic practices in general is on the rise in Japan, driven in part by popular idols: "Boys and men are a new and growing market for makeup in Japan. Male teens buy facial packs and may wear foundation makeup for ordinary occasions. One college girl said that she was surprised to come home to find her high-school age brother listening to tapes as his green facial mask dried on his face. Salons receive many requests for chest, arm, and leg hair removal from young men who believe that girls prefer hairless males. Girls say a boy is an 'animal' if he has a lot of body hair. Pop stars are almost always smooth-skinned" (White 1993:129).
techniques, display—that is, about clothes—and still be political? Of course, concern with aesthetic production of the subject reinscribes certain class and gender stereotypes. The mistake is in thinking that the other position—ostensibly not caring about clothing or appearance, which in itself is a form of preoccupation with appearance—is politically innocent. Such a position is overdetermined in terms of its reinscription of masculinities, and, as some women of color (both gay and straight) would argue, of race. After all, who can afford to be unconcerned about his/her appearance? Who is allowed to ignore it with impunity? [Kondo 1997:15, footnotes mine, emphasis in original]

Kondo makes an interesting point: That even within the academy, there are many who seek to distance themselves from the apparent silliness of obsessing about appearance. However, appearance makes a great difference. Kondo points out,

6 Goffman notes that service personnel often cynically note the contradicting performances of their clients: "Those who sell men's clothing learn that the gruff show men maintain of being little concerned with how they look is sometimes merely a show and that strong, silent men will try on suit after suit, hat after hat, until they appear in the mirror exactly as they want to see themselves" (1959:155). While, as Kondo notes, not caring about appearance is not "politically innocent," not caring about appearance is also not achieved without effort. In other words, it takes time and effort to look like you care, but it also takes time and effort to look like you don't care. Beausoleil notes of those women who do not wear makeup are similar to their makeup-wearing counterparts in that they "engage in similarly ordered morning appearance routines" (1994:38).

7 Goffman explains it well in his classic work, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959), and is worth quoting at length:

When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. They will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc. Although some of this information seems to be sought almost as an end in itself, there are usually quite practical reasons for acquiring it. Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from him.

For those present, many sources of information become accessible and many carriers (or 'sign-vehicles') become available for conveying this information. If unacquainted with the individual, observers can glean clues from his conduct and appearance which allow them to apply their previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them or, more important, to apply untested stereotypes to him. They can also assume from past experience that only individuals of a particular kind are likely to be found in a given social setting. They can rely on what the individual says about himself or on documentary evidence he provides as to who and what he is. If they know, or know of, the individual by virtue of experience prior to the interaction, they can rely on assumptions as to the persistence and generality of psychological traits.
"...fashion...highlight[s] the performativity of gender, race, and nation" (1997:5).

Cosmetics are a weighty matter in ethnic identity issues, not to mention a multi-billion dollar global business.

Before I discuss disciplinary fields of expertise, I wish to make a final point. There is a danger in essentializing "Japan" that ought to be discussed. To rephrase a question asked by Skov (1996), "What is so Japanese about makeup?" Skov critiques Kondo's analysis of Rei Kawakubo's designs thus:

When, for instance, Kondo argues that Japanese designers are engaged in creating Japanese identity, she essentially ignores the interaction of market forces and lifestyles which is a precondition for fashion design, and which makes it more than likely that designers of whatever nationality more or less consciously address their design, not to national communities, but to certain enclaves of taste, which in Kawakubo's case has certainly transcended national boundaries. [Skov 1996:148]

as a means of predicting his present and future behavior" (Goffman 1959:1).

Appearance is important because of the visual clues it gives to people between whom interaction is taking place. Ethnic affiliation—though not mentioned by Goffman—is the most important and foundational of these visual clues or sign-vehicles, and perceived ethnic affiliation will be the foundation upon which other "untested stereotypes" are applied. Cosmetics become implicated as sign vehicles, as well. Whether a person is wearing makeup (or not), whether it is visible (or not), whether the facial skin is colored paler or darker than the rest of the skin (or not), whether the lipstick is pink (or red, or black)—all of these factors are sign-vehicles which convey important messages to the people who view the face of a person.

Quotations around words such as "Western," and "Japanese" are meant to suggest the discursiveness of such entities, often taken unproblematically as temporally, historically, spatially, ethnically, and / or referentially bounded units. It has been suggested by many authors that reality is much more complex, that Japan and the West have never embodied such an impenetrable exclusivity one of the other, and that the boundary between Japan and the West is an artificial one. Further, as Ivy notes, "Japan is literally unimaginable outside its positioning vis-à-vis the West" (1995:4). However, I'd like to also keep in mind "Derrida's position...that we can never be free of the conventions, concepts and categories we wish to criticise" (Docker 1994:134). I cannot refer to a temporally, historically, spatially, ethnically, referentially ambiguous Japan without referring to "Japan." Quotes around such constructs will not be used hereafter.

I tend to agree with Skov, that Kawakubo's designs for Comme Des Garçons represent an enclave of taste rather than an ethnic identity. How does this apply to makeup? It is entirely possible that differences in makeup brand and application in Missoula, Montana and Tokyo, Japan index differences in taste, rather than differences in national-cultural and cultural-racial identity. However, I am convinced that, while boundary-crossing may not provoke an ethnically-based change in performance of identity, the overall use and consumption of makeup does.

In the next section, I will discuss the relationship between anthropology and cultural studies, and finally end by explaining my original research.

"Culture" and Controversy

The disciplines of anthropology and cultural studies both claim "culture" as the primary landmark in their own conceptual territories (Nelson et al. 1992). The resemblance ends here, however. To begin with, it is useful to use anthropology and cultural studies to critique one another.

Cultural studies' genesis in 1960s Britain was as the study of subaltern (not necessarily "popular") identity and politics by academics of working-class background, such as Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams (Nelson et al. 1992). The phenomenon spread to Australia and the United States, and has broadened somewhat, though the common view of cultural studies in the U.S. is that it is decidedly the study of "pop" culture (despite numerous studies of "high" culture, as well) (Nelson et al. 1992:11).
Nelson et al. tentatively define cultural studies:

...one may begin by saying that cultural studies is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counter-disciplinary field that operates in the tension between its tendencies to embrace both a broad, anthropological and a more narrowly humanistic conception of culture. Unlike traditional anthropology, however, it has grown out of analyses of modern industrial societies. It is typically interpretive and evaluative in its methodologies, but unlike traditional humanism it rejects the exclusive equation of culture with high culture and argues that all forms of cultural production need to be studied in relation to other cultural practices and to social and historical structures. Cultural studies is thus committed to the study of the entire range of a society's arts, beliefs, institutions, and communicative practices. [Nelson et al. 1992:4]

With this definition in mind, I would like to ask, where do people fit in to this definition? Who do cultural scholars study? Or, to put it a different way, who is the Other of cultural studies? According to Nelson et al., the Other would seem to be any of the set of all "modern industrial societies," not unlike the Other of (traditional) sociology. However, while sociology, in general, successfully posits the study of the Other as the study of the Self, cultural studies does not, because there is no person(s) at the center of cultural studies theory.

In cultural studies, as in sociology, alterity is a window through which the Self is viewed, turning the Self into the Other. But who is the Self / Other of cultural studies? Is it the subaltern? Or the entity in power? Or the material object of study? Are we studying, for example, Pokemon\(^\text{11}\) cards in order to describe and understand fans of Pokemon (both children and adults), or in order to describe and understand Japanese (or American) society more generally, or in order to understand the underlying meanings of Pokemon characters themselves?

One of the admirable goals of cultural studies is that of "offer[ing] a bridge

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\(^{11}\) Pokemon (or Pokémon, as it is often rendered in the U.S.), a group of animated monsters (of which Pikachu is one of several), is the latest of Japanese-created international crazes. Pokemon is a clip-blend of the English words pocket and monster. Pokemon characters appear in a syndicated cartoon show, on trading cards, as stuffed toys, on lunchboxes, etc.
between theory and material culture" (Nelson et al. 1992:6). However, I would argue that, while cultural scholars often succeed in this goal, they ultimately fail in the academic project because they make no reference to real people in their studies. For example, a cultural scholar may use an object of material culture, such as a novel by Yoshimoto Banana, to arrive at a conclusion about the population at hand (young women who read Yoshimoto novels), or perhaps about society as a whole (Japan), using a range of theoretical orientations (feminism). The emphasis is not on what Yoshimoto's readers say they think about Yoshimoto's novels, but on the imaginary characters of the novel as spokespersons for the real people in question (or as ethnographic informants, if you will), and hence the presumed effects of these novels on these specified readers. This is the criticism most often leveled by ethnographers: While it's true that you cannot gain an understanding about things people do until you do it, too, you also cannot know what people think about their lives unless you ask

Key here is the definition of culture (again) tentatively offered by Nelson et al.:
"...culture is understood both as a way of life-encompassing ideas, attitudes, language, practices, institutions, and structures of power-and a whole range of cultural practices: artistic forms, texts, canons, architecture, mass-produced commodities, and so forth" (Nelson et al. 1992:5). However, cultural scholars tend to assume the "life-encompassing ideas" and explicate the text in those terms, whereas anthropologists more often assume that a text is used to make transparent the "life-encompassing ideas." This is obviously a gross generalization—but it is the case more often than not.


i.e. to put it very crudely, if a cultural scholar says that young women read Yoshimoto because they identify with the alienation and difficult family situations of the characters, I want to see an ethnography or citation of an ethnography where the researcher has discovered that the young women who read Yoshimoto feel alienated or have difficult family situations. And if people who do not feel alienated or who do not feel they have difficult family situations also read the novels, this ethnography would explain why. This is the conceptual link that is missing in much cultural scholarship.
them. Both must occur. You cannot gain a holistic knowledge about Japanese women simply by virtue of reading the novels they read. You must talk to them about it, too.

True, a novel is written through the filter of culture by someone immersed in that culture. But a sample of one (i.e. one author, one book character) is a bad sample. Even a sample of a hundred authors or book characters may not mean much to an anthropologist, since the emphasis in anthropology is on interaction with people, not texts alone, whether those people are from New Guinea or from New York. The anthropologist's exasperated question, then, to the cultural scholar who endeavors to bridge theory and material culture is, "Where do people fit into this analysis?"

On the other hand, the virtue of cultural studies is this same effort to ground theory in concrete reality. Postmodernity's fame (or infamy) for its rejection of grand

15 Cultural scholars sometimes focus on the particular, explaining the meaning of a certain text, and sometimes focus on the overall significance a text has in a particular cultural milieu. While sometimes these methods seem very effective, I still feel that ethnographic inquiry adds to the overall picture of culture to make it more complete.

16 For an example of an anthropologist who uses cultural studies methodology, as well as ethnography, see Martin's (1994) study on how immunology is understood in the U.S., in which she uses sources as varied as "Newsweek," microbiology texts, and children's books, as well as her human informants. Martin comments, "Powerful as the impact of media images may be, we would be terribly misled if we took their content as the only sign of what is being understood in the wider culture...Ethnographic exploration will quickly show us that the reality is far more complex. In the end, we will see that media images, rich as they seem, are impoverished in comparison to the living collages of ideas produced by people" (Martin 1994:62). Another anthropologist who critiques cultural studies is Rosenblatt (1997). In his cultural study of books relating to tattooing and piercing in the West, he repeatedly emphasizes that, while the cultural study is interesting and revealing, it is not enough, and that ethnography is needed to compliment the study. Kondo (1997) does an excellent job of integrating ethnography with her cultural study of fashion, by discussing fashion's meaning and using ethnographic information from interviews with designers and others. Other critiques of cultural studies theory include that of Beausoleil (1994), and Walters (1999), who comments in her literature review on feminist cultural studies, "Who / what has the power to determine meaning? Is it the actual viewer, who makes of the image what she will, or is it the image itself that determines certain readings from the viewers?" (Walters 1999:246). These scholars all do an excellent job making the dangers of reifying "media" and "images" clear.
metanarratives has resulted, in some cases, in the infinitesimal splintering of theory. And while I agree with Nelson et al. that theory must be intrinsically fitted to a culture, and that there has been much wrestling with theory in order to make it fit the bill, on the other hand, a theory that is not explanatory of multiple cultures is useless. With this thought in mind, I would like to discuss anthropology's major problem, as I see it: an unhealthy obsession with theory.

A Narcissistic Obsession: Anthropology's Theory

One problem with many contemporary ethnographies is that they are addressed to a very narrow audience: other anthropologists. Few others--rarely the people involved in the study--find ethnography readable. This goes beyond the jargon associated with anthropology (as any field has its own specialized vocabulary), dealing

17 I cannot emphasize enough that I am not rejecting anthropological theory entirely. Ethnography needs an orienting context or it is meaningless; theory is much needed. Unfortunately, anthropology as known through popular culture is caricatured as atheoretical. Bordo relates that theory of any kind is popularly seen as irrelevant: "Those who insist on an orienting context (and who therefore do not permit particulars to reign in all their absolute 'difference') are seen as 'totalizing,' that is, as constructing a falsely coherent and morally coercive universe that marginalizes and effaces the experiences and values of others" (1990:663). Thus, in her discussion of a Donahue program, the history of black oppression by whites was completely erased from the conversation. Blacks wearing blue contact lenses were on a par with whites getting permanents. Appearance was apoliticized and construed as a matter of personal choice and being "different" and "sexy." Hence, analyses of cosmetics that leave history and power out of the picture are inaccurate at best and continue the oppression of other peoples at worst. Di Leonardo (1998:chapter 6) gives an excellent discussion of how anthropology is popularly viewed in the United States, including her own efforts to explain her views as an expert consultant to a journalist for a Newsweek article on sociobiology, which turned out to be appallingly ahistorical and unanalytical. All historical and political concerns were ignored by the journalist and di Leonardo was asked to explain "the old ahistorical, natural laboratory, billiard ball use of Other Cultures for our edification" (1998:355). Di Leonardo's is an excellent argument on behalf of an anthropology that is steeped in theory and history--so much of what floats around popularly these days is atheoretical and ahistorical. However, hers is also an excellent argument on behalf of making "real" anthropology more available to non- anthropologists. It is probable that at least part of the reason that anthropology is so poorly known and misunderstood because of the fact that anthropological writing is so inaccessible to so many people--when paradoxically, it is more important than ever to understand the human condition.
with the broader ethical issue of for whom we write.

One excellent example of a needlessly difficult ethnography is *Charred Lullabies* by E. Valentine Daniel. Daniel speaks of the civil war in Sri Lanka with great sensitivity. He struggled greatly with writing a book that is ultimately about violence. I do not hesitate to say that I consider his book to be one of the most important of the century. I also do not hesitate to say that I doubt it will be read very widely.

Daniel seems to hope that his book will be read by people outside of the academy, in particular, the Sinhahas and Tamils on either side of the Sri Lankan civil war. He comments that he hopes his analysis will "draw the reader, especially if he or she is a Sinhala or Tamil who believes in essential differences...to ponder over the constructedness of our world and ourselves more generally and more profoundly" (1996:14). The question of language (i.e. the fact that the book is written in English) aside, how many Sinhahas and Tamils will read this book? He establishes in chapter 6 that there are many Sri Lankan emmigrants in various English-speaking nations: Britain, the U.S., and Canada. Will this book be read by them? I think they would find it intensely interesting. Daniel's historical sketches and ethnographic data are nothing short of brilliant, and extremely convincing, and not difficult to understand. However, his usage of theory gets in the way of understanding the historical and ethnographic information. Nothing short of prolonged exposure to philosophy, psychology, and anthropology could make his theoretical passages meaningful to the lay reader. Some, at least, of the emmigrés may be able to pick apart the book. However, the grand majority will not.

Another of the possible target audiences include immigration policy makers in the U.S. and elsewhere. Daniel discusses several heartwrenching court cases where a Sri Lankan refugee is deported to Sri Lanka, only to be tortured and murdered. Again, however, if Daniel is hoping to reach policy makers with this ethnography, he has failed--again, because it is uncertain at best that the people in question are also
students of philosophical, psychological, and anthropological theory.

As anthropologists, our calling is to inform, to engage in cultural critique, to analyze. However, if ethnography is not read beyond the walls of the Anthropology Department, or even beyond the walls of the University, we are failing. We should address not simply our colleagues, but as broad an audience as possible. Writing is not an activist activity when those potential readers who could affect change do not read our writing.

There is a further issue—that of power over knowledge in general. Martin (1994) comments in her excellent (and very reader-friendly) ethnography of immunity and health in U.S. society that the new measuring stick in U.S. society is flexibility of body, mind, and society, symbolized by such disparate practices as yoga classes, training / education / re-training, flexible employment, and movement into electronic hyperspace (e.g. by using email, fax machines, the internet) (see 1994: part six: Post-Darwinism). However, only a small elite have access to these resources.

Anthropologists are arguably among this elite—highly-educated and culturally flexible (even those who study their own originay cultures), we have the ability to empower (through accessible writing—as well as through teaching, and community outreach) or to indirectly oppress (by limiting our discourse only to ourselves in the current fashion). Ironically, so much of the current discourse on power, hegemony, and resistance is written in prose that only the powerful can understand. When anthropologists narcissistically address only themselves, they are implicated in the power system they endeavor to critique.

With this idea in mind, I specifically endeavored to write a thesis that is not atheoretical, but that could potentially be read and understood by my interviewees and friends—people who expressed interest in the project, and the grand majority of them not anthropologists. I hardly think I'm starting a trend, but ethically, I feel it is necessary to include these people in my potential readership.
Explanation of Original Research

The grand majority of this thesis was written via library research. However, I also did some original fieldwork, which is referenced in the thesis in several chapters. Therefore, it might be helpful to the reader if I were to explain my views on research (both in the library and in the field) in the introduction instead of explaining them repetitively throughout the thesis. It is my goal to demystify the process of anthropological research and fieldwork somewhat--I want to give the reader an impression of how the research process happens; too often, readers see only a writer's polished, final results and wonder how that conclusion was written. So, I do not hesitate to include personal experience in my writing—including anecdotes that caused me to ask certain questions, as well as problems I encountered while doing research.18

The fieldwork done for this thesis consisted of twelve interviews: ten interviews with Japanese women currently attending the University of Montana, and two emailed questionnaires to friends who attended UM during the 1998-1999 school year, and have now returned to their homes in Japan. The women were contacted largely through my networks of already-existing Japanese and American friends. A number of them I have known since September, 1998; others I met through introductions from other friends. I did not advertise (in e.g. a newspaper) to find them, but instead relied on human connections.

The interviews were held primarily in English. The point, since both I and the interviewees spoke both English and Japanese, was code-switching. This is the most natural way for two people who both speak the same two languages to communicate. Also, I did not press my knowledge of Japanese on any of the interviewees (see e.g.

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18 Kondo (1997) does this via italicized vignettes set apart from the main chapters. I left my experiences with research, however, within the text in normal script.
Macdonald 1997:20). They all had studied hard to master English, and we were, after all, in a predominantly English-speaking area of the United States, so it seemed fitting that we hold the majority of the conversation in that language.

The interviews took about an hour and were extremely casual. Most of them took place at the Business Building Undergraduate Student Lounge, or the University Center during lunch hour. I wanted the atmosphere to be relaxed and for conversation to flow naturally, as between friends. This is part of the reason I chose to interview mostly people I already knew, or people I with whom I shared some sort of mutual acquaintance. Moreover, I specifically avoided "official" or intimidating settings. For example, I am a graduate teaching assistant in the UM Anthropology Department. Because of time constraints and other circumstances, at one point, I was forced to have one interview take place in my office. I worried a lot about this because I didn't want the interviewee to feel that she was paying a call on a sensei (teacher) who was going to interrogate her. Fortunately, the interview proceeded (to my perception, anyway) very naturally, and we were able to discuss the questions without experiencing a profound hierarchical gap.

The first part of the interview dealt with major, age, etc. There were: one eighteen-year-old, two nineteen-year-olds, three twenty-year-olds, one twenty-two year-old, three twenty-three-year-olds, one twenty-four-year-old, and one twenty-eight-year-old. Their majors ranged from English to Psychology to Environmental Studies to Business. They came from cities and prefectures all over Japan, including (to name just a few) Saiyama, Saitama; Nago, Okinawa; Hata, Nagano; Kumamoto, Kumamoto; and Ehime, Matsuyama. Predictably, there were several from the Tokyo-Saitama area and Kumamoto prefecture (where the University of Montana has sister schools). Overall, however, I think they were quite a diverse group.

The second part of the interview involved the lexicon of appearance. I asked the women to give me their first impressions when I spoke the words kakko, kesho, and
The results of this section of the interviews are included in chapter 2.

The third part of the interview involved questions about cosmetic use in Japan and Missoula, e.g. had the informant changed her morning cosmetic routine since coming to Montana, what products and brands she was unable to procure in Montana, and what she thought of people who used makeup in public places (e.g. putting on lipstick while sitting at a table in a restaurant). The results of this section are also discussed in chapter 2.

The fourth part of the interview was comprised of questions about magazine-reading habits. Finally, I asked the women, "Why do you think so many Japanese advertisements show photographs of white people?" The results of this section are discussed the conclusion.

Having covered, in this chapter, a brief background on cosmetics and the face, critiques of cultural studies, anthropology, and linguistics, and the circumstances of my fieldwork, I think the reader is prepared for chapter 1 on consumerism.
Part I
GENDER AND THE FRIVOLITY (?) OF CONSUMERISM AND COSMETICS
Chapter 1
Spectacle, Gender, and Consumerism

Misemono: Visuality and Consumerism

Neko mo...minna motteiru, machi ni aruke--Louis Vuitton!
Rich people, poor people, honmono, nisemono--Louis Vuitton!
...shorudaa baggu, suutsu keisu, bosuton baggu, o-saifu, kinchoku bukuro.

(Even cats...everybody has one, walking in town--Louis Vuitton!
Rich people, poor people, real thing or imitation--Louis Vuitton!
...shoulder bags, suitcases, Boston bags, wallets, kinchuck bags.)

This is the chorus of a song called "BAGGS" by the Japanese punk band
Shonen Knife, a group which made it big in the U.S. in the early 1990s. In the song, a
significance is placed on owning just the right item in order to display it in public.
Indeed, it is a small exaggeration to say that even cats own designer bags, at least in
Tokyo. Misemono is the Japanese word for spectacle or luxurious display, and
misemono is at the heart of much consumerism, whether the consumer buys a
commodity in order to visually fit in with a group of people who also own that item, as
a competition--to keep up with the Yamadas, to display differential (usually superior)
status, or merely to indulge in the pleasure of buying, owning, or experiencing.

Consumption of high-status commodities and artifacts is an important pursuit
in Japan, which, it has been suggested is "a society of surveillance" (Holden 1994:193),
in which watching each other has become a national-cultural pastime. Consumers
may be labeled both elegant and selfish. While fitting in or looking the part (i.e. of one's

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1 This chapter is a compound of three papers written for classes taught at the University
of Montana. "Misemono: Visuality and Consumerism in Contemporary Japan" was
written Fall Semester, 1999 for the class Anthropology 430: Social Anthropology, taught
by Dr. Katherine Weist. "Interpreting Japanese Cosmetic Advertisements" was written
Fall Semester, 1999 for the class of Anthropology 494: Seminars in Ethnology: Law,
Gender, and Kinship, taught by Dr. G.G. Weix. "English in Japan" was written Spring
Semester, 2000 for the class of Japanese 386: History of the Japanese Language, taught
by Dr. Judith Rabinovich.

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occupation or status) may be seen as positive and enviable, conspicuous visual display of luxury goods implies competition, a phenomenon with which Japanese are uncomfortable (Creighton 1995:139).

Young, unmarried women are the most visible consumer group in Japan. Young women who engage in seemingly unbridled consumerism are often labeled self-centered (Skov 1996:165n3). However, display of wealth through display of goods may also be interpreted as a sign of elegance and fashion. The spectacle of wealth can be visually performed, as well, by a person who can pay for access to a service, such as a club, that others cannot afford.

The U.S. view of Japanese consumerism parallels the ambiguous and conflicting view we have of Japan in general. At the mention of Japan, two very distinct and seemingly opposing images are often invoked in the American mind. There is the vision of consumer Japan, of Japanese businessmen zooming to work in their luxurious BMWs, of Japanese women with Gucci dresses, Prada bags, and Chanel makeup. But there is also the image of the samurai, the kimono, the painted face of the geisha, the enormous girth of the sumo wrestler, and the other mysterious relics and superstitions of the feudal age. This distinction also exists for the Japanese person, who knows without thinking about it which artifacts are discursively traditional / Japanese, and which are discursively modern / foreign.

Widespread consumerism, as a product of the modern world (e.g. in the form of consumer capitalism or the rise of the middle class) is often seen by both Americans and Japanese as consumption of modern or Western commodities. However, visual display of luxury goods to assert power or status (conspicuous consumption) exists not only of Western commodities, but also of traditional culture and artifacts. Japanese consume both the Western and the traditional, and depending on the context, both may be of high status. Lise Skov notes:

The 'native'-'foreign' distinction in consumer culture represents an axis in a
cultural hierarchy within Japan which tends to position 'Japanese' with high culture and 'Western' with consumer culture, although imported designer fashion and other brand name goods tend to have a high status ranking. [Skov 1996:146]

The example she gives is that, despite the usual disavowal of "mixed" dress codes, at a formal occasion such as a wedding, women in kimono and women in designer dresses are equally appropriately dressed (Skov 1996:146).

In this chapter, I wish to discuss some of the ways in which consumption creates a spectacle. Misemono is the point of buying to fit in, competitive display of money or goods, and of spending to display differential status. I will examine the phenomenon of excessive teenage spending, and then explore the economic basis for consumption by young, single women. Women are the target of much advertising, and hence, responsible for many purchases of cosmetics, and for the "purchase" of much international experience (e.g. language classes, travel, study abroad).

Shopping with and Showing Up the Crowd: Spending Among Adolescents

Human relations in Japan are based on the ideal of group solidarity, whether the group is one's friends, coworkers, schoolmates, or fellow Japanese. Individualism is looked down upon. Holden states that surveillance is what keeps people from getting out of line:

For a society predicated on group cohesiveness, the observation of conformity and restraint by individuals is critical. Deviation from behavioral norms, the expression or cultivation of individual idiosyncrasies must be countenanced. The primary method for societal preservation, then, becomes surveillance. A second strategy, which flows from the first, is the compulsion to self-consciousness. In effect, society is sustained because rampant surveillance stimulates self-monitoring and auto-control. [1994:203]

Participation in adolescent friendship groups\(^2\) follows this model, in which friends

\(^2\) See Condon (1984) for an excellent discussion of the primacy of group-oriented behavior in Japan
monitor each others' spending and purchases and exclude non-spenders (i.e. less affluent teens).

What kids buy and wear is of seminal importance, as their purchases (both the act of buying and the commodity bought) enhance their "individuality." Tanaka highlights the paradoxical use of the word koseiteki (individualistic) in Japanese advertisements (1990). She notes that ads that encourage the viewer to "individualistic" purchases are usually encouraging not the self-actualizing pursuit of a discrete identity that Westerners think of as individualism, but of the pursuit of an elitist identity:

Being oneself is using Italian tableware and wearing French suits. They [ads] are apparently endorsing the idea of 'doing your own thing', but in practice this means buying European products which are expensive and have high status, and which are, therefore, approved of by society. There is a sense that 'individualism' is equivalent to elitism: doing things European or American is 'desirable', for they are superior. Individualism is accessible only to an elite group, who can afford to buy European or American goods. [1990:91]

Consumption, then, is not about individualism (in the Western sense) in Japan\(^3\), but in being seen to buy and display the commodities that the group deems as high-status.\(^4\)

Kondo, in her analysis of an article in Ryûkô Tsushin (a Japanese fashion magazine), comments that, "Our individuality is thoroughly constituted through consumption; we are distinguishable by the \textit{way we buy}" (1997:83, emphasis in original). Through consumption and consumerism, the individual self is constituted and defined, at the same time as that self conforms to the latest trend or fad.

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\(^3\) The trap Tanaka falls into here is the association of consumerism only with the Western. As noted above, kimono and designer dresses are equivalent in some situations. Furthermore, geisha, Japanese traditional party entertainers, constitute a significant consumer group, and their extravagant purchases defined taste and style historically, though admittedly not as much contemporarily. See Dalby 1983 and Geffen and Maltby 1999.

\(^4\) The same could be said of "individualistic" consumerism in the United States.
However, following the group also implies competition—competition involving who gets to define what commodities are valued, and competition between people to follow the trend most closely and extravagantly. Creighton notes that competition is looked down upon by Japanese:

...competition is directly in conflict with espoused Japanese social values. Everyone and everything is supposed to strive continually for a harmonious, co-operative existence. I do not mean to suggest that competition is lacking in Japan; extreme competition does exist, just as conflict exists despite the espoused value given to harmony. However, competition tends to be channeled, and open expressions of competition tend to be treated negatively. [1995:139]

Consumerism is one of these accepted channels for competition, and thus embodies a contradiction. Teen consumerism toys with the paradox of both inconspicuously fitting in and obviously sticking out: If you follow the trends, you fit in with everyone who also follows them. But you stick out from those who can only wish to follow them, who do not have the means to follow them, or who choose not to follow them. Thus, elitism is individualistic, and individualism is elitist.

In Japan today, however, has elitism become commonplace? Many authors have noted with skepticism the rise of the “new middle-mass society” (shin chūkan taishū shakai--see Ivy 1993:241) in Japan--the phenomenon where over 90% of people identify themselves as middle-class, making class distinctions outdated for the homogenous masses (see e.g. Davidson 1993:42; Ivy 1993; Ivy 1995: 206-207 and 237n40; Robertson 1998:159, White 1993). The existence of the middle mass is debatable, however, since it is doubtful that over 90% of teens (or adults) can participate in communal and competitive spending. Ivy comments instructively, “...when Japanese are asked about their kurashimuki (circumstances, standard of living), more than 90 percent say they're in the “middle” (chu); when asked directly what class they're in, however, only about 25 percent say that they are “middle class” (chūsan kaikyō)” (Ivy 1993:241n9). The existence of a middle mass--or even an
unusually large middle class—is somewhat doubtful.

White notes that—despite the dubious existence of a middle mass—Japanese youth have more disposable income than ever (see both White 1993 and White 1995 for a comparison of the relative affluence of teens versus their parents and grandparents). Though the average allowance is only about twenty-four U.S. dollars per month, Japanese teens receive many gifts of money from their parents and grandparents regularly, as well as large amounts of money as holiday and birthday gifts. They have, on average, $1000 in a savings account. Furthermore, few work part-time or do household chores, but concentrate primarily on schooling, especially if college-bound. At the times American kids might go out to eat, to the movies, or on a walk, their urban Japanese counterparts, both male and female, prefer to go shopping with groups of friends (White 1993:112). Most group activity in Japan is homosocial: Girls go out with girls and boys go out with boys. Even among married adults, it is most common to see husband and wife live separate social lives: a man may spend his evening at a bar with his work friends while a woman spends the morning (i.e. when her children are at school) at tea ceremony classes with her female next-door neighbor (see Rowland Mori 1996).

White notes that the first step to being stylish is to find out what's in style...for Japanese teens, this means finding out what's stylish in Tokyo. They do this primarily by reading magazines directed at boys or girls and then discussing their findings with their friends. Such magazines are especially invaluable to teens who live outside of Tokyo:

Magazines spread the rapidly changing taste of Tokyo's haute bourgeoisie. Provincial children are well prepared for their school trips to Tokyo. [For example,] Boys are informed about where the trendy sports shops are, such as the NFL licensed football gear outlet near the Harajuku Post Office, or the Italian bike clothes shop in Aoyama. Or they go to Wave in Shibuya or Roppongi for CDs and tapes, and Akihabara for discount electric goods, following pull-out sheet maps in their favorite magazines. [1993:115]
The information, then, is geared toward encouraging youth consumerism by being extremely specific as to what to buy and where to buy it.®

What do teens buy? Clothes, stereo equipment, video games, "idol" gear (bags, diaries, etc. adorned with the image of the latest teen idol or pop group), CDs, makeup, sports gear, and other consumer goods, as well as lessons in, for example, piano or etiquette. And these goods don't come cheap. White notes that it is normal to spend $100-$200 for a single item of clothing (1993:3). Teens may also go on unchaperoned vacations, both within Japan and abroad (1993:143), as well as participate in shorter school- or sports-oriented trips or short homestays in foreign countries.

It must be emphasized that it is not simply enough to be seen with the buying crowd in a trendy shop, but one must be seen to spend in order to be included.® One of White's informants, a middle-school-aged boy, commented,

I don't have a group of friends because if I get too involved, I'd have to spend a lot of money on clothes and movies and stuff. I can't keep up, and I can't talk to them about it. My best friend understands and we just go home together after school. [White 1993:103]

His exclusion from (eschewal of?) social groups was based on his family's financial situation. Kids may be able to keep up with their friends in the realm of consumer

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White also notes that consumerism is encouraged in other--less direct--ways. Girls' magazines often contain horoscopes, spells, or charms that assess how compatible a girl is with her crush, or love charms to get his notice. Other spells include charms that induce her parents to raise her allowance (White 1993:117-118). Boys' magazines detail appropriate gifts to buy for their girlfriends, such as lace underwear or expensive necklaces (1993:118) or "what kind of flowers to give to what type of girl" (1993:119).

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It might be noted here that spending money is more visually marked in Japan than in the United States. First of all, highly visual cash is favored over the less conspicuous forms of currency (credit cards and cheques). Credit cards are used rarely, and cheques used not at all, so the majority of transactions take place in cash. Cash is more visible because it is usually slightly crinkled and disorganized, and one must search for the correct bills and change. Furthermore, if something expensive is being bought, a large pile or wad of bills may be conspicuously extracted from the pocket or wallet.
goods, but be reluctant to bring their friends home if their apartment or home is seen as inferior to those of their friends (White 1993:153). Some girls turn to prostitution, the pornography industry, or shoplifting in order to finance their consumption (White 1993:163, 175). Sometimes, parents go into debt, or formerly stay-at-home mothers take part-time jobs, in order to finance teens' passions for the latest craze (White 1993:106) -- which may last less than a month (see White 1993:125). Furthermore, as in the Shonen Knife song, the real Louis Vuitton is desired and nothing at all is preferable to the knock-off (note that poor people are associated with spurious Louis Vuitton bags through the song's parallel structure), though non-designer items are gaining a following in Japan since the economic recession of the 1990s (see White 1993:124, White 1995).

What is the value of such consumerism by teens, actively encouraged by their parents and grandparents, as well as by magazine editors and writers? The answer has to do with the dominant view of teens and their peer groups in Japan. White explains that, in the U.S., the teenage years are seen as a negative time, and teen friendships are also accorded this negative view: "Among American adults, it is thought

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7 White notes: "Those who have the best CD players, the most expensive electronic audio equipment, the fanciest skis, and the top-of-the-line Nissan have small apartments and no time for leisure activities. Among those who cannot afford these things, there is a new recognition of the distinction between the haves and the have-lesses" (1993:105). People with many possessions must work excessively to afford them, as well as live in a cheaper dwelling in order to fund their consumer appetites. I saw this process at work many times, especially while I lived in Tokyo. For example, one of my neighbors, a businessman, lived in a tiny, three-room, somewhat seedy apartment, with his wife and their three children under the age of six years old. He dressed in designer suits and drove a BMW to work. It is, furthermore, common to see two- and three-year-old CD players and televisions put out with the trash, since the owner has bought something better and with more up-to-date technology.

8 This holds true for cosmetics as much as everything else. As we will see in the next chapter, the young women I interviewed often discussed which brands were prestige brands and which were "cheap," in general preferring prestige brands to drugstore brands.
that teen friendships lead to the dreaded peer pressure (always negatively interpreted to mean the trouble adolescents get each other into, simply by being together)” (White 1993:142, emphasis in original). However, Japanese adults see teen relationships as positive training for adult life: “[In Japan)...teen relationships are not as threatening, for they are seen to provide training in the realities of adult relationships--the constraints of adult hierarchies must be learned young. Friendship, then, complements the lessons of home and school” (White 1993:142). The importance of having friends (and ultimately proper training for adulthood) and being able to keep up with their spending habits thus results in adult anxiety that their children have enough pocket money to spend. Not to mention the desperate measures some teens resort to in response to the pressure to fit into a highly hierarchical and surveillance-oriented society.

However, at the same time that parents and grandparents fund their children’s consumerism, there is concern that their teens do not know how to work, and that they complain of poverty in the midst of affluence (White 1993:105). There are, as noted above, also teens who do not or cannot participate in communal shopping and spending. Ironically, these children may be the most “individualistic”—in the real sense of the word—since they (often painfully) stick out from the kids that can follow the latest trends.

**Age, Marital Status, Gender, and Consumerism: Young, Single Women**

In the above section, I have discussed the ethnographic aspects of highly visual consumption among teenagers. Consumption is a way of paradoxically conforming and showing an elitist sort of “individualism,” as evidenced by the lavish spending of middle- and high school students. The performance of spectacle and consumption in Japan, a society oriented toward surveillance, both thrills and alienates.
Here, I change the focus from the gender-undifferentiated category of "teenagers" to that of young women. Young women are arguably the most dynamic consumers in Japan today, outspending their male counterparts by tens of thousands of yen yearly. Especially for young working women (whether they have or have not gone to college), consumerism is a widespread pastime. Skov and Moeran (1995) discuss the history of women entering Japan's workforce, commenting:

...it is the decision-making power over their own salaries which is the main factor allowing women, and marketers, to create space for individualized consumption. At the same time, it is women's participation in public processes, whether related to work or leisure, which has made them visible in the streets, in the media and, not least, in marketing strategies. [1995:27]

While most discussions of the consumerism of young, Japanese women focus on the consumption of things, one should keep in mind the internationalist flavor of consumption of foreign language lessons, travel, and even schooling abroad. Consumption of the international can and does constitute a form of consumerism.

The most strikingly consumeristic gender / status category, both in real terms and in ideological terms, is perhaps that of the young single woman. Horioka (1993) states that working women in their twenties by far outspend their male counterparts in pleasure-related goods and services. Young, unmarried working women are more likely to prefer brand-name clothing and accessories, are more willing to spend money on recreational activities, and are twice as likely to engage in travel for pleasure abroad than are working men in their twenties. In 1990, young working women were saving up their money at high rates--21.4 percent of their total income in Tokyo and 31.0

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9 I was not able to find data on why the consumerism of young, single men does not match that of their female counterparts.

percent in Osaka; the most common reasons being for their future marriages and for travel. Their savings outstrip men's by 1.9 times (1993:288). Horioka notes:

...these gender differences are becoming increasingly pronounced over time: between 1984 and 1989 the consumption expenditures of single women of all ages increased 13.0 percent in real terms and those of single women under the age of 30 increased 15.8 percent, whereas the corresponding figures for single males were 1.2 percent and 2.0 percent, respectively. The rate of increase in spending by category also varied considerably by sex, with sports, hobbies, and lessons (cooking, English conversation, etc.) showing the biggest increases in the case of single women and accessories such as watches and handbags and nonalcoholic beverages showing the biggest increases in the case of single men. Thus, the tendency to spend more, especially on leisure and recreation, is far more pronounced in the case of single women than in the case of single men. [Horioka 1993:288]

Horioka further suggests that the reason young women can engage in such consumption is that many of them live at home with their parents and contribute only slightly to the overall family budget.\(^{11}\) He muses that perhaps the reason single women engage in such extravagant consumption is that they know that, once they are married, they will have much less time and money to spend on themselves (Horioka 1993:288-289).

Furthermore, once young women are married, they are expected to run the family budget with care, even stinginess, according to the "good wife, wise mother" (ryōsai kenbo) role\(^{12}\) first propagated by the Meiji state at the end of the 1800s (Uno

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\(^{11}\) Rowland Mori notes that young women are often encouraged by their parents to take lessons in tea ceremony as "bride training," making them more desirable marriage partners because of their association with traditional arts and etiquette (1996).

\(^{12}\) Rowland Mori relates that the majority of her informants did not question their roles as homemakers and mothers (1996:123); however, Uno cites statistics such as the following that suggest that some young unmarried women—at least ideologically—reject the ryōsai kenbo role, such as the following: “Survey results revealed that in Tokyo in 1981, 23 percent of female junior high graduates, 27 percent of female high school graduates, 30 percent of female junior college graduates, and 42 percent of women college graduates opposed the statement ‘Men should work outside and women should guard the home’” (Uno 1993:321).
The urban homemaker lives in a small apartment and purchases rather than makes or grows most of the food and items she uses. Chores are eased by the use of machines, and her job...[is] that of competent manager and wise consumer. (Rowland Mori 1996:119-120)

Married women are, thus, also consumers, but tend to direct consumption toward goods and services that benefit their husbands and children, rather than themselves. Both husbands and children receive generous allowances (Horioka 1993:289; White 1993). However, the urban wife may still fill up her leisure time with lessons, especially those in the traditional arts which are perceived to make her a better hostess and homemaker, such as chadô (traditional tea ceremony and etiquette) and ikebana (traditional flower arranging) (Rowland Mori 1996:125). She may pay for such lessons out of the family budget or by means of her own money--from her pre-marriage savings, from money given to her by her mother, or from money she earned at a part-time job (Rowland Mori 1996:124, 133n18).

Because of their status as lacking obligations married adults of either sex have, and of having money that their married counterparts don't, young unmarried women are recognized as immediate consumers, as well as consumers that will eventually generate other consumers (in the persons of their husbands) by advertising companies (Ivy 1995:38). Ivy details the rationale by which the mastermind of the Dentsu advertising company, Fujioka Wakao, chose to target young women in the immensely successful “Discover Japan” and “Exotic Japan” advertising campaigns for Japan Railways:

...Fujioka and his colleagues determined that in postindustrial Japan only young women initially had the time and the ease for [intranational] travel...In his [Fujioka's] sociology, the youth market is the most profitable one for mass advertising. Youth are not completely enclosed by rule-bound working society;  

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13 Though, as Davidson notes on the topic of allowances wives give to husbands, “Men frequently complain among themselves about their stingy wives” (1993:73).
they can transgress and traverse societal boundaries that working men cannot. If youth are therefore freer than adults, how much more so are young women. For women do not have to enter society at all, he asserts. Instead, they operate as hidden manipulators in the comfort of their homes, making decisions and controlling their husbands. Moreover, Fujioka continues, women are perfectly aware of their control: where women go, men follow. [1995:37-38]

Because the societal and occupational expectations of young, unmarried women are so open, they make an excellent target for advertising campaigns.

One form of consumerism in which Japanese women are much more heavily invested than are men is consumption of the international. Kelsky cites the following statistics: "Currently nearly 80 percent of all Japanese studying abroad are female; approximately 130,000 women travel abroad to study each year" (1999:236).

Indeed, Japanese women are very international beings (as compared to Japanese men), according to some. Kelsky documents a discourse in Japan which posits men as uninternationalized—indeed, incapable of internationalization—while women are portrayed as the truly outward-looking gender. One of Kelsky's informants (a woman who had lived, studied, and traveled extensively to Western countries), for example, stated

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14 Ivy comments on the subject of internationalization in Japan that “Japan assimilates” (1995:1) and relates this to a discourse prominent in Japan since the 1980s: Kokusaika or internationalization: “While internationalization elsewhere implies a cosmopolitan expansiveness...the Japanese state-sponsored version tends toward the domestication of the foreign” (1995:3). In general, I would agree with her. However, in this case, internationalization refers more to an eschewal of everything Japanese in favor of being domesticated by a Western society.

15 Shibatani comments that women’s magazines contain the most foreign words of any other genre. In 1964, foreign words were 9.9 percent of all words that appeared in the women’s magazines tested. (Compare this to e.g. 7.0 percent for practical and popular science magazines or 8.3 percent for entertainment and hobby magazines) (1990: 143). Notably, this internationalist discourse contrasts greatly with ideals as women of upholders of culture and tradition, through learning of tea ceremony, ikebana (traditional flower arranging), etc.—which knowledge helps them to pass such knowledge of Japanese-ness on to their children. See Rowland Mori 1996, and also Kelsky 1999:237-238.
We cannot look forward to significant internationalization in Japan. The problem is Japanese men. They think Japan is number one in the world and refer to white people as *ketō* ['hairy barbarians']. Men hate foreigners. As long as Japanese men’s attitudes don’t change, true internationalization is out of the question. [Kelsky 1999:237]

Kelsky adds that internationalist texts often picture a Japanese woman speaking fluently with a foreigner or group of foreigners, while Japanese men are not pictured at all, or are pictured as incompetent and unable to communicate. Often, there is an implicit comparison between the Japanese man, backward and incapable of assimilating, and the Western man, the competent, handsome embodiment of true modernity—and are often portrayed as teachers and mentors. Further, women who write autobiographies about their foreign (i.e. Western) experiences almost always include the story of their romance with a white man, the book’s climax coming at a sexual or marital union with him.

How are such ideologies depicted linguistically? In some cases, an erotic component is added to internationalist discourses by the use of such statements as “New York City is a lover [*koibito*]” and “English had become my lover” (Kelsky 1999:238). Also, Kelsky uses as a case study an English textbook whose storyline is about a white man and Japanese woman who fall in love. In the last lesson, the man proposes. Erotic possibility is taught along with the English lesson.

Women, then, are surrounded by a discourse that posits them as natural consumers of the international. Therefore, a study of female expatriate students is highly appropriate for this thesis.

In this chapter, I have explored the world of consumerism. In the following chapter, consumption of cosmetics at home and abroad are put into the context of ethnicity and consumption by young, single Japanese women who are undergoing education abroad—more specifically in the small American city of Missoula, Montana.
Chapter 2
Borders, Cosmetics, and Ethnicity: Interviews

Study abroad and UM

In the previous chapter, I discussed consumerism, ending on the note of consumption of the international. Here, I comment on consumers of the international here at the University of Montana, and then discuss my interviews with expatriate Japanese students. Originally, I had intended to write this volume on consumerism and enclaves of taste relating to transnational (border-crossing) use of cosmetics; ethnicity was the least of my concerns. However, as I talked with interviewees about cosmetics words, usage, and advertisements, the topic that came up—almost subliminally—was ethnicity. But first, some background on Missoula and the University of Montana.

Missoula is one of Montana's larger cities with a population of 48,883 in 1996 (Missoula City Webpage). Compared to the metropolitan areas where many of my interviewees grew up, Missoula is practically microscopic. For example, Tokyo's estimated population in 1995 was 7,968,000—almost eight million people (though I have seen estimates as high as thirteen million for the daytime population). Fukuoka City's population was 1,285,000; Sendai's was 971,000 (Demographia Webpage). Many

1 The grand majority of this thesis consists of new work; however, the parts on kakkō, keshō, and kao are greatly expanded portions of a paper I wrote for a class taught by Dr. Nancy Mattina of the University of Montana. “A Japanese Mini-Lexicon of Fashion” was written Spring Semester 1999 for the class Linguistics 495: The Lexicon. Another person who was of great help to me in writing the above paper was Professor Yuka Tachibana of the UM Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

2 A final section of my original research is presented in the conclusion. For the questions I worked from, see the Appendix, this volume.

3 Hence, Part II of this volume is devoted almost exclusively to ethnicity and ethnic concerns.
of these young women had to adjust to life in a surprisingly small town. Furthermore, while in Japan, the excellent train system facilitates transportation, one must have a car (or ride the bus) to get out of Missoula, and the closest large city is Spokane, Washington, some three-hour drive away. Hence, Missoula is truly isolated in comparison to cities in Japan. Furthermore, a much more casual attitude prevails, and there is less indoor entertainment in general--the most popular pastimes in Missoula are generally outdoor sports. This was remarked upon multiple times by interviewees, who found Missoula somewhat less exciting than their hometowns in Japan.

Despite this, the University of Montana is an excellent place to meet Japanese international students, as well as an excellent place for American students to find a way to study or work in Japan, due to the many programs available. Part of the reason for this surely lies in the school's affiliation with professor and U.S. senator Mike Mansfield, who also served as U.S. ambassador to Japan for many years. The library is named for Mansfield and his wife, and the Mike Mansfield Center located in the library brings many scholars and officials to UM to lecture on Asia and attend conferences. Furthermore, several informants told me that their attendance at UM was facilitated specifically by UM Professor Yuka Tachibana, who has been responsible for recruiting several junior colleges (such as Shokei Women's Junior College) to be UM sister schools, beyond the three universities that comprise UM's Japanese affiliates.

Japanese students constitute the grand majority of international students at the University of Montana. Fall Semester 1998 saw 121 Japanese students enrolled. The country with the second highest number of students enrolled was Canada, with 45 students; third place went to Malaysia with 34. Total enrollment of international students was 400 students. This trend continued in Fall 1999, with 130 Japanese students enrolled, with Canada still in second place at 34 and Malaysia still third with
27 students, and an overall total of 385 students.\textsuperscript{4} Total enrollment for all students for Fall semester 1998 was 12,157 students.\textsuperscript{5} Therefore, in Fall 1998, 3.29 percent of the student body was comprised of international students. Japanese students constituted 30.25 percent of all international students. And Japanese students comprised 1.00 percent of the overall student body. This trend continued in Fall semester of 1999, when a total of 12,208 students were enrolled. During Fall semester 1999, international student enrollment declined from 400 the previous year to 385. However, even though international students now constituted only 3.15 percent of the student body, the proportion of Japanese students actually increased. 33.77 percent of all international students were now Japanese; Japanese students comprised 1.06 percent of the entire student body.

The University of Montana also has a high frequency of sending American students to Japan.\textsuperscript{6} The worldwide official vehicle for doing this is ISEP (International Student Exchange Program). However, since UM has three official sister schools (Toyo, Sophia, and Kumamoto Universities), this route is rarely taken by UM students. No UM students studied in Japan via ISEP during either the 1998-1999 school year (when UM students studying in other foreign countries totaled 21) or the 1999-2000 school year (when UM students studying in other foreign countries totaled 19). No students are projected to study in Japan via ISEP in 2000-2001 (when UM students studying in other foreign countries total a projected 28).

Instead, students take advantage of UM's sister school program. The Office of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{4} I am indebted to the UM Office of Foreign Student and Scholar Services for these statistics.

\textsuperscript{5} I am indebted to the UM Registrar's Office for statistics on total student enrollment.

\textsuperscript{6} I am indebted to the UM Office of International Programs for statistics on students studying abroad via ISEP and at UM sister universities.
\end{footnotesize}
International Programs reported that for the 1998-1999 school year, two students attended UM sister schools in Japan (when UM students studying at sister universities in other foreign countries totaled 17). In 1999-2000, six attended sister schools in Japan (when UM students studying at sister universities in other foreign countries totaled 19), and another six are projected for the 2000-2001 school year (when UM students studying at sister universities in other foreign countries total a projected 26).

UM can send a total of six students to Japan to study at sister universities; the only other country that matches this number is Wales; the University of Wales-Aberystwyth will accept up to six students for the 2000-2001 academic year. Other sister schools accept only four or fewer UM students. Japan is the only country with which UM has three sister schools. In 2000-2001, three UM students will attend Toyo University; two will attend Sophia; and one will attend Kumamoto.

UM also sends students to Japan for internships and study through programs run by the UM Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. There are also programs by which students go to Japan on their own without UM sponsorship, such as JET, which sends college graduates to Japan to teach English or work as translators for government offices. Therefore, there are many ways for students to get to Japan for study or work, and since all of these programs are not run by the university, it is impossible to get an exact count. But the reader would do well to keep in mind that there are a great many more UM students in Japan than can be accounted for by the Office of International Programs. Therefore, Japanese international students may find an unusually high number of Japanese-speaking American students to converse with at UM.

In my study, I interviewed ten current UM students from Japan in person, and

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The reason for a projected seven student increase over the previous year is that in 2000-2001, UM is adding six new sister university exchange programs in five different countries to its original roster.
sent via email questionnaires to another two students who attended UM during the 1998-1999 school year, but have returned to Japan. All these interviews took place in March and April of 2000. I asked them questions about why they came to UM to study, the vocabulary of cosmetics, their use of cosmetics in the U.S. and in Japan, and their reading of magazines in the U.S. and Japan. This chapter discusses their responses to questions about cosmetics and their responses to the questions about words.®

Language, Cosmetics, and Ethnicity: Kakkô, Keshô, Kao

Language is an important symbolic system, and a discussion of words can lead to a significant discussion of culture. As with all portions of the interviews I held, surprisingly, ethnicity came up as a topic--almost subliminally--several times.

In the interviews, the three words I concentrated on were kakkô “looks,” keshô “makeup,” and kao “face,” occasionally asking questions that fleshed out other words and concepts. The questions on the lexicon were the second part of the interview and

Of twelve informants, six stated they attended UM sister schools before coming to UM. One of them added that she had wanted to study abroad since her childhood. I also know that one more of the interviewees came to UM from a sister school, but she gave a different reason for doing so; she said she wanted to meet many foreign students and that UM seemed like a good place to do so.

Other reasons for choosing the University of Montana were varied. One woman, who had also studied in England (in order to study English), stated that she had come to UM to get an advanced degree (i.e. not to study English). One said she chose UM specifically because she felt it had an excellent program in her chosen major. Another gave the same reason and added that she had an aunt (who was married to a American) who lived in Billings, so she thought UM was a university where she'd be at least somewhat close to family. Finally, one person stated that one of her teachers in Japan recommended UM.

Many interviewees had been to various cities in the U.S., and also abroad on travel, though study at UM was the first time many of them had lived in a foreign country for an extended period of time. One woman had lived in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada for a year. Another had studied abroad in England. Three said they had no previous experience traveling or living abroad before coming to UM.
were conducted as much as possible in Japanese. I began by saying the words to the interviewees and asking for the first word that came to mind. This was very difficult for many people, and made them feel self-conscious, though I tried to reassure them that their responses were excellent and interesting and to further shape the conversation more naturally around their responses. Many informants brought up the issue of fashion or named cosmetics while talking about these words. This may have been because they knew the interview was going to be about cosmetics, and felt they ought to say something to that end. However, it seems significant to me that cosmetics and fashion were often mentioned; I think it's unlikely that everyone brought it up on purpose. Informants were allowed to give as many responses as they liked. Some people thought of a flood of words and some people thought of just one. I felt all of the answers were insightful, however.

Since most of an interview was conducted in English, and since much of their daily lives as students in Missoula are conducted in English, and possibly because I am a gaijin (white Westerner), informants often had trouble speaking to me in Japanese for this portion of the interview.

Kakkō "looks," or "appearance," or as one of my informants translated it, "[personal] style," was one of the more contested words in the lexicon. One informant said it made her think only of surface appearance, while another stated it refers to both mental and physical characteristics of a person.

Kakkō has many collocates, most indicating a judgement on appearance, including kakkō ga yoi “attractive”; kakkō ga warui “unattractive”; kakkoii “attractive”; kakkowarui “unattractive”; kakkō no ii “shapely”; kakkō wo tsukeru “to put on airs.”

Kakkō is one of the primary nouns used in describing people physically [e.g.,

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9 I also relied on use of dictionaries and textbooks listed in the bibliography, as well as, as noted above, the help of Prof. Tachibana.
while looking at a group of people, one person comments on a person in the crowd and
the listener replies, Donna kakkō no hito? “Which person are you talking about?”

When I was in Japan, I most commonly heard the word kakkō in its adjectival
collocates kakkōii and kakkowarui. It should further be noted here that kakkō can
embrace racial classifications. A perfectly good answer to Donna kakkō no hito? is Ano
gaijin wa... “The gaijin over there...” (i.e. a white Westerner).

Some informants related kakkō to gender. One informant immediately replied
ryūkō\textsuperscript{10} “fashion” when I said kakkō; she added as a further thought on the subject of
ryūkō that, in her experience, boys care more than girls about their looks\textsuperscript{11}--the obverse
of the American stereotype. Another young woman replied with a collocate, kakko wo
tsukeru, which means roughly “to put on airs.” It is used mostly for boys (she meant
college-age men, but she used the English word “boys”), she explained, for when a boy
“pretends as if he’s so cool.”

One more person also responded with ryūkō “fashion.” Another responded with
fuasshon “fashion.” Another answered o-share, which generally refers to fine clothing
and jewelry, with the connotation of sparkling or shining. Another person stated imeji
“image,” this English loanword reflecting her presentation of herself to others. The
linking factor in all of these responses is that they indicate some aspect of the visual
performance of the self.

Informants most often identified kakkō with clothing (i.e. rather than makeup).

\textsuperscript{10} Ryūkō is of three Japanese words that mean “fashion” (ryūkō, hayari, and fuasshon).
Ryūkō is of Chinese origin and is the more technical of the three terms. Hayari (a word
of indigenous Japanese origin) and fuasshon (an English loanword) are probably the
more common terms in speech. It is generally true that Chinese-originated words
(kango) have a more technical, polite, detached, or scholarly flavor than do indigenous
Japanese words or other foreign imports (gairaigo).

\textsuperscript{11} Several others made this same comment at other junctures of the interview.
Items of clothing named included bōshi “hat”; and kutsu “shoes”; as well as yōfuku, the general word for Western clothing (as opposed to wafuku—Japanese clothing—like kimono). One person mentioned seifuku “uniforms.” She felt that kakkō referred to looking uniform or similar (rujisei) by wearing uniforms. This was the same person who said o-share, which would seem to be the opposite of uniformity, as uniforms often indicate austerity or officiality (see e.g. White’s appendix on school uniforms in Japan, White 1993) and o-share indicates luxury. However, it makes sense in light of the argument made in this volume’s previous chapter, that the pursuit of uniformity through consumption of prestige items constitutes a form of “individualism” (see also Tanaka 1990).

In discussion kakkō, few people referenced the face directly, concentrating on more general concerns such as ryūkō; or, when they got specific, they talked about clothing. One informant noted, however, that kakkō was one of her foremost concerns and that she disliked her nose—naming a facial feature and implying that felt her clothing appearance was fine in comparison.

English words that came up as related to kakkō included good clothes, dressing, shopping, face, and clothes (i.e. with no modifiers).

All in all, the discussion of kakkō centered more specifically on gender than on ethnicity; at another time and place, this would be an interesting line of thought to follow.

The second word for which I asked the interviewees’ responses was keshō “makeup.” This is the polite Chinese word for makeup, with its collocate keshōhin referring more generally to cosmetics. I was told by two different informants that keshō was an old-fashioned, formal word and that mēkuappu and even mēku (a clip of the English loanword mēkuappu “makeup”) were the more common words among younger
women and college students. One of these same women stated that it was common for older Japanese women to add the honorific o to keshô, making it more polite: o-keshô. This is an example of language / cultural change at work.

Keshô can refer both to cosmetic material culture (e.g. lipstick, mascara), as well as the act of wearing or applying makeup (when used in the construction keshô suru).

Many interviewees indicated particular items of makeup as the words that first came to mind. Kuchibenki “lipstick” was mentioned four times. Masukara “mascara” was mentioned three times. Aishadô “eyeshadow” was mentioned once. Fuandeshon “foundation” was also mentioned one time.

Sociological classifications were also mentioned. One person mentioned women and adults (in English). Another mentioned just women (in English). One person mentioned that keshô is onna no ko no hitsujuhin “a girl’s necessities.”

Most responses dealt with contemporary Western makeup, but one person mentioned maiko-san--i.e. geisha-in-training, a person who is discursively traditional, as important to her image of what makeup meant. One interviewee, in a possibly similar vein, stated that keshô makes her think of the verb bakeru--i.e. to transform or disguise oneself. Another informant suggested a collocate that perhaps is also related to this line of thought: atsugeshô--or thickly applied, heavy makeup.

One informant expressed negative feelings about cosmetics. She mentioned the cost in English (which she translated as o-kane ga kakaru when I asked her). She added that keshô made her think of shakai kara no pureshu “societal pressure”--i.e. to wear makeup. Another informant commented that all women in Japan are expected to

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wear makeup: "You cannot go anywhere without makeup."\textsuperscript{12}

Ethnicity came up in one of the interviews regarding keshô. One informant gave a lengthy personal comment about keshô. She stated that shiroku suru meant to put on foundation. When I asked, "Is that related to shiroi (white)?" She replied that it was and launched into a story about how her mother often encouraged her to wear a foundation lighter than her actual skintone (a common practice in Japan), since her mother felt her skin was unbeautifully dark. The interviewee, however, commented that she had no hang-ups about her skin color and continued to wear the foundation of her choice—one that matched her so-called dark skintone.

Finally, kao is an important word, and the word which most commonly elicited a response involving ethnicity.\textsuperscript{13} One reason I chose the face as my frame of reference for this thesis is that—in both the U.S. and Japan—the face is “our primary external bodily locus of identity” (Kondo 1997:25). The face is also the primary locus of expression—kinesics (body language) is often noticed only as an afterthought. The gaze is often focused on the face while speaking with others, and so the face is also important linguistically.\textsuperscript{14} Kao—as does the English word “face”—has several meanings, including not simply just the face in a body-oriented context, but also the idea of “face” as prestige, honor, or respect. For example, kao wo tateru has a meaning similar to the

\textsuperscript{12} Prof. Tachibana noted that she associated putting makeup on with going out. Wearing no makeup indicated the intention of staying in.

\textsuperscript{13} Suzuki 1973 gives an excellent discussion of facial features in both English and Japanese cultural-linguistic paradigms, including, for example, an analysis of the chin. Sticking out one's chin means defiance or aggression, while in Japanese, it suggests exhaustion. See pages 40-54.

\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, when I was in Japan, I found that if I was watching someone's face while they spoke, I had much less trouble understanding what was being communicated than when, for example, someone came up behind me and asked me a question, and I couldn't see their face.
English “to save face.”

A brief look in the dictionary will confirm that there are many collocates of kao, including marugao “round face,” kaoiro “complexion,” kaotsunagi wo suru “to get to know someone,” and kaoawase “a meeting.”

One informant suggested several collocates of kao, including kao wo tsubusu and kao wo yogosu “to lose face”—i.e. one has brought shame on one’s family.

Kaomuke, another word she taught me, means that one can’t show one’s face because one has brought shame on oneself. Another informant suggested kaodachi “[facial] features.”

Other people mentioned makeup items. Masukara “mascara” was mentioned once and so was airainā “eyeliner.” Some people mentioned features or functions of kao. Hana “nose” was mentioned once. Me “eyes” was mentioned twice. One person said hyōgen “[facial] expression.”

Some mentioned special care given to the face. One person said skincare (in English), but noted that the Japanese also use sukinkea “skincare” as a loanword. One person stated fuandeshon, not as an item of makeup, but as an item of facial care, adding that fuandeshon, as well as massaji “massage” made the face look better. One person said that the face was taisetsu “important.” Another stated the word imēji “image” (the same person who stated imēji as a response for kakko), and wondered aloud how other people perceived her. Another person responded with bijin “beautiful person.” One gave an unusual answer. She commented, onna no inochi, “a woman’s life”—a phrase from a television commercial she’d seen in Japan.

Several people associated the face with whiteness. Bihaku yō keshō sui or “skin whitening lotion” was mentioned twice, once in Japanese and once in English.

15 More on skin whitening creams in this chapter.
same person who said *bihaku yō keshō sui* originally said merely *bihaku* "beautifully white," then expanded her answer to include the product that makes a person look *bihaku*. Another person commented in English that many Japanese people prefer to have a whiter face. Overall, when I had not expected the subject to come up at all, concerns related to ethnicity--specifically, skin color--appeared multiple times in the lexicon section of the interviews, alone. Skin color was also a recurring theme in discussions of cosmetics usage and preference, discussed in the following sections.

**Cosmetics and Borders: Before and After**

In Japan adult women are, in general, expected to use cosmetics. Missoula, Montana, however, is a small college town where I have rarely seen the sort of visible cosmetic usage that seemed ubiquitous in Japan. One of my main questions was: How did these women adapt their cosmetic use to Missoula, Montana--and the U.S. in general. My prediction--based on experiences and conversations with my Japanese roommate during Fall semester 1998, as well as observations of Japanese women in both Japan and Missoula--was that Japanese women were wearing less makeup in Missoula than they had in Japan.

I was both right and wrong.

If I had thought about the issue a little more critically, I would have realized that I made this generalization based upon the observation of women in my own age bracket. I had already completed three years of college before going to Japan, and many of the women I knew there were close to my same age. At UM, I found myself interviewing many women who had graduated from high school shortly before coming to UM for college. Since wearing makeup to school is not allowed at most Japanese middle- and high schools (see White's (1993) appendix on school regulations), some women actually never wore makeup before coming to Montana.
Three women told me that they had never worn makeup in Japan because of their high school student status. Two of them still didn’t wear makeup to any great extent. However, all three were aware of the kind of money it takes to buy cosmetics, and of the pressure to wear makeup in Japan. One stated, “If I went back [to Japan] now, I would spend 3000 yen\(^{16}\) on makeup every month. She explained that she didn’t really start wearing makeup until she was twenty.\(^{17}\) Since she had reached adulthood, she felt she ought to start wearing some makeup. Also, makeup made her look older.

Another commented that if she had gone to a Japanese university, she’d wear cosmetics, but “it seems like, here, nobody cares about it.” The third commented that if a person bought an entire kit of cosmetic necessities in Japan, it would cost about 10,000 yen—close to one hundred dollars. This same woman had many reasons for not wearing makeup. She stated she didn’t want to get up early to put it on, and that if she wore makeup to her part-time job, she’d end up sweating it all off, anyway. She had worn it to impress a guy in the past, or to go to a party, but “Makeup is for showing the face to people. So if I don’t have a target, there’s no reason.” So, she only wore makeup on occasions when she had a “target”—i.e. someone she wanted to impress.

Several other women spent a lot of money on cosmetics in Japan, but spent little or nothing on cosmetics in the U.S. One woman stated that she spent about 40 dollars per year on cosmetics in Montana. In Japan, by contrast, she had spent 3000 yen per month. Whenever she returned to Japan for a visit while attending UM, she

\(^{16}\) As of 18 April, 2000, one Japanese yen equaled .009577 U.S. dollar. Or, one U.S. dollar equaled 104.496 Japanese yen (Oanda Currency Converter Webpage). I find it useful (if not completely accurate) to think of one yen as roughly equivalent to one penny. Therefore, 3000 yen is roughly equivalent to thirty dollars.

\(^{17}\) Seijinshiki, or the Coming-of-Age celebration is held for all women and men who turn twenty every year. Turning twenty is symbolic of becoming an adult.
would buy a lot of her favorite cosmetic brand in Japan and bring the cosmetics back to the U.S. Furthermore, she stated that American brands carry shades of foundation for white and black women only. She had a difficult time finding a foundation that would match her skintone in the States. However, she planned to make Missoula her home, so she noted that she felt like she ought to start looking for an American brand that she liked.

Notably, several other women used this same strategy, buying up favorite brands whenever they went home to Japan, but spending relatively little on cosmetics in Montana. Another strategy employed by many was to have someone back home—usually one’s mother—mail cosmetics to Missoula. This was done for several reasons—usually that the brand or product the woman preferred was not available in the States. However, one woman commented that U.S. cosmetic products were “too strong” for her skin—i.e. the colors were too bright, the chemicals in the cosmetics caused her skin to break out, and the fragrance was overpowering. Another woman claimed that even within a brand, Japanese cosmetics differed from U.S. cosmetics. She liked Clinique in

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18 According to Beausoleil (1994), African American women also have this problem. The range of colors sold tend to suit white women more than black women, stated her black informants. See 1994:52. Here is one of the many places in which ethnicity crept into the interview.

19 I also knew that she had recently married an American, but she did not explicitly state this as one of her reasons for staying in Missoula.

20 I have often heard the same reasoning about medicine from Japanese people. For example, one of my friends I knew as an undergraduate brought over-the-counter medicines (e.g. painkillers) with her from Japan because American medicines were too powerful. It is my feeling that Americans take both over-the-counter medicines and prescription medicines more readily than Japanese people. The extension of this logic to pseudo-pharmaceuticals like cosmetics is therefore not particularly remarkable. It is, however, an argument with ethnic undercurrents. Statements like “American makeup is too strong for Japanese skin,” and “American drugs are too strong for Japanese people to tolerate,” often assume a fundamental (i.e. genetic or racial) difference between Americans and Japanese people. My feeling is that if there is a real difference in physiological response to the drugs and cosmetics that are used in both countries, it is due to environment rather than to some sort of genetically-based tolerance.
Japan, but it was prohibitively expensive. When she came to the U.S., she thought it was very cheap here, so she bought a large amount of Clinique cosmetics. However, when she used them, the U.S. Clinique cosmetics were "too strong." She elaborated by stating that the Clinique cosmetics she bought in the U.S. made her skin itch and burn. But the Clinique cosmetics she bought in Japan did not hurt her skin in any way. So, she felt hesitant to spend money on U.S. cosmetics because even trusted brands might prove harmful.

Items that women asked mothers and friends to mail them from home were varied and included the brands (unavailable in the States) Sofina and Noebia. Individual products included many items: eyeshadow, blush, foundation, oil control paper (aburatorigami), and face creams, lotions, and cleansers. Items that women did not receive by mail but wished they could buy in the U.S. / Missoula included skin whitening creams (howaitoningu from English "whitening"), skin whitening lotions (bihaku yō keshō sui), and facial water (keshō sui). Brands women wished they could buy in the U.S. / Missoula included Shiseido, Sofina, Fancl, Mary Quant, Menado, and DHE. One woman commented she wished she could find a U.S. brand that was natural and non-chemical like her favorite Japanese brand, Kira—but did not

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21 This is particularly surprising because of Clinique's status as a hypoallergenic brand. Unfortunately, Lauder (1985) says nothing about marketing of products internationally, i.e. whether the formulae change or not.

22 The informant compared this brand to decentralized American brands Avon and Mary Kay—the cosmetics were sold by women who sold them informally out of their homes and were not available in stores. In this case, the informant's aunt sold Noebia, which her mother bought and mailed to her.

23 This thesis does not deal directly with hair, but hair products like a special kind of hair wax and hair straighteners were mentioned.

24 Available in larger U.S. cities, but not in Missoula. One of the informants who wished Shiseido was available in the States was surprised when I told her it was available in, say, New York, or even Seattle.
necessarily wish for Kira per se.

**Cosmetics and Borders: Changes in Cosmetic Routine**

Beausoleil notes that many women (as well as men) have a morning routine which they generally follow in getting ready for the day. Even people who do not use cosmetics generally follow a routine in e.g. showering, dressing, blow-drying their hair, etc. (Beausoleil 1994). Many women noted a change in their cosmetic routine when they began life in Montana.

Several women noted that, in Montana, there is less pressure to wear makeup. One woman noted that, while in Montana, she would skip, for example, putting on eyeshadow; "But in Japan, I did everything." Another (who had already returned to Japan) commented, "While I was in Montana, I did not make up so often. I think that I put very basic makeup, foundation, light lip colors. I did not take care of the line of eyebrow in Montana. However, I put more makeup on when I was in L.A. and Boston--In big cities." Other women noted that they wore less or more natural makeup in Missoula.

One woman who didn’t change her makeup routine in Montana stated that the reason was that she didn’t care about makeup in the first place. Another person, the woman who had lived in Vancouver for a year stated that she changed her makeup often in Vancouver, but not in Montana. The reason she gave was that Vancouver was a larger city than Missoula, which she found more interesting and exciting than Missoula. Furthermore, Canada is the home of her favorite cosmetic brand, Mac. So, she would often go to department stores to get free makeovers at the Mac counter. She experimented with makeup with her friends. But in Missoula, where people didn’t wear makeup much and where her favorite brand didn’t have a makeup counter, she felt like she had no reason to change or experiment with her makeup. One more woman noted that she didn’t change her makeup routine because it worked for her. Also, she didn’t
go out as much in Missoula as she did in Japan.

And as mentioned above, several women who came to UM as recent high school graduates changed their cosmetic routine by starting to wear makeup.

**Cosmetics and Borders: Brands and Prestige**

Brands and the relative prestige they exude were a significant topic of discussion. Clinique was one brand that came up multiple times. The woman who commented that she preferred Kira stated that Clinique (assumably even in Japan) was too strong for her. (Remember also the story of the woman who had tried Clinique in both Japan and the States in the section “Before and After.”) Another woman mentioned that she used Clinique *keshō sui* and didn’t mention any skin difficulties.

One woman commented that she liked Max Factor. She stated that in the U.S., Max Factor is a low-status brand, which she compared to Maybelline, saying Maybelline was cheap in both places. Max Factor, however, is expensive in Japan, and therefore a high-status brand, she explained. Interestingly, another woman commented that she used both Max Factor and Maybelline, but didn’t offer any comments on relative prestige—possibly because she came her as a recent high school graduate and had not used makeup until coming to Missoula. Another woman who used Max Factor in both Japan and Montana also mentioned the relative prestige of Max Factor in the States and Japan.

Shiseido also came up multiple times. One woman commented that she didn’t like Shiseido because Shiseido cosmetics had too strong of a smell for her liking, and spent a lot of money on advertising—which seemed excessive to her. Another woman echoed this comment when she stated that Shiseido was not good for her skin, and

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25 This was the same woman who had bought Clinique in the States and found it made her skin itch and burn.
that she associated it with younger women's craze for the latest fad. She didn't like Shiseido because she felt its image was too faddish. However, when asked if there was a brand they wished was sold in the U.S., two women said Shiseido. These two women did not seem to be aware that they could buy Shiseido in the U.S., but not in Missoula. When I told one of them Shiseido is available in Seattle, she was really surprised. Another woman stated that one of the brands she liked was Shiseido and that she bought some whenever she was in Seattle or Vancouver.²⁶

Many women did not limit themselves to one product. One woman stated, for example, that she used items from Clinique, Shiseido, and Fancl. Many women noted that they used at least two different brands.

Other brands that were mentioned by only one person included DHE, Mary Quant, Sofina, Fancl, Kira (all Japanese brands), and Chanel.²⁷

**Cosmetics and Borders: Using Cosmetics in Performance**

Peiss (1998) states that as use of cosmetics in the U.S. became more the norm, they began to be used more and more in performance. From the early the twentieth century, women began to use cosmetics in public, e.g. pulling out a compact at a restaurant or putting on lipstick while at work in a factory: "As they put on a feminine face, these women briefly claimed a public space, stopping the action, in a sense, by making a spectacle of themselves. Making up spotlighted the self in a gesture at once forceful and feminine" (1998:186). I wondered what my informants thought of public

²⁶ This was not the same person who had lived in Vancouver for a year, but someone who traveled there only occasionally.

²⁷ Incidentally, no one mentioned Estée Lauder at all, but despite this, I felt it would be useful to contrast the Estée Lauder company with Clinique in the previous chapter.
cosmetic application. Views vary on this in the United States, and my informants had varying views of the practice.

One woman declared, "Oh, I hate it so much!" She added that it "looks ugly" to put on makeup in public. "It seems so dirty," commented another, at the same time noting that she had seen her own friends do it. A third stated, "I think they do not know what a manner is." Two more stated it was embarrassing when people used makeup in public.

Another woman gave a different sort of reason that she didn't care for women who applied makeup in public. "I think makeup should not be noticed by other people," she explained. If she sees that it's obvious that someone uses makeup, this woman stated that her opinion of the person was lowered. "Maybe, in reality, she's not that beautiful," she explained. Another woman stated, "I think making up is kind of the secret part of a woman."

One woman expressed ambivalence about public performance of makeup:
"Some people look horrible, but generally, I think they're cute and cool." Another stated that she didn't have a strong opinion about it but that it was probably better not to.

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28 Beausoleil generalizes the American view as, "...the restroom or bathroom, as a more private room in a public place, is the most appropriate place in which to apply makeup. Yet...lipstick is the one item of makeup women may properly apply in public, for instance, at the table in a restaurant, especially in the presence of other women" (1994:44). Though, applying makeup in public was scandalous in the early part of the twentieth century, Peiss notes (1998: see e.g. cartoon satirizing public makeup application on page 186). Some people still feel it's scandalous.

29 Cosmetics as performance of femininity can also be translated as performance of prestige--i.e. the classier girl is the one making up in public with a Chanel compact, instead of a Maybelline compact. It is further conceivable that someone could "fake" their status by using Maybelline at home, and owning one Chanel compact or lipstick to use in public places. Public use of cosmetics as performance of ethnicity would be counterintuitive, however. Skin whitening preparations would assumably never be used in public, as the illusion of white skin would then be broken.
Conversely, one woman stated that applying makeup in public was commonplace in Japan, and that if one woman in a group pulls out a compact, her friends will all soon be applying lipstick or powder, too. She stated that she did not feel uncomfortable doing so in Japan, but that she would never apply makeup in public in Montana. Another woman commented that putting on makeup in public was “a nice thing to do.” She stated it was because women want to “look nice,” with the implicit assumption that this is a positive quality. (Conversely, another informant stated that putting makeup on in public was “immodest”—therefore, wanting to “look nice” can be also interpreted as vanity.)

Overall, the answers were conservative in the sense that the women I interviewed did not like it when other women applied makeup in public. I think it’s impossible to make a generalization at this point as to whether or not the public performance of cosmetics has caught on in Japan. My original feeling was that it was not rude to do so in Japan, but my interviewees’ reactions to the question make me question this. Generally, of all the questions in the interview, this was the one about which people had the most heated opinions.

Discussion: Ethnicity in Cosmetics

The cultural-racial issues of cosmetic use are explicit in these interviews in the discussion of skin-whitening cosmetics. Preparations like howaitoningu (whitening cream) and bihaku yō keshō sui (liquid skin whitener) have obvious cultural-racial overtones (and even national-cultural overtones) that cannot be ignored. Several women noted that they wished they could find these products in the United States. Historically, there is a good reason why they can’t.

Chemical skin whiteners actually were sold in the United States, to both black and white women, in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Peiss 1998). Preparations for
white women generally extolled a return to pale, beautiful girlhood. These preparations (e.g. a lead-based lotion called Bloom of Youth) were criticized in medical journals as harmful, even deadly (see Peiss 1998: chapter 2).

Preparations for black women often had explicitly racist overtones and ads showed images that typically sported drawings of a brutish-looking black woman as a “before” picture and a genteel white woman as the “after” picture (see e.g. Peiss 1998: 35, 42). Such preparations were always subject to criticism as promoting a racist white aesthetic, but became especially taboo in the later half of the twentieth century. A parallel movement in the 1960s and 1970s critiqued major cosmetic manufacturers for not producing foundations and other makeup in colors suited to African American skintones (Peiss 1998: see chapter 8).

While there is little popular memory of either whitening preparations for white or black women in the U.S., skin color is highly politicized, perhaps more than ever. It is therefore logical that skin-whitening preparations are not marketed in the United States (not even to Japanese expatriates). Because of the political implications of such cosmetics, any company that did market them would be labeled racist and lose business, at the very least.

In contrast, skin-whitening cosmetics seem to have little or no political meaning in Japan. Shiseido, for example, markets a brand of skin-whitening cream called U.V. White in Japan—but not in the United States. The fact that people use them, or even simply choose foundation paler than their actual skin color, without racializing such acts, is quite different from the way such preparations are viewed in the U.S.

There are many possible reasons for this. I think the major one is that, in the

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This is why skin-whitening cosmetics are both a cultural-racial and a national-cultural issue. In Japan, skin color is not now, nor has it historically been, a political issue on a national level—unlike in the United States.
U.S., race is assigned by skin color, whereas in Japan, it is assigned by blood. It seems to me that the Japanese actually “discovered” skin color very recently (i.e. at the opening of Japan in the 1860s, and again with a vengeance during the American occupation), and the discourse swirling around it is still in formation—whereas, in the United States, the discourse on skin color is much more solidified and politicized.

Why is it important to talk about skin? Because skin is not innocent. Putting on makeup is not an apolitical act. Race is directly implicated in cosmetic choices, despite the prominent popular and scholarly assumption that cosmetics are harmless, meaningless, and even frivolous. Bordo (1990) discusses an episode of the American talkshow Donahue, in which commercials for colored contact lenses were debated by the audience. The question at hand was, “Is the devaluation of brown eyes racist?” Phil Donahue evidently thought so, but the women in the audience disagreed. Cosmetic enhancement women use are merely play, they contested. A black woman
arguments not hold up under scrutiny?

Bordo comments:

First, it [the Donahue conversation] effaces the inequalities of social position and the historical origins which, for example, render Bo Derek’s corn rows and black women’s hair-straightening utterly non-commensurate. On the one hand we have Bo Derek’s privilege, not only as so unimpeachably white as to afford an exotic touch of Otherness with no danger of racial contamination, but her trend-setting position as a famous movie star. Contrasting to this, and mediating a black woman’s “choice” to straighten her hair, is a cultural history of racist body-discriminations such as the nineteenth-century comb-test, which allowed admission to churches and clubs only to those blacks who could pass though their hair without snagging a fine-tooth comb hanging outside the door. (A variety of comparable tests—the pine-slab test, the brown bag test—determined whether or not one’s skin was adequately light to pass muster.) [Bordo 1990:659]

Bordo adds that feminine preoccupation with appearance is normalized, but all transformations of appearance are not “equally arbitrary”—that “not every body will do” (1990:659, 660). She states that Bo Derek’s concern with her appearance is related to a normalized gender role for women. However, a black woman who straightens her hair is not simply exhibiting gender role normalization, but racial normalization, as well: “normalization not only to ‘femininity,’ but to the Caucasian standards of beauty that still dominate on television, in movies, in popular magazines...[black women have not] creatively or playfully invented themselves here” (1990:660-661).^32

Is it, then, that Japanese women are also exhibiting normalization to a racial aesthetic when they lighten their skin with cosmetics? Or are they simply expressing a normalization of gender roles? After all, historically, pale skin has been valued in Japan (see Russell 1996). When Japanese women lighten their natural skintone, are they behaving like natives? Or are they creatively and playfully inventing themselves? Or are they behaving as non-natives? Why is makeup in Japan even an issue?

While Japanese and Westerners have been on much more equal terms than

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^32 For a historical reading of black women, cosmetics, and cosmetic practices, see also Peiss 1998.
have Africans and Westerners, I think it is still safe to say that Japanese women are not "creatively or playfully inventing themselves" when they dye or perm their hair or wear white makeup. Tokugawa Japan was forcibly opened to the West, and post-World War Japan rapidly modernized under U.S. tutelage. While Japan has effectively competed both technologically and culturally with the West, I think Japan's status in the Western world is, at best, met with ambivalence, and at worst, as the underdog that bit the hand that feeds it. (See chapter 3, this volume.) As Ivy comments, "Japanese modernism arose in response to [Western] modernization and mass cultural phenomena. The critical difference here, of course, is that the 'modern' emanated from the West; modernism, in its very essence, [is] associated with the domination of the West" (1993:240n6). Who will dispute that blond hair dye and permanent curls have no place in Japan's premodern history? And who honestly believes that the use of skin-whitening lotions or paler-than-thou makeup are nothing more than the modern equivalents of *o-shiroi* (whiteface makeup)? The issue brought to bear by cosmetics in a global sense is nothing less than cultural-racial power. It is a subject that we cannot afford to ignore. Unfortunately, until recently, cosmetics were seen as only the meaningless items of feminine consumerism and petty competition for male attention. The idea that cosmetics are meaningless, of course, is far from correct.

From here, I will foray into the paradigm of ethnicity now prevalent in Japan, and the ambivalence Americans feel toward Japan, in the following chapters. Both chapters focus on issues of border-crossing; paradigms treating race always involve some form of border-crossing, and the cultural study of the film *Baraka* posits an American gaze as focused across the borders of Japan.
Part II
PERFORMANCES OF ETHNICITY
Chapter 3
Borders Within: Japan’s Ethnic Marginals and Outsiders

Homogeneous (?) Japan

There are no borders within Japan. Japan is homogeneous—so say the Japanese and American media, as well as Japanese politicians—and sheer numbers. Official statistics indicate that only about 1 percent of those living in Japan are not Japanese (Ivy 1995:26; Howell 1996:189n27). Then perhaps there is a prediscursive reality to this claim. You can't argue with statistics. Or can you?

Acknowledgement and discussion of non-Japanese in Japan has been rare until recently, and has not effectively penetrated popular discourse. Indeed, when Japanese people discovered my status as an American, they often asked me about cultural-racial tensions in the United States—sometimes in an honest attempt to understand American

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This chapter is, in part, derived from a paper written for a class taught by Dr. Gregory Campbell of the University of Montana: “Ethnic Marginals and Outsiders in Modern Japan” was written Fall Semester, 1999 for the class Anthropology 585: Seminar in Ethnology.

2

The remarks of Nakasone Yasuhiro, Japan’s Prime Minister, in September of 1986, drew widespread criticism. He attributed a supposed decline in intelligence in the U.S. to the presence of blacks, Mexicans, and other minorities, while implying Japanese intelligence was on the rise due to Japanese homogeneity. See Russell 1996, Fukuoka 1998b n15, and Creighton 1995.

3


4

Marilyn Ivy argues against the idea that "It's all discursive" by noting that "to claim there is no prediscursive reality is to redraw the boundary lines of a totality that operates as metaphysically as any unreformed theory of truth ever did" (1995:21). One of my arguments in this paper involves visual Otherness and the ability of some to pass visually as Japanese. Therefore, on any given street in Japan, a crowd that appears homogeneous may really be surprisingly diverse.
culture, and sometimes with a barely concealed holier-than-thou attitude. The belief that such tensions do not exist in Japan is based on the belief that there is no reason to experience such tensions.

In Japan, social, cultural, and even racial homogeneity are continuously asserted; the existence of non-Japanese in Japan is effectively denied. Ivy comments: "[W]hat makes the Japanese so different from everyone else makes them identical to each other; what threatens that self-sameness is often marked...as the foreign" (1995:9).

Ivy further suggests that the Japanese find consolation from modernity's ambiguities in the reification of Japanese culture in the form of glorified tradition shared by an ethnically and culturally homogeneous society. She begins her analysis of "what haunts cultural consolation" (1995:23) with majority Japanese themselves, but also states that there are other ways to contest the interior certainties of Japanese culture. One is to examine instances of difference that is generally acknowledged as difference, cases of people explicitly recognized as deviating from Japanese: foreigners, burakumin (so-called outcastes, or discriminated-against "special status" people), guest workers, Okinawans. (1995:23)

This is the strategy I will employ in this essay: I will be looking at the outsiders perceived by Japanese as the Other, and at the people whose existence is effectively denied in Japan: the Marginal.

Foreignness and Commonality

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5 My status during my stay in Japan was as a missionary. Though I was not a student or researcher, I was often called upon to act as a cultural ambassador, memorably in the matter of U.S. race relations. I was asked to explain "hyphenated" racial designations such as Japanese-American, for example, by one of my conversation students. Another time, I was asked to comment on the U.S. Civil War in a Sunday School class. In these types of situations, the Japanese people with whom I spoke saw racism and race relations as a distinctly American problem.
Why write a chapter about outsiders and marginals? What do the two categories have in common? Both Otherness and the Marginal are often associated with the foreign in Japan. The Japanese attitude toward foreigners of all types is ambivalent.

Creighton (1995) discusses types of foreigners and how Japanese classify them. The white Westerner most typically falls under the appellation of *gaijin* (literally "outside person," but most often translated simply as "foreigner"). Creighton points out that *gaijin* could be used to denote any foreigner, but is not (158:2). *Hakujin* ("white person") is used when a specific contrast involving skin color is implied or explicit. Many other various terms are applied:

Blacks and non-Japanese Asians are conceptualized differently and, in recognition of the fact that they come from foreign countries, may be referred to as *gaikokujin* (person from an outside country) but are seldom called *gaijin*

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6 Another way to look at ethnicity in Japan is presented by Hildebrandt and Giles (1983). They tie ethnic ambivalence, power, and resistance to language, using English in Japan as a case study. Indeed, their argument is extremely convincing, and I hesitate to say I entirely disagree with them. However, I see two problems with their theory. The first is that, while their reliance on language as the demarcator of ethnicity accounts neatly for the ambivalence toward English and English-speaking Westerners in Japan (and possibly even toward, say, Koreans and Okinawans, both of whose cultural-racial difference from the Japanese is often blamed, at least in part, upon language), it does not account for ambivalence toward groups that are not ostensibly linguistically marked, but remain culturally-racially marked (e.g. the *burakumin*). Secondly, when Japanese people are asked what makes a person marginal or outside, the answer is not language as often as it is physical difference (see Valentine 1990, Fukuoka 1998b).

7 Foreignness is only one particular category of the marginal, though many types of marginality denote foreignness either directly or implicitly. When I use the English word "foreign" and its derivatives, it will not mean strictly outside or marginal, but will mean the same thing as "not ethnic Japanese" (though Japanese use several words that are translated as "foreigner"--see below). "Japanese" and "foreign" or "not ethnic Japanese" are problematic terms. I follow Fukuoka (1998b) in his characterization of what makes an "ethnic" Japanese in the opinion of most Japanese people: An ethnically Japanese person is of Japanese (also referred to as Yamato) "blood," "descent," or "lineage"; an ethnic Japanese is also socialized into Japanese culture and has Japanese nationality. Both culture and nationality are determined based on "blood" alone; it is the most important aspect of what makes a person "ethnically Japanese." Fukuoka notes that many people who pass as Japanese flout these norms, however. When I use the term "racial," I am referring to this national-cultural obsession with the so-called Yamato bloodline.
since...this word suggests someone white. Certain groups, such as people of Korean descent who are legal residents of Japan, are none the less conceptualized as "outside people" even if they are not from other countries. The designation *zainichi kankokujin* (Korean residents of Japan) is commonly used. [Creighton 1995:137]

Beyond these distinctions, she notes that blacks are often called *kokujin* (literally "black person"), and non-Japanese Asians are generally referred to as *ajiajin* (Asians), a label that Westerners apply to Japanese, but that Japanese do not apply to themselves (Creighton 1995:158n2). Various foreigners can also be designated by the name of their native country; thus people from China (*chūgoku*) are called Chinese (*chūgokujin*); people from the United States ("America") (*amerika*) are called Americans (*amerikajin*); etc.

My argument is that the foreign pollutes, the foreign threatens--despite its allure. This is the commonality between outsider Otherness and the Marginal in Japan, though the logic of foreignness is deployed differently in different cases. I will first discuss the outside / inside dichotomy and then explain how the Marginal (whose existence is so often denied in Japan) troubles the boundaries between insider and outsider. Finally, I will give three case studies: Two revolving around the outsider Other (white and black), and one revolving around the Marginal (*zairida* Koreans).

**Uchi and Soto: Insider Japanese and the Western Other**

The only people who constitute Japan's real insiders, according to Japanese, are "pure" Japanese of the so-called Yamato race (Valentine 1990, Fukuoka 1998b). Here it would be wise to say something about the social milieu in Japan. Social interactions are essentially hierarchical in nature; a great emphasis is placed on harmonious

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8 The allure of the foreign can be witnessed, for example, in the enthusiastic tourism embraced by Japanese (Ohnuki-Tierney 1987:147), as well as in the fascination with theater genres such as Takarazuka, which comprises plays mostly from foreign countries (Robertson 1998:7). However, there is also a marked distaste for the foreign, which is the subject of this chapter.
relations and appropriate, polite speech, to the point that hierarchy is lexicalized in a system of honorific and humble verb endings whose use often mystifies even native speakers. The ethnicity, gender, class, status, occupational situation, and interactional context (e.g. whether the interaction takes place at home, office, or bar; whether the actors are drunk or sober) of the actors all come into play. Because of the emphasis placed on harmonious and appropriate behavior in social interactions, a Japanese person must know where they stand relative to other people—the important point here is not so much to know one's own place, but to know how to categorize and appropriately respond to other people.

One fundamental distinction made in Japanese society is that of *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) (Valentine 1990:38). This distinction is presumed to be absolute: Either you are Japanese, or you are not. The boundary between outsider and Japanese is obvious, rigid, and unchanging. Culture is racialized: The outsider is not Japanese racially and can never become Japanese culturally. Condon puts it this way:

Most Japanese seem to regard their culture as one that is extremely difficult for anyone but a Japanese to understand, and certainly not one into which an outsider could ever fit completely...the Japanese find it hard to accept that anyone could become Japanese. This is reflected in everything from stringent government immigration policies to words of praise for the foreigner who can use chop sticks (sic)...The newcomer is delighted by such compliments, but when the compliments continue after twenty years, the outsider knows that they carry an additional message. [1984:xviii]

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9 Painter gives an excellent example of this dynamic at work. At the television station where he did his fieldwork, when the elevator was overfull, a buzzer would sound. When this happened, the person who got off was not generally the person who had just entered the elevator and made it overfull, but the person of lowest status in the elevator. When the buzzer sounded, everyone onboard would look around, gauge their status in relation to the other people on the elevator, and then one person, the lowest-status person in the group (for example, a temp worker or petty secretary), would get off and use the stairs or wait for the elevator to return after delivering its load of people to the above floors (Painter 1996).
Who is the outsider that composes the Japanese racial and cultural Other?\textsuperscript{10} The outsider is prototypically the white Westerner\textsuperscript{11}, but also includes black Westerners.\textsuperscript{12} Note that, as rigid categories, black, white, and Japanese are highly visually oriented. That is, it is simple to look at a person and visually gauge their ethnicity simply by comparing that person to an essentialized mental image of blackness, whiteness, or Japanese-ness. The color of the skin becomes racialized and assumptions about culture and identity are made based upon it.

The outsider or Other is often seen as a threat. Ivy speaks of rural Japanese village boundaries, which historically played a significant part in ritual. The village represents this world (the world of the living), and the world outside the village represents the other world (the world of the dead), the source of evil. Rituals often ended in, for example, expulsion of straw effigies (i.e. the symbolic expulsion of evil) at the margins of the village, crossroads, mountain passes, and riverbeds. Stone deities were erected at these places to prevent evil's entry into the villages (see Ivy 1995, 

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{10} At the risk of over simplifying her argument, I will try to summarize Ohnuki-Tierney's view of several dialectics surrounding the Other. Ohnuki-Tierney suggests that Japanese cosmology posits an equivalence between deities and outsiders / the Other (and hence human:Self). Both deities and the Other can have a dual nature, both evil and good, both impure and pure. See 1987:chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{11} Precisely which nationality from which a "Westerner" originates depends on the situational context. While references to Westerners and the West may mean, in some contexts, just North America and Europe, they are often more specific, according to the context of the discourse at hand. For example, Ivy, in her discussion of commodity capitalism, sees this opposition as one fundamentally of Japan versus the United States as the prototypical Western entity (1995:3). Creighton, in her analysis of internationalization (kokusaika) and whites in Japanese advertising, agrees that the U.S. is the prototypical Other and gives a historical background as to why (1995:144-145). Dorinne Kondo, however, implies the dichotomy is one of Paris versus Japan in the fashion world (1997:57), and Kelsky's West implicitly includes both Europe and North America, as well as South America (1999:see e.g. 232 and 240).

\textsuperscript{12} I might add here that black Westerners are often conflated with black Africans; historically, the two have often not been seen as distinctly separate in Japan--see Russell 1996.
\end{footnotesize}
chapters 4 and 5, esp. 156-157; see also Ohnuki-Tierney 1987:143). This view of the outside (and hence the outsider) as the potential source of evil is part of a Japanese worldview that devalues the Other.

The theory of world as target posited by Rey Chow can be applied to the phenomenon of ascertaining visual Otherness. She posits the Self as eye and the Other as target. To be able to see the enemy is to be able to destroy them:

As long as knowledge [about the Other] is produced in a self-referential manner, as a circuit of targeting or getting the other (sic) that ultimately consolidates the omnipotence and omnipresence of the "self" (sic) and "eye"...the other (sic) will have no choice but remain just that--a target whose existence justifies only one thing, its destruction by the [Self]. [1998:215, emphasis in original]

In the case of uchi and soto in Japan, the visual Other is not necessarily destroyed (Chow uses "destroy" in the sense of physical destruction in war), but the threat posed by the Other is neutralized by the Self--the eye--that can see and identify the Other.

But obviously, not every person in the world is visually identifiable as either black, white, or Japanese. What, then, of those people?

**Neither Uchi Nor Soto: Shūhen or the Marginal**

While the distinction between insider and outsider seems fairly straightforward, it fails to take into account those people who do not fall neatly into the category of Japanese or Westerner. Valentine suggests that, while "real" Japanese (uchi) and "real" outsiders (soto) exist, there are other racialized categories into which people fall which render their identities ambiguous: These are the Marginal (shūhen) (1990:49).¹⁴

Valentine draws a distinction between how marginality is seen in Japan and how

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¹³ Though Ohnuki-Tierney considers impurity to be "most clearly associated with the state of liminality" (1987:143).

¹⁴ Valentine also discusses those on the borderlines (1990:39), somewhere between outside and marginal, but this distinction will not be discussed in this paper.

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It is seen by Western sociology, and Western culture in general:

This mainstream [Japanese] interpretation of marginal as peripheral implies a view that looks from the centre outwards, and reflects the predominant sense of social and cultural homogeneity in Japanese society (but not, of course, its reality, which is denied by the very fact of marginality). This contrasts with the immigrant experience and melting-pot ideology of the USA in which the Western sociological conception of marginality, as a borderline situation in between two groups or cultures, was developed. The Japanese sense of homogeneity of insiders is sometimes graphically expressed in terms of Japan being a circle [Yoshida 1975:133-9], in which case marginals are represented as on the circumference, furthest from the centre. [1990:49]

Hence the proliferation of so-called "hyphenated" identities in the United States (e.g. Asian-American, African-American), where the Marginal is the person who straddles two worlds. Conversely, Japanese see themselves as the racial-cultural norm, with the Marginal as racially or culturally peripheral--and the Other fully outside.

Marginality is seen as negative because it implies an ambiguity in origins, loyalties, and identity. The Marginal are often excluded socially and materially from insider pursuits, and the boundary between insider and marginal is "inconsistent, ambiguous and / or of uncertain duration" (Valentine 1990:39). Marginals may sometimes "pass" as insiders, though if passing is too easy, they may qualify as insiders more than as marginals. Outsiders, on the other hand, are always irrevocably and recognizably outside and are incapable of passing, for whatever reason--usually visual (i.e. physical) and linguistic difference.

Who is the Marginal that "haunts cultural consolation" (Ivy 1995:23) by troubling the boundary between insider and outsider? Valentine classes many different types of people as marginal, for both ethnic and lifestyle reasons, and notes that many marginals experience the intersection of multiple marginalities. He further notes that his categorization of marginals refers to the types of people regarded as deviant by the mainstream, rather than to any "real" attribute of marginals (1990:39). He divides marginals into the following categories:

1. Foreign blood (not of "pure Yamato race");
2. Foreign contact;
3. Pollution through illness / damage;
4. Deviance: criminal and / or ideological;
5. Association with the liminal;
6. Unusual family circumstances;
7. Unusual at work\textsuperscript{15} (1996:40-43).

Foreign blood marginals include: Ainu\textsuperscript{16}, Okinawans\textsuperscript{17}, the so-called zainichi.

\textsuperscript{15} The last and penultimate categories are not as often categories involving the foreign and hence will not be discussed here. Valentine notes that sex workers are often seen as marginal and places them in the category of Association with the liminal, but notes that they are "often already marginal in other respects" (1990:42). I would argue that many sex workers are associated with the foreign, especially countries seen as low-status by Japanese, such as Thailand and the Philippines.

\textsuperscript{16} The Ainu are the indigenous inhabitants of Japan, now greatly reduced in number and primarily occupying a small area of Hokkaido, the northernmost island. As Dr. Nancy Mattina kindly pointed out to me, the Ainu would make an excellent subject of discussion in terms of marginality as an indigenous people, and would have been a highly appropriate subject of discussion for this chapter, as well as in light of the discussion of tattoo in the chapter following this one. I chose to discuss zainichi Koreans because I knew several zainichis in Japan, and one of my closest friends upon returning to the States was a Japanese man who had a Korean father and a Japanese mother. So, having known these people personally, I feel more prepared to evaluate the claims various authors make about them and to write about them critically. I have never known anyone Ainu and hence, I felt less comfortable reading and writing about them. Also, there is a dearth of information on the Ainu, in comparison to the information available on zainichi Koreans, and so this was also a factor in my decision. The Ainu are, however, possibly the most important minority group in Japan, if not the largest. A later draft of this chapter would almost certainly include a section on the Ainu.

\textsuperscript{17} Okinawans originated in the Ryûkyû Islands and originally spoke a language called Ryûkyûan, but are currently being somewhat assimilated into Japanese culture--more so, in any case, than the Ainu (Smith 1995:205).
("residing-in-Japan") Koreans\(^\text{18}\), Chinese\(^{19}\), and ainoko\(^{20}\). To this list, I would add the burakumin\(^{21}\), or so-called outcaste societies, that historically did "impure" tasks and are now considered to differ racially from the Japanese. Foreign contact marginals include, for example, returnees from extended stays abroad for whatever reason, those born abroad, and people who marry foreigners.

Valentine follows Mary Douglas\(^{22}\) in discussing the phenomenon of ritual purity

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18 Many Koreans came to Japan during Japan's annexation of Korea from 1910-1945, either voluntarily to find work, or involuntarily as forced migrant labor. Among the most odious of forced migration cases is that of the ianfu (comfort women), who were brought to serve as sexual slaves to men in the Japanese army. See Fukuoka 1996.

19 Chinese culture has historically been admired and enthusiastically assimilated by the Japanese; Smith cites this reason as why Chinese suffer less discrimination than e.g. Koreans (1995:218-219). Ohnuki-Tierney suggests that Japan's wholesale borrowing from both Chinese and Western cultures is a result of a vision of the Other as "transcendental self," suggesting that an ideological "act of reaching out for" the Other is witnessed on the individual level by kokki (self-conquest). She adds: "At the collective level, the desire to reach for the other [sic] has propelled the Japanese to emulate and then surpass the superior features of both Chinese and Western culture, be they their writing systems, their arts, their technology, or their scientific achievements" (1987:136). The reader should not infer, however, that Chinese and Westerners are equally Other to the Japanese. Ohnuki-Tierney comments: "While the Chinese used to be the strangers / outsiders, they, together with other Asians, became marginals--neither insiders nor outsiders--when Westerners took over as strangers / outsiders" (1987:147).

20 i.e. children of Japanese-mixed parentage. Ohnuki-Tierney comments: "They are supposedly Japanese, and yet they are regarded as falling short of a full-fledged Japanese identity because their upbringing and behavior show departures from those of the 'fully Japanese'" (1987:147-148).

21 For a history and analysis of the burakumin, see Ohnuki-Tierney 1987, especially chapters 4 and 6.

and pollution. People "polluted"\textsuperscript{23} through illness or damage\textsuperscript{24} include persons such as PWAs (people with AIDS)\textsuperscript{25}, hibakusha (atomic bomb victims)\textsuperscript{26}, and handicapped and mentally ill people.

Criminal / ideological deviants include criminals and ex-convicts, yakuza or organized crime gangs\textsuperscript{27}, and followers of certain political and religious groups.\textsuperscript{28}

The reason I have chosen to employ a case study of zainichi Koreans is for the comparative value of such a case. Koreans are well-recognized as marginalized and

\textsuperscript{23} Non-polluted marginals would include, e.g. divorced women, unmarried middle-aged men, professional women in "men's" careers, etc.

\textsuperscript{24} Both foreignness and disease have historically been assumed to be communicable by Japanese. Smith notes that the ritual pollution of the burakumin was considered both hereditary and communicable, resulting in the relegation of burakumin to poor neighborhoods and occupations associated largely with death (e.g. butchers, cremators) (1995:197). The Ainu have, further, been associated with the spread of syphilis in Japan (Smith 1995:206). The appearance of AIDS in Japan has been blamed on contaminated shipments of blood from the U.S. and other countries, and on foreign sex workers, from low-status countries, e.g. Thailand, the Philippines, Korean, Taiwan, and China (Buckley 1997).

\textsuperscript{25} AIDS is a relatively new phenomenon in Japan, but it has quickly acquired a reputation as a foreign disease (Buckley 1997). PWAs are polluted not only by illness, but also by their association with the foreign, by the same dynamic that people such as Koreans are rendered marginal. Foreignness pollutes just as surely as illness.

\textsuperscript{26} Note that the atomic bomb was a misfortune imposed on Japanese by Americans.

\textsuperscript{27} Valentine places members of the yakuza as more outside than marginal (1996:41). Marilyn Ivy demonstrates the association of organized crime with Koreans (1995:see chapter 6); Howell comments on the association between Asian female migrant workers and the yakuza (1996:185); Smith notes connections between the burakumin and the yakuza (1995:204). However, there are also yakuza which are constituted by ethnic Japanese. Whether they are truly marginal or not, it is notable that the yakuza have a strong association with ethnically marginal groups. For an analysis of yakuza as Japanese cultural heroes in film, see Buruma 1984:chapter 10.

\textsuperscript{28} It seems to me that "pollution" can be extended further than Valentine has applied it. Many types of marginals experience discrimination based on their contact with the foreign, including such diverse people as members of the yakuza and AIDS victims.
stigmatized in Japanese society. Perhaps they are the prototypical marginals. I will compare *zainichi* Koreans to white and black Westerners, in an effort to show how appearance (i.e. skin and face) makes it possible or impossible to pass, and the symbolic implications of skin color.

Having defined the Other and the Marginal, I will now proceed to the case studies. Images of white and black Westerners in Japan will be examined, then the lives of Koreans residing in Japan will be explored.

**The Outsider: Visual Other as Oddity and Commodity**

Moeran discusses wrapped commodities, where a commodity is conflated with its package: the sleek outside shell, box, or container therefore signifies the contents. The wrapping then becomes commodity, and the value of any commodity therefore can be judged by its wrapper (1990:2). *Gaijin*, arguably the prototypical (but not only) outsiders, are commodified in this way, such that their packages (European languages, white skin) indicate their hidden inner identities and become commodities to sell Japanese products.

White Westerners, as well as the advertisements they appear in, are commodified in this fashion in Japanese advertising. Creighton discusses the prevalence of so-called "mood advertising" in Japan (1995:139). "[A]dvertisements that extol the virtues of items being sold, or that even provide extensive information about them, violate expectations for formalized humility" (1995:139). Furthermore, mood

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29 One important aspect of Japanese culture cited by Creighton (1995) is that of formalized humility and self-abnegation. Many situations entail formalized expressions that belittle the self, and must be spoken for the sake of politeness. Creighton's example is of an excruciatingly carefully prepared meal, served to the guest with the humble declaration, "*[T]his might not suit your palate, but please eat it anyway* ('okuchi ni awanai ka mo shiremasen ga meshiagatte kudasai')" (1995:139). It is assumed that such humility is a characteristic of Japanese, but not of egocentric white Westerners.
Advertisements may associate images with entirely unrelated products in order to catch the eye and create a fantasy world the viewer would like to join, while making no authoritative assertions about goods that may insult the consumer's intelligence in being able to choose which products to buy (Creighton 1995:138-139).

This is related to the proliferation of the English word "my" in Japanese advertising and lexicon in general. Use of expressions such as *watashi no* (my) may be seen as selfish, egocentric, and individualistic (i.e. assumed traits of the Western personality). Therefore, many ads proclaim slogans such as "'my jeans', 'my car', 'my home', 'my peanut butter', and even...'my toilet paper" (Creighton 1995:146). Creighton argues that because of the code-switching from Japanese to English to express the sentiment "my," "egoism and individualism persist as occidentalist projections, while the Japanese core of conformity, collectivism, and self-abnegation remains unblemished" (Creighton 1995:146). Language becomes a wrapper for the message of the ad and becomes a commodity, itself. English is "sold" to Japanese in the sense that it is everywhere; they must be able to read Roman letters in order to read advertisements.

White skin becomes commodified as well in mood advertising. Nude white men and women are commonplace in Japanese ads for many items and services, for example, personal care products, wedding chapels, and department stores. One advertising executive Creighton interviewed commented,

> There are a lot of love scenes in ads--like kissing. In Japan for a long time there is an idea that kissing, even holding hands, is something that people shouldn't do in public. But having *gaijin* kiss is one way to portray romance, and it's o.k., because, after all, they are *gaijin*. [1995:145]

Here, the *gaijin* is destroyed by the Japanese Self / eye. The threat of Otherness is actually put to work to sell Japanese commodities to Japanese people. The threat of Otherness is tamed by the assumption that the people in the image (and the act they are performing) are not "real" because they (and the act itself) are not Japanese.

This kind of advertisement objectifies white Westerners, causing them to lose
their reality and status as individuals. My own experience in Japan as a paler-than-most white American of Northern European descent was consistent with this analysis. For example, one time, while I was riding my bicycle, a boy of about ten years old who was waiting on the street corner to cross the street saw me and burst out in surprise, "Gaijin da!" (It's a gaijin!). He then launched into an impromptu song: "Look at the gaijin! Look at the gaijin! Look at her face! She looks like a doll (ningyō)!" Another time, I was stopped on the street by a perfect stranger, a woman, who declared, "You have the most beautiful skin I've ever seen! You look like one of those women in Renaissance paintings! I'm an artist and I simply must paint you!" In both of these instances, I was compared not to people, but to representations of people (dolls, paintings), objectifying me (as well as drawing other passersby's attention to me) in a way that made me supremely uncomfortable. The visual identification of me as Other destroyed whatever threat of difference I posed by transforming me into an image of a white Westerner, rather than a person.

Black Westerners are similarly commodified in Japanese culture. Russell ties Japanese stereotypes of blacks directly to the influence of white Westerners:

Indeed, the evidence suggests that in ascribing certain...characteristics to blacks, the Japanese have been heavily influenced by [white] Western values and racial paradigms, imported along with Dutch learning (Rangaku) and Western science in their rush to catch up with the West. In a word, Japanese views of blacks have taken as their model distorted images derived from Western ethnocentrism and cultural hegemony. That the Japanese had, as historian John Dower points out, their own indigenous racial paradigm based on Tokugawa Confucian notions of 'proper place' is not denied; what is suggested, however, and conveniently overlooked by many Western commentators on Japanese antiblack racism is that the position blacks have come to occupy in

30 Many "modern" baby dolls, as well as Barbie-type dolls, in Japan are white, but many "traditional" dolls (e.g. o-hina ningyō—Girls' Day Festival Dolls) are also white, presumably from o-shiroi (whiteface makeup).

31 Note here, as well, that the people here disobeyed social conventions that prohibit singling people out for comment (see Condon 1984, esp. chapter 4). My gaijin-ness rubbed off on them, allowing them to perform acts of non-Japaneseness, as well.
the Japanese hierarchy of races not only echoes Western racist paradigms but is borrowed from them. [1996:19]

I think that here it is not necessary to mention in detail how blacks were commodified and destroyed / rendered harmless (literally, bought and sold, and killed and mutilated through racist violence) in the United States and all over the world by white Westerners through the practice of chattel slavery and racism in general. Blacks continue to be commodified / destroyed by white Westerners today, though in less overt forms, perhaps, than in the past. Commodification and destruction of blacks as the visual Other has further been assimilated by the Japanese.

Japanese images of blacks were negative due to Western racism from the earliest periods of Japanese-Western contact. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, racist paradigms that painted blacks as animals were inherited from Dutch and the Portuguese traders and missionaries. Japan was closed to Western contact during the Tokugawa period (1604-1868), but when reopened, was inundated with similar ideas about blacks from British and Americans. For example, the diaries of members of Japanese envoys sent to the U.S. as ambassadors in 1860 reveal evidence of white racism against black slaves and Japanese acceptance of it. One diarist comments, "The faces of these natives are black, as if painted with ink and resemble those of monkeys. According to the Americans, they are incarnations of apes" (Wagatsuma and Yoneyama 1980:64, quoted in Russell 1996:20).

Blacks are, further, commodified as children's playthings, such as the Dakko-chan doll popular in the 1960s and the 1980s craze for Chibukuro Sanbo (Little Black Sambo) dolls (Russell 1996; Creighton 1995). A more recent product includes Animal Mats, floor mats in the shapes of various animals, as well as in the shapes of black female and male house servants (Russell 1996:24).

Other Japanese discourses resemble Western discourses that equate blacks with children. Controversial American "classics" like Huckleberry Finn have their Japanese
counterparts, in which a childlike black man is juxtaposed with a maturing Japanese youth. Russell (1996) discusses, for example, two short stories that are built upon this theme: Oe Kenzaburo's "Shiiku" ("The Catch," 1958) and Itsuki Hiroyuki's "Umi wo Miteita Johnny" ("Johnny Who Saw the Sea," 1966). Both tales deal with the subject of a Japanese boy who is helped to resolve some sort of internal crisis and deal with the ambiguities of adulthood by black American GIs. Russell notes that this type of narrative both employs a black man "as a symbol of childhood alienation" and as "childlike, as a weak, pitiful being whose confused and impotent attempts to master his environment are defeated in the end by forces beyond his control" (1996:23). Black men are portrayed in some literary works as the children who never grow up, in both Japan and the United States. The Japanese Self / eye renders the highly visible black man harmless by reducing him to a child.

More recently blacks have been portrayed in Japan as "sexual objects, studs, fashion accessories and quintessential performers" (Russell 1996:34-35). White GIs' stereotypes about black GIs' hypersexuality have abounded in Japan, in both the print and televised media. For example, the sexual prowess of blacks has been the subject of TV specials in which women dating black GIs were asked to rate their boyfriends' bedroom performance (Russell 1996:36). Blacks are further essentialized and objectified as an important element of a successful party. A Japanese guidebook tells of New York's party scene:

At parties thrown by whites, just having a fashionable black guest who dances skillfully adds life to the party. This effect is so well known in New York that [whites] boast that they have stylish black friends. In fact, when [white] New Yorkers assemble with their friends to sing, dance, and drink, if there are just a few blacks the party will come to life. They may be natural entertainers. However, more than anything else the blacks themselves seem to enjoy playing the role of entertainer. [Nagasawa and Miyamoto 1986:136, quoted in Russell 1996:32]

The image of the black American GI seems central to modern Japanese conceptions of blacks. Novels Russell cites often include black characters who are GIs, while historical novels seem to emphasize slavery and primitiveness of black characters (Russell 1996).
In this guidebook, blacks are discussed in much the same way as any object would be. It takes very little manipulation of the sentences to replace, for example, "a fashionable black guest" with "a Sony karaoke machine" or "a bottle of expensive champagne." Blacks are objectified here as the commodities that make a party fun.

Interestingly, Japanese, themselves, are marginalized in the very racial hierarchy they subscribe to when they accept Outsider whites' stereotypes of Outsider blacks. Here they are marginalized in the Western sense of "a borderline situation in between two groups or cultures" (Valentine 1990:49). Because Westerners, especially Americans, tend to see race as dichotomous (i.e. black vs. white, with no mediating categories33), Japanese struggle with categorizing themselves. They recognize they are not white, but hesitate to identify themselves with blacks and all the negative connotations that would entail. Russell discusses this dilemma by using the vehicle of Endo Shusaku's novel Ryûgaku (Studies Abroad, 1965), in which Kudô, a Japanese student in France, looks on with a mixture of contempt and embarrassment as a black Moroccan student performs a "traditional" song at a party for some white French women. Russell commentates,

Aside from the suggestion of an implicit sexual rivalry between the Japanese and the African for the attention of the white women, the scene suggests that for Kudô the black is an uncomfortable reminder of his own insecure status to whites. [1996:31]

The Japanese, in such a case, becomes marginalized, as a case that is neither white nor black. Kudô's friends at the party do not know whether he is white or black, and more significantly, neither does he.

33 Sometimes "red" and "yellow" referring to Native Americans and Asians respectively are posited, but black and white are the labels most often used by people in the United States.
The Marginal: Boundaries, Passing, and Pollution

One of the key assertions Japanese make is that the Japanese people are physically different from other peoples. Obviously, the Japanese were not the first to differentiate themselves from others as of separate racial stock. However, as Valentine asserts, any deviation from the norm may be explained as physical difference, and people who are of Japanese descent whose behavior or lifestyle is unconventional may describe themselves (or be described by other Japanese) as physically different. Who can "pass" and who cannot emphasizes this focus on physical (visual) explanations:

One is likely to be less marginal, and deemed rather outside, if one cannot pass at all due to physical recognisability. This indicates the great significance given to physical signs of difference. Even where not physically recognisable, marginals are often thought to be so in the prevailing ideology; and, where outward appearance is not thought to manifest difference, this may still be explained in physical terms. There seems to be a preference for physical explanations of difference if at all plausible. Thus, if one's marginal status is considered to be involuntary, the factors responsible tend to be conceived as physical, rather than social or psychological. For example, physical explanations are often invoked to account for unmarried men. [Valentine 1990:50]

As we have seen, foreignness or physical difference can be seen as positive (i.e. *gaijin* as bearers of style and fashion), but it is more often ultimately negative. An excellent example of this phenomenon is the population of so-called *zainichi* Koreans in Japan, who compose up to 75% of "foreigners" in Japan (Smith 1995:214). Many of the first and second generation have passed away; third- and fourth-generation *zainichis* have little or no connection to Korea and often do not speak Korean. Currently, though they have generally been socialized into Japanese culture, they are denied Japanese nationality\(^{34}\) based on their lack of Yamato lineage.

The boundary between Korean and Japanese has fluctuated through time. For

\(^{34}\) Koreans must carry alien registration cards (*gaikokujin tōroku shōmeisho*) and be fingerprinted. Koreans, even those who have never been to Korea, can be deported for engaging in certain criminal activities. They are not allowed to vote or run for office, and are restricted from teaching and government jobs. See Smith 1995:213-214.
example, after Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, a discourse on the origins of Koreans (nissen dōsoron) emerged that justified Japanese imperialism. Nissen dōsoron posited a common origin of both Japanese and Koreans; it was an attempt to re-imagine Korean history as one in which the essential Japanese identity of the Korean people, having been obscured for sixteen centuries, was finally rediscovered through Japan's annexation of Korea. The key to Nissen dōsoron was the assertion that the Korean peninsula had once been under the suzerainty of the Japanese emperor: having once been imperial subjects, the Koreans were forever 'Japanese'. [Howell 1996:172]

However, Koreans were hardly treated as "forever 'Japanese'"; their status was questionable. In this same time period, many women of Yamato descent married Korean men; after 1952 (because of the San Francisco peace treaty), these women were reclassified as foreigners of Korean nationality. Short of applying for naturalization, they could not regain their Japanese citizenship (Fukuoka 1998b). This is one example of how the foreign pollutes; marriage to a foreign marginal rubs off on the spouse, marginalizing the spouse, as well.

The boundary is still blurred, since a law enacted in 1984 allowed children of Japanese-Korean marriages to choose the nationality of either parent (nationality was previously assigned by the nationality—i.e. blood lineage—of the father) (Smith 1995:217; Fukuoka 1998b).

Ability of Koreans to superficially pass as Japanese is high, and passing as Japanese is often seen as desirable in order to avoid discrimination at school, and to improve marriage and employment prospects (Howell 1996:185; Fukuoka 1996). Signs of difference may not be visual, but are available upon closer research. A prospective

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35 One reason Koreans are so culturally-racially dangerous is that they look Japanese, even if contemporary Japanese insist on physical difference as setting them apart. Furthermore, Koreans have been required by the government to have and use Japanese names since annexation, especially if the Korean naturalizes (though this is rare); therefore, many Koreans have Japanese names, but the extent to which they are used is varied. (See Fukuoka 1996, 1998a, 1998b; Smith 1995:206.)
school, marriage partner, or employer has many avenues for checking up on the ethnicity of an applicant or lover if that person's identity is in doubt. The area of residence alone may give away the hidden information, since the location of Korean neighborhoods is easily discovered by looking at a map and checking the address (though this is most obvious in the case of Okinawans and *burakumin*; Smith 1995:206). The "official kinship registry" (*koseki*) "records each person's address at the time of birth" (Smith 1995:197), as well as makes lineage clear (Smith 1995:212), so if the suspicious party has access to it, ethnicity can be ascertained in that way as well (Valentine 1990:51; Smith 1995:212). The applicant / lover's past may also reveal the "truth" about identity, if the person attended a Korean school--necessary information on college applications; Korean-oriented schools are not recognized by the Japanese government, and thus graduates from such schools are not generally accepted at universities and colleges (Smith 1995:215). Finally, if a paper trail for a person of questionable ethnicity is not available, a private investigator can be (and often is) hired to discover any unavailable information (Valentine 1990:51). Passing visually is, thus, easily accomplished, but may not protect a *zainichi* Korean from discrimination. The target (Koreans) is not visually destructible by the Self / eye, but can be controlled (and therefore neutralized) through bureaucracy.

In this chapter, I have argued that the foreign pollutes, the foreign threatens. This is the commonality between outsider Otherness and the Marginal in Japan, though the logic of foreignness is deployed differently in different cases. I have used the case studies of white and black Westerners (non-Japanese ostensibly outside Japan's border) and *zainichi* Koreans (non-Japanese within Japan's border) to demonstrate this point. While the Other is objectified and denigrated, the Marginal in Japan continues to be denied and discriminated against. The Japan of the twenty-first century cannot effectively hide from cultural-racial problems like these, no more than can the United States.

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In the coming chapter, a cultural study on the film *Baraka*, I will discuss ethnicity and Japan as they are viewed in the American paradigm. In the final chapter of this thesis, I will tie cosmetics advertisements to ethnicity, in an effort to prove that “female” issues do not occur in a vacuum. When cosmetics are used, when advertisements are viewed, ethnicity is indeed involved, even in a seemingly homogenous society.
Chapter 4
The Primitive Body and the Modern Body
or
The Japanese Have Sold Their Souls to the Foreign Devils

Japan and the Politics of Ambivalence

Japan is both maligned and admired by Americans. Japan is the chiefest of our national-cultural and cultural-racial nightmares, while also being held up as the example of how U.S. schools, criminal justice systems, and businesses (among other institutions) ought to be run. Japan, on the other hand, has experienced both the giddy thrill of imperialism, and the horror of brutal defeat. Japan, in other words, is both maligned and admired by Japanese, as well.

The major reason both Japanese and Americans feel ambivalent about Japan is skin color. Kondo (1997) notes that speaking of “race” in the U.S. at the current moment evokes immediately the binary of white versus black (1997:6). Japanese do not fit neatly into either category, as their skin is not dark enough to be black, but not light enough to be white. Russell notes that this ambivalence toward “Japanese” skin applies also to the way “Japanese” skin is performed in literature, in which a Japanese

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1 This chapter is a compound of two papers written for classes taught by Dr. Katherine Weist of the University of Montana: "Body Ornamentation and the Primitive" was written Spring Semester, 1999 for the class Anthropology 581: Culture Theory. “The Primitive Body and the Modern Body Or The Japanese Have Sold Their Souls and Joined The Rest of Us Western Foreign Devils: An Analysis of the Film Baraka" was written Fall Semester, 1999 for the class of Anthropology 430: Social Anthropology.

2 Race and racial in American discourses covertly refer to skin color more than anything else, despite overt references to culture or other factors. As we saw in the previous chapter, this is not so in Japan—at least not to the extent it is in the States. The emphasis placed on skin color by Americans and other Westerners is paralleled by the paradigm of visual Otherness in Japan. However, as we saw in chapter 3, Japanese differentiate themselves from others “of their own race” (by Western standards based on skin color—I am talking about people from other Asian countries here) not by invoking visual characteristics, but by reference to blood descent.
person may find a black person "an uncomfortable reminder of his own status to whites" (1996:31; see also chapter 3, this volume). Skin color is an undercurrent that compromises all of Japan’s "modern" accomplishments, marking Japan as the homeland of a non-white race.

Japan has, however, had many "white" accomplishments. Japan, despite an "inferior" racial component, never succumbed to colonization by a European power. Not only this, Japan became an imperialist power, though a relative latecomer, in Korea and Taiwan. (Compare this to the United States, which was once nothing but a handful of colonies in the wilderness, and which also was a relative latecomer to the imperialist project abroad. Japan is one up on us--they were never colonized.) Furthermore, Japan took the United States by surprise in the bombing of Pearl Harbor. And after the U.S. finally defeated Japan, the island nation became a major economic power--defeating its former conqueror in a different arena. The uneasiness Americans feel about Japan may well belie the horror of discovering a supposed racial inferior to have bested them.

Japan’s successes, however, do not negate its failures--because of race (read "skin"). Kondo notes:

An overly schematic narrative of relations with the West would mark a legacy of inferiority symbolized in the "opening" of Japan to Commodore Perry and the defeat in World War II, followed by a postwar economic boom and an increasing sense of Japanese political confidence as equal or, some might say, even superior to the West. At issue here are inter-imperial rivalries among advanced capitalist nation-states. Yet, because the Japanese are racially marked, the rivalry is laced with familiar Orientalist discourses whose tropes circulate in the fashion world as they do in the realms of politics. [Kondo 1997:56]

"Racially marked" in this sense means "marked" on the skin--since skin color is the primary marker of race, by the European paradigm. Hence, whatever Japan’s failures or successes, the underlying message is that race is what ultimately matters.

In this chapter, I will first examine the racial-gendered component of whiteness and introduce "the primitive." Next, I will explore the racial implications of the
“colonized body.” Finally, I will show the fallibility of these dichotomies by performing a cultural analysis of the (1992) film by Ron Fricke, *Baraka*. The lesson to be learned from the cultural analysis is that ethnography and experience make the difference in portrayal of a culture.

**What it Means to Be White**

In the West, whiteness has been normalized to an extent not recognized by most people, even within the academy. Classes being taught this semester at the University of Montana include, for example, *History 371: Women in America: 1865-Present* (presumably this class’ prerequisite would be the unmarked *History 152: Americans: the 20th Century*); and *Asian Studies 295: Artistic Traditions of Asia* (cf. *Art 151: Art of Western Civilization: Renaissance to Modern*; this Western counterpart of AS 295 is perhaps named in a more parallel fashion, but is again indexed by a lower number, marking it as the more basic class).³

Time and time again, Americans (of all races) are subjected to the binary category of white people and everybody else. The value of poststructuralist discourse is that it rejects the simple binarical opposition between “the West and the rest,” and the unproblematic normalization of whiteness as prime, basic, or unmarked.

Glenn notes:

> Oppositional categories require the suppression of variability within each category and the exaggeration of differences between categories. Moreover, because the dichotomy is imposed over a complex “reality,” it is inherently unstable. Stability is achieved when the dichotomy is made hierarchical—that is, one term is accorded primacy over the other. In race and gender dichotomies, the dominant category is rendered “normal” and therefore

³ I am not criticizing anyone here (indeed, the reader has surely noticed that I am not proposing new, more “politically correct” names for the classes), but merely pointing out that the racial and gender marking runs deep in our consciousness, to the point that we cannot seem to address “Women’s History” or “Asian Art” (vs. “History” and “Art”) as anything else. For a history and analysis of subaltern subjects in English departments in the U.S., see Peck 1996.
“transparent,” whereas the other is the variant and therefore “problematic.” Thus White appears to be raceless and man appears to be genderless. The opposition also disguises the extent to which the categories are actually interdependent. [Glenn 1999:9-10]

Kondo (1997) calls this phenomenon "racial marking," using the example of fashion design. How ridiculous is it to say that a person is a German designer and that she takes her inspiration from German national costume? No one speaks of “German designers” per se. But again and again, “Japanese designers” are lumped together as an undifferentiated group (despite substantial differences in preferred cloth, method, aesthetic, etc.) and their designs are termed “ethnic” or related to traditional patterns in art or kimono (Kondo 1997:see chapter 3).

Furthermore, as Glenn notes, the same argument can be applied to male-female relations. The same sort of “marking,” what I will call “gender marking,” occurs with respect to academia and scholastic subjects taught in every level of education. Why, for example, at the University of Montana, is there a major in Women’s Studies, composed of courses with names such as History 371: Women in America: 1865-Present? The implicit assertion is that “Men’s Studies” do not exist, and that other classes are not marked for gender. Thus, the study of cosmetics might fall under the category of Women’s Studies, while the “regular” subjects taught in classes--history, literature, art, science, etc.--are taught from a typically male viewpoint. Or, for example, “History” may be taught as the history of men with a brief component of women’s history (e.g. throwing Molly Pitcher into the section on the American Revolutionary War). Again, the result is that male is normalized as universal and female is construed as the variant case. An “American Literature” class covers mostly male authors, while subjects such

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4 I have, in general, avoided reference to the discipline of women’s studies throughout the thesis—not because I reject the discipline of Women’s Studies, but because I wish to avoid overt reference to feminism throughout this treatise. It seems to me that Western feminism is not particularly suited to critiquing anything outside of the Western purview, including so-called “Westernized” countries like Japan. (See also Dalby 1983
as "Native American Poetry" are taught in separate classes. 5 "Art" refers to an androcentric, Eurocentric paradigm and covers topics one would construe as typically “high” art, while “popular” art is racialized and / or feminized and taught as a separate subject, if at all. 6 Furthermore, racial and female are rendered deviant in a parallel fashion such that ethnic is often construed as deviantly feminized, and female is often construed as deviantly racialized. Both non-white and non-male persons become the Other, whose meaning is malleable and manipulable. One such racial category in the Western imagination is that of the “primitive.” 7

The Primitive

The Western imaginary, “the primitive,” whether based on the actual behaviors

and White 1993:119.) Japanese feminism is a huge topic on which I am far from an expert, and so I have also avoided tackling it, here.

5

Or, another telling example from the University of Montana Spring 2000 class schedule: English Literature 121: Introduction to Poetry. Cf. English Literature 221: The History of American Literature, as well as English Literature 495: Native American Poetry. One would ask if Native American poetry is included in the syllabus of either of the above two classes.

6

The racialization and feminization of an object or phenomenon often go hand in hand. The same is true of cultural anthropology and sociology (though the difference is not lexicalized in the manner of, say, American literature and Native American poetry). Sociology has historically been the (unmarked) study of men (or “society”), and anthropology has historically been the (marked) study of exotic or primitive men (or “culture”). (Only since the 1960s has the study of women been a widely attempted goal in any discipline.) However, anthropology has been slower to gain credibility in the academy because of the construction of “primitive” peoples as variant, weird, and effeminate, not to mention the comparatively many women attracted to anthropology in the early twentieth century (e.g. Ruth Benedict, Elsie Clews Parsons). There is a great deal of overlap in epistemology, methodology, and theory between sociology and anthropology, and even more so since sociologists are expanding their research abroad, anthropologists are expanding their research at home, and “native” practitioners are becoming more common in both disciplines.

7

From this point on, I will be discussing the primitive as a racialized (i.e. “colored skin”--by genetics or by paint) category only; however, the reader should keep in mind that “the primitive” is a racialized category that is also feminized.
of actual peoples or not, is a real construct that has pervaded both academic and popular thinking and discourse at least since the age of European exploration began (Rosenblatt 1997, Torgovnick 1990). Torgovnick discusses the relationship between the West and the primitive as one fundamentally of dialectical opposition, with the meaning of the savage or primitive being ultimately mutable according to the perceived situation of the present, the modern, or the West:

Is the present too materialistic? Primitive life is not—it is a precapitalist utopia in which only use value, never exchange value, prevails. Is the present sexually repressed? Not primitive life—primitives live life whole, without fear of the body. Is the present promiscuous and undiscriminating sexually? Then primitives teach us the inevitable limits and controls placed on sexuality and the proper subordination of sexuality to the needs of child rearing. Does the present see itself as righteously Christian? Then primitives become heathens, mired in false beliefs. Does the present include vigorous business expansion? Then primitives cease to be thought of as human and become a resource for industry, able to work mines and supply natural wealth. In each case, the needs of the present determine the value and nature of the primitive. The primitive does what we ask it to do. Voiceless, it lets us speak for it. It is our ventriloquist's dummy—or so we like to think [1990:8].

Defining the primitive, then, inevitably leads us back to how we define the modern. When the modern is defined in positive terms, the primitive is defined negatively, and vice versa. This ambivalence toward modern and primitive culture is a sticky matter, in both the anthropological and the popular mind. As we shall see, the contradictions inherent in Japan haunt this unwieldy problematic in a way troubling to Westerners (not to mention Japanese). One vehicle for explicating the primitive is that of face-body

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8 I will not be putting quotes, thus, around words like "primitive" and "modern," after this point, though it is certain that both categories are part of the "us" and "them" dichotomy largely adhered to in European cultural-racial frameworks. Despite the fact that they are painfully culturally-specific constructed categories, I will use them here, since they are used by the society being addressed by the film reviewed in this chapter. Note that the argument posited here is similar to the argument of Ivy (1995) regarding Japan and the West, and introduced briefly in the Introduction. In this essay, "Western" and "modern" will be roughly equivalent, since in English, they indicate essentially the same referent: a cultural-racial-geographical entity (European-based, white, living in North America or Europe). "Japan" is a most striking anomaly in the
Ornamentation and the Colonized Body

Western recognition of ornamentation in primitive peoples is largely dated to the eras of the European discovery and colonization of the Americas, Africa, and Polynesia (Blanchard 1991, Gröning 1997, Rosenblatt 1997, Einhorn & Abler 1998). From the outset, ornamentation was seen in the West as drawing a line between colonizer and colonized, notes Blanchard:

Indeed, there seems to be a link between the reception of tattooing in Europe and the ideology of colonization. Not only because Western man does not customarily tattoo his body, but precisely because tattoos are the mark of the colonized other: the difference between the colonizer and the colonized is the texture of the skin. The former's skin is white and transparent. The latter's is made opaque by the designs in it [1991:13, emphasis in the original].

Blanchard is here speaking of tattoo, but his arguments are germane to other skin / flesh-altering practices associated (in the Western mind) with the primitive, such as piercing and stretching, scarification9, and face-body painting10, as well. The skin of the dialectic of Western / modern vs. primitive, troubling this binary by exhibiting the high technology of the West / modernity, but also the racial markedness (i.e. colored skin) of the primitive. Ivy comments, “As in the West, Japanese modernism arose in response to modernization and mass cultural phenomena. The critical difference here, of course, is that the “modern” emanated from the West; modernism, in its very essence, was associated with the domination of the West” (1993:240n6).

Scarification is sometimes subsumed under another category. Blanchard (1991) considers it a form of tattooing because it often involves the introduction of ink to the skin. Rosenblatt (1997) considers it a relative of piercing because it involves an act of breaking the skin. He also seems to feel that in the West, scarification and piercing are practiced by the same people (sadomasochists and the homosexual community), while tattooing is much more widespread, non-deviant, and popularized. Scarification has been described ethnographically as being done largely in areas (e.g. Africa) where people's skin is too dark for tattooing to show up clearly (Gröning 1997).

The differences between some of these practices is not always clear-cut. In general, it seems to me that cosmetics enhance or disguise natural qualities of the face-body--i.e. making the lips redder, the eyelashes more visible, the cleavage more shadowy, the

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The colonizer is inviolate—there are no breaches, no colors; the skin is whole, unbroken, transparent, and white. The skin of the colonized is breached, broken, opaque, and colored (in both the painted and racial sense). Visually, the difference between colonizer and colonized is obvious. Furthermore, the skin of the colonizer is covered with clothing, while the breached, colored skin of the colonized is often plainly visible, due to nudity.

The exception to this statement is perhaps face-body decoration. Face-body painting has been comparatively accepted in the West—particularly in the twentieth century—as cosmetic enhancement, as a show of festivity (as in the painting of faces—particularly of children—at carnivals or on holidays), as theatrical makeup, or as a show blemishes more invisible—while face-body painting changes the look of the skin more dramatically—e.g. with colorful geometric designs. Blanchard (1991) states that what makes tattooing different from face-body painting and other more extreme forms of modification is the fact that it is permanent. However, this distinction cannot completely clarify the distinction between tattooing and face-body painting, although tattooing is usually permanent and painting ephemeral. They still share both methodology and design—since both tattoo and painting involve the use of ink or paint, since many tattoo designs are first drawn non-permanently on the skin as a guideline, and because many painting designs and tattooing designs copy each other. Furthermore, permanent application of cosmetics (such as eyeliner) has been performed since the 1980s.

11 Here, "colors" indicates both the sense of no paint or cosmetic introduced to the skin, and the sense of having skin that is racially white.

12 Women are in a double bind, in a way, as to whether painting and revealing their bodies "liberates" them or not. Behar (1996), for example, notes that women anthropologists, as colonizers, wear clothes, disguising their femininely-sexed bodies. The women that anthropologists study have breasts, but the anthropologists do not (i.e. the primitive woman is allowed, even expected to show her body, but the Western woman is forbidden from doing so). Behar means this statement both literally and figuratively—In academia, women are expected to dress conservatively and modestly like men, but also that women are expected to write like men, and are criticized and ignored when they innovate. I would add that, in my own observation, women in the academy tend to use less makeup compared to their counterparts in other occupations. On the other hand, women (not of the academy) have historically taken the role of the "colonized" in Western culture, showing their bodies to the "colonizer" men via the clothes they wear, which emphasize and reveal the shoulders, breasts and hips; and since the 1920s, the legs; and since the 1960s, the stomach, etc.
of spirit when cheering at team sporting events (Gröning 1997). The use of cosmetics in the West, in particular by women, dates back to classical Greece and Rome, and ancient Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Egypt (Eichler 1924, Gröning 1997). It is arguable that the use of cosmetics has been the only form of ornamentation that has been historically enjoined among the middle and upper classes. Ornamentation, otherwise, has been largely forbidden to the middle and upper classes in the West.\textsuperscript{13}

Tattooing and piercing in the West have generally been restricted to people who travel, particularly among the colonized. These tended to be persons of lower social status, such as sailors, soldiers, and merchants (Blanchard 1991). The stereotypical image of the pirate with multiple earrings and the sailor with an anchor tattoo on his burly arm are hardly new in Western culture. Tattoos became fashionable in the U.S. in the 1890s for a brief period, then were relegated to the lower-class and deviant again soon after (Blanchard 1991). The tattoo renaissance of the 1960s took its inspiration, notably, from Japanese\textsuperscript{14} and neo-tribal designs; piercing as fashion\textsuperscript{15} followed in the

\textsuperscript{13} Perhaps the expectation that women use cosmetics also originates with the idea of the colonized body. "Colonized" women makeup their faces (and bodies), while "colonizer" men do not.

\textsuperscript{14} In recent years, Japanese patterns of all-over body tattoo have gained popularity in the United States and Europe; tattoo, however, fashionable among merchants in the Tokugawa period, is stigmatized in Japan, despite popular authors who imply it is widespread and fashionable, such as Gröning (1997) (see also Blanchard 1991 and Rosenblatt 1997). For example, Ivy (1995) explicates the ties between tattoo and the \textit{yakuza} (organized crime) (see chapter 6). For a brief history of Japanese and Ainu tattooing, see Sanders (1991). For more extended histories and analyses (regrettably, which I have not had a chance to read, but which are recommended by Sanders (1991)), see Richie, Donald and Buruma, Ian. 1980 The Japanese Tattoo. New York: Weatherhill; and McCallum, Donald. 1988 Historical and Cultural Dimensions of the Tattoo in Japan. In Marks of Civilization. Arnold Rubin, ed. Pps. 109-134. Los Angeles: UCLA Museum of Cultural History.

\textsuperscript{15} The upswing in the popularity of piercing in the 1990s can be traced to the punk movement in England in the late '70s and early '80s (Gröning 1997) and to the homosexual and sadomasochistic communities (Rosenblatt 1997) and street gangs (Blanchard 1991) of the '80s and '90s. Before that, the views of piercing were much more conservative. Women, for example, wear earrings, but until the '80s, multiple

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'70s and '80s (Blanchard 1991, Groning 1997, Rosenblatt 1997). Both tattoos and piercing are enormously popular in the West today.16

Ear-piercings were not common. Men, as well, have had restrictions placed on ear-piercing. Before street gangs popularized the male wearing of multiple earrings, men wore them only to look rebellious or to show their sexual preference (Blanchard 1991). Furthermore, there have been strict limits imposed on the size of the piercing hole. Liu notes, While body piercing now is practiced in American and European cultures, along with multiple piercings of the ear, the size of the ear perforation is still a major distinction between what ancient and tribal cultures have accepted as ear ornaments versus what we tolerate. Although there are ethnographic earrings that do not have a thick earwire or require only a small hole in the earlobe of a few millimeters in diameter, the West has a marked cultural aversion to lobal distension of the scale necessary for the wearing of many ethnographic pieces. [1998:38-39]

Stretching, however, is also gaining popularity in the West, in the form of thicker and thicker studs and the acceptance of larger and larger holes. Body-piercing, as well, is becoming more and more popular.

16

Piercing and tattooing in the West can be effectively examined according to paradigms developed by British symbolists Mary Douglas and Victor Turner. Douglas noted that the physical body and the social body are perceived in similar ways and suggests that individual experience is shaped by both. The terms she uses for this phenomenon are group and grid (1970). She defines the terms thus: "Group is ... the experience of a bounded social unit. Grid refers to rules which relate one person to others on an ego-centred basis" (1970:viii). Where group is the element most emphasized culturally, individuals emphasize society over self and individuality is devalued. The society protects itself against the different (i.e. threatening). Socially, this leads to witch hunting, discrimination against foreigners and eccentrics, austere religious practices, etc. Further, these trends are reflected in attitudes toward the physical body, which is also protected from "unlawful intrusions" into bodily orifices--which results in food taboos and restriction of sexual intercourse (1970:viii). Douglas states, In all cases, it is the lack of strong social articulation, the slackening of group and grid which leads people to seek, in the slackening of bodily control, appropriate forms of expression. This is how the fringes of society express their marginality [1970:83].

Douglas' ideas pertain directly to body ornamentation in the West. Both Blanchard (1991) and Rosenblatt (1997) comment on tattooing and piercing as a Western symbol of sexual penetration. It seems likely that when an individual feels alienated from the group, it is not only the natural orifices that cease to be protected from unlawful intrusions, but new "orifices" are created by unlawful intrusion, as well. Rosenblatt comments, "The skin becomes a kind of battleground on which the self and society contest each other, and the decorated body becomes and indexical icon of the self's (possible) victory" (1997:325). Here, it seems reasonable to replace "self" with "grid" and "society" with "group."

The analysis of liminality and ritual by Victor Turner also proves an important contribution to the study of tattoo and piercing in the West. Some of the characteristics of liminality are nakedness (as a symbol of possessing nothing), punishment and acceptance of pain without complaint, and an egalitarian feeling among the initiates.

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The next section entails an extended critique of the pseudo-ethnographic\textsuperscript{17} film *Baraka*, in an attempt to explicate Japan as photographically presented by and to the modern mind. Nudity and revelation of the face and body and its ornamentation are themes which recur repeatedly in this film.

**Baraka, Japan, and Going Modern**

The package copy of the 1992 film *Baraka* (on VHS) claims:

A WORLD BEYOND WORDS PHOTOGRAPHED IN 70MM IN 24 COUNTRIES...Set to the life affirming rhythms of varied religious rituals and nature's own raw beat, *Baraka* is a visualization of the interconnectedness humans share with the earth. Spanning such diverse locales as China, Brazil, Kuwait and major U.S. and European sites, among others, *Baraka* captures not only the harmony, but also the calamity that humans and nature have visited upon the earth. However, mere words do not do the film justice--*Baraka* must be seen, felt, experienced to be understood. [Fricke 1992:back cover, italics in original]

The implication of egalitarianism is that "the high could not be high unless the low existed, and he who is high must experience what it is like to be low" (Turner 1969:97). Western individuals who have been tattooed or pierced often note that they feel they have undergone a ritual (Blanchard 1991, Rosenblatt 1997, Gröning 1997). Whether or not they are aware of Turner's analysis, I argue that they have. In the first place, modification involves baring the skin—not necessarily the entire body, but at least that skin which will be modified. The "initiate" must show that they possess nothing, at least on that area of their skin. Tattooing and piercing all involve breaking the skin (and consequently, pain), but the initiates subject themselves willingly (in most cases) to the operation. Furthermore, the adoption of the markings of the "colonized" or of the lower classes brings the middle-class person low. Suddenly, they identify with the primitive in the sense that they have done something that they perceive was formerly done only by primitives.

Westerners continue to view piercing and tattooing as sexualized, rebellious, and ritualized (see Blanchard 1991, Rosenblatt 1997, Gröning 1997).

\textsuperscript{17} *Baraka* is only one of many "ethnographic" films produced in the 1990s. However, the film is out of touch with anthropology's current trajectory, i.e. that which (hopefully) eschews exotic display for the self-aggrandizing modern gaze, and in which the "natives" themselves participate and create as theorizers, writers, and informants. (See also Ohnuki-Tierney 1987:3-5.) Two (of many) well-known and excellent examples of "native" and scholarly reactions to questionable ethnographic methods, theory, and conclusions are the !Kung debates of the 1980s and 1990s by Solway, Lee, Wilmsen, and Denbow, among others; and the arguments about Samoan culture published by Derek Freeman—a "native" anthropologist--after the death of Margaret Mead, who wrote extensively about Samoan culture.
Baraka\(^1\), filmed and produced by Ron Fricke, critiques modern society with its use of imagery and music.\(^2\) As the package copy states, no dialogue or narration are imposed over this "world beyond words," but this statement on the package copy belies the fact that much of the music is dubbed over singing or chanting in a foreign (primitive) language. Sometimes the chanting is so weirdly digitized that it does not even resemble human vocalization. The voice of the primitive is represented as wordless here, and it is Fricke's first implicit claim that primitives cannot speak for themselves--in fact, cannot speak at all. Language as the fundamentally human ability is denied and primitives are immediately dehumanized, their vocalizations no different from animal cries.\(^3\) The rest of the film follows this precedent, tending to romanticize and dehumanize so-called primitive cultures while deprecating modern ones.

Beyond the implication of linguistic incompetence, Fricke consciously uses shots that will be categorized as primitive or modern by an American (or even Western European) audience. Consequently, he treats both the moderns and primitives in general unfairly and untruly in the visual matter chosen for the film. He does this by equating religion with primitiveness and, consequently, irreligiosity with modernity. This is expressed in the portrayal of primitives in wild, skin-baring, emotion-charged

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\(^{1}\) According to the video's package copy: "Baraka, an ancient Sufi word with forms in many languages, translates as a blessing, or as the breath or essence of life from which the evolutionary process unfolds." The fact that Fricke chooses to name the film after a foreign ("primitive") word suggests his preoccupation with mysticizing the primitive.

\(^{2}\) White Westerners are his audience. They are the all-seeing eye, the camera, and are not pictured, as the eye sees outward, but does not see itself. The one still, close-up shot of a white face in the entire film is that of a woman working in a chicken factory. "Colored" Westerners are indistinguishable from primitives in their native countries.

\(^{3}\) Incidentally, no vocalizations in a Western language such as English or French are used in the film, at all. This, as we shall see, is a function of the way moderns are portrayed as bodyless. Primitives have a voice, but it is incoherent to us. Moderns have no bodies, though the modern "voice" is shown clearly and unmistakably by the images Fricke chooses to juxtapose.
rituals, while moderns and modernity are shown as automatons without sensibilities, while Japanese are portrayed as the former primitives who sold out and have "gone modern"\textsuperscript{21} and wander the streets, apparently religiously clueless and unseeing of the religious icons among them.\textsuperscript{22} This film, though it is beautifully shot and spliced together, prescribes and reinforces typical demeaning stereotypes of primitive cultures and uses the Japanese as the anti-example of what a primitive culture should be, using the body as the vehicle of its criticism. The fundamental assumption of the movie is that

\textbf{primitive: unclothed and / or painted: religious and / or ritualistic}

\textbf{as}

\textbf{modern: clothed and / or undecorated: irreligious and / or ritually}

\textsuperscript{21} Part of going modern is also the oppression of primitives, as we shall see later in the essay. Japanese have gone from oppressed primitive to modern oppressor, in Fricke’s mind.

\textsuperscript{22} The body which is neither modern nor primitive is a subtext in this film. For example, Greek Orthodox priests are shown fully dressed in religious robes, performing a religious function (e.g. swinging censers in a church). Clothing means modern, but religious means primitive. Similarly, Turkish whirling dervishes spin round and round dressed in beautiful flowing skirts. Again, clothing means modern, but religious means primitive. The ultimate choice of which modern-primitive becomes the devalued one is essentially racist: i.e. Greeks and Turks are white (or at least whiter than Japanese) and therefore not featured heavily in the film or criticized for their borderline status (read modern aspirations), while the Japanese are clearly not white, and therefore are castigated for abandoning their primitiveness in favor of modernity, paradoxically both offered by and acceptable for only white people. It could also be argued that Western (white) culture has roots in both Greece and Asia Minor; devaluing these could be seen as biting the hand that feeds you, where Western (white) culture has not come into direct contact with Japan until the colonialist era. One scene involving a Roman Catholic mass is shown, as well as many scenes of recognizably Hasidic or Orthodox Jews. The arguments above apply to these groups, as well, except to note the historically low and racialized status of Catholics and Jews in overwhelmingly Protestant North America.
In other words, Fricke equates religiosity and nakedness with primitivism, as if moderns and Japanese were void of religious feeling and ritual.

First of all, it is important to note that there are different kinds of rituals. I would argue that in this film, ritual is assumed to have some sort of religious content and context. Therefore, the subtext of the film is that primitives have ritual, Westerners (and Japanese), who are essentially irreligious, do not. Furthermore, this focus on ritual with a capital R suggests that habitual public routines done by Westerners (i.e. walking to work, riding the train, driving a car, etc.) do not count as rituals. Secondly, the naked or semi-naked body is used as a symbol of the performance of ritual,

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23 I am indebted to Dr. Strecher for pointing out an important argument here. This film adheres principally to an assumption of cultural evolution. This is not inappropriate--there are many anthropologists (mostly archaeologists) who still argue that culture evolves on a trajectory of simple to complex, and endeavor to place contemporary societies somewhere on that continuum. Fricke’s point in *Baraka* seems to be that, regardless of the level of evolutionary complexity a society reaches, a complex society still must hearken back to its tribal roots. It is an emotionally appealing argument, but not a particularly intellectually compelling one. European society’s roots are largely agrarian. European societies have not been tribal for tens of thousands of years, and any cultural consciousness or memories of a tribal origin are long lost. Furthermore, it is not rational to suppose that modern tribal societies are not also adapted to their modern environment. Contemporary tribes and their ways of life are as much a product of the modern world as are contemporary complex societies. Contemporary tribes cannot be wholly and unequivocally equated with the human past or with European “tribal roots.” Indeed, no anthropologist who wants to be taken seriously today would make such an argument. Again, Fricke here simply shows that he is out of touch with anthropology’s current trajectory.

24 Or, here is another way to look at it. Both moderns and primitives perform rituals, but Fricke, like Morris, distinguishes between “ritual as reiteration” and “ritual as originating act” (1995:576). Fricke seems to find reiterative ritual modern (and hence unfulfilling, disembodied, oppressive) and originating ritual primitive (and hence exciting, embodied, and sensate). Ohnuki-Tierney (1987) comments that sacred rituals are assumed to overtly emphasize purity, but purity has seldom been regarded as a quality of the secular. I think the failure to see the association between the secular and purity is due to a narrowly conceived notion of ritual, assigning it only to sacred phenomena. If we examine secular rituals, it becomes abundantly clear that the secular is too being kept pure through rituals. [1987:142]
suggesting that ritual is not done while clothing such as a business suit or office uniform—or even a shirt and pants—is worn. Therefore, moderns are exempt from ritual, and Japanese are semi-exempt. I will return to this point later.

In the film, primitives are shown in activities that are unmistakably ritual, while moderns and Japanese are shown in everyday sorts of activities. There are no scenes of moderns or Japanese performing any sort of religious ritual, while scenes of primitives are almost invariably scenes of ritual. For example, an extended scene of shirtless Asian men is shown early in the film. The men are seated and two opposed groups are chanting and waving their hands and arms at one another. The mood of the scene, heightened by the sweating, pulsating, semi-nude bodies of the primitives, is feverish, intense, almost sexual. This is a scene of ritual, where the observer is close enough to the visual objects to feel their mounting tension and to literally see the cavities in their teeth.

Further scenes involving primitives involve a searching camera, which pans across the naked genitals of several South American Indian children. We see one penis and five or so vulvas. Another involves a crowd of people from some African society—many of them sporting extreme (to the Western eye) earrings and many of them somewhat unclothed, foregrounded by a staring, jumping youth. One assumably primitive scene involves the use of Japanese macaques. In fact, this is among the

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25 Perhaps I should not go so far. There is a scene (shown once toward the beginning, then returned to at the end) of an elderly Japanese Buddhist monk, apparently mournfully contemplating as he looks out over the adjacent Zen rock garden. This scene, however, is not one of ritual, but instead evokes a sense of loss of ritual, as if the monk were mourning that ritual no longer existed. It, hence, fits neatly into the film's overall theme.

26 They are all men, and are all stripped to the waist. Furthermore, jostling and rhythmic leaning insure skin-to-skin contact.

27 This is one of the more obvious examples of how primitive peoples are feminized by the Western gaze.
opening scenes of the film, and the first scene we see of Japan in the entire movie.\(^{28}\)
The monkey is one of the most anthropomorphized and symbolic creatures in many
societies (the United States and Japan, included—see, e.g. Ohnuki-Tierney 1987). This
scene seems to be hearkening back to Japan’s primitive past. A scene presumably
intended to be ironic involves Australian aborigines preparing for ritual by applying
paint to their bodies with a plastic comb—the modern manipulated by the primitive (who
later—as we shall see—is manipulated by the modern).

The above scenes can be contrasted with the scenes of anti-ritual in modern and
Japanese societies. One modern scene consists of bizarrely speeded-up cars driving on
a street far below the camera. The key here is the absence of the body from the scene,
and the distance of the observer. The message is that moderns have lost their bodies—
that feverishly intense sexual medium of interaction and religious expression—and now
live out their lives as extensions of their machines. The observer is distant from the
visual object, suggesting that personal relations between these modern machine-people
are distant if not nonexistent. They are mechanical, unknowable. Other “modern”
scenes include footage of modern sites that are strangely unpeopled—for example,
chandeliers in various French cathedrals or scenery in Utah’s Canyonlands National
Park (both of which attract hundreds, if not thousands, of visitors and tourists every
year). The people are strikingly absent. The camera, in other, overwhelmingly peopled
modern places, such as New York’s Grand Central station, employ a grotesquely
speeded-up camera in which the people are just blurs as they whiz by. The body here is
ephemeral, non-existent, unreachable. Moderns are portrayed as faceless, bodyless.

The primitive scene and the modern scenes cited can be further contrasted to
scenes of Japanese businessmen crammed into trains. Here are the Japanese in close

\(^{28}\) The second scene involving Japan is the first scene of the mourning monk, which
subsequently cuts away to the neon lights and freeway of one of Japan’s metropolitan
cities, suggesting a decidedly evolutionary theme—with evolution construed as bad.
facial and bodily contact with one another, and yet the mood is not intense and sexual. Rather, it is stoically resigned, as the commuters intentionally ignore the bodies around them, as well as the body of the observer (the camera). Furthermore, the train ride seems to symbolize the punishment of modernity on the formerly primitive body. Close, intimate primitive contact is still realized, but modernity makes such contact unpleasant, a pleasure to be denied. A second telling scene involves Japanese people walking on the street, past a slowly moving Buddhist monk begging for alms. In this scene, Japanese ignore the monk, here a symbol of their primitive past. This scene also brings up explicitly the status of the Japanese as a people who have rejected a romanticized, glorified, primitive past for a mindless, meaningless, intentionally blind modernity.

A further scene where this accusation is intimated is in a scene of Japanese men in a public bathhouse, relaxing in one of the pools. Suddenly, one of them stands up to reveal a heavily tattooed back. This scene fades to a shot of a child with a red-painted face, wearing only a large necklace of colorful beads, possibly from some South

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29 One of Fricke’s most insulting recurring visual themes is that of posing a person in front of an object or other people and then filming them staring lifelessly into the camera, as if there were no hope, as if they were reaching out to the viewer for help—and, of course, the viewer is a modern who takes patronizing pity on these unfortunate beings. The subway scene is parallel to the above-footnoted monk scene in that, here, Fricke films two Japanese middle school-age girls in their school uniforms standing in front of an artificially speeded up train, which is leaving the platform behind them. The visual effect of helpless hopelessness is ruined here, however, as one of the girls is endeavoring not to burst out laughing.

30 This person is undoubtedly a member of the yakuza, or organized crime. Yakuza members are ambiguous in Japan; on the one hand, they are part of modern, anti-social criminal organizations, but also represent a very traditional reading of Japanese culture (see e.g. Buruma 1984). However, my guess is that Fricke is not viewing this man from a Japanese perspective which renders him ambiguous, but from an American perspective which renders him as “colored” (i.e. tattooed and not white), and hence, primitive. I am indebted to Dr. Strecher for posing me questions on this subject.

31 This same child is featured—staring—several times throughout the film, and notably, on the video cover of Baraka.
American Indian tribe. Here, the use of art on the naked skin unmistakably implies primitiveness: The painted, naked body is a primitive body. However, the Japanese man with the tattooed back will assumably put on a shirt and go back to work, covering up or denying his internal (read real, true, or deep-down) primitiveness. Another scene of Japanese kabuki theatre further elucidates this assertion of the denial, even the death of Japanese primitiveness. The camera is intentionally slightly unfocused, and the actors' hair is mussed and makeup unfinished, their lips and eyes unpainted (usually, kabuki actors wear elaborate costumes and makeup, without a hair out of place in their complex wigs). This scene suggests that the primitive, painted body of the kabuki actor is really nothing but a ghost. Japanese primitiveness is dead.

How do we know for sure that the Japanese have really gone modern, though? The answer here is that they are shown oppressing other primitives. One scene shows primitives--Southeast Asian women--rolling cigarettes in a sweatshop-style factory. This scene cuts to a Japanese man...smoking a cigarette. Presumably, this cigarette's creation was accomplished by means of oppression of the primitives. Japan constitutes a modern nation because they have taken up the colonialist agenda of subjugating the primitives. The juxtaposition of the two scenes also ironically suggests that "white makes right"--indignant Westerners wonder, "What right does that awful Japanese man have to glut himself on the labors of those poor cigarette makers...when he is just like them?" The juxtaposition of these visual images imply that the Japanese smoker is cannibalistically oppressing his own kind. But where is the white Westerner in Fricke's analysis? Do not white Westerners also smoke cigarettes made in Southeast Asia? The parallel scene involving a Western place involves ghostly, unpeopled shots of Auschwitz in Poland. This is another reason why I classify the Orthodox Jews as primitive (according to Fricke's dichotomy), since primitives are the only ones who are shown to suffer pain, pleasure, or any other bodily sensation. However, since there is no narration, the viewer is likely to have no idea what is being viewed, while the cigarette-making and smoking scenes make it painfully clear who is oppressor and who is oppressed.

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choice of a Japanese smoker here makes it a most telling scene. Westerners are encouraged to sit back and comfortably blame primitives for creating their own problems—not to mention to condescend to the Japanese for not being able to get it (i.e. modern ways) right.

The problem with such social commentary based on flagrantly unexamined assumptions about other peoples (like Fricke's) is that this would-be social commentary invariably creates and reinforces stereotypes of Self and Other that misrepresent the facts, oppress along the same contours they critique, and are not based in reality. Surely Fricke is uninformed if he believes that primitives spend their entire days in nothing but ritual, while moderns never perform a single ritual act in their entire lives. He further knows nothing about Japanese culture. True, monks and "regular people" tend to live separate lives, but the institutionalization of religious specialists and laypersons was hardly invented by the Japanese. Many Japanese, further, have shrines to their ancestors in their homes and pay respects to their ancestors on a daily basis; not to mention extensive mourning and rituals performed for the recently dead (and even those who died years ago—e.g. the nanakaiki—the seventh-year funeral); and institutionalized household rituals and shrine visits, such as daisōjikai and hatsumōde, the major cleaning out (of both dirt and evil) and first Shinto shrine visit of the New Year. Where are such scenes in Fricke's film? Why were they not included?

I know about these things because of personal experience. Many people, even Christians, have Shinto and Buddhist shrines in their homes, though observance of the ritual varies. One of my Japanese missionary companions (dōryō) attended the Buddhist nanakaiki of her late mother while I was in Nakano (though, I, myself, did not attend). I was a firsthand witness to the funeral and prolonged mourning of a family I knew in Maebashi whose mother had died, and participated in both daisōjikai and hatsumōde (at the most famous of Tokyo shrines, Asakusa) in 1997, while I was in
Chiba. My experience in this area is not ethnographic, admittedly. But experience and ethnography constitute a major issue in the representation of other peoples. Fricke lists his Japanese consultants at the film's end. We do not know what they thought of the finished film. They may have tried to tell him his fundamental assumptions about Japanese people and ritual were frighteningly inexact. They may have agreed with him. We don't know.

Furthermore, though I have essentialized Fricke as the villain behind the making of this film, I cannot honestly claim to know what he really thinks—or what his consultants really think, for that matter. Ethnography, here, would again be a useful tool to ascertain where and how films such as *Baraka* develop and grow in the minds of those who make them—not just the mind of Fricke as photographer and producer, but the other people involved in making this film—the musicians, the consultants, the viewers. Fricke's reading of the film, doubtlessly, was very different from mine. Perhaps he is very interested in Japan, and hence showed it often. (Or perhaps much of the other film was ruined and the project was already overbudget. There are many possible *or perhapses* here.) Dr. Weist, herself, noted on the *Baraka* film review I handed in to her (see footnote 1, this chapter), that she did not agree with me in my interpretation. She felt that Japan was emphasized in *Baraka* (and indeed it was—Japan was filmed in twice as many locations as the second most filmed countries, according to the film's credits) because of its exoticness, and no other reason.

Oppression, however, seems to me the most pressing issue here. There is an unexamined implication that the man with the tattooed body is like the painted boy in the sense that neither can be trusted to take care of himself. As children need the care of their parents, the primitives (and even former primitives) fall under the white man's burden. Fricke is merely repeating the tired old mantra that moderns will (and should) be the ones to offer or refuse modernity to primitives. And the primitives who don't (or can't) accept will be romanticized and patronized and those who do accept (and beat
moderns at their own game) will be castigated, criticized, and rejected for being not quite modern and not quite primitive.

Fricke's film *Baraka* is not ultimately a "blessing" to the people he films in it, but instead subjects them to the same demeaning, oppressive essentialisms, that continue to be leveled at moderns and primitives, and neither-nor groups such as the Japanese, which simultaneously trouble and reinforce this unstable binary.

In this chapter, I have explored a white American preoccupation with skin color. As a conclusion to this thesis, I try to ascertain whether a similar Japanese preoccupation with skin color exists. Through a cultural study of Japanese women's magazines, I wish to discover if Japanese people truly do have a fascination with whiteness that I have assumed to exist throughout this thesis.
Conclusion

Gaijin Fascination: Magazines and Models in Japanese National-Cultural and Cultural-Racial Perspective

A Fascination With Gaijin?

The *gaijin* (white Westerner) may be the most visible border-cropper in Japan. Even in rural areas where actual, living, breathing *gaijin* are rare, one sees a lot of representations of *gaijin* everywhere one goes— in advertising, in books, in magazines, on television. Studies by scholars of Japan reflect this Japanese fascination (e.g. Creighton 1995, Kelsky 1999, Kondo 1997). However, I feel it is necessary to question: Is the *gaijin* really a Japanese preoccupation, or are American cultural scholars just obsessed with the idea that the *gaijin* is really a Japanese preoccupation? This topic would be well-benefitted by a more in-depth study of images and peoples' reactions to them than I can give at this time. However, I will do what I can to shed some light on the subject.

First, I discuss the historicity of whiteness (and conversely, blackness) in Japan. Then I discuss the general milieu of advertising in Japan. Then, I chart out some general features of five Japanese fashion magazines. I then choose two for comparison: *Elle Japon* and *Elle U.S.* Also, I discuss the reactions of my informants to white people in advertisements in the Japanese media. I finally come to a somewhat ambivalent conclusion regarding how ethnicity is portrayed in Japan.

"White" and "Black" Skin and Cosmetics in Japan: A Historical View

In chapter 3, I theorized visual alterity in the form of black and white skin. Here, I try to put this theory in a historical perspective. In Japan, black (*kuro*) has had many of the same symbolic connotations as it has had in the West, many of them
negative: sickness, filth, death, evil, corruption, etc. (Russell 1996:19). Pale skin has been historically aesthetically valued, even before contact with European countries. Pale skin was considered a marker of high birth, since the skin of lower-class women was often tanned or sunburnt from working outside (Robertson 1998). Several proverbs attested to the perceived beauty of white skin:

"iro no shiroi wa shichinan kakusu" (white skin compensates for many deficiencies), "kome no meshi to onna wa shiroi hodo yoi" (in rice and women, the whiter the better), and "Fujisan no mieru kunin ni bijin nashi", the last conveying the notion that women who live in the overcast, snowy northern prefectures of Shimane, Niigata, and Akita are pale-skinned beauties compared to those who live in warmer, sunnier climes, a view that survives today in such expressions as Akita bijin (an Akita beauty). [Russell 1996:19]

These proverbs further show that the valuation of white skin is gendered: White skin makes a beautiful woman, but not necessarily a handsome man. The first proverb is somewhat ambiguous, but the second two leave no question: Women are mentioned explicitly in the second, and bijin (beauty, beautiful person) in the third is a word that is applied only to women, never to men. Men are, further, generalized to have darker skin than women (Robertson 1998:12).

White face paint (o-shiroi) (Robertson translates it “whiteface”) was imported to Japan from China in the 600s A.D. (Robertson 1998). It is still used by certain segments of the population, in particular, geisha (always women) and kabuki

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1 This cannot be taken as a blanket statement, however. Black has varying appropriateness in items of clothing, for example. Black kimono and black kimono accessories, both historically and currently, are used only during mourning (Dalby 1990). In the case of Western fashion, black is favored as a color of clothing or accessory. For example, Kondo comments, "...Japanese designers are credited with the predominance of the color black during the early 1980s" (1997:66). Moreover, many of Shiseido’s compacts are black, as are compacts by Chanel, etc.

2 Today, being tan does not have such a negative connotation, but note that it is expressed as the polar opposite of being pale in terms of “black” and “white.” A person might say to a remarkably pale friend, "Sō na ni shiroi to ii, ne" (It would be nice to be so white [i.e. pale]). A comment to a tan friend might be something like, “Hada ga kuroku natte kita yo ne” (You've gotten black [i.e. tan] haven’t you?).
performers (always men). Theatrically, *o-shiroi* acts as an “erasure”: the “substitution of inscribed signs of ideal masculinity or femininity” (Robertson 1998:190). Therefore, *o-shiroi* is used to give an erotic feminine beauty to geisha³, while kabuki actors wear it to perform both masculinity and femininity. People who argue that a *gaijin* fascination does not exist could point to *o-shiroi* as *bihaku yō keshō sui*’s predecessor. However, it seems painfully obvious that a woman who wears foundation a shade paler than her actual skintone is not trying to copy the look of the geisha or kabuki performer. Geisha makeup is highly stylized, with the eyes outlined in red and the lips painted on smaller than they actually are. Furthermore, *o-shiroi* is purposely applied to leave a slight margin of skin bare at the hairline, to enhance the mask-like effect of the makeup (Geffen and Maltby 1999). It is rare that Western makeup is purposely applied to look like a mask that distorts the features visibly, but is used more often than not to enhance the wearer’s features in a less obvious, more natural-looking way. And if the method and purpose of application are incompatible, so are the historical precedents. *O-shiroi* is discursively traditional; Western cosmetics are discursively modern. Considering the two commensurate would seem as absurd to a Japanese woman as would wearing a Chanel hat and Gucci stilettoes with a kimono. There is a discontinuity between artificially pale contemporary Japanese women and their geisha counterparts, contemporary and historical.

**Culture and Advertising**

The typical Japanese advertisement tends to be in the style of so-called mood

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³ Geffen and Maltby comment on the geisha aesthetic of applying *o-shiroi* such that it leaves a narrow portion of the facial skin bare: “A tiny margin of bare skin is left all around the hairline, to enhance her [a geisha’s] masklike appearance and heighten the sensuality of the bare flesh.” Arthur Golden, in this same documentary, compares the eros accorded the skin between the makeup and hairline to nudity in the West (1999).
advertising. Mood advertising, though it is also used occasionally in the U.S., is especially prevalent in Japan, where overt competition is frowned upon (though competition is a part of everyday life—*overt* is the important word here), and where humility is all-important (which makes ads that make claims about a product or compare another unfavorably to it somewhat tasteless). Ads in Japan tend to be highly symbolic, evoking a certain mood or emotion. Fantasy and exoticism are common themes (Creighton 1995). Images used in Japanese advertising, then, differ significantly from those used in U.S. advertising.

Considering this, Japanese makeup ads differ somewhat from other Japanese ads. Actually, the grand majority of them follow the same paradigm pictorially as they do in the U.S. Cosmetic ads generally show either a larger-than-life photo of the commodity being sold, a huge face prominently made up with the commodity in question, or both. Only rarely are full or partial body shots used. In this essay, I will be discussing only the images in the ads, and not their accompanying texts, except where applicable. I would like, to some extent, to let the pictures speak for themselves.

I also want to emphasize that these ads can be interpreted in several different ways, and that the analysis here, based primarily on Creighton (1995), may not coincide with how young women view the ads. Creighton's analysis is of what Japanese advertisers say about their ads. But how a consumer, in an ethnographic setting, might interpret such ads remains to be seen. An advertiser and a consumer may "read" advertising images completely differently.

Ethnography, then, is of prime importance to the study of advertising. Martin

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5 Showing both a face and a product is generally--but not always--done in a two-page spread.
warms:

Powerful as the impact of media images may be, we would be terribly misled if we took their content as the only sign of what is being understood in the wider culture. Many studies assume that the content of mass media products gives transparent evidence of "cultural ideas." Some further assert that the mass media do not allow any meaningful response from the public: they are "opposed to mediation"; they "fabricate noncommunication" [Baudrillard 1985]. Ethnographic exploration will quickly show us that the reality is far more complex. In the end, we will see that media images, rich as they seem, are impoverished in comparison to the living collage of ideas produced by people. [Martin 1994:62]

Thus, in order to understand how various Japanese people perceive these ads, ethnographic work—not cultural analysis alone—is necessary. Furthermore, it is necessary to keep in mind that ads are always part of a larger ad campaign, and that campaigns are always part of a wider sales strategy. Moreover, ad campaigns are often transnational in nature (Moeran 1996). So, ads need to be looked at in both an ethnographic and wider sales context.

With these stipulations in mind, we can discuss the meanings of ads with some amount of confidence. Advertisements are, after all, just one of the many material objects carefully crafted by people, and have the meanings people (the crafters, the viewers) give them:

...the images [i.e. of advertisements] are intentional representations designed to make people buy, projected by people with a well-developed understanding of what is likely to prompt members of that culture toward purchasing...[A]dvertising agencies...devote extensive research efforts to studying how Japanese consumers respond to their images. [Creighton 1999:138-139]

Therefore, while it is paramount that we not read too much into the ads, it is also important to not discount them as entirely irrelevant to culture. The next section details whiteness in ads as discussed by Creighton (1999), who interviewed Japanese advertising executives to get their take on why white people appear so frequently in Japanese ads.
Previous Work on the Gaijin Fascination

To review a bit from chapter 3, Moeran discusses wrapped commodities, where a commodity is conflated with its package: the sleek outside shell, box, or container therefore signifies the contents. The wrapping then becomes commodity, and the value of any commodity therefore can be judged by its wrapper (1990:2). Gaijin (white Westerners) are commodified in this way, such that their packages (white skin) become commodities geared to sell Japanese products.

White Westerners, as well as the advertisements they appear in, are commodified in this fashion in Japanese mood advertising. Nude white men and women are commonplace in Japanese ads for many items and services, for example, personal care products, wedding chapels, and department stores. The high visibility of the skin in a nude photo (as well as in a close-up photo of a face) suggests an overemphasis on the outer “wrapper.” One advertising executive Creighton interviewed commented,

My idea is that Japanese ads are not so realistic. Unlike typical ads in America, they are not there to give information or to depict everyday life. Instead ads create a mood. Something is wanted to help create that mood, or a fantasy feeling. Pictures of foreigners and foreign places help create this. [1995:141]

Foreigners, in the case of white Westerners, are easily identified by their highly visible skin. This kind of advertisement objectifies white Westerners, essentializing and objectifying them, and causing them to lose their reality.

As a further note on commodification, Creighton states that many of her informants commented on the use of gaijin in fashion (i.e. clothing) ads, that gaijin are

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It could well be argued, however, that the faces / skin of women, regardless of skin color, are already commodified by advertisers, since cosmetic ads, as noted above, generally employ the image of either a large face or a large commodity—or juxtapose the two, structurally equating the two. You can buy the face by buying the cosmetic. Nowhere is this more evident than in the March 2000 issue of More, where a 22-page article explained how to make yourself over to look like women in advertisements.
beautiful and stylish, and therefore appropriate for use in ads. One male researcher of Japanese identity told Creighton:

Particularly looking at European women from way back there has long been the idea that they are more stylish. This doesn’t apply so much to men. It’s very closely tied to the whole idea of fashion and that’s what lots of ads are for, women’s fashions...Whether it’s true or just an illusion I don’t know, but this is the Japanese belief. [Creighton 1995:143]

Another researcher, a woman, commented on clothing ads featuring white men:

Fashion is a big part of the reason there are so many foreigners. For example, in men’s wear. Japanese don’t suit foreign goods and styles as much. We don’t think those Japanese men look good in Western clothing. [1995:143]

This analysis is also possibly applicable to cosmetics advertising. Could it be that whites are used because they represent the West, the source of Western cosmetics? Does Estée Lauder look better on a white woman than a Japanese woman? If a Japanese woman wears green contact lenses, does that make her look more European, and therefore make her a better model for Western-style makeup? This is another commodification of white skin--in order to sell Western clothes, a company must also sell the idea that white skin makes those clothes beautiful. With this in mind, let us look at two case studies: Estée Lauder / Clinique and Shiseido, two internationally successful brands of cosmetics. But first, a note on how an ad’s visual presentation makes a difference in how it is “read.”

The “Native Language” of Ads

The grand majority of cosmetics ads are two-page spreads. Two-page spreads generally have one page that is meant to be viewed first, and the eye pans from this page naturally to the second page of the ad. In magazines for English speakers, since English writing reads left to right, two-page spreads naturally flow from left to right, as well. In cosmetics advertisements, it is usually extremely clear in which order the pages are meant to be viewed. Usually, the left page pictures a model, whose eyes or
face are turned slightly toward the ad's right page, which more often than not pictures a product, as if she is looking at it or turning toward it. The reader then follows the model's gaze or face to the product. Switching the pages would create a sense of visual disharmony, as the model would then be staring or facing toward the oblivion of the edge of the page; the reader would then stumble at ascertaining what the model was indicating, and the product would have no clear referent. Many of the ads for American companies that appear in Japanese magazines have been translated textually to Japanese to one extent or another, but remain visually untranslated--that is, they are still meant to be viewed from left to right. These ads I call "visually English."

What would a visually Japanese ad look like? Historically, Japanese text was read in columns from right to left. Hence, Japanese books historically opened at the left side (English books open at the right side). Contact with the West has changed this, however, and now it is common to see Japanese writing that reads in rows from left to right. Some books and magazines now open from the right side. However, the grand majority of printed materials still open at the left side, including many of the fashion magazines discussed here. Inside a fashion magazine, there is often a melange of writing styles. Some articles are written in right-to-left columns and some in left-to-right rows. Therefore, what a visually Japanese ad would look like, it is hard to say. Indeed, as we shall see, Shiseido seems to have no preference as to which visual language of ad they prefer.

**Cosmetic Companies: Selling in Japan and the U.S.**

In this section, I will discuss two cosmetic companies: Estée Lauder / Clinique (a division of Estée Lauder) and Shiseido. I chose these two companies because information is abundantly available: Estée Lauder's biography details many aspects of her company and philosophy, and Shiseido has a substantial history on its English webpage. Furthermore, both companies advertise in both the United States and
Japan, and both\textsuperscript{7} were mentioned multiple times by my informants.

Estée Lauder, the daughter of a well-to-do immigrant family, grew up mixing skincare concoctions and giving them out to her friends. She started her business in the 1930s as a single counter at an obscure hair salon in New York (Lauder 1985:27-28). Lauder's family-run company was born during the same era as many of the now famous international cosmetics companies—for example, Elizabeth Arden and Revlon's Charles Revson were two of Lauder's dynamic competitors and arch-enemies (Lauder 1985, Peiss 1998). Slowly the business grew and expanded overseas. It remains family-owned and family-run to this day.

The Clinique line of cosmetics was developed by the Estée Lauder company in 1967 (Peiss 1998:262, Lauder 1985: see chapter 8). Clinique was meant to be a hypoallergenic, fragrance-free line of makeup and skincare products—a product of its times, Clinique was meant to be inoffensive to the various activist groups turbulent in the 1960s. (Clinique's scientific, rather than therapeutic, atmosphere made it less politicized in the eyes of feminists who decried the use of makeup as subjugation of women to an unrealistic beauty aesthetic created by men, for example.) Notably, the line was released under a separate label than its mother company, Estée Lauder, and the two brands have completely different counters in department stores, the salespeople wear different "uniforms" (Clinique's is modelled after a lab coat), and the two brands use completely different advertising schemes. Few people probably realize that Estée Lauder and Clinique are related at all.

While Estée Lauder cosmetics ads traditionally have featured a model (always a twenty-something white woman, most recently British supermodel Elizabeth Hurley), Clinique ads were consciously modeled differently from those of the parent company,

\textsuperscript{7} Actually, informants mentioned Clinique and Shiseido multiple times; Estée Lauder did not come up at all. However, as Clinique's parent company, and in comparison to Clinique's advertising strategy, Estée Lauder is an interesting foil.
and—with few exceptions—feature larger-than-life photographs of the product. Lauder (1985) comments on the reason for this:

I think the Clinique advertisements have been favorably received everywhere. They are beautifully stark: a pristinely clear glass holding a huge tooth brush, a line of Clinique products, the headline—TWICE A DAY—and no model. We are still-life; we almost never have used a face in conjunction with Clinique products. Why? Clinique’s tone is educational, practical, not frivolous. The product is the hero. It is not to be identified with any age group...Clinique is for people from cradle to grave. There was no reason for us to identify Clinique with an age group, a coloring, a life-style—anyone specific. [1985:144]

Again, Clinique’s advertising paradigm reflects the times in which it was conceptualized and created as being unidentifiable with e.g. “a coloring” or “a life-style.”

Both Estée Lauder and Clinique ads are not generally changed from country to country. The same photographs are used and the text is translated. Currently, Estée Lauder ads are generally two-page spreads featuring Hurley on one page (often in black-and-white) and the product on the other (often in color). The ads show an English-based bias in their layout. The eye is meant to pan from left (model) to right (product). However, even when these ads have been placed in a Japanese magazine which reads from right to left (e.g. More, Luci, Elle Japon or Ryûkô Tsushin) the photos have not been transposed or changed—i.e. the model is still on the left.

Exact matches between American and Japanese ads were not forthcoming in the sample of magazines to which I had access. However, it is clear that Estée Lauder’s marketing strategy does not differ from the U.S. to Japan.

One example is the “Futurist” ads. In Elle U.S. (4 / 2000:8-9), a two-page spread advertising Futurist Lash Extending Mascara places a black-and-white photo of Elizabeth Hurley on the left and a color photo of the product on the right. The word

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8 I had access to several 1999 issues each of Ryûkô Tsushin and Fashion News, as well as access to the March 2000 issues of Luci and More. The main magazines used in this study were Elle U.S. October 1999-March 2000 and Elle Japon October 1999-March 2000.
"Futurist" is one of the most prominent words in the ad, large and in boldface letters, rivaled only by the company name Estée Lauder, itself. A thematically similar ad for foundation appears in *Elle Japon* (4 / 2000:2-3) and *More* (3 / 2000:42-43). In this ad, Elizabeth Hurley is again pictured in black-and-white on the left, with a color photo of the product on the right. The foundation is a peachy pink shade, definitely meant to represent a shade meant for a white woman's skin, with a large circle of foundation behind the bottle. The majority of ad text is translated into Japanese, but "Futuristic" is again large, boldface, and in English (and again rivaled only by the name Estée Lauder). The ads are all visually English--meant to be viewed from left to right.

Another example is the eyecare line Estée Lauder markets in both Japan and the U.S. In *Elle U.S.* (10 / 1999:16-17). A black-and-white photo of Hurley is on the left. Her face is in shadows, except for one semi-circular pattern of light across her face, spotlighting her left eye. On the right is a color photo of the product, a blue bottle of undereye wrinkle-reducing cream, and the most prominent word in the accompanying text is "Unline." A similar ad, this one an eye cream for reducing dark undereye circles, appeared in *Elle Japon* (2 / 2000:2-3). Here, Hurley is pictured in shadow on the left in black-and-white, with a round circle of light shining on her right eye. On the right page, a color photo of the product, a blue bottle of eye cream, and the word "Uncircle" are prominently displayed. (The rest of the text, except for the Estée Lauder name is translated into Japanese.) These ads are obviously not the product of two different campaigns in two different countries, but instead are indicative of one...

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9 "Futurist" and "Futuristic" are actually words that appear in the names of the products: "Futurist Lash Extending Mascara" and "Futuristic Age-Resisting Makeup." Why the company chose to use two forms of the same word for different products (i.e. instead of the same form of the word for all products) is unclear.

10 Again, "Unline" and "Uncircle" reference the products' names: "Unline Total Eyecare" and "Uncircle Eye Treatment for Dark Circles." In this case, the emphasized word refers to the purpose of the product.

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campaign, with the ads simply translated, with certain words left in English to emphasize them. The "Uncircle" ad is visually English, with the model on the left; it is especially jarring in this case, because the ad appears as the first thing the reader sees upon opening the magazine--Elle Japon opens from the left side (English magazines open from the right side), as books in Japan historically have for centuries. Therefore, the reader, prepared for a visually Japanese message, opens the magazine and is confronted by an ad that is clearly visually English.

Clinique ads form an interesting contrast to Estée Lauder ads. Again, I was not able to find Clinique ads that were identical in both Elle U.S. and one of the Japanese magazines. However, it is clear that the ads do not differ much between the U.S. and Japan. For example, one Clinique ad from Elle U.S. is a two-page spread (4 / 2000:20-21). The left page shows a block of soap, a bar of soap, a tube of pink body wash, and a tube of yellow lotion, on which a stream of lotion is being poured. The right page shows a lime, a tube of green body wash, a buffing stone, a tube of green body exfoliator, and a block of ice being splashed by water. The theme of product being splashed by a liquid is used in both pages. This is an ad which is not visually English; there is no clear sense as to which page should be looked at first.

A similar ad appeared in Elle Japon (11 / 1999:46). In this ad, a yellow bar of soap, a bottle of pink clarifying lotion and its green lid (which is removed), a cotton ball, and a bottle of yellow moisturizing lotion are being splashed by a stream of water. While this ad is not an exact copy of the above Elle U.S. ad, it clearly does not depart from the main theme of the other ads. It was probably photographed as part of the same campaign, at the same time and place as the Elle U.S. ads.

Compared to Estée Lauder ads, Clinique ads tend to be less overtly "English" because they feature product rather than faces or bodies (though this is not true of ads for Clinique's most recent fragrance, Happy). Now, we will compare the ads of these
two American companies to those of Shiseido, a Japanese company.

Shiseido was founded in 1888 by Fukuhara Yushin, formerly the head pharmacist of the Japanese navy. The first product was a toothpaste powder, and Western-style pharmaceutical products (e.g. lotions and soaps) and later cosmetics followed. Shiseido currently sells products in the U.S., France, Italy, New Zealand, Germany, Australia, China, and elsewhere (Shiseido Cyber Island English Webpage).

Therefore, Shiseido is probably the most well-known Japanese cosmetic company both in Japan and abroad. Shiseido is certainly the most advertised cosmetic company in Japan, from what I have seen. For example, the token cosmetics ads in both Ryūkō Tsushin [9 / 1999] and Fashion News [7 / 1999] were both for Shiseido. Shiseido alone had five ads in More [3 / 2000], and four of them were two-page spreads.

Until recently the only Japanese cosmetic company I had ever seen advertise in a U.S. magazine was Shiseido.¹¹ Unlike the case of Estée Lauder and Clinique, the ads are different in the U.S. and Japan. From 1980 to 1998, the artist illustrating Shiseido's overseas ad campaigns was a man named Serge Lutens, whose artwork is a peculiar blend of body art and touched-up photography.¹² These ads were very much in the Orientalist vein (relying on the association of Japan with exotic Asia) and were

¹¹ Though Shu Uemura (a clothing designer) has recently come out with a new cosmetic line, advertised in the September 1999 issue of Elle U.S. His ad features photos of product (in this case, eyeshadow), not faces. For a Shu Uemura ad in a Japanese magazine, see his skin care ad in Elle Japon 11 / 99:273.

¹² For example, Luten’s work, “Light into Darkness” was published in the Elle U.S. September 1997 issue. The photograph is of the head, shoulders, arms, and breasts of a woman. Her skin is white, overlaid with black swirling patterns. Her hair is made up of the same swirling patterns; her face is left unpatterned, but her lips are red, as though she is wearing lipstick. Several Shiseido products are shown standing in a row in the lower right corner of the page. This ad is typical of the ads of Serge Lutens (the reader can see more examples on Shiseido Cyber Island English Webpage). This one in particular is interesting, however, because of the resemblance of the body makeup to Japanese tattoo (see chapter 4, this volume).
not used within Japan itself (Shiseido Cyber Island English Webpage).

This type of ad by Serge Lutens stands in stark contrast to Shiseido's current campaign as evidenced by an ad in the September 1999 issue of Elle U.S. The product being advertised is the "Pureness Deep Cleansing Pore Mask." The photo is of a blue-eyed white model, and is so large that not even the entire face fits in the frame. The model's nose, taking up approximately a sixth of the page, is covered in the white mask. The intent of this ad seems to be to startle (perhaps disgust?) rather than to dazzle with glamour (as in the case of the previously described ad). Whether or not this same ad has appeared in Japanese magazines, I cannot say; it hasn't appeared in any I've seen, but I'm also working with a relatively small sample.

Shiseido cosmetics are amply advertised in Japan, if not as much in the States. Shiseido, further, uses both white and Japanese models strategically, to represent different cosmetic lines. Fashion News of July 1999 contained a two-page spread featuring a white model, advertising Shiseido's Inoui line of cosmetics (7 / 1999:2-3). A black-haired, brown-eyed white woman is pictured twice. On the left page, her head and upper body are pictured against a dark blue background; she is wearing only a scarf, and her photo takes up less than half the page. On the right page, her head and

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13 To my frustration, Shiseido ads in Elle U.S., formerly occurring in almost every issue I'd seen in the past, promptly disappeared without a trace as soon as I threw out all my old magazines and started this study. So, the information on Shiseido's ad campaigns in the U.S. is not as clear as I'd like. Even more frustrating, in the June 2000 issue (i.e. three months too late for this study) of Elle U.S., a two-page Shiseido ad finally appeared, advertising skincare products with photos of product. This ad was a direct translation into English of identical ads that had appeared in Japanese magazines.

14 Shiseido's Clé de Peau line is also advertised with white models. See e.g. Ryūkō Tsushin (9 / 1999:2-3). The ad is a two-page spread featuring the head, shoulders, and one arm of a reclining white woman, with a blush compact, tube of lipstick, and the words "beauté" to her left. Her face is starkly clear, though the rest of the photograph is slightly blurred. Her hair is black, her eyes are blue, and her skin is extremely pale. Her fishnet bodysuit is reminiscent of the Serge Lutens ads in the United States and Europe.
shoulders are pictured, taking up the entire page; she is wearing a black turtleneck. This ad's "native language" is hard to ascertain visually; the two photos of the model are facing each other, and the text is continuous across the two pages. Therefore, it is ambiguous which page is meant to be viewed first; possibly, the ads are meant to be viewed as a whole. A second Inoui line ad in the Elle Japon February 2000 issue features a blue-eyed blonde woman pictured in the same format as the Inoui ad mentioned above: one facial close-up, one head, shoulders, and torso shot (2 / 2000:28-29).

A Shiseido ad for the Dignita line of cosmetics that ran in Elle Japon (11 / 99:10-11) was a two-page spread. The left page showed a Japanese model with green eyes touching her temple with her hand. On the right page was a bottle of foundation. Comparison with the Estée Lauder "Futuristic" ad showed that, even though the foundation in the Estée Lauder ad was meant for a white woman, the Shiseido Dignita ad's pictured shade of foundation is clearly much paler than the Estée Lauder ad's pictured foundation. This is significant because (though I have no data to prove this) I think that few people (American or Japanese) would claim that Japanese people in general have paler skin than white Westerners. Furthermore, the fact that the model has green eyes (not hazel or brown-green, but strikingly turquoise green eyes) is significant. This model with her green eyes and pale foundation seems almost a hybrid of white Westerner and Japanese. Furthermore, the ad is visually English, because, although the model stares out of the photo at the reader, she is facing slightly toward the right page, drawing the readers eyes toward the right. Another Dignita ad--this one for eyeshadow--appears in the March 2000 issue of Elle Japon, following closely the paradigm of the previous Dignita ad: A Japanese woman with extremely pale skin and blue eyes is pictured (3 / 2000:12-13).

A Shiseido line whose ads feature Japanese women is the pN line. One ad for
this line is a two-page spread that appeared in Luci (3 / 2000, pps. 2-3). Luci opens from the left. The model is on the right page, with brown eyes and brown hair, wearing glossy pink lipstick and a sequined tanktop. On the left page is large red text mostly in katakana (the Japanese script reserved for foreign words or emphasis, not unlike English italics), a photo of lipstick, and a lineup of available shades. Is this ad visually Japanese? It is hard to say. The model is on the right, but she is looking and facing straight out at the reader, not toward the product. Also, the text reads in rows, left to right, the way English does. However, I am tempted to say that while this ad has hybrid qualities, it is visually Japanese, for the simple fact that the right page is meant to be viewed first.15

Hence, it seems that the Shiseido advertisements seem to have a context, indicated usually by the line of the cosmetics advertised. But there is also a context as to which lines are advertised where---in which magazines. I was not aware of this until one of my informants, Marie, pointed it out to me. During the interview, I happened to have brought along an issue of Elle Japon and when I asked her why she thought there were so many gaijin in Japanese ads, she looked at me quizzically, then her eyes lit on the magazine, lying on the couch between us. She nodded understandingly. “Oh, well, if that’s what you’ve been reading. Gaikoku no mono dakara [It comes from a foreign country].”

We talked about it and she said she prefers magazines of Japanese origin because they featured almost exclusively Japanese models wearing “the clothes you really buy.” She found these magazines “more normal” and “more persuasive.”

Unfortunately, I was too far into my project (and too broke) to start subscribing

15 Interestingly, in this same issue of Luci, there is a long article on how to make oneself over to look like the models in advertisements. One model is made over to mimic a Shiseido pN ad—notably not a Dignita or Inoui ad. See below.
to some new magazines, so I was not able to do so. However, Marie talked to one of her friends who kindly gave me her latest copies of two magazines conceptualized in Japan, *More* and *Luci*. Any statements I make about *More* and *Luci* must be taken with a grain of salt, because I've only seen one issue of each. However, they make an interesting contrast to *Elle Japon*, *Ryûkô Tsushin*, and *Fashion News*, and hence are worth discussing.

**Selection of Magazines for this Study**

I probably went about choosing the magazines for this study in the wrong way.\(^\text{16}\) I should have researched and found out some titles, first, but instead plunged ahead and called Kinokuniya Bookstore in San José, California, and asked them what *fusshon zasshi* (fashion magazines) they carried. The kind woman who helped me apparently assumed I wanted only magazines with the word “fashion” in the title, and suggested *Ryûkô Tsushin* and *Fashion News*. I bought several issues of both. I asked her if she had ever heard of *Elle Japon* and she said no, to my disappointment and surprise, since items with the *Elle* logo (handkerchiefs, pencil bags, etc.) are widely sold in Japan. I specifically wanted to see *Elle Japon* because I knew that the English “control” magazine I’d be using was *Elle U.S.*, since it was the only American magazine I had seen to advertise Shiseido cosmetics\(^\text{17}\)--also the only Japanese brand I’d seen advertised in the U.S. at that time. So, I thought perhaps *Elle Japon* would be roughly comparable to *Elle U.S.*

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\(^{16}\) The collection of magazines used in this study is housed in the University of Montana Women's Studies Office, Liberal Arts Building 138, and open to study by anyone who would like to examine the magazines further.

\(^{17}\) Since then, I have seen a Shiseido ad in *Harper's Bazaar*, March 2000 issue.
Furthermore, upon examination, I was dissatisfied with both *Ryūkō Tsushin* and *Fashion News*. Neither of them devoted many pages to ad space, especially *Fashion News*, which is basically a model-by-model record of fashion shows around the world, without many articles or extraneous text. *Ryūkō Tsushin* is less of a fashion magazine than a style magazine—clothes were a major emphasis, but other regular features included travel articles, large sections of art, and serial stories in both Japanese and English. So, I knew that neither of these magazines would be sufficient for my study. Also, *Ryūkō Tsushin* had already been evaluated by at least two other anthropologists (see Kondo 1997, Skov 1996). I wanted to do something new.

Finally, I tried a different branch of Kinokuniya bookstores, Kinokuniya Seattle. To my excitement, they not only carried *Elle Japon*, but had a subscription plan whereby I could actually subscribe to the magazine, instead of having to phone and have it mailed to me every month.

In comparison of *Elle U.S.* and *Elle Japon*, I discovered several not-very-surprising facts. The two magazines often share photographs (for example, identical photos of American actress Ashley Judd appeared in the 9 / 1999 issues of both *Elle U.S.* and *Elle Japon*) and even articles (see translation of interview with actress Uma Thurman, originally published in English in *Elle U.S.* 11 / 1999 and later published in Japanese in *Elle Japon* 3 / 2000). Cosmetic advertisements generally featured white women. For example, in the entire February 2000 issue of *Elle Japon*, only three ads featured anyone who looked recognizably Japanese at all, and none of them were cosmetic ads.

Despite this, *Elle Japon* tends to be more “international” than *Elle U.S.* For example, *Elle Japon* includes in every issue a section called “Elle Planet,” which

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features news—and article—clips from *Elle* magazines published all over the world.  

*Elle Japon* also often features interviews and articles about designers from non-European countries such as Korea and Thailand—whereas Korea and Thailand are only mentioned in *Elle U.S.* as places to which one might travel, and are not taken seriously as sites of design. *Elle U.S.* most often references Europe in relation to design.

Finally, a word about *More* and *Luci*. Both of these magazines fall into a category of more strictly informational (in the sense of detailed information on how to dress) reading than the other magazines mentioned. They also tend to be more visual, showing, for example, twenty pairs of shoes on a page, with a sentence or two of information on each; or photos of catwalk models displaying the newest trends, with corresponding photos of how women can appropriate these styles into their own wardrobes. Interviews are rare. So are articles on health, art, stars, fashion designers, travel, culture, food, etc.—the mainstays of *Elle Japon* and *Ryûkô Tsushin*.

Both of these magazines, born and bred in Japan, rather than abroad, feature almost exclusively Japanese models. The text is more likely to be in Japanese than to feature the boldface words in English text that are scattered over the covers and pages of *Elle Japon* and *Ryûkô Tsushin*. In *More*’s March 2000 issue, I took to counting the *gaijin* and Japanese people in cosmetic ads. Interestingly, the only cosmetic ads that featured white women were ads for European and American companies, with only one exception. Advertisements for aesthetic salons toward the back of the magazine

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19 It is arguable that so was *Ryûkô Tsushin*—why *Ryûkô Tsushin* follows the Western fashion magazine paradigm more closely than *More* or *Luci*, I cannot say.

20 The exception was the RMK Rumiko company, whose ad featured a blonde, white model.
featured both white and Japanese models, usually with photos of several models (getting massages, facials, etc.) per ad. In Luci, the only gaijin that appeared were the gaijin models in catwalk photos (showing the reader how to copy designer looks), as well as a few gaijin cartoon people as illustrations in articles or ads. No gaijin appeared in cosmetic ads at all. The models are young, Japanese, and anonymous, eschewing the focus on famous people in Elle Japon and Ryūkō Tsushin. A scant few appeared in other ads--but this was rare. Incidentally, the issues of More and Luci that I examined did not feature photos of noticeably Korean girls, or any sort of foreign people at all.

Both More and Luci present a homogenous view of fashion in Japan. There is almost an egalitarian feeling that any Japanese girl could appear in them.

As if in assertion of this, Luci's March 2000 issue featured a 22-page article on how to make yourself over to look like the women in ads. Various unassuming models were combed, brushed, dressed, and made-up to look like the models in Shiseido ads, Kanebo\textsuperscript{21} ads, and ads for non-cosmetic items such as coffee--with astonishing results. The made-over models did look like the ad models, down to their lipstick. This is a revealing article because it implies that there is more to ads than meets the eye. Cosmetic ads are not simply selling a product; they are geared to sell a look, and even more precisely, a face. None of the models in the above-mentioned article were gaijin; none of the models in the targeted ads were gaijin. Without cosmetic surgery, it might be simply impossible to make a Japanese girl look like Elizabeth Hurley. However, the cartoons showing the methods of arranging hair and applying makeup rarely looked like the ad model or the makeover model...but looked like gaijin.

\textbf{Not the Final Word on Gaijin Fascination, but...}

\textsuperscript{21} Another Japanese cosmetics company--one that has not gone international.
So, who is fascinated by *gaijin*, Japanese people or cultural scholars? I am not ready to dismiss the idea that *gaijin* are unusually prevalent in Japanese representations of people. However, as we have seen in this chapter, we have to be careful how we read whiteness in Japan. "White" companies like Estée Lauder do not market their products differently in Japan, and therefore artificially inflate the numbers of *gaijin* in advertising. Chameleonesque Shiseido, by contrast, changes its ads to fit the genre of magazine and cadre of readers expected to peruse the ads. Models are sometimes white, sometimes Japanese, and sometimes somewhere in-between. Both companies, it seems to me, are referencing the Western—in particular, the Parisian—hegemony of the fashion world recognized in both Japan and abroad (see Kondo 1997, Creighton 1995).

Referencing Paris, however, may be a form of *gaijin* fascination in and of itself. Kondo comments that Japanese fashion magazines engage in an unproblematic enshrining of things Western, particularly in those journals catering to youthful, hip, urban audiences. The enshrinement takes many forms. Western models abound on these pages, particularly in high-fashion journals such as *Ryūkō Tsūshin* (*Fashion News*), *Hat Fashion* (*High Fashion*), and Japanese versions of international magazines, like *W*, *Marie-Claire*, or *Elle*. Indeed, sometimes there is scarcely a Japanese face to be seen. The prestige of Western luxury designer goods—Hermès, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Celine—continues unabated. Magazines for young men and young women are often detailed guides to consumption, describing trends in various Western countries in lapidarian detail: the street-by-street, gallery-by-gallery tour through Soho or Venice Beach in *Popeye* and *Brutus*, the shop-by-shop tour of Honolulu or Paris in *Hanako*, the consumer guide for “office ladies.” Things Western still embody the fashionable. \[Kondo 1997:78\]

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22 Another reading of this phenomenon goes back to the idea of white as cultureless introduced in chapter 4. Perhaps representations of people in Japan are not always intentionally white, but reference an idea of a prototypical human being as a white human being. This seems likely to me in the case of the cartoons used in the *Luci* article on making one's self over to look like an ad model.

23 Though Parisian hegemony of fashion does not go unchallenged by other sites of fashion creation, such as New York, Tokyo and London (Skov 1996:144).

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For Kondo, *gaijin* fascination resides not simply in the fact that white models are used or not used. Even in magazines that use Japanese models, the “enshrinement” of Western commodities is perpetrated by the myriad ads and consumption guides for Western commodities like Gucci and Louis Vuitton, and Western cities full of Western shops. So, even if Estée Lauder pictures Elizabeth Hurley in advertisements in Japanese magazines, we cannot simply dismiss that fact by saying Estée Lauder is an American company—why wouldn’t Estée Lauder use Hurley in ads in Japan? The question is really by what problematic does Estée Lauder have a high-prestige presence in Japan in the first place? It seems obvious to me that the answer is *race*. Race is also the problematic behind Shiseido’s color-changing ads. Shiseido ads are orchestrated to blend-in in predominantly white-model environments, as well as color-coded to blend-in in predominantly Japanese-model environments as well.

For companies that wish to have a single, unified advertising plan that does not reference race, Clinique’s style of advertising may be the paradigm to follow. However, as long as the West is the hegemonic site of fashion and style, I doubt that companies like Estée Lauder will expand their advertising repertoire.\(^{24}\)

**Interviews: Magazines and Readers**

Nine of the twelve women I interviewed stated that they read fashion magazines (among other magazines) at least once a month while living in Japan; only two read any American fashion magazines while in Missoula. Their choices of reading material further convinced me that I had been hasty in choosing magazines for study. Here are

\(^{24}\) Other companies like Estée Lauder include Chanel and Lancôme, whose ads change very little from country to country, even much of the text remaining untranslated.
the magazines they said they had read:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese Fashion Magazines</th>
<th>American Fashion Magazines</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Women's Magazines</strong></td>
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<td>An-An</td>
<td>Bazaar</td>
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<td>Can-Cam</td>
<td>Cosmopolitan</td>
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<td>Cutie</td>
<td>Elle U.S.</td>
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<td>Junon</td>
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<td>Luci</td>
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<td>Non-no</td>
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<td>Puchi (Petite)</td>
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<td>Ryūkō Tsushin</td>
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<tr>
<th>Men's Magazines</th>
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<td>Boon</td>
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<td>Hotdog</td>
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<td>J.J.</td>
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Notice that neither *Elle Japon* nor *Fashion News* were read by any of the informants.

Of course, I sampled only twelve women, only nine of whom expressed an interest in fashion magazines. Still, this was somewhat of an unhappy result for me.

The women had many strategies of reading these magazines. Only one woman stated that she bought magazines regularly. "I'm crazy about magazines!" she declared, stating that she bought five or six magazines every month while in Japan. Moreover, she worked at a shoe store that bought several magazines each month for the purpose of research; she read those, too. While living in Missoula, she has ordered her favorites, *More* and *Luci*, via the Internet, and also enjoys reading *Elle U.S.* and *Cosmopolitan*. She was unusual compared to the others, however.

Many women stated that buying magazines was too expensive. Two said they engaged in *tachiyomi*—reading their favorite magazines at a bookstore—but not buying

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25 Indeed, as White (1993) notes, it is not unusual for gender crossover to occur in magazine reading.
them. Three stated that they borrowed magazines from friends. One stated that she would buy her favorite magazines occasionally, but mostly stuck to *tachiyomi* and borrowing from friends. One woman, a twenty-eight-year-old graduate student stated that she didn’t really read fashion magazines anymore; more serious magazines like *Newsweek* appeal to her now. The other two women gave no reasons for not reading fashion magazines.

**Race in Advertisements**

There were various reactions to the question as to why *gaijin* are so prominently featured in advertisements. Some women frankly disagreed that *gaijin* are numerous in advertisements. One woman commented, “European and American cosmetics brands often use white women in advertisements, but I think many Japanese brands—Shiseido, Kanebo, etc.—show photographs of Japanese actresses. That’s because Japanese actresses are more closer to consumers.” We have seen that she is wrong (to some extent) about Shiseido; Kanebo, I am more willing to agree with her.

Two women stated that they felt that *gaijin* were numerous in the past, but were declining in frequency. “Some magazines are only for European fashion, so their models are white people. I used to see white models a lot, but I don’t see [them] anymore,” commented one. Another woman looked surprised when I asked and stated she’d never noticed a marked predominance of *gaijin* in ads before.

Other answers to this question basically paralleled answers given to Creighton (1995) by Japanese advertising executives as to why they used *gaijin* models. One of my informants stated that ads normalize *gaijin*, which are rare in Japan. Others gave answers that referred to the beauty of *gaijin* women, that referenced the predominance of the West, the idea that Western clothes look better on Western people, and that *gaijin* are associated with style and expensive prestige goods. One woman even used
the word “jealous” to describe Japanese feelings toward the West.

I think the most significant aspect of the interviews on magazine reading and interpretation was the discussion on black Westerners. Black British model, Naomi Campbell, was brought up by an informant three different times—with my unintended suggestion in only one of these cases.

I was intrigued by the February 2000 cover of Elle Japon, which featured Naomi Campbell posing wrapped in a red blanket. Blacks have generally had low status in Japan (see chapter 3, this volume); I wondered if the magazine editors had gone out on a limb by picturing Campbell on the cover.26 When I interviewed Marie, one of the informants, I happened to have this issue of Elle Japon with me and, without thinking, placed it on the couch between us as we sat in the Business building’s undergraduate lounge. “Naomi!” she exclaimed.

“You know Naomi Campbell?” I asked.

“Of course! She’s very famous in Japan.” Marie proceeded to tell me of a television commercial for an esute (aesthetic salon) which featured a Japanese girl named Naomi (not an uncommon name in Japan). As she was about to leave to go to the esute, her father scoffed and expressed cynicism that the salon would actually benefit Naomi. However, when Naomi came home, she was no longer her ordinary Japanese self—the massages and beauty treatments at the esute had transformed her into Naomi Campbell. The commercial ended with the surprised look of the father as Campbell walked in the door, saying, “Tadaima! Naomi desu!” (I’m home! It’s Naomi!)

The transformation of a Japanese girl into a black model, a symbol of beauty, struck me quite forcefully. Having left the magazine at home during subsequent

26 Dr. Strecher kindly pointed out to me that both Tiger Woods and Mike Tyson have done commercials in Japan for different products; Naomi Campbell is not the first. However, both Woods and Tyson are sports stars, not symbols of feminine beauty in the way that Campbell is.
interviews, I was somewhat surprised when Naomi Campbell was brought up again.

This time, it happened when I asked why white Westerners were so prominent in ads. Risako commented that Japanese people admired white supermodels, but that black women were also gaining admiration in Japan. She then cited the same television commercial featuring Naomi Campbell that had been described by Marie. I behaved as though I had never heard of it before, and listened while she explained it to me. This happened only two days after I'd first talked to Marie and, at the time, it felt almost spooky.

This same ad was yet again brought up by a third informant, again in response to the question as to why white Western women figured so prominently in Japanese ads. Another woman did not mention Campbell, or the television commercial, but did note that Japanese people generally subscribed to the stereotype of the white, blonde, blue-eyed Westerner, and did not particularly think about black people in the same light as white people.

Comments on Japanese models, and on black supermodel Naomi Campbell were some very unexpected elements of fieldwork that I especially did not anticipate. However, I think it is telling that some women are beginning to see a beauty aesthetic that is no longer based emphatically only on white women. In this sense, a preoccupation with *gaijin* may be coming to an end.

**Conclusion: The Future of Ethnicity in Japan**

One idea that I have not touched upon much in the thesis, but which presents itself repeatedly in this chapter is the idea of hybridity, a being that is somewhere between Japanese person and white Westerner. This is where—superficially—it looks like ethnicity is headed in Japan. I contend that hybridity is more a stop on a continuum between *gaijin* and Japanese, and that the reality is actually much more
complex.

As an illustration, I once happened to show the March 2000 issue of *Luci* to an American friend. She exclaimed in surprise at the cover model, as I had said I was going to show her a Japanese magazine. "She's Japanese?!" my friend exclaimed. She examined the magazine closer. "Well, she *could* be Japanese. She looks Asian a little bit, maybe around the eyes. But the rest of her--well, she's very white and her hair isn't black. She looks, at best, Japanese-American." What would a Japanese person say about *Luci*'s cover model? What would a Japanese person say about the Shiseido Dignita green-eyed Japanese model?²⁷

Christopher (1983) comments:

On one level, as even a superficial look at Japan makes plain, the Japanese are quick to ape things foreign--and particularly things American. Indeed, so many of the externals of Japanese life have now become effectively Westernized that a casual visitor could be pardoned for concluding that the people of Japan are hell-bent on transforming themselves into ersatz Europeans or Americans. It is even tempting to speculate that in their fantasies the Japanese may have already done so: it is a curious fact that the people who appear in Japanese commercials, both live and animated, tend to have distinctly more Caucasian features than the general run of Japanese do. Significantly, however, every Japanese friend whom I have ever asked to explain this phenomenon has flatly assured me that it does not exist and that the actors in TV commercials are, in fact, typically Japanese in appearance. Since this is manifestly not the case, it might seem that my friends were displaying some sort of chauvinistic touchiness, but I do not believe that to be so. Rather, it simply had not occurred to them that the actors in those TV commercials looked uncommonly like Europeans and Americans--like anything, in fact, except "modern" Japanese. My friends, in short, were indulging in an absolutely standard Japanese practice: the cultural domestication of what are seen as desirable foreign attributes and institutions. [Christopher 1983:180-181]

In short, what Christopher is saying, is that Japanese people do not see themselves as

²⁷ I am indebted to Dr. Campbell for posing this question to me. Unfortunately, I hadn't started my cultural study of ads (beyond simply buying the magazines) at the point that I started the interviews, so I didn't have a chance to ask any of my interviewees. However, I agree with Christopher (1983) (upcoming quote) that it is likely that the interviewees would have said that both models were unequivocally Japanese. Only ethnography would be able to refute or affirm this suspicion.
idolizing a European beauty aesthetic. What they do see is Japanese people looking Japanese.28

I doubt that what we are seeing, however, is strictly Europeanized Japanese people or Japanese Japanese people. It seems to me that what we are seeing is kokusaika (internationalization) in action.29

In Japan, the culturally foreign does not remain foreign, once it has crossed the border into Japan.30 Ivy comments that “Japan assimilates” (1995:1) and relates this to the discourse of kokusaika, or internationalization, prominent in Japan since the 1980s: “While internationalization elsewhere implies a cosmopolitan expansiveness...the Japanese state-sponsored version tends toward the domestication of the foreign” (1995:3). It seems to me that this is a good explanation for the proliferation of white-looking Japanese people. It is not simply that Japanese people want to look like gaijin. Instead, Japanese people want to look like Japanese people who have internationalized their appearance—by domesticating and appropriating an appearance paradigm that just happens to have come from the West.31 Shiseido ads show the continuum from foreign to Japanese: The model in the Inoui ad is unequivocally a gaijin. The model in the Dignita ad is a hybrid between Japanese and

28 On the other hand, how can white Westerners be assured that what they are seeing is Japanese people looking white? Possibly, Japanese people and white Westerners are working from different stereotypes of what Japanese people look like. I think it is more complicated than this, however, as I explain.

29 I am indebted to Dr. Weix for pointing this out to me.

30 Obviously, this does not hold true for people, only for cultural ideas. The gaijin in Japan remains gaijin and it is impossible for them to become Japanese, in the dominant Japanese view (see chapter 3, this volume).

31 How men and women would view this phenomenon differently would also be a fruitful venue of research. See e.g. Kelsky (1999).
gaijin. The model in the pN ad (and the Luci cover model, as well) is Japanese, having also appropriated the best characteristics of gaijin-ness. This is why appearance is not politicized in Japan—why whitening creams and lotions are not ethnically offensive. They are not meant to make a person look like a gaijin; they are meant to make a person look like a Japanese person.32

Future research, then, would concentrate on ethnography of Japanese peoples' reactions to ads such as the Shiseido ads discussed above, as well as the burgeoning movement toward a black beauty aesthetic as performed by Naomi Campbell. Much has yet to be written on the subject of ethnicity and appearance in Japan; the interplay between the two will continue to be an interesting and pressing question well into the future.

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32 Notably, this argument shoots down the argument that whitening cosmetics are the observable effects of a global white beauty aesthetic, argued in chapter 2 of this volume. Currently, I find it difficult to reject either theory (i.e. globalized white beauty aesthetic vs. kokusaika). I think both bring important conclusions to the implications of ethnicity and cosmetics in Japan, so I’m not sure that choosing just one would accomplish anything more important than simply eliminating the other.
Appendix: Questionnaire Used in Interviews

Questionnaire:

**Preliminary Information:**

Sex: M F
Major: 
Class Ranking: F S J S G
Age: 
Home city and prefecture in Japan: 
To-date duration of stay in Montana: 
Intended duration of stay: 
Other cities, countries to which this person has traveled, or in which this person has resided:

Why did you decide to come to the University of Montana to go to school?

**The Lexicon of Cosmetics:**

1. When you think of the following words, what Japanese words come to mind?
   a. *keshō* (cosmetics)
   b. *kao* (face)
   c. *kakko* (form, looks)
2. Why do you think you thought of that (those) word(s)? Why does *keshō* / *kao* / *kakko* remind you of (word[s] suggested by informant)?

**Cosmetics and Their Use:**

1. About how much do you think you spend per month on cosmetics in Montana?
2. How much per month do you think you spent on cosmetics while you were in Japan?
3. Why do you think this amount has changed / not changed / stayed the same?
4. What cosmetic brands and products do you buy?
5. What brands or products do you wish you could buy in the U.S.?
6. Do you ever ask friends or family to send you cosmetics from Japan? If yes, what?
7. How long do you spend putting on makeup each day? Do you put it on more than once?
8. Has your makeup routine changed since coming to the U.S.? How / Why / Why

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1 This is the actual questionnaire I used in interviews. Naturally, not all of the questions I asked were able to be addressed in the thesis. Since I received so many answers discussing ethnicity, I was forced to reduce or simply not write about many issues—e.g., gender—which I asked about and would have been interesting to explore. For example, question 10 of “Cosmetics and Their Use” is one such question involving gender that did not survive to be written into the thesis. Such an issue would be interesting to include in a future monograph.
9. What do you think of people who, for example, put on lipstick or pressed powder in public?
10. If you were a person of the other sex, and you came to Montana, would you have changed your looks, do you think? How / Why / Why not?

Advertisements in Fashion Magazines:

1. Did you read fashion magazines at least once a month while you were in Japan? If yes, which ones?
2. Do you read fashion magazines at least once a month while in Montana? If yes, which ones?
3. Why do you think so many Japanese advertisements show photographs of white women (instead of Japanese women—the advertisements' presumed targeted consumers)?
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