Abstract:
The racialization of "Japanese" has a long history going back to the country's origins within the past two millennia, in the form of words related to descent and bloodline. “Ainoko” (betweener, hybrid) was the most common word in the 19th century. “Konketsuji” (mixed-blood-child) became a strong rival early in the 20th century. “Haafu” (half) was used in fiction in the 1930s but did not begin to replace its rivals until the 1960s and 1970s when many mixed-blood singers became popular. “Haafu-gao” – meaning “half-face” – was used in the 1980s to refer to a “look” that appeared “half foreign” – the essential meaning of “haafu.” In the early 2000s, when many “haafu” models and entertainers became popular, some fashion magazines began promoting makeup techniques to create the exotic “haafu-gao” look that is most commonly associated with the offspring of racially “Asian” and “European” parents. Such labeling almost always racializes “Japanese” and “foreigners” so that racially mixed people in Japan, most of whom are Japanese, may be regarded as not fully Japanese. Furthermore, “haafu” who “look” more “foreign” than “Japanese” may be treated like foreigners.
The Language of “Racial Mixture” in Japan: How Ainoko became Haafu, and the Haafu-gao Makeup Fad

By Hyoue Okamura, Independent Scholar, Kyoto, Japan

This paper focuses on the history of words related to “mixed race” in Japan from the middle of the 19th century to the present. Since the development of racial terminology in Japan is closely linked with changes in the racial composition of its population, the linguistic history is embedded in a general overview of the larger social history of mixed race in Japan. The two histories at times alternate and at times unfold together. Both are punctuated by examples of usage of labels like ainoko (betweener, hybrid), konketsuji (mixed-blood child/offspring), and haafu (half) in dictionaries, literature, and life, and of attitudes toward such labels. They are also punctuated by asides about racially-mixed Japanese and others, whose lives dramatize the extent to which they have generally been accepted and recognized in Japan for their achievements and contributions as integral members of Japanese society. The two historical streams flow into the last three parts, which describe the growth of the haafu-gao (half-face) fad in Japan's fashion and makeup culture and industry since the late 20th century, and argue why the ways in which it racializes “Japanese,” and cultivates an envy for the faces and bodies of Eurasian fashion and makeup models, constitute a pathology that complicates the lives of many racially-mixed Japanese and others – in Japan and elsewhere.

The purpose of this paper is to present in English some of the information I have uncovered in the course of several years of original research using mostly previously unreported primary materials, and an analysis of its significance in the sweep of Japan's social history. I have given the era up to the end of WWII as much attention as postwar Japan, because many academics today tend to focus only on the postwar period, especially the present, with little or no awareness of either the large and vibrant population of racially-mixed people in Japan before the end of WWII, or the continuity of this population in postwar Japan, without which the “GI Babies” of early postwar fame would not have been able to gain acceptance as quickly as they did. I conclude my essay with the haafu-gao (half-face) fad for two reasons: Firstly, all of its elements, from the word haafu (half) itself to the fascination with Eurasian faces, spring from the prewar period.; Secondly, the fad is deeply rooted in the racialism of the past, which is alive and well today, as in the public claim by an educator that Japan is “the world’s purest [racio-ethnic] nation without mixture.”

Introduction: From antiquity to the 1850s

Contrary to such romantic pride in racio-ethnic purity, the Japanese people today are a product of many centuries of expansion, migration, and mixture. The population of Japan in the middle of the 19th century did not yet include many descendants of migrants beyond its closest neighbors, but anthropologists recognize that it was a mixture of East Asian, Northeast Asian, and Pacific Asian populations. Japan's earliest official histories, centering on the fifth-eighth centuries, have stories about mixture between different races of Japanese, and between Japanese and others. Even the imperial family is unambiguously acknowledged to be a product of racial mixture, broadly defined.

Although Europeans began coming to Japan in the mid-16th century, by the mid-17th century contacts with foreigners had been forbidden or extremely restricted. Japanese who left Japan without permission were subject to execution if they returned. Nonetheless, sanctioned and secretive sexual fraternization between Japanese and foreigners in Hirado, Nagasaki and elsewhere naturally resulted in children. Some such offspring were removed or exiled, or for other reasons left
A mixed-race child’s status depended on many factors. Children were generally regarded as affiliated with their fathers, but custody was contentious. Japan was generally reluctant to let a child of a Japanese be taken from Japan. The Dutch East India Company, however, considered the offspring of Dutch men with local women its chattels. After the death of Cornelis van Nijenroode in 1633 as he prepared to leave Japan, for example, the Company insisted on taking custody of his daughters by different Japanese women in Hirado. Cornelia van Nijenroode (1629-c1692) and her half-sister ended up in Batavia. Cornelia became the wife of Pieter Cnoll, who went on to become the first head merchant of Batavia Castle. They had many children, and she herself became a merchant, then a widow, and finally went to Holland to litigate a divorce against an abusive second husband. Some correspondence between her and her family in Japan survives. A portrait of her with Cnoll and two of their daughters, painted in 1665, hangs in the Rijksmuseum in The Netherlands, proof that life went on for the descendants of interracial unions in early 17th century Japan.

Life also went on for Tei Seikō (1624-1662), as he is known in Japan, referring to Cheng Ch’eng-kung (Zheng Chengong) in Chinese, the most famous Chinese of part-Japanese descent in his time. Born in Hirado to a Japanese mother and a Chinese merchant-cum-pirate father, who was loyal to the Ming dynasty, Tei evicted Dutch colonialists from Taiwan in order to mount a rebellion from the islands against the Manchu Qing dynasty. He failed, but was memorialized by Japanese playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725) in the bunraku (puppet) play Kokusenya kassen [The battles of Koxinga/Coxinga], first performed in Osaka in 1715. The story was later adapted into a kabuki play, and there are also film versions, including a joint Japan-China production in 2001.

Racialized labels in Japan existed well before the Meiji period, when they began to change into the labels more familiar today. By the 18th and 19th centuries, Japan was treating children born between Japanese women and foreigners, mostly Chinese or Dutch, as belonging to their mothers. They were Japanese and so could not leave with their fathers. Chinese were Tōjin (唐人 Tang people), referring to Tang China, which had contributed to Japan’s culture during the 7th-10th centuries, when some children born in China, between Japanese envoys to China and Chinese, settled in Japan. Portuguese and Spaniards were nanbanjin (南蛮人 southern barbarians), a Chinese term alluding to their southern origins, while Dutchmen were kōmōjin (紅毛人 red-haired-men), which signified their hair color. Between the mid-17th and mid-19th centuries, when trade with Japan was strictly limited to Dutch and Chinese vessels in Nagasaki, and to Chosenese ships in Tsushima, some mistress relationships between Japanese and foreigners were recognized by local magistrates.

By the time Commodore Perry arrived with his “black ships” in Ryūkyū (Okinawa) and Japan in 1853 and 1854, there was a small population of mixed-race, mostly “Dutch Japanese” and “Chinese Japanese” in Japan. Kusamoto Ine (1827-1903) would be Japan’s first female doctor practicing the Dutch and German medicine she learned first from her father’s disciples, then from him. With the opening of treaty ports and the foreign settlements in Japan, fraternization between foreigners of many races and local people – as well as between Japanese who ventured overseas to study – produced many children, some in wedlock, others not. As in earlier times, two broad categories of mixed-blood children lived in Japan – those who grew up with both parents, and those brought up by their mother or her family, or sometimes by their foreign or Japanese father. Japanese who lived with or married foreigners sometimes encountered disapproval or contempt.

The birth of the term haafu on the streets of Yokohama

During the late 1800s, children of mixed unions also had to contend with discrimination, whether they lived in the mainstream of Japanese society, or in an extraterritorial foreign settlement. In Japanese they were most likely called ainoko (間児, 間子, 間の子, 合の子, 合いの子, あひの
which means “child [born] between [parents of different breeds],” i.e., “betweener” or “cross” or “hybrid.” J.C. Hepburn’s Wa-Ei gorin shūsei [Japanese-English aggregation of words] defined ainoko as “One born of mixed breed; an Eurasian” (1974 edition of 1886 3rd edition). “Eurasian” is given as an example of a “mixed breed” person. The mixture could be anything. Ōtsuki Fumihiko’s Daigenkai [Great sea of words], published in 1932, cited the term ainoko-bune (間子船) from an 1855 source that explained its meaning as a ship with both “Japanese style” and “Western style” features. Today ainoko is considered a discriminatory word when used toward people, but some people still use it in the vernacular to describe hybrid (haiburiddo ハイブリッド) designs and animals.

The word “mixed-race” was translated zasshu (雑種 assorted seeds/species/races, hence “hybrid” or “cross” or “mongrel”) in Fuon sow Ei-Wa jii [An English-Japanese dictionary with attached pronunciations and pictures], compiled by Shibata Masayoshi (Shōkichi) and Koyasu Takashi, and published in 1873. In 1884, Takahashi Yoshio transliterated “mixed-race” as mikkisudo reesu (ミツキスドレース mixed-race) in Nihonjinshu kairyō ron [On improving the Japanese race]. These expressions, as Sino-Japanese translations or phonetic transliterations, were generally limited to writing.

Konketsu (混blood mixed blood) and konketsuji (混血兒 mixed-blood child/offspring), which became common expressions during the 20th century, appear in the late 1890s. In dictionaries, konketsuji first appeared in 1932 in Daigenkai, and konketsu first appeared in Shinmura Izuru’s Genrin [Forest of words] in 1949. However, konketsuji was used as early as 1898 in Yomiuri shinbun, a major newspaper, and konketsu is found in Jinshu tetsugaku kōgai [Summary of racial philosophy], published in 1903 by Mori Rintarō, a medical doctor better known as the novelist Mori Ōgai (1862-1932). In this book, Mori criticized Joseph-Arthur Gobinou’s Essai sur L’inégalité des Races Humaines (1853-1855), but he had read it in the German, thus translating “Blut” and “vermengen” as “ketsu” (血 blood) and “kon” (混 mixed), hence konketsu (mixed blood).

Konketsu and konketsuji were the usual terms in publications until the late 1960s and 1970s, when they began to be replaced by haafu (ハーフ). However, the Chinese characters for konketsuji could be read ainoko or even haafu and were sometimes clearly marked to be read this way. Haafu was not a new term, though. The Yokohama novelist Kitabayashi Tōma (1904-1968) used haafu as a free-standing word in early 1930, in an episode of Perushiya neko [The hill of the (foreign) settlement (The Bluff)]. In 1930, Kitabayashi also used haafu as a reading for the characters for konketsuji in a scene in Machi no kokusai musume [International girls of the cities], his first novel to be published in a book. However, in the slightly revised 1934 edition, haafu became ireppu (イレップ Europe), apparently meaning someone of European descent, “Isamashiki kentōka” [The Brave Boxer], a short story published in 1931, also includes an instance of konketsuji read haafu, and this survived in the 1933 anthologized edition. No other instances of haafu in publications come to light until the early 1950s, when Hirano Imao (see below) referred to the word as something he was called when a boy in the 1900-1910s.

Haafu was first listed as a synonym of konketsuji in the 1973 edition of Kanazawa Shōzaburō’s Köjirin [Wide forest of words]. This reflects the fact that haafu had surfaced in the entertainment world and mass media in the late 1960s. It quickly became popular enough that a group of girls calling themselves Gooruden Haafu (ゴールデン・ハーフ Golden Half) debuted as singers in 1970. Shortly after the group disbanded in 1974, one of its members, Takamura Runa (1952-2004), was quoted to have said “I hate the word haafu. I’d rather be called ainoko. I’m not bluffing. Haafu feels halfway, half done. I don’t like that.” By the 1980s, though, haafu had become the most fashionable racialist label for mixed-blood people in Japan. As of now, 2017, it is not only the dominant word for people perceived as racially-mixed, but has become a synonym for “exotic,” especially “part Caucasian” or “Eurasian” attractiveness in the fashion and entertainment worlds.
Haafu probably originated as a port-town abbreviation of "half-blood" (haafu-buraddo ハーフ・ブラッド) or “half-caste” (haafu-kasuto ハーフ・カスト), both of which are found in Katsuya Eizō’s Gairaigo jiten [Dictionary of words that came from outside], published in 1914. “Half-and-half”, which is listed in the 1931 and 1960 editions of different English-Japanese dictionaries compiled in Japan, is also a candidate, as is “half-breed” (haafu-buriido ハーフ・ブリード). “Half-caste” has been used in Japanese, as in 1956, when a popular novelist, writing in a major weekly news magazine, complained about fashion models he called “mannequin beauties” – including one he likened to a “half-caste (hafukasuto) [of a Japanese] with [someone from] a different country of the same Orient.”17 “Half-blood” appears mainly as an English translation of the Chinese characters for konketsu (mixed-blood), such as in the title of a 1953 journal article on Japanese history, a poster for a 1953 movie, and the jacket of a 1971 record.18

At the moment, there is no clear and unambiguous etymological link between haafu and “half-blood.” The origin of haafu be what it may, all English candidates are defined in terms of konketsu (mixed blood). And all current editions of Japan’s major Japanese dictionaries define haafu as konketsu and/or konketsuji. In 2004, Asahi shinbun, a major newspaper known for its somewhat leftist and sometimes politically correct stances, added both of these terms to its list of “discriminatory words” (sabetsu yōgo). However, not all such usage guides agree with this stance. In mass media and the Internet, haafu (half) and “kwoota, kuootaa” (クォーター, クオーター quarter), and “hachi-bun-no-ichi” (八分の一 one-eighth), continue to racialize fractions of impure “foreign” blood (血 chi), in the same manner that mulatto, quadroon, and octoroon in English refer to quanta of “black” blood.

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**Chart 1: Chronology of Japanese terms for racial mixture (Hyoue Okamura, 2017)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1860</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ainoko あいのこ（間子，間の子，合いの子）“betweener, hybrid, half-caste, half-breed” (nlt 1855), 1872, 1886</td>
<td>Zasshu 雑種 “mixed race” (hybrid) 1873</td>
<td>Mikquisudoreesu ミキシスドレース “mixed race” 1884</td>
<td>Zakketsu 混血 “mixed blood” 1891</td>
<td>Majiridane no ko マジリダネノ子 “child of mixed breed” 1894</td>
<td>Gōshuji 合種児 “hybrid-race child” 1894</td>
<td>Zasshuji 雑種児 “mixed-race child” 1895</td>
<td>Konketsu 混血児 “mixed-blood child” 1898</td>
<td>Konketsu 混血 “mixed-blood” 1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haafu buraddo ハーフ・ブラッド “half-blood” 1914</td>
<td>Haafu kasuto ハーフ・カスト “half-caste” 1914</td>
<td>Yuurashian ユーラシアン “Eurasian” 1914</td>
<td>Haafu ハーフ “half” 1930</td>
<td>Kokusaiji 国際児 “international child” 1930</td>
<td>Zasshuzoku 雑種族 “the mixed-bloods” 1932</td>
<td>Yuureishian ユーレイシアン “Eurasian” 1933</td>
<td>GL bebii GI ベビー “GI baby” 1953</td>
<td>Amerikaajiajin アメリカアジア人 “Amerasian” 1966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Terms related to racial mixture today

In academia, konketsu and konketsuji remain fairly common terms, especially in studies that include historical periods. While haafu dominates usage in the non-academic world, if you ask what haafu or any of its alternatives mean, and press for clarifications of ambiguous answers, people generally end up using “blood” (ketsu, chi) metaphors, which everyone understands as meaning “genes” hence “race.” A good example of the way in which haafu is essentialized as “mixed blood” can be seen in Haafu mania (Half Mania), a 2013 collection of dramatic caricatures and profiles of over 200 people, some of whose ancestries stretch the meaning of haafu. The subtitle claims the book will introduce “the mixed bloods of famous people of Japan” (Nihon no yūmeijin no konketsu) through caricature.20 (Figure 1)

The appropriateness of haafu has been challenged by a number of people who favor words like daburu (ダブル double) or mikkusu (ミックス mix, mixed). In 1994, the mother of a mixed-race child wrote to Asahi shinbun that haafu was negative because it suggests that someone is “half” something. She argued that mixed-race children have two roots, hence daburu would be more positive. As early as 1983, Adair Nagata, the president of Nishimachi International School in Tokyo, had advocated the use of “double” in The Japan Times, which is published in English. And in 1998, a group of photographers published a study of families consisting of Japanese and Koreans (or Chosenese) couples and their children, which promoted daburu in its title. This book inspired some Korean/Chosenese publicists to endorse daburu rather than haafu.21 After three decades of advocacy, however, the daburu camp is very small. (See Chart 2, next page.)

Though haafu is a generic term for offspring of racio-ethnically different parents, some people want to limit its use to certain kinds of haafu or qualify its use when speaking of various kinds of haafu. Some people on Okinawa use shima haafu (島ハーフ island half) to refer to mixed-blood Okinawans who are raised beyond the influence of the English-speaking “base culture” around U.S. military bases, and can’t speak English. But this implies that haafu can speak English - a stereotype that Sandra Häfelin (b. 1975) lampoons in her cartoon-illustrated books, which poke fun at haafu stereotypes, hoping to raise awareness about their silliness.22 (Figure 2) Some mixed-race people in Okinawa dislike the word haafu because of its local association with “base culture.”

The newest generic label for mixed-race people is mikkusu. Historically, “mixed” was transliterated as mikkisudo (ミツキスド) or mikusuto (ミクスト) in relation to reesu (レース race) as early as 1884, but it didn’t survive. The English term is used by “Mixed Roots Japan,” which promotes “mixed identity” not limited to racial mixture, but mikkusu in reference to racial mixture among human beings has not gained momentum in mainstream Japanese usage. Mikusu (ミクス) has appeared as a transliteration of “mix” in Shinmura Izuru’s Köjien [Wide garden of words], Japan’s best-known desktop dictionary, since the first edition in 1955, and mikkusu was added as a variant in the second edition in 1969. Mikkusu is now the standard variation for a “blend” of something, or in terms like mikkusujuusu (mixed juice). A dog that might be called a zasshu or buchi (ブチ or even ainoko (all of which mean “mutt” or “mongrel,” “cross” or “hybrid”) is now more cutely called a mikkusu, and haafu has been used to refer to crosses of pedigreed dogs.23

Images in Meiji, Taishō, and prewar Shōwa fiction

During the Meiji (1868-1912), Taishō (1912-26), and Shōwa (1926-45) periods, numerous Japanese short stories and novels, and a few plays, featured racially-mixed characters in different settings in Japan, or in other countries. The shortest list would include works from the 1910s-1930s by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Asahara Rokurō, Itō Gingetsu, Itō Ken, Kishida Kunio, Kitabayashi Tōma, Satomi Kon, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, and Uematsu Misao. The stories by Kitabayashi are the most important here, but novels by Itō and Tanizaki also warrant comment.
### Chart 2: Current usage of Japanese terms for racial mixture (Hyoue Okamura, 2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ハーフ  haafu</td>
<td>half (blood)</td>
<td>The most common label for racial and racioethnic mixture in Japanese today. Generally a person with one-half &quot;foreign blood.&quot; Sometimes includes other &quot;blood&quot; (chi) quanta, especially &quot;kuootaa.&quot; Sometimes connotes &quot;half-white&quot; or &quot;Eurasian.&quot; Also used for mixes of varieties of some animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>クオーター  kuoootaa</td>
<td>quarter (blood)</td>
<td>A person with one-fourth &quot;foreign blood.&quot; As a label in racist Japanese, &quot;1/4&quot; is usually equivalent to &quot;3/4ths&quot; in racist English, and vice versa. People in America who claim to be &quot;a quarter Japanese&quot; would be &quot;yonbun no san&quot; (3/4ths foreigner) in Japan. Also used for some animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ミックス  mikkusu</td>
<td>mixed (race)</td>
<td>Limited usage. However, it is used in the Japanese name of Mixed Roots Japan (ミックスルーツ・ジャパン). Mixed-breed pets are increasingly called &quot;mikkusu&quot; rather than &quot;buchi&quot; or &quot;haiburiddo.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ダブル  daburu</td>
<td>double (identity)</td>
<td>Limited usage. Regarded as &quot;politically correct&quot; by some people, including a few parents and educators. Adopted by some individuals or families with mixed Korean/Chosenese and Japanese roots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>国際児  kokusaaiji</td>
<td>international child</td>
<td>Once popular in Okinawa. Rarely used by academics. Regarded as &quot;PC&quot; by some people, but &quot;kokusai&quot; (international) itself is commonly racialized in Japanese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>混血児  konketsuji</td>
<td>mixed-blood child/offspring</td>
<td>Still used in academic and other historical writings. Rarely used in mass media, and some usage guides consider it discriminatory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>混血  konketsu</td>
<td>mixed blood</td>
<td>Rarely used in mass media. However, it continues to be used to define racial (jinshu-teki) or racioethnic (minzoku-teki) mixture in definitions of &quot;haafu&quot; and related blood-quantum terms, as &quot;blood&quot; (chi) is commonly used as a metaphor for descent, including racial or racioethnic descent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>アメラジアン  Amerajian</td>
<td>Amerasian</td>
<td>&quot;America-centric&quot; term used by Pearl S. Buck to refer mainly to children fathered by American servicemen in Asia with local women. Used in Okinawa with essentially this meaning by AmerAsian School Okinawa (AASO). Otherwise, the word has practically no currency in Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ユーラシアン  Yuurashian</td>
<td>Eurasian</td>
<td>Used in Japanese mainly as a geographical term. Rarely used as a racial term in Japanese media. Occasionally used in Japan by racially mixed people brought up in English-speaking environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>雑種  zasshu</td>
<td>mixed race, hybrid, cross</td>
<td>First Japanese translation of &quot;mixed race.&quot; Now deemed derogatory toward people but still used in biology to mean &quot;haiburiddo&quot; (hybrid). A &quot;mutt&quot; or &quot;mongrel&quot; dog might be called a &quot;zasshu&quot; or &quot;buchi&quot; or &quot;mikkusu.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>あいのこ  ainoko</td>
<td>betweener, hybrid, cross</td>
<td>Rarely used in mass media, and considered discriminatory as a label for people. However, occasionally used to describe &quot;mixed&quot; or &quot;hybrid&quot; designs, and animals such as dogs, cats, and fish.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Itō Gingetsu (1871-1944) is best remembered for *Nik-Kan gappō mirai no yume* [Dreams of the future of a Japan-Korea union], a novel about the unification of Japan and Korea. He published the work in 1910 several months before Korea joined (was annexed by) Japan and became a part of Japan called Chōsen. But he set the story 70 years in the future, after there had been considerable mixture of the two populations, and some mixture with other national populations. The novel follows the offspring of mixed marriages through their various upbringings. In the novel, some critics claimed that mixed people were of bad character and questioned their loyalty to the union. Others contended that so long as they were raised to be patriotic, there would be no problem. Some ethnonationalists (*minzoku-shugi-sha*) in Japan today also worry about the loyalties of *haafu* and dual nationals.24

Tanizaki Jun’ichiro (1886-1965), one of Japan’s most popular novelists, lived for a while in Yokohama, and several of his stories reflect an insider’s view of interracial relations in the city. In *Nikukai* (1923), a movie director admires a girl who has some “western blood” (*seiyō no chi*). He especially likes the “whiteness” (*shirosa*) of her skin, which was different from the “whiteness” of a “westerner” (*seiyōjin*) and had an “Oriental” (*Tōyō-teki-na*) look about it. He describes her beauty as more like that of a “mixed-blood child of a Chinese and Portuguese” (*Shinajin to Poruchugiisu to no konketsujī*).25

When the protagonist of *Chijin no ai* (1925) falls foolishly in love with a big-eyed, playful “modern girl” (*moga, modan gaaru*) and tells her she looks like Mary Pickford, she responds that people say she looks like an *ainoko*. Later he says some of her features are like those of a “westerner,” and he tells her they “depart from [those of] a Japanese” (*Nihonjin-banare ga shite iru*). This is a variation of an expression that is still very commonly used today to describe someone who looks or acts a bit differently from what a “typical (racialized) Japanese” is supposed to be like. In a theater lobby, people whisper about her. “What is that woman?” “An actress maybe?” “Maybe a *konketsujī*?” In the past, racially-mixed people were likely to hear whispers of *ainoko* or *konketsuji*. Today they hear *haafu.*26

**Realistic haafu in the fiction of Kitabayashi Tōma**

The 1920s and 1930s were decades of “internationalization” (*kokusaika*) for people living in port towns like Yokohama. Ships from all over the world visited the ports, and the local bars, restaurants, and hotels were patronized by “marines” (seamen) of all nationalities. Many foreigners also resided in the towns, and not a few were permanently settled. The novelist Kitabayashi Tōma (1904-68) set his stories in and around the waterfront of Yokohama, and he himself was a well-known *mobo* (*modan booi*, modern boy) denizen of the entertainment districts of Yokohama and Tokyo. Kitabayashi brought his *haafu* (mixed-blood, *ainoko*) characters to life. Their backgrounds ranged from tragic to privileged. Some grew up as the children of sailors, or orphans, in an *ainoko buraku* (mixed-blood slum) in the Sagiyama, Negishi neighborhood of Yokohama. He called them *kokusaiji* (国際児, international children), and likened their ignorant mothers to old shoes cast off by their foreign lovers. Some of his mixed-blood characters become delinquents and criminals. His main characters, though, rise above their circumstances and some become heroes. Or they are brought up by parents who provide them with good schooling, but they face ordinary problems as they grow up and learn how to survive as adults.

Kitabayashi used the term *haafu* very sparingly, preferring *ainoko* and *konketsuji*. But *haafu* appears in scenes involving intimate conversations between local people, which suggests that the word was familiar among “Hamakko” (Hamaites, Yokohamans), including the mixed-blood characters in his novels. Some of his mixed-blood characters have street handles like “Ainoko [Name].” But at least one character refers to Henry, a popular mixed-blood lad who creates a lot of jealousy among his girlfriends, as a “*kirei-na haafu*” (beautiful half).27

Kitabayashi was familiar with the neighborhoods and haunts in which he set his novels, which capture the local milieu, and in places read like anthropological reports. His wife had been a
classmate of the vocalist Satō Yoshiko (1906-78), who was born in Kōbe to a French mother and a Japanese father. Satō makes fictional appearances in two of his stories, the 1930 novel *Machi no kokusai musume* [International girls of the cities], and the 1955 novella “*Konketsuji shōfu Rizu no shōgai*” [The life of the mixed-blood prostitute Rizu].

One of Kitabayashi’s more interesting characters is the protagonist of the short story “*Hikyō naru [Yaraoa] Joo*” [Joe the coward/ Yellow Joe], published in 1937.

Joe’s father, an American of German descent, managed a small hospital in Berkeley (California), and his mother, as described in the American way, was “an Oriental with poison black hair and foxy eyes.” She was actually Japanese, but as the novel explains, “in America, whether you’re a Jap or a Chink, or even a Malay, you’re the same ‘Oriental’.”

Kitabayashi, a hack writer in the eyes of critics who are mesmerized by Tanizaki, knew how to tell stories, some tragic, others more hopeful. He could be accused of using his racially-mixed characters to vent his own animosities toward arrogant white westerners. But compared to Tanizaki, who used his characters to express his fetishes about feminine beauty, Kitabayashi attempted to see Japan’s mean streets through the eyes of *ainoko, konketsuji,* and *haafu* – long before World War II, the postwar Occupation, and the birth of the “GI baby” generation.

The postwar “mixed-blood problem” that wasn’t

The genetic legacies of the Allied Occupation of Japan from 1945-1952 include today’s descendants of the children who would not have been born in Japan, or anywhere, if not for the ways in which the Empire of Japan was dismantled and occupied. Of concern here are the relatively few such children who were born between mainly male Allied military personnel and mostly Japanese women, for they became the focus of the so-called “*konketsuji problem*” that nagged some critics and officials into the 1960s.

The “problem” was not about the many kinds of mixed-blood children who had been born in East, Northeast, Southeast, and Pacific Asia, between Japanese and local people, before and after the end of WWII. Nor was it about the much larger populations of various kinds of mixed-race people who were already in Japan when the Occupation began, or those who were born in Occupied Japan between Japanese, or between foreigners, or between Japanese and foreigners who were not affiliated with the Allied Powers. And it did not refer to racially-mixed children in Okinawa, which was captured by the United States in 1945, separated from Japan, and not returned until 1972.

The “problem” concerned only the relatively small population of children who were born in Japan to Japanese women and mostly foreign military personnel during or shortly after the Occupation of Japan – or rather, it concerned social attitudes toward such children.

A 1953 survey conducted by the Children’s Bureau of the Ministry of Welfare reported that 3,490 “so-called mixed-blood children” were known to local obstetricians and midwives. “So-called” (*iwayuru*) alluded to the fact that “mixed-blood child” (*konketsu jidō*) was the technical name for such children, as well as the fact that the survey included only the children of Japanese mothers and foreign soldiers or military-affiliated civilians. Hence mixed-blood children of foreign mothers, and of foreign fathers of “Japanese, Chinese, or Korean descent,” were excluded. “Consequently, only children whose skin, eye, and hair color, and facial features, are notably different from those of the Japanese race (*Nihon jinshū* 日本人種)” were objects of the survey.

The 1953 survey also excluded children living in child welfare facilities, including orphanages, which accounted for about 1,500 children, including so-called “mixed-blood orphans” (*konketsu koji* 混血孤児). So in 1953, there were roughly 5,000 – and possibly as many as 10,000 – children in Japan who were fathered by Occupation personnel. Mixed-blood orphans constituted part of the
much larger population of children of all ages who had lost their families during the war. Some war orphans were taken in by relatives, some by orphanages or welfare facilities, and a few survived on the streets.

The 1953 survey covered practically every conceivable aspect. The following general profile illustrates the diversity of the conditions of the mainstream “so-called mixed-blood child” population:

84.3% had American fathers. 7.7% had fathers of other known nationalities, and the nationalities of 8.0% of the fathers were unknown.

77% had been acknowledged by their father, 20% were unacknowledged, and acknowledgment was uncertain for 2.9%.

Their presumed “colors” were 86.1% “white,” 11.5% “black,” and 2.5% “unknown.”

19.4% were being raised by both “Real Parents,” 48.8% by their “Real Mother Only,” 16.7% by other relatives, and 26.3% by biologically unrelated “caregivers.”

During the Occupation, Japanese journalists and foreign correspondents in Japan published very few reports about the children fathered by Occupation troops. Some early reports angered GHQ/SCAP (General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), which prohibited articles and books that criticized Occupation policy or otherwise threatened to disturb public order. Some books, articles, and fictional stories came out in Japan immediately before and after the Occupation ended in 1952. The rest of the 1950s saw an explosion of publications examining the moral effects of U.S. and other foreign military bases on women and children in surrounding communities, prostitution, and the so-called “mixed-blood-child problem” (konketsuji mondai 混血児問題).

The phrase “X mondai” suggests that X is a problem. The meaning of “konketsuji mondai” becomes clearer when considering the difference between “mondai jidō” or “problem child” and “jidō mondai,” which refers to family, social, and policy problems involving children. The “mixed-blood-child problem” was more about society than the children. And as such, it had many practical and emotional aspects.

The more practical aspects concerned policy, such as how to educate the earliest postwar-born population of so-called mixed-blood children, who by then were beginning elementary school, their first step toward formal socialization as Japanese. The more emotional aspects involved race. Some commentators questioned the capacity of Japanese society to accept and absorb children who were visibly different. They were seen as bastard “droplings” (otoshigo 落し子) or the “fruits” of defeat. Their very existence reminded some people that Japan had lost the war and some of its women had become lovers, wives or prostitutes – if not rape victims – of foreign soldiers.

The main “problem” that such konketsuji faced was ignorance and a lack of confidence on the part of society at large – an uncertainty about whether Japan could absorb so many children who physically stood out and invited the scorn of some people. However, the most vociferous social critics, though cautionary, believed that Japan could, and should, make room for the children, who after all were the children of Japanese.

To make a very long and complicated story short, Japan had, in the course of its history, already absorbed a number of conspicuously mixed-race people representing all social classes, high and low. In this regard, very little had changed. The postwar segregationists and doomsayers (both a minority) lost. The mainstreamists and qualified optimists won. The vast majority of the children adapted and survived, and Japan itself adapted and survived.
Several of the many mixed-blood youth who became popular as models, singers, or actors during the “mixed-blood talent boom” of the late 1960s and 1970s benefited from the support and encouragement of Remi no Kai, a group founded in January 1953 by a few well-known, older mixed-blood personalities. Hirano Imao (1900-86), its leader, was a translator, novelist, and poet. His father, a French-American attorney, Japanophile, and occasional diplomat, had nicknamed him “Remi,” after a homeless boy in a French children’s book. Other key members included Fujiwara Yoshio (1898-1976), Japan’s most famous tenor at the time; Egawa Ureo (1902-70), an actor; Satō Yoshiko (1903-82), a mezzo-soprano; and Watanabe Akeo (1919-90), a violist and conductor. Some others were invited but did not join. Supporters included the novelist Kitabayashi Tōma, whose stories included Minato no Nihon musume [Japanese girls at the harbor], which he wrote for the 1933 movie of the same title, starring Egawa Ureo, whose father was German, and Inoue Yukiko (1915-2012), whose father was Dutch. Brochures clearly described their roles as those of konketsuji. Both continued to be partly or fully active after the war.

Remi no Kai was the first organization formed of, by, and for mixed-blood people, to advocate the mainstreaming of the postwar-born generation into Japanese society. Hirano’s activism remains the most important but forgotten story even in Japan. Sawada Miki (1901-80), the “mother” of the mixed-blood orphans at Elizabeth Saunders Home she founded in 1948, has been turned into a national hero by several accounts of her life, including a heavily illustrated book for children. Sawada – the “segregationist” rival to Hirano’s “integrationist” approach in the battle of konketsuji publicists – appealed to Colonel Crawford Sams, the Chief of SCAP’s Public Health and Welfare Section, to support her orphanage. Sams had the authority to order the Japanese government to help her, but he rebuffed her, apparently because he favored the government’s mainstreamist stance.

Sawada felt that “her children” would be better off if raised, educated, and Christianized in her protected facilities, to prepare them for life outside Japan, as adoptees or emigrants. Hirano and his Remi no Kai promoted life in Japan. Hirano himself registered a number of orphaned children as his own, in his family register, which secured their status as Japanese and gave them a father. And he and Remi no Kai were instrumental in the production of the 1964 film Jidōsha dorobō [Car thieves], which had a nearly all-mixed-blood cast, including himself. Several of the young performers went on to be well-known actors or musicians.

Hirano published an article titled “Konketsu jinsei ki” [Chronicle of a mixed-blood life] in 1953, which preluded a longer book by the same title that came out in 1954. The article and book included a number of anecdotes about his personal experiences growing up in Yokohama in the 1900s and 1910s. One anecdote, which he repeats in one of the six “Remi” books he wrote between 1958-69, relates how he and Fujiwara Yoshio, who attended the same mission school, were teased by other kids who said, “If you play with a half-half, you’ll become a half.” Hirano described himself and other racially-mixed people as konketsuji, not haafu. He detested the word ainoko because he had been taunted with it as a child. Hirano reported that Satō Yoshiko wept at a Remi no Kai meeting after being called “Ainoko O-Yoshi” by a journalist she knew. Some people, however, got used to it as a name for what they were.

Hirano wrote about nationality and language, treatment by others, and feelings about belonging – the same sort of matters that figure in the lives of many haafu today. His most important and influential book is Remi wa ikite iru [Remi lives], a prize-winning work of juvenile literature written also for adults, first published in 1958, and re-issued in several later editions. The “mixed-blood talent boom” and the rebirth of haafu

Early post-WWII images of mixed-race people in Japan were those of men and women born before or during the war, some of whom were already well-known actors or musicians before the
war. By the time the first generation of postwar-born Japanese and foreign mixed-blood children reached their mid-teens or early 20s in the late 1960s, the fashion and entertainment worlds were already familiar with the faces of many pre-postwar-born mixed-blood, mostly Eurasian models and singers. By the 1970s, ainoko had been largely replaced by konketsuji, and haafu had emerged as a synonym that would generally replace konketsuji by the 1980s.

The earliest mixed-blood male and female idols were born before the end of the war. Wanibuchi Haruko (b. 1945), and her younger sister Akiko (b. 1948), were both child models in the early 1950s who sometimes appeared together. Wanibuchi studied music from her Japanese violinist father and Austrian pianist mother and appeared on magazine covers as a prodigy violinist, as well as a cute girl who promised to blossom into a beauty, and she did. She became one of Shōchiku’s main theater draws at a time when major film companies were beginning to feel the impact on their revenues of the spread of television. (Figure 6)

Some early-postwar-born mixed-blood celebrities still command attention today. The most prominent names are (in order of their birth) Maeda Bibari (b. 1948), Yamamoto Linda (b. 1951), and Kusakari Masao (b. 1952). Yamamoto debuted as a model in her early teens, become a singer, and had a roller coaster career, but she still amazes fans with her powerful, rhythmic and well-preserved voice and body a few times a year. Maeda, who studied ballet, became a musical actress, and this remained her principal occupation, but she also dazzled the public as a leggy bathing beauty in some of Shiseidō’s most celebrated cosmetics ads, and now and then still adorns a magazine cover. (Figure 7) Kusakari, who modeled and sang, became a very versatile stage, film, and TV actor active today.

The September 1967 issue of Kindai eiga (Modern Movies) reported that Japanese show business was experiencing a “konketsu tarento buumu” (mixed-blood talent boom). 38 It featured eight postwar-born mixed-blood female stars, including Yamamoto Linda and Maeda Bibari. All were of part racialized “Japanese” and part racialized “European” or “American” descent. But some mixed-blood stars, such as model and actress Mari Annu (b. 1948), and singer Aoyama Michi (b. 1949), were not part “white.” Mari Annu’s father was from India and she sometimes modeled with her two sisters. Aoyama was usually represented in contemporary Japanese media as having a “black soldier” (kokujin-hei 黑人兵) father. In the United States, the September 1967 issue of Ebony dedicated its cover to Aoyama and Tina Noda, an aspiring model some sponsors thought “too dark” to model, and six other youth who figured in the cover story titled “Japan’s rejected: Teenagers fathered by Negro soldiers face bleak future in hostile land.”39

The postwar “boomer” population peaked in the mid-1970s and the supply of fresh mixed-blood talent had dwindled by the early 1980s, by which time the term haafu had all but replaced konketsuji in mass media. The boom included a few racially-mixed “imports” who had no connections with Japan. The best remembered is Agnes Lum of Hawaii (b. 1956), who was a bikini-busting idol in Japan from 1975-1983. Men’s and women’s magazines alike fetishized her beach-girl body as a symbol of healthy womanhood.

Fewer haafu and other racially-mixed personalities debuted during the 1980s and 1990s, but the period was not a dark age. Ogino Anna (b. 1956), now a professor of literature, received the Akutagawa Prize in 1991, the Yomiuri Prize in 2001, and the Itō Sei Prize in 2008 for different novels. Renhō (b. 1967), a model in the late 1980s, became a newscaster in the 1990s and a politician in the 2000s, and is now the president of the Democratic Party of Japan. Born a national of the Republic of China (ROC), she weathered a change of nationality and name changes of the kind that are familiar to many offspring of parents with different nationalities.40 Miyazawa Rie (b. 1973) illuminated Japan’s bubble economy from the mid-1980s and well into the 1990s as a super teen idol and model. Today she is one of Japan’s most highly acclaimed and awarded stage and film actresses.
Japan’s embrace of its slowly growing population of racially-mixed people is perhaps most clearly seen in the official recognition of racially-mixed people with Japanese roots. Japan honored the vocalist Fujiwara Yoshie (1898-1976) and the artist Isamu Noguchi (1904-88) on commemorative stamps in 1998 and 2004. And the first three athletes in Japan to receive the government’s “People’s Honor Award” were the children of Japanese mothers and foreign fathers: Baseball player Oh Sadaharu (b. 1940), son of a Japanese mother and Chinese father, in 1977; baseball player Kinugasa Sachio (b. 1947) a Japanese mother and an American father, in 1987; and sumo wrestler Taihō Kōki (1940-2013), child of a Japanese mother and a Russian father, in 2013.

The “racial ceilings” that may have existed in local and national beauty pageants have also been cracked if not broken with the crowning of Miyamoto Ariana as Miss Universe Japan in 2015 and Yoshimoto Priyanka as Miss World Japan in 2016. A few people complained that Miyamoto’s darker skin and facial features disqualified her as a “Japanese” beauty queen. However, her crowning as a representative of Japan got practically no negative attention in mainstream mass media. Most complaints were voiced in Internet forums and blogs, where a few people – as in all countries – habitually idealize racial purity.

While this paper is not about media images, a word must be said about reportage and other representations of konketsuji and haafu in news and entertainment media after the Allied Occupation of Japan (1945-52). Thousands of newspaper and magazine articles, and numerous fictional works, movies and comics (manga) featured konketsuji and later haafu in various ways. Some representations had inevitable undertones of curiosity, and some genres of fiction, movies, and comics exploited themes of delinquent konketsuji heroines and heroes. But racially-mixed personalities in Japan, most of whom are Japanese, have generally been featured as part of the country’s “natural fauna” so to speak. Racially negative articles are rare. There is more racialist voyeurism in vulgar men’s magazines, but that is the nature of the vulgar beast. Reportage and photojournalism related to the so-called “konketsuji mondai” was generally sympathetic. Most media today take racial mixture in stride, without comment, but some quarters of popular culture have nurtured “haafu mania.” And as this report will show, there is a pathological racialist obsession with “haafu-sa” (ハーフさ half-ness).

The roots of haafu advocacy

The turn of 20th and 21st centuries also brought revolutionary developments in the Internet that enabled some people in Japan who considered themselves to be “mixed” in a “racial” or “ethnic” sense to communicate through the World Wide Web. In 2000, Tomiyama Maria founded the Children of Peace Network (CPN) in Okinawa prefecture. The aim of CPN was to help members find their (usually American) fathers via the internet. Tomiyama and other members, all born in Okinawa, generally labeled themselves “Amerasian” (Amerajian アメリアジアン).

As a racial term, “Amerasian” usually denotes a person whose mother is an Asian and whose father is an American serviceman. The term was used in this sense by Pearl S. Buck in the 1960s, but it did not get much attention in Japan until the late 1990s. In 1960s, Asahi shinbun, a major national daily newspaper, introduced “Amerasian” through translation as Amerika-Ajia-jin (アメリカアジア人 America-Asia-person), but it was usually transliterated as Amereshian (アメレシアン) or Amerashian (アメラシアン) and is now Amerajian (アメラジアン). In 1998, some mothers of “mixed blood children” (konketsuji) or racialized “international children” (kokusaiji) in Okinawa established the AmerAsian School of Okinawa (AASO), and a number of Japanese papers reported this in the course of covering local news of human interest.

During the 2000 G8 summit in Okinawa, the islands received a lot of media coverage for political, economic, and environmental reasons. Again, the small school attracted some attention
due to the “Amerajian mondai” (Amerasian problem/issue). Some major newspapers characterized AASO as a self-advocacy movement. However, the “voice” of the movement was that of the mothers of the children, not of the children themselves, or of other racially-mixed people in Okinawa. Tomiyama Maria, the leader of CPN, started her activities with AASO, but a few months later broke her ties with AASO because it did not wish to advocate for mixed-race adults in Okinawa. CPN ceased its activities in late 2000, the year it was launched. The reasons it disbanded remain unclear.


In September 2002, before there were any SNS (Social Network Service) websites in Japan, I began a site called “Die Kreuzungsstelle” (www.kreuzungsstelle.com), which means “crossroads.” It hosted the first BBS (Bulletin Board System) in Japan for people to share their haafu experiences in Japanese (see my editorial, “The ‘human duty’ to deracialize nationality,” also in this issue). Mixi, Japan’s first major SNS, began in 2004, and from 2004 to 2006 three websites devoted to “mixed” people were established on mixi: Sam Baron’s Hapa Japan (aka “Haafu no kai” meaning “Society of haafu”), Jamie Belton’s HArts (a community site for “haafu artists”), and Edward Sumoto’s Mixed Roots Japan (including Mixed Roots Kansai). And in 2008, Marcia Lise and Natalie Willer began Hafu Project, a photographic study of haafu in Japan. The film Hafu, directed by Megumi Nishikura and Lara Takagi, released for theaters in 2013, and as a DVD in 2015, grew out of this project.

Most of these early efforts to create communities of people with mixed identities lost their vigor within a few years. The most active project was Edward Sumoto’s “Mixed Roots Japan.” MRJ promoted “Social Dialogue” and advocacy of mixed identity in Japan not limited to race but including also cultural and other experiences. From 2008 to 2011, MRJ organized a music event called “Shake Forward” every year, and from 2010 to 2012 it convened an annual Mixed Roots Academic Forum at Osaka University. Today MRJ has a modest Facebook and Twitter presence, while Sumoto remains personally active on many fronts. A search of the Internet will produce many links related to haafu but most are to sites that feature celebrity gossip, or forums for grumbling about experiences in Japan, rather than calls for protest against social discrimination and misrepresentation.

The film Hafu depicts “the mixed-race experience in Japan” of five people with very different family backgrounds. Its taglines are “Japan is changing” in English and “Nihon wa taïyōka shite iru” [Japan is diversifying] in Japanese. The film is pitched to a global audience and has been subtitled in seven languages. The filmmakers recognize that “the word ‘haafu’ itself stresses having the blood of a foreigner” (haafu to iu kotoba jitsu, gaikokujin no chi o hiku koto o kyōchō shite iru). Yet they define hafu or haafu as meaning “half Japanese” – when in fact the word is not limited to racially-mixed Japanese. The film’s celebration of “half Japanese” is widely praised – yet “half Japanese” encourages the sort of racialization of “Japanese” that the filmmakers, and the people who appear in the film, seem to dislike. (Figure 8)

Hirano Imao’s Remi no Kai, active in the 1950s and 1960s, was the first advocacy movement by, of, and for racially-mixed people in Japan. But advocacy on behalf of mixed-blood people in Japan goes back to at least a 1931 article by Kitabayashi Tōma, who would later be a member of Remi no Kai. In the article, “Konketsu musume no machi: Jenii no aika” [City of mixed-blood girls: Jenny’s elegy], which was published in a popular women’s magazine, Kitabayashi estimated that there were from 2,500 to 3,000 mixed-blood people in Yokohama at the time. He clearly stated that ainoko was not a nationality (kokuseki) but were of various nationalities, including – through their mothers – Japanese. The article was devoted to the plight of “ainoko girls” who end up prostitutes. He said
that international romances and marriages were popular and mixed-blood children would quickly increase. He concluded on this note: 48

*Whether this trend is good or bad, I cannot say, but as a result, those called *konketsuji* have come to be viewed less heretically than in the past. This, at least, is fortunate. Because being treated like rare oddities, being made the objects of low-class curiosity, is, for them, the most unbearable and anguishing thing.*

**The advent of haafu-gao and haafu-gao makeup**

In 1986, the fashion magazine *an-an* used the word *haafu-gao* (ハーフ顔 half-face), possibly for the first time, in a cover story titled “Wakai onna no kao ga haafu-ppoku natte kita” [The faces of young women have become haafu-esque]. The article attributed this in part to the fact that young women were taller and thinner than those of earlier generations. The article shows photographs to support its contention that the figures and faces of “Japanese” women, especially models, were on a par with those of “foreign” models, and were comparable to haafu and so-called “Nihonjin-banare-shita” (日本人離れした Japanese-departing) features, which were similar. It then showed women how to dress, do their hair and make up their face, to affect such features. 49

In 2008, several women’s fashion and beauty magazines featured *haafu-gao* makeup. The January 2008 issue of *S Cawaii!* (Cワイイ！), one of the most popular magazines among women spanning their late teens and early 20s, featured makeup techniques to create a “slightly foreigner-like half-face” (chotto gaikokujin-ppoi haafu-gao). The *haafu-gao* was large print but was qualified in smaller print as meaning “haafu- & kuootaa-gao” (ハーフ&クオーター顔). Readers were invited to transform their “originally Japanese-face” into a “half-like face.” 50 The 5 November 2008 issue of *non-no*, a popular bi-monthly fashion magazine, featured a pull-out “handbook” on how to create a “deep-sculptured half-face.” 51 The February 2008 issue of *MAQUIA*, a slightly more “sophisticated” fashion magazine for young women beyond their mid-teens, featured a cover story that urged readers to “Aim to be the half beauty (haafu bijo ハーフ美女) of your yearnings!” The banner spanned two pages beneath photographs of four then talk-of-the-town *haafu* personalities - two models representing “lively faces” (Mori Izumi and Rinka), and two newscasters representing “intellectual faces” (Takigawa Christel [Kurisuteru] and Yamamoto Mona). The cover even personalized the faces – “intellectual Christel-gao” and “lively Rinka-gao” – using the familiar “name-gao” (name-face) formula, which can define the face of any animal, vegetable, or mineral. The article led with the claim that “The difference between *Nihonjin-gao* and *haafu-gao* is the depth of the eyes (me no okuyuki) and the breadth of the face (kao no yokohaba)! The article ended with instructions on how to massage one’s face to help create the illusion of a *haafu-gao*. 52

The March 2008 issue of *BLENDA* presented the faces of singer Beyoncé, figure skater Asada Mao, and actress Tsuchiya Anna as typical of respectively *gaikokujin* (外国人 foreigner), *Nihonjin* (Japanese), and *haafu* (half) faces. The feature suggested that readers begin with a massage to prepare their face for a *haafu gao* look. It stressed that, in the modeling world, *haafu* were at a peak of popularity on account of having the deeply carved facial features of a foreigner but the beautiful skin and irises peculiar to Japanese. *Haafu* were “hot” because girls throughout Japan yearned to have their *haiburiddo* (hybrid) look. The article entirely focused on creating the illusion of deeper set eyes and sculptured cheeks. Yet the “‘*Haafu-gao’ meikuu!’ (Half-face makeup!!) in the Japanese title was represented as “How to make Half-Japanese Face” in English. The English directly contradicts both the essential meaning of *haafu* as “half foreign(er)” in Japanese, and the object of the makeup techniques to create this “half foreign” look. The racialist logic is clear in the “Japanese” minds of the copywriters, but is muddled in their “English” minds, which translate *haafu* as “half-Japanese” without thought as to what it actually means in practically all contexts. 53
The cover story of the June 2008 issue of BLENDA was “This summer, go as a “half-like” woman!” The article featured the usual makeup methods to create the sort of faces that have “transcended country and race” (kuni to jinshu o koeta). It focused on “Face, Eye, Lip & Cheek” as the features a girl who wanted a haafu-gao would have to change. The title of the “Eye” section was “Race-conversion techniques: How you do your eyes will transcend national boundaries” (Jinshu henkan jutsu: Me no tsukurikata wa kokkyō o koeru). The feature also promoted color contact lenses to help effect a haafu-gao look. “When the bloods of Japanese and foreigners mix” (Nihonjin to gaikoujin no chi ga mazaru to), it said, four colors of irises are common. The lenses were black, brown, green, and gray.

The November 2013 issue of Koakuma ageha introduced five styles of makeup to transform the “country” of a girl’s looks – American, British, French, Spanish, and Korean. The question was, “Even if you say half-face, which country is it?” (Haafu-gao tte itte mo dono kuni no koto!?). This exemplifies the manner in which, almost always, haafu is used in a context that implies “half foreign” – the assumption being that the “unmentioned” half is “Japanese.” The rejoinder was “Of course [you, we] love Nippon! ♥” (Mochiron Nippon dai suki! ♥). Caricatures, not photographs, of the national models were shown – Blake Lively (American), Twiggy (British), Brigitte Bardot (French), Penélope Cruz Sánchez (Spanish), and Dara (Sandara Park, Korean). Different Ageha house models were made up to effect the different looks – which shared the predictable big eyes with tinted contacts and long lashes, highlighted nose ridges, lowlighted rosy cheeks, and pinkish white skin. The magazine is for young women who, as the title suggests, have “come up (graduated) from being little devils” to being flashy and sassy, young girly (devilish) adults. The “genres” of ageha styles included Lolita, Street Casual, Princess, Glamorous, Queen, Lady, Girly, and Rock. All but a few of the models in the main articles and ads had blonde or light hair. Few had dark hair, and none had black. All had pink-tinted pasty-white complexions and eyes that would glow in the dark if you turned off the lights.

Even Snip Style, a hair-styling magazine, joined the “haafu-gao meiku” frenzy, since part of “looking haafu” is having full hair, if not also an “attitude.”

In 2016, a few makeup artists promoted seemingly new approaches. The May 2016 issue of MAQUIA, as though flogging a flagging horse, referred to haafu-gao makeup as “still in vogue.” As though to say it was not only for girls having fun, it promoted “half-face makeup for adults” and stressed the need to “Be conscious of the roundness (marumi) peculiar to [the faces of] Europeans and Americans!” As though innovating for the sake of innovating, one of the cover stories of the October 2016 issue of Biteki claimed that the standards of beauty were shifting toward haafu-gao. A natural-looking “nuanced half-face” (nyuansu haafu-gao) was essential. The object was to create “the nuances of a haafu-gao” (haafu-gao no nyuansu) in a way that people would not think your haafu-gao contours were created by makeup. And the December 2016 issue of MAQUIA alleged that the “keys” to creating a now-ish “Northern-Europe-descent half-face” were “color” (iromi) and “transparency” (tōmeikan). The article appealed to the envies of readers who see someone around them and think, “[She’s] Japanese, but somehow seems like (evokes the feeling of) a half…”

The marketing of haafu-gao makeup

Articles about haafu-gao makeup feature are neither regular nor frequent, but come in erratic, seemingly whimsical spurts. Only about one in 50 of the magazines I regularly checked billed a haafu-gao makeup feature on their covers, which generally show all features. This may seem a small figure, but taking into account how magazines are designed, and the larger social milieu in which they thrive, it is meaningful.

Haafu-gao is only one of many makeup themes that magazine editors continually shuffle and innovate in order to create the impression that each issue is different. Haafu-gao makeup has attracted attention for over a decade as of this writing in 2017. Its novelty has worn off, and it may
have passed its peak in popularity, but it hangs around as a quasi-perennial theme. In the meantime, practically every issue of practically every major fashion and beauty magazine features well-known haafu house models, some of whom are pictured in haafu-gao makeup articles. Moreover, parts of some haafu-gao makeup articles are recycled in makeup handbooks in the form of “mooks” (magazine-books) put out by the same publishers. And, as with other makeup themes, copywriters constantly come up with new catch phrases and tag lines to give the impression that haafu-gao makeup objectives and techniques are evolving.

As makeup articles, haafu-gao features are not at all unique. Like other makeup articles, they are essentially “infomercials.” Their main purpose is to showcase cosmetic products and even the clothing and accessories worn by the models. The cosmetic goods featured in the articles are usually identified by maker and product name, and may even be priced.

Products specifically marketed as haafu-gao cosmetics or appliances are also evolving. In March 2009, the Seven-Eleven Japan group, which operates 7-Eleven convenience stores in Japan, released a new cosmetics line named Para Do which was billed as “Haafu-Gao Kosume” [half-face cosmetics]. The line included eye shadow and cheek color palettes and rouge gloss. Model and TV personality Suzanne (b. 1986), whose real name is Yamamoto Sae, lent her (faux) “haafu-ppoi” (ハーフっぽい half-like) face to leaflets and package inserts. (Figure 10) The contour palettes and other items in the line were ordinary “generic” cosmetic goods. Only the branding and blurbs were new.

Since then, several cosmetic makers have marketed ordinary products as haafu-gao aids – everything from eye and face makeup to false lashes and double-lid fibers, tapes, and glues, to color contact lenses. One line of tinted contact lenses specifically labels three colors: “Natural,” “Quarter,” and “Half.” Another company markets a pink plastic nose clip that, if worn for fifteen minutes, will help create a haafu-gao look by raising your nose – for how long is not said, but it comes with a freebie case to pack it around.

The idea of marketing conventional cosmetics as ways to effect an “exotic” look is not new. In 1959 and 1960, fifteen-year-old Irie Miki (b. 1944), also known as Vera Ilyan, the daughter of a Russian father and a Japanese mother, promoted an already existing cold cream that now promised – only because her face was featured – to create the “exotic coloring” associated with “the appeal of an ainoko” (ainoko no miryoku). Irie rivaled Wanibuchi Haruko as a cover girl on women’s and fashion magazines in the early 1960s. In 1964, when she was 19, Irie was named the world’s most beautiful model at the International Fashion Festival in Las Vegas. The world today knows her as Vera Ozawa.

As a fake style of makeup, haafu-gao is part of the larger dekame (デカ目 big eyes) makeup style that has its roots in the exoticization of the naturally larger and deeper set eyes of some Japanese personalities who have no family history of racial mixture. Double-lid appliances go back to at least the 1930s. They have generally been promoted as ways to balance asymmetrical eyes or make both eyes more prominent, but today the same products are also being promoted as ways to effect a gaikokujin or haafu look. “Dekame” is increasing associated with gaikokujin-gao (外国人顔 foreigner-face) – the alien sister of haafu-gao – or gaikokujin-feisu (外国人フェイス foreigner-face) as an advertisement in the September 2015 issue of Ranzuki put it, using the Japanization of English “face.” The catch phrase on the cover of this issue of Ranzuki, describing a haafu-gao feature, was “Analyzing the faces of sweet-half girls is the shortest path / to becoming a cute half-face…”

“Face” as used in haafu-gao and gaijin-gao in the names of make-up styles could be compared to the “face” of “yellow-face” and “black-face” and such on Broadway and in Hollywood. In Japan too, actors and actresses, including racially-mixed performers, commonly perform in “white” or “black” or “Chinese” or other “alien” and even “half” faces on stage and screen.
though, is that the “faces” affected by individuals in the course of their everyday lives are motivated by personal feelings – including complexes – about one’s natural face, rather than by mechanical compliance with a script that calls for a particular racial look. Both stage and personal makeup are intended to “deceive” others. Personal makeup is also a form of self-deception.

The haafu-gao makeup fad was anticipated in 2007 when the May issue of the women’s fashion magazine ViVi ran a cover feature called “Gaikokujin-gao ni naru ai meiku” meaning “Eye makeup to become a foreigner-face.” The eyes to emulate were those of eight Hollywood celebrities – Lindsay Lohan, Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen, Jessica Alba, Nicole Richie, Mischa Barton, Paris Hilton, and Rachel Bilson. The article did not mention Japanese, but it implied that the eyes of “foreigners” such as Jessica Alba were different in four ways, all of which resulted in “foreigners” having bigger, deeper set, more striking eyes. The article showed readers how to create the illusion of such dekame with standard items like various shades of eye shadows, eyeliners, brow pencils, mascara, and applicators and brushes, using techniques familiar to cosmeticians for decades. Nothing about the article was new – except for the manner in which, page-after-page, it “stylized” – or rather “racialized” – the effects as gaikokujin-gao (foreigner-face), gaikokujin-fū (foreigner-style), and most prominently gaikokujin eye/ai with English “eye” more often than Japanese “ai.”

The Internet teems with rumors about popular models and other personalities who are pursued by “suspicions of being half” (haafu no giwaku). One such person is Nakamura An (b. 1987), a model, actress, and TV talent. Her real name is Nakamura Yūko but she styles herself Anne Nakamura. In her case, after a lot of handwringing, internet gossipers conclude that she is a “pure Japanese” (junsui-na Nihonjin) who has “Japanese-departing” (Nihonjin-banare shite iru) facial features. In an article about Nakamura in the September 2016 issue of MAQUIA, the “beauty journalist” Saitō Kaoru (b. 1955) raves about Nakamura’s iroke (sensuality), which meets her highest standards of sexiness. She especially praises Nakamura’s “beautiful features, so deeply carved and sharp [you will] think is [she] a half?” (haafu? to omou hodo no hori no fukai kukkiri shita bibō).

**Conclusion: Haafu-gao as racism**

This report has described changes in the language of racial mixture in Japan, spanning over a century and a half, from the Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa periods, to the present Heisei era. The changes are reflected in the uses of first ainoko, then konketsuji, and now haafu – all three terms, and others, sometimes together – in Japanese literature, film, and mass media, which generally have shown an “admiration” for especially “Eurasian” features. The admiration of “white skin” as a mark of beauty predates significant contact with “Caucasian” or “Western” standards of beauty. However, Caucasian skin, even when “white,” is generally considered inferior to “Asian” skin racialized in Japan as “Japanese” skin. Avoidance of direct sunlight today is again fashionable for health as well as beauty reasons. The bronzed beach-girl, beach-boy skins that were popular in the second half of the 20th century are less fashionable today, but honey-toned skin, whether natural or the result of moderate tanning, still has a place in the diverse standards of attractiveness that are found in Japan.

Japanese with darker skins stand out. Quite a few dark-skinned mixed-blood youth debuted as singers and actors in the 1960s and 1970s. Only a couple lasted very long, but statistically this may not be significant, as practically no one lasts very long in the entertainment world. When roles for “black konketsuji” in contemporary films dried up, so did acting opportunities. “White konketsuji” who are not “Japanese” enough face the same problem. Practically all haafu actors and actresses play mostly if not only “Japanese” roles. On the other hand, racially-mixed Japanese whose features depart too far from a racialized “Japanese” face may encounter a racial ceiling when it comes to casting, or employment in jobs reserved for people who “look” Japanese. Generally, haafu entertainers don’t go around calling themselves haafu. And protocol in the entertainment world...
frowns on racializing people, except on goofy variety shows. But the rules are different in the jungle of gossipy magazines and the wild woolly web.

Some haafu-gao makeup articles have promoted “plastic [surgery] class” (seikei-kyū) makeup techniques. The November 2015 issue of ViVi featured a cover story that showed how to create a “petit-cosmetic-surgery” effect with makeup that “balances your facial structure” so your “eyes become naturally big” – “big eyes [you] were born with in a ‘half-like-face’ (haafu-ppo-gao).” There are strong elements of “fantasy indulging” and “make believe” and “costume play” in makeup. But women who have strong stigmas about their appearance understand that, while the advantage of makeup is that it is not permanent, the disadvantage is that, when it comes off, those it was intended to lure may be shocked.

Predictably, some cosmetic surgery clinics have also been capitalizing on the haafu-gao craze. Takasu Clinic, a widely advertised chain of cosmetic medicine clinics, promotes the racialization of beauty on its website. One of its plugs for cosmetic surgery and other procedures states that “Generally, halves and quarters of whites and Japanese, compared to pure Japanese, have many visually superior features.” This is followed by a long list of the allegedly more beautiful features. Takasu Clinic’s webpage also has a “half” page that contrasts “Western” (Seiyōjin 西洋人) and “Oriental” (Tōyōjin 東洋人) features, and offers seiyōjin-gao (西洋人顔 westerner face) and haafu-gao (half-face) as cosmetic surgery options. Such promotions exemplify the spirit of the racialist heart that beats in the beast of the beauty industry.

Everyone agrees that character is more important than looks, but this does not resolve the complexes of people who have serious stigmas about their faces. The beauty industry exploits these stigmas, and some magazines directly promote indulgence in “wannabe” envies as a way to deal with personal complexes about one’s appearance. “Konpurekkusu” (コンプレックス) commonly appears in frank discussions of makeup motives. The cover of the August 2010 issue of Biteki shouts “Your COMPLEXES / vanish with this!” The complexes include monolids, not having a small face, and having a quiet [plain, flat] face. The same makeup techniques that are used to create haafu-gao come to the rescue. With the techniques and products shown in the article, readers with complexes can double their lids, and create the illusion of deeper set eyes in a smaller, more contoured face – like the models on the cover, neither of which is haafu and one of whom has naturally big eyes.

The January 2008 issue of Nikkei entertainimento exemplifies both the racialism that enables the haafu-gao fad and the racism that it inevitably nurtures. Looking back at 2007, the magazine featured haafu-gao as one of nine key words in the entertainment world that year. It listed sixteen “half beauties” (haafu bijo ハーフ美女) – actresses, models, TV personalities, and newscasters. It cited a Fuji Television drama production center chief as saying that “You need a reason, like a role, to cast blue-eyes and blondes, but the hair and iris colors of many of the popular half girls are close to those of Japanese. That many were born and raised in Japan and normally speak Japanese, including slang, is also a big point.” The article stressed the numbers of children born between Japanese and American or British parents (about 2,200), but in fact they were very small compared with the numbers of children born between Japanese and other - mostly Chinese, Korean, and Filipino - nationality parents (about 22,000).

The Nikkei entertainimento article not only racialized Nihonjin (Japanese) and gaijin (foreigners), but underscored the fact that haafu who look more like racialized “Japanese” than racialized gaijin are economically and even politically more valuable to Japan. The article said “Haafu can melt into works [dramas] set in Japan without a sense of disharmony (iwakan naku).” The writer thought this represented how much Japan’s “mental sense of distance toward Europe-and-America has shrunk.” “Distance” alludes to the strong sense of rivalry between the “yellow” and “white” races that has driven the development of Japan since the country was forced to open its ports to Americans and
Europeans in the middle of the 19th century.

_Nikkei entateinmento_ cited cosmetic surgeon Takasu Katsuya as saying, “Trends in looks fluctuate with the economy and social conditions. In periods of economic growth, European-style faces, which symbolize a bright future, tend to become popular.” The writer recalled that, “at the peak of the bubble [in the 1990s], Miyazawa Rie, whose father was Dutch, was hugely popular.” Takasu reportedly said that “Asian beauty” (_Ajianbyuutii_ アジアンビューティー) is becoming more popular internationally, and a number of Japanese women have placed high in recent international beauty pageants. If the economy remains stable, there will be even greater interest in “Asia Oriental faces” (_Ajiaorientaru-na kao_ アジアオリエンタルな顔).

The writer’s conclusion took a turn that reveals the deeper racist significance of the racialist _haafu-gao_ craze. With the 2008 Beijing Olympics approaching, and the world turning toward Asia, the writer said, “it might be good if from here on [we Japanese] don’t go out of [our] way to become ‘foreigner-faces’ (_gaijin-gao_ 外人顔).” This may not sound like a discriminatory remark. But it “alienates” Japanese (including many _haafu_) who happen to have naturally _gaijin_ (foreigner) or _gaijin-ppoi_ (foreign-like 外人っぽい) faces from their right to feel that they are Japanese.

One of the _haafu_ celebrities listed in the _Nikkei entateinmento_ article was Takigawa Christel. Takigawa was born in France and has Japanese nationality through her mother. As a trilingual TV announcer and newscaster who has also modeled, she was seen as an ideal choice to help pitch Tokyo’s bid for the 2020 Olympics in 2013. In this sense, the “_haafu buumu_” of the early 20th century bore fruit. But the “_konketsu tarento buumu_” of the late 1960s and 1970s also set the stage for the acceptance of at least some _haafu_ as representatives of Japan. In 1979, a Liberal Democratic Party poster with catch phrases like “Gazing at the tomorrow (future) of Japan with a big view (vision)” featured the face of Hiroko Grace Hollie, a ten-year-old child model. Hiroko Grace, as her fans know her, was born in Japan but happened to have an American father and a Japanese mother. Under Japan’s Nationality Law at the time, she did not qualify as a Japanese national through her mother, and hence was only a U.S. citizen through her father. Like many political posters, the LDP poster was run as a full-page ad in some weekly magazines. Some critics opposed the use of the “only half Japanese” girl, but senior LDP officials defended the poster.

Though _haafu-gao_ is a new makeup style, its racialist logic is old and familiar. At its crudest, it encourages the simplistic image of _haafu_ as one-half racialized (Asian) “Japanese” and one-half racialized (European) “American” – like the caricature in the 1991 issue of the weekly magazine _Shūkan hōseki_. In the hands of more sophisticated beauticians, it encourages pride in the supposedly “unique” and “pure” qualities of racialized “Japanese” skin and eyes. It fetishizes facial contours, noses, eyes, and hair that are widely associated with “foreigners” racialized as “Caucasians” or “Westerners.” It exoticizes especially _haafu_ who exhibit the desired “foreign” features in their otherwise “Japanese” faces. All of this encourages greater admiration of, and preference for, people who have such features, including Japanese who have no history of racial mixture in their families. And it sustains a discriminatory climate in which mixed-race Japanese are treated as “less” or even “not” Japanese.

_Acknowledgments_

I wish to thank Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu for inspiring the writing and submission of this paper; Edward Sumoto for his brotherly camaraderie over the years, and Bill Wetherall for sharing ideas and helping me translate, write, and edit this paper.
Figure 1. Cover and obi (promotional band at the bottom) of Mr. Yuniyoshi (text), Drawing Studio Management (caricatures), Haafu mania: Nihon no yūmeijin no konketsu o karikachua de dai shōkai! [A big introduction through caricature of famous mixed bloods of Japan!], Tokyo: Shakai Hyōron Sha, 2013. (Author’s collection)
Figure 2. Cover and obi (yellow promotional band) of Sandra Häfelin (text) and Hira Matsuo (cartoons), *Nippon zajū haafu-na watashi no setsujitsu de waraeru 100 no mondai* [100 pressing and laughable problems I have as a haafu residing in Japan], Tokyo: Media Factory, 2013. “Such an imagine is a delusion!” declares the obi, referring to the 3 red-checked stereotypic haafu girl qualities: Beautiful, Bilingual, Brilliant. The sad looking boy in the box says “I can’t speak a word of French,” and people say, “Really? Unbelievable!” (Author’s collection)
Figure 3. Devi Sheth (later Mari Annu, born 1948), whose father was from India, playing a “brown” (buraun) mixed-blood teen girl (left), and Yasuoka Rikiya (1947-2012), who was born in Italy, playing a “black” (buraku) mixed-blood teen boy, in this still from Tōhō’s 1964 production of Jidōsha dorobō [Car thieves]. The film had a practically all-mixed-blood cast, including Sheth and Yasuoka, both of whom became popular action-film actors. The movie was inspired by Hirano Imao’s Remi no Kai. Hirano himself appeared in the film as an “old white man” – an image he despised in real life, according to his daughter, who said he had a stigma about his somewhat Caucasoid features. (Author’s collection)
Figure 4. Cover of Hirano Imao’s *Konketsu jinsei ki* [Chronicle of a half-blood life], Tokyo: Nihon Shuppan Kyōdō, 1954. (Author’s collection)
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Figure 5.

Cover and obi (promotional band at the bottom) of Hirano Imao’s Remi wa ikite iru [Remi lives], Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1993. Illustrated by Hirano’s son in law, Wada Makoto, with comments by his daughter, Hirano Remi. Obi reads, “Why am I an ainoko? The single tear of a mixed-blood child becomes a star of encouragement that seeks hope and happiness for the many mixed-blood children that will follow.” (Author’s collection)
Figure 6. Wanibuchi Haruko (right, b. 1945) with Tsugawa Masahiko (b. 1940) in Shōchiku’s 1960 production of Kawabata Yasunari’s 1927 novel *Izu no odoriko*, the third make and second postwar remake of a film that has made every leading starlet famous – except Wanibuchi, who was already famous. She had just turned fifteen when the film was released, but she had been a child and teen idol since the early 1950s, and had already played leading roles in movies since 1955. (Author’s collection)
Figure 7. Maeda Bibari (b. 1948) as a Shiseidō Summer Campaign Girl in 1966 when she was about 18, two years into what would become a career as one of Japan’s best known musical stars. She also modeled for Shiseidō’s sun-block products, sometimes in the same magazine ad or TV commercial that promoted its suntan oils. When older she promoted the company’s line of skin-whiteners. She is still a perennial cover girl on major magazines read by mature women. (One of many images in virtual public domain on the Internet, including Shiseidō’s Facebook page (Shiseidō’s Facebook page, timeline of 22 April 2014. [https://www.facebook.com/shiseido.corporate/photos/a.561177830572098.1073741829.548424035180811/715091578514055/]).)
Figure 8. Publicity leaflet for Hafu (The Film), 2013, directed and filmed by Nishikura Megumi and Takagi Lara (as their names are represented in Japanese).

The catch phrase reads “Meet Japanese of the new generation”. The man and the woman, two of the five people who tell their stories in the film, are identified as Japan x Ghana (top) and Japan x Australia. (Author’s collection)
Figure 9. Cover of Snip Style, October 2009, a magazine for hair stylists and beauticians. The small round white-on-brown blurb says, “Whatever [people] say, in the end, everyone wants to become haafu-gao . . .” The pink and white titles below it say, “With voluminous hair and sculptured makeup, create a haafu-gao!”
Figure 10. Model and TV personality Suzanne (Yamamoto Sae, b. 1986) lends her faux “haafu-ppoi” (half-like) face to a promotional leaflet for a contour palette and related Para Do cosmetic aids marketed by 7-Eleven. The ad promises consumers a sculptured “haafu-gao” look. The products and techniques are standard. The “haafu-gao” naming is a marketing ploy to create and exploit the envy of a stereotypic “half-face” look.
Figure 11. Caricature of stereotypic “half” in four-page article in weekly magazine, Shūkan hōseki, 7 March 1991. The article, in a column called “Old-man’s news”, is titled “Nostalgic half talents.”
NOTES

1. In this paper, I use “racial mixture” and “mixed race” in the sense of “mixed blood” (konketsu) in Japanese, which metaphorically reflects such English expressions. There are no other comparable terms in Japanese. I use “race” in both its narrower sense (jinshu), which racializes skin color and other physical features, and its broader “ethnonational” sense (minzoku), which racializes “nationality” in the ethnographic sense of “ethnicity.” In principle I do not endorse racialization, but racialist terms are part of this study, and I use them accordingly, sometimes bracketed, sometimes not. The same goes for “mixture” and its Japanese equivalents – I use them not because I like them, but because they are embedded in my primary sources. I use “racio-ethnic” to more clearly speak of “race” in both its narrower and broader senses. I view “descent” and “ancestry” and “lineage” as universally valid terms for describing individuals in relation to their biological parents and predecessors. Every human being has a unique family history apart from questions of “race” or “ethnicity.” I use “blood” when translating Japanese terms in which “blood” (ketsu, chi) is used as a biological metaphor for descent, whether or not racialized. I use “culture” to mean precisely “culture” (bunka) with no implications of “race” (jinshu, minzoku) or “ethnicity” (minzokusei), and without any sense of obligation of descent or ancestry. I do not use “heritage”, which has come to be highly racialized in English, because there is no linguistic foundation in my Japanese sources for its use. Its nearest equivalent in Japanese would probably be “blood” as a metaphor for whatever it is that someone “inherits” through their parents. National identities of individuals or their parents are civil, not racio-ethnic, nationalities. “Asian” and other geographical identities also speak of place rather than race. All racio-ethnic labels are reproduced as found in primary sources, whether or not they are considered “acceptable” or “appropriate” by one or another standard today. Family names appear first except when citing names from sources in which they come last. Japanese terms are romanized according to the New Hepburn system, except in citations of other representations. I have shown Japanese script only for words or expressions that specifically label racial qualities. Please consult my Japanese-language papers for full descriptions of the primary lexical and other sources.

2. This paper is based on hundreds of primary sources, from dictionaries to popular magazines, many of them in the author’s personal collection. Only a few sources have been cited here.

3. “[Nippon wa] sekai de ichiban majirikke no nai junsui-na minzoku de arimasu” ([日本は] 世界で一番混じりつけのない純粋な民族であります). This claim was made on the website of Mizuho no Kuni Memorial Elementary School by its principle Kagoike Yasunori. The school was supposed to have opened from April 2017, but Kagoike, the director of the school’s development company, had to withdraw the application for government permission to operate the school in the midst of a scandal about land acquisition, construction costs, funding, and negative publicity regarding the treatment of children in other schools the company oversees. The message remained posted until the website was taken down on 13 March 2017.

4. See https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-4062 for an image of the painting in the Rijksmuseum and particulars about the work. Cornelia van Nijenroode’s story is told in Leonard Blussé 1988 (Japanese), and related English and Dutch works which I have not seen.

5. Japan annexed Ryūkyū, then a kingdom claimed by both Japan and China, as a domain in 1872 and made the islands a prefecture called Okinawa in 1879.

6. Linguistically, “ainoko” is nominal “ai” + genitive “no” + nominal “ko.” “Ai-no-” is a very productive form which qualifies the things it prefixes as being “between” (ai 間) or “mutual to” (合い) two or more other things. Historically, 間 and 間の prevailed as script for “ai-no” in relation to “ko” (児, 子) meaning “child” or “offspring.” Today, 合 and 合い are more common. The view expressed in some early English sources, that ainoko derives from Aino as a form of Aino in reference to one of Japan’s indigenous peoples, is linguistically untenable. Some writers, again mainly in non-Japanese sources, state that, since “ai no” can also mean “of love” (愛の), “ainoko” in reference to a racially mixed child means “child of love” or “beloved child.” But this is folk etymology. Aino はの子 is sometimes used in names of nursery schools, and at times is used with other nuances, but it has no currency as a synonym for “mixed-blood child.”

7. “Zatsu” (雑) has the feeling of “assortment” or “miscellany” or “variety,” hence “assorted,” “unsorted,” “miscellaneous,” or “various.” In some contexts it connotes “unruly” or “promiscuous.” Prefixed to “kon” (婚) or “marriage” it forms the word “zakkun” (雑婚), an older term for “mixed marriage” especially
between racially different people. Combined with “kon” (混), which means “mixture” (see next note), it forms the word “konzatsu” (混雑), which is one of the more general Sino-Japanese terms for mixture.

8. “Kon” is the most common Sino-Japanese (SJ) morpheme similar to “mix,” “mixed,” and “mixture” in English. “Ketsu” is the primary SJ morpheme, both for physiological blood, and for “blood” as a metaphor for biological lineage in a family, racio-ethnic nation, or race. SJ compounds follow Chinese syntax rules, hence “kon + ketsu + ji” = “mixed-blood child/offspring.” Though appearing after ainoko and before haafu in the history of racialist labels in Japan, “konketsuji” is today the standard definition of both.

9. See my papers, Okamura, “‘Konketsu’ o meguru gensetsu,” 2013, and Okamura, “‘Haafu’ o meguru gensetsu,” 2016, for more examples and full linguistic particulars.

10. Episode 108, 18 January 1930. Perushiya neko [Persian cats] was published under the pen name Shimizu Kōsuke. Kitabayashi’s real name was Shimizu Kinsaku. I had not yet seen Perushiya neko when I first reported my findings of “haafu” in Kitabayashi’s Machi no kokusai musume (1930). See Okamura, 16 June 2013. This is my first public disclosure of the use of “haafu” in Perushiya neko.


13. Kitabayashi first uses “ireppu” as a reading for “konketsuji” in “Shōfu (Onna) Rori” [Prostitute (Woman) Lori], the lead story in his Minato no Nihon musume [Japanese girls at the harbor] anthology (1933). The term is used twice in this story, and both uses survive in a 1973 anthology. The term appears to mean “Europe” on the strength of Kitabayashi’s “Eurasian” as “Ireeshian,” which is also a reading for konketsuji in the same story. The standard Japanese term is “Yooropa” following Portuguese and Dutch “Europa,” whereas Kitabayashi is Japanizing English “Europe.”


16. Here “half-caste” is haafu-kaasuto (ハーフ・カースト) in Japanese. It is now more commonly haafu-kaasuto (ハーフ・カースト). Most “half-” compounds in English have katakana forms with and without the “mid dot.”

17. Ishihara Shintarō, Sandee Mainichi, 20 April 1956, 110.

18. The Japanese title of the journal article, “Kokusai konketsuji” (International mixed-blood children/people), is represented in English as “Men of Half-blood in the Diplomatic History of Japan” (Naganuma Kenkai, Shien, No. 56, March 1953). The title of the 1953 movie is written “Konketsuji” and generally read “Konketsuji.” The main title of the 1971 record jacket is written “Konketsu Marii” but read “Ainoko Marii” and the English title is “Half Blood Marie.”

19. Graphically, クォ reflects a w-glide hence “kwa,” whereas クオ reflects “kuo.” They could represent different pronunciations but are generally conflated. “Kuootaa” (クオーター), which represents “quarter” in numerous compounds adopted mostly from English, is now the more common form. “Quarter” could also be “yon-bun-no-ichi” (四分の一 one-fourth), but this expression is used mainly to describe, not label, a quantum of something.

20. See Mr. Yunioshi 2013. This was a domestic sequel to Jinshu mania [Race mania], a similarly designed volume by Watanabe Takayuki, put out in 2010 by the same publisher. Though Watanabe’s book clearly uses “jinshu” (race) in its title, it bears the English title “Ethnicity Mania,” and the subtitle states that the book introduces “the ethnic roots of famous people” (ゆめいじん no esunikkuruutsu) through caricature. In Japan as well as in countries like the United States, “race” and “ethnicity” are often conflated.


22. Häfelin Sandra, 2013. Häfelin (Haefelin) was born in the United Kingdom to a Japanese mother and a German father, and raised mainly in Germany, but now resides in Japan. Some of the content of her books, and the manner in which they are illustrated, may actually deepen some stereotypes.


24. Itō Ginetsu, Nik-Kan gappō mirai no yume [Dreams of future of Japan-Korea unification]. Tokyo: Sankyō Shoin, 1910. The book was published on 24 April 1910. The historical annexation took place on 29 August 1910. By 1945, when Japan lost Chōsen (Korea) under the terms of surrender at the end of World War II,
population migration and intermarriage between the peninsular and prefectural populations of the Empire of Japan was common.


27. The scene and phrase appears in both *Perushiya neko* (op cit.) and its revision as *Kyoryūchi no oka* (op cit.). The *haafu* in the cited phrase is the only instance of *haafu* as a standalone word.

28. Kitabayashi Tōma, “Hikyō naru Joo”, in Kitabayashi Tōma 1937, 371-409. In the novel, Joe is nicknamed “Yellow Joe” (*Kiiroi Joo*) on account of his skin color, but the association of “yellow” with “coward” in English invites ridicule, hence the Chinese characters for “coward” (*hikyō*) in the title are read “yellow” (*yaroo*) in the novel.

29. In the expression “konketsu jidō” (mixed-blood child), the word “jidō” refers specifically to a “child,” whereas “konketsuji” – while morphologically also “mixed-blood child” – may also refer to adults.

30. Koseishō Jidōkyoku, 1953, 1-2. The survey was not about mixed-blood children generally, but only about those who were offspring of Allied Forces personnel, and as such were the focus of diplomatic and welfare issues. The much greater number of other mixed-blood offspring were unrelated to the Allied Occupation.

31. 10,000 would be an upper limit. Some contemporary writers reported rumors of 200,000 while those with actual numbers said 5,000, possibly 10,000, no more than 20,000 allowing for underestimates.


33. The original name of the organization was “1953-nen Kai” abbreviated “53 Kai” (Go-san Kai) after the year it was formed. Later it was called “Remi no Kai.” Hirano used “Remi” to mean not only a homeless child, but also the sort of child he had been when growing up in a discriminatory world.

34. The silent film *Minato no Nihon musume* (Japanese Girls at the Harbor) directed by Shimizu Hiroshi (1903-66) was released by Shōchiku on 1 June 1933, just two weeks after the publication of the novel. In the movie, which departs significantly from the novel, Egawa plays Henry, who in the novel is a “konketsuji (ainoko).” Though the novel never clearly identifies another main character Dora as a *konketsuji,* publicity materials for the film version describe both Dora and Henry as *konketsuji.* While the film and its director are still somewhat well-known, Kitabayashi is all but forgotten. Egawa appeared in a number of postwar films and was doing mainly TV work when he died. Inoue ceased acting after the 1930s but wasn’t forgotten, and last appeared in a 2004 film.

35. Hirano 1953, 66.

36. Satō Yoshiko’s nickname as a vocalist was Carmen O-Yoshi. “Carmen” was her trademark work throughout her career, during which she also wrote essays and taught music. In the 1930s, she modeled for and then married the French-trained artist Satō Kei (1906-1978), who had the same family name and signed his works as “Key.”


38. “Geinō kai wa konketsu-tarento buumu jidai” [The entertainment world (has entered) the mixed-blood talent boom era], *Kindai eiga*, September 1967, 100-101. “Konketsu-tarento” means a singer or other such entertainer of “mixed blood” (*konketsu*). This term included not only “part-white” but also “part-black” people, such as Aoyama Michi and Mary Jackson, and other “part-name-your-race” people.


40. Renhō acquired Japanese nationality through a notification pursuant to special provisions made when the Nationality Law was revised from 1985. In 2016, some political opponents questioned her loyalty when it came to light that she (or her father, who had handled the notification) had not completed the procedure to end her Taiwanese nationality. Dual nationality is a gray-zone issue in Japanese law, and “choice” rules complicate the lives of tens of thousands of Japanese who are born every year between Japanese and foreign parents, as well as Japanese born between two Japanese in states with right-of-soil nationality laws. Other national Diet parliamentarians who were born to parents of different nationalities include
Tamaki Denny (born 1959), who was born in the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) when they were under U.S. administration. Legally he was Ryukyuan through his mother, and like other Ryukyuans he became or resumed being Japanese when the islands were returned and resumed being Okinawa prefecture in 1972.

41. The People’s Honor Award was created for Oh when he broke the world’s homerun record in 1977. Some critics objected that Oh was not a national of Japan. His nationality prevented him from participation on Japan’s national team when he was in high school. However, under Japan’s professional baseball rules, he and some other Japan-born foreign athletes have been excluded from “foreign player” quotas. Regardless of his nationality, Oh is widely recognized in Japan as one of the country’s most highly respected global citizens.

42. The few objections raised in some quarters in Japan are reminiscent of those from some Japanese Americans to racially mixed candidates in Japanese American beauty pageants. See Rebecca Chiyoko King-O’Riain, 2006. As of this writing, “Nissei Week Queen” candidates, in addition to meeting age, citizenship, and marital status requirements, must satisfy a racialized “nationality” requirement which states: “Nationality: Candidate must be a minimum of fifty percent (50%) Japanese ancestry. Candidate will supply supporting documentation, including parents’ names and birth certificate, if requested.” (http://www.niseiweek.org/become-a-court-member/, last viewed 27 January 2017, emphasis in original).

43. Tomiyama was her family name at the time. She now goes by Higa.

44. “Self-advocacy movement” is a translation of “tōjisha undo,” which means a movement of, by, and for immediately concerned people – in this case, offspring of racially-ethnically different parents.

45. Stylized “mixi” (as it is styled) is read “mikushii” in Japanese, and is so named because it facilitates on-line social mixing.

46. Hafu Project’s logo is “ha-フ/ハ-フ/half japanese” and its website tagline reads “‘Hafu’/Half Japanese / A dialog about being between two cultures” (see http://www.hafujapanese.org/). The Japanese title of Hafu the film is ハーフ or “hafu.” Thanks to the project and the film, “hafu” and its plural “hafus” have gained a few users in written English. However, speakers of English will usually say “half” and “halfs” – or “hafu” if they know Japanese. Some bloggers and vloggers use cutesy expressions like halfie, halfsie or halvsie, and even mixie, in reference to mixed-race people, not necessarily related to Japan.

47. See http://hafufilm.com/ for details.

48. Kitabayashi, November 1931, 423. In the story, the Chinese characters for “konketsu musume” (mixed-blood girl) are read ainoko (betweener).

49. “Wakai onna no kao ga haafu-ppoku natte kita” [The faces of young women have become half-like], an-an, 13 June 1986, 6-24.


51. “Hori-buka haafu-gao meiku kōza” [Deeply carved (Sculptured) half-face makeup workshop], non-no, No. 21, 5 November 2008, 111-118, 127-134.

52. “MAQUIA meiku teian, mezase akogare no haafu-bijo!” [MAQUIA makeup proposal: Aim to be the half-beauty of your yearnings!], MAQUIA, February 2008, 68-85.


55. “‘Nippon” is italicized here because it is written in phonetic katakana rather than in graphic kanji (Chinese script) for emphasis.

56. “Ano kuni no haafu-gao ni naritai / Yūmeijin o mane-kko” [I want to become a half-face of that country / (Be) an imitator of a famous person], Koakuma ageha, November 2013, 87-91.

57. Snip Style, October 2009, features “voluminous [full] hair” (rittai hea) along with “deeply carved [sculptured] makeup (horibuka meiku)”.

58. MAQUIA, May 2016, 86. “Ô-Bei-jin tokuyû no marumi o ishiki suru!” [Be conscious of the roundness peculiar to (the faces of) Europeans and Americans!].
60. **MAQUIA, December 2016, 128.** “Nihonjin na no ni, doko to naku haafo no hito mitai . . . .” [(She’s) Japanese, but somehow seems like (evokes the feeling of) a half . . .].

61. This study is based on a 10-year collection of magazines displayed in ordinary bookstores. The collection consists of 31 magazines with “haafu-gao” related stories (27) representing 18 different magazine titles. The 31 magazines are separately listed after the Bibliography. 1.4 percent = 3100 / 2160 = (100 * 31 issues in 10 year period) / (18 titles * 10 years * 12 issue/title/year). This computation is an estimate based upon the author’s informal collection of data via personal observation, rather than formal tracking of publication data over time.

62. At least seven variations of the “ainoko no miryoku” [appeal (attractiveness) of ainoko] ads appeared during the last months of 1959 and early months of 1960 in several major mass magazines. I am indebted to Bill Wetherall for bringing the ads to my attention.

63. Anon., ‘Kokusai-fashhon moderu dai-ichi-i, Irie Miki san ni kiku’ [An interview with Irie Miki, the top international fashion model], Asahi shinbun, 1 June 1964, 9.

64. **Ranzuki, September 2015, 47.** The issue includes several “haafu-gao” features.

65. Ibid. Cover. “Ama-haafu no ko no kaa o bunseki suru no ga ichiban chikamichi / Kawaige haafo-gao ni naru tame ni” [Analyzing the faces of sweet-half girls is the shortest path / to becoming a cute half-face].

66. So-called “blackface” is usually translated “kuronuri” in Japanese, which means “blackening” the face by daubing or smearing soot or some other dark material on the face. Several other Japanese and Sino-Japanese terms are used to refer to the guises used by performers when playing a role of the opposite sex, of a different age, race, or even species.


68. **MAQUIA, September 2016, 52-53.** The title of the article is “Nakamura An kara himotoku, genzai-kei no sekushii [Present-form (style) of sexiness, revealed from Anne Nakamuraj]. The “himo toku” and “genzai-kei” are playful. “Himotoku” originally means “to untie a cord” as one around a scroll in order to open it and see its contents. The “genzai-kei” in the title is also the grammatical term for “present tense.” Elsewhere in the article, “genzai-kei sekushii” (with a different character for “-kei” meaning “-related”) and “imadoki sekushii” mean “contemporary / happening / now-ish sexiness.”

69. Older paintings and woodblock prints are convincing evidence of the historical value placed on whiteness, whether natural or created. Early 20th century magazine covers and ads for beauty aids also show the extremes to which some women went to whiten their faces. See Wagatsuma 1967 for his attempt to point this out, although he over-racializes the subject, possibly because at the time he was deeply involved in “konketsuji studies” and felt compelled to explain the greater prejudice that was shown “black” mixed-blood children.

70. “Kuroi konketsuji” (black mixed-blood children) were sometimes called “kuronbō,” which means “blackie” or “darkie” but not necessarily “nigger” is the sense that this English word is often used. Kitabayashi Tōma sometimes used the term with a contemptuous tone, such as when spoken by a mixed-blood hero confronting an Indian villain. But the word, sometimes kuronbo rather than kuronbō, is also used to refer to a child or an adult with a deep tan, or to black kabuki garb, or even to black ears of grain.

71. ViVi, November 2015, 243. ViVi, one of Japan’s oldest and most popular fashion magazines, targets women in their late teens, 20s, and early 30s. It is sold in several other Asian countries, and its Chinese edition is popular in both the Republic of China and the People’s Republic of China. Several of its house models have ranked among the most glamorous, exotic, and idolized models who publicly identify as haafu.


73. Ibid., [http://www.takasu.co.jp/topics/special/half.html](http://www.takasu.co.jp/topics/special/half.html)
74. “Anata no KONPUREKKUSU / Kore de kesemasu!” [Your COMPLEXES / (You) can eliminate (them) with this!]. Biteki, August 2010.

75. Nikkei Entateinmento, January 2008, 53-54. The magazine is published by a subsidiary of Nikkei shinbun, Japan’s largest financial newspaper. The article featured two graphs of recent vital statistics reported by the Ministry of Health and Labor. One showed the total number of Japanese children born between a Japanese parent and a foreign parent (about 22,000 annually during the early 2000s). The other showed the number of children born to a Japanese parent and an American or British parent (between 1,400 and 1,600 annually). The second table showed breakdowns by the sex of the foreign parent (about 1,600 and 400 Japanese children born in 2005 had respectively American or British fathers). The statistics represent annual tallies compiled by the civil nationalities (not races) of parents. Many researchers cite the official statistics to dramatize the increase in the number of “interracial” Japanese children and label them “haafu.” The distorted manner in which the Nikkei Entateinmento article racializes “haafu” as the offspring of “Asian” Japanese and “Caucasian” foreigners is typical in mass media.

76. Ibid., 54. “Ō-Bei ni tai suru seishin-teki kyori-kan ga chijimatta.” [(Japan’s) mental sense of distance toward Europe-America has shrunk].

77. Ibid., 54. “kore kara muri shite, ‘gaijin-gao’ ni naranai hō ga ii no ka mo!?” [not going out of (our, Japanese) way to become “foreign-faces” might be good! no?].

78. The 1950 Nationality Law was revised effective from 1985 to allow children born to Japanese women married to foreigners to acquire Japan’s nationality matrilineally. The law provided a three-year window during which minor children born within 20 years of the effective date of the revision were able to acquire Japan’s nationality by filing a “Nationality acquisition notification” (think “claim”) pursuant to the special transitory measures stipulated in the revision. Until then, matrilineal nationality was possible only if the mother was unmarried. Under both the 1899 and the pre-revision 1950 Nationality Law, children who were born out of wedlock were generally able to become Japanese through matrilineality. And under older and present laws, children born in Japan to unknown or stateless parents become Japanese through a place-of-birth rule.

79. Shūkan Yomiuri, 7 October 1979, 55. My thanks to Bill Wetherall for providing me with clippings related to the LDP poster controversy.


81. Shūkan hōseki, 7 March 1991, 112-115. The article is a retrospective of nearly 20 female singers and talents who were popular during the “konketsu tarento buumu” centering on the 1970s. The women represent a number of parental nationalities, including India, and not all are haafu. The lead states that “Half talents fill the gap between us [Japanese] and the foreigner (gaijin) models who exist way above the clouds.” The introduction rephrases this as “[The existence of half] is not an existence as distant as foreigners, and not as close as Japanese.” The magazine, which targeted mainly male commuters, no longer exists.
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Shūkan Yomiuri, 7 October 1979, 55. LDP campaign poster featuring Hiroko Grace.


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The Language of “Racial Mixture” in Japan – Okamura

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(sic) [What I want to become now / “Half-face” makeup!! / How to make Half-Japanese Face (sic)].
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