

The Discourse of *Konketsuji*: Racialized Representations
of Biracial Japanese Children in the 1950s

by

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Abstract

This study examines textual representations of biracial Japanese children as featured in the print media of 1950s Japan. Attention is paid to the complex discursive process of racialization that produced knowledge of biracial Japanese under the label *konketsuji* or “mixed-blood child.” This “discourse of *konketsuji*” is deconstructed and analyzed towards the aim of illustrating how it functioned to disassociate the figure of the *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese.” This study situates *konketsuji* and Japanese racial identity discourse into their proper historical contexts before transitioning to an analysis of primary source material. The discourse of *konketsuji* is revealed as having racialized *konketsuji* in a plural and complex manner. Racializing statements about *konketsuji* referenced difference in phenotype, social origin, political potential, birth circumstances, mentality, intellect, and cultural proclivities so as to position biracial children as a group outside a normative construction of Japanese raciality.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
0.1 There’s Something About Ariana.....	1
0.2 The Purpose of this Study.....	5
0.3 Theory and Methodology.....	6
0.4 Organization and Chapter Summaries	12
Chapter 1 - The Discourse of <i>Konketsuji</i> in Historical Context.....	14
1.1 The Genealogy of Japanese Homogeneity Discourse.....	14
1.2 A Brief History of “Mixed-Blood” Japanese to the 1950s.....	18
1.3 The Discourse of <i>Konketsuji</i>	26
Chapter 2 - Where <i>Konketsuji</i> Came From: Representing Mixed-Blood Origins.....	28
2.1 The Othering of <i>Panpan</i>	28
2.2 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> are Children of <i>Panpan</i> and Born out of Wedlock”	33
Chapter 3 - What <i>Konketsuji</i> Are: Defining Mixed-Blood Qualities.....	40
3.1 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> are Better off in America”	40
3.2 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> are <i>Ibutsu</i> .”	44
3.3 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> are not Asian”	47
3.4 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> Have an Inferiority Complex”	51
3.5 “ <i>Konketsuji</i> Have Low Intelligence”	54
Chapter 4 - Where <i>Konketsuji</i> Will Go: Speculating on Mixed-Blood Futures	61
4.1 Arguments for <i>Konketsuji</i> Segregation.....	61
4.2 Arguments for <i>Konketsuji</i> Integration	63
Conclusion	67

Introduction

0.1 There's Something About Ariana

On March 12th, 2015, twenty-year-old Miyamoto Ariana was crowned Miss Universe Japan and chosen to represent her home country at the 2015 Miss Universe pageant. It was not long before a storm of controversy began to surge around the topic of Miyamoto and her selection as Japan's representative at the world's most famous beauty contest. Some felt that Miyamoto was not right for the title of Miss Universe Japan. Their reasoning was simple: Miyamoto was *different*. In fact, despite having been born and raised in Sasebo, Nagasaki prefecture, speaking the Japanese language as her mother tongue, and even possessing highly advanced skills in traditional Japanese calligraphy,¹ Miyamoto was still *too* different in the eyes of some to represent the country of Japan – much less its *people*. Those decrying Miyamoto's selection expressed her difference in one word: “*hāfu*.” The term is derived from the English “half,” and defined in the second edition of major Japanese dictionary *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* as “a mixed-blood person” (*konketsu no hito*). Miyamoto was the first such “*hāfu*” to ever wear the crown of Miss Universe Japan.

Following Miyamoto's history-making win, outcry regarding the selection of the tall, long-legged, dark-skinned daughter of an African-American father and an ethnic Japanese mother was expressed on Japanese news sites and social media accounts. One news article reported a middle-aged woman's sentiment that “[Miyamoto] does not look like a Japanese,”² as well as a male high school student's comment that “*Hāfu* are not 100% Japanese.”³ Sankei News reported comments from social media users proclaiming “you can't pick a *hāfu* to represent Japan,”⁴ and “[Miyamoto] is not like a Japanese.”⁵ A comment from one Facebook user read, “I

¹ Martin Fackler, “Biracial Beauty Queen Challenges Japan's Self-Image,” *The New York Times*, last modified May 29, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/30/world/asia/biracial-beauty-queen-strives-for-change-in-mono-ethnic-japan.html?src=me&ref=general&_r=1

² “Beikoku no chichi o motsu 20-sai, misu yunibāsu nihon daihyō ni,” *CNN.co.jp*, last modified March 25, 2015, accessed August 20th 2016, <http://www.cnn.co.jp/showbiz/35062290.html>. “*Nihonjin rashiku mienai*.”

³ *Ibid*. “*Hāfu wa 100% nihonjin to wa ienai*.”

⁴ “Misu yunibāsu Miyamoto-san ‘hāfu demo nihon no daihyō’... netto hihan ni ‘sono hitotachi no kangae kaeru,’” Sankei News, last modified April 29th, 2015, accessed August 20th 2016,

don't mean to discriminate, but I'm not sure about a *hāfu* representing Japan."⁶ Twitter was also afire with criticism of Miyamoto's selection. One user complained that "Miss Universe picks [women with] faces that foreigners go for way too much [lol]. [Miyamoto] is not like a Japanese at all."⁷ Another had questions: "Is it okay to pick a *hāfu* to represent Japan!? I guess there are times when the Miss Universe selection criteria are not clear."⁸ Some had strong statements to make: "She might be Miss Japan, but she has the face of a *gaijin* no matter how you look at it!"⁹ Others just expressed confusion: "Miss Universe Japan is... what? What is she? She's... not... Japanese... right?"¹⁰

This doubting of Miyamoto Ariana's "Japaneseness" seems to be resting on certain assumptions of just what exactly a so-called "Japanese" is – and what determines one's status as such. Evidently, critics of Miyamoto's win did not understand the criteria for membership within

<http://www.sankei.com/premium/news/150429/prm1504290022-n2.html>. "*Nihon daihyō ni hāfu o erande dame da.*"

⁵ Ibid. "*Nihonjin rashikunai.*"

⁶ Ono Takashi, Facebook post, March 12th 2015 (7:19am), accessed August 20th 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/takasi.ono.98/posts/1592132384364796:0> "*Sabetsu suru wake dewanai ga... Hāfu wa Nihon daihyō to iu no wa dōka to omou.*"

⁷ "Misu yunibāsu nihon daihyō, Miyamoto eriana-san no kako 'hāfu no kunō,'" Laughy.jp, last modified February 10th, 2016, accessed August 20th 2016, <http://laughy.jp/1427368914534146271>. "*Misu Yunibāsu tte gaijin ukesuru kao erabisugi daro w [sic] Nihonjin rashisa ga mattaku nai.*"

⁸ Peter Holley, "Why some critics think Japan's Miss Universe contestant isn't Japanese enough," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, last modified March 23rd, 2015, accessed August 20th 2016, <http://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/beauty/why-some-critics-think-japans-miss-universe-contestant-isnt-japanese-enough-20150322-1m5as6.html>. "*Nihon daihyō ni hāfu o erande ii no!? Misu Yunibāsu wa sentaku kijun nazo no toki aru yo ne.*"

⁹ Ibid. "*Misu Yunibāsu Japan ya no ni, kao dou mitemo gaijin ya nai ka!*" I have left the word "*gaijin*" untranslated instead of following the more or less standard practice of rendering it as the English "foreigner," which has its more proper equivalent in the Japanese word "*gaikokujin*" (a person from a country outside [of Japan]). The literal meaning of *gaijin* is "outside person," as in an outsider to Japan. In terms of practical usage, *gaijin* does not mean foreigner, but something more along the lines of "person who is not Japanese." At best the word is employed as a colloquial term for a foreign person, and at worst the word functions as little more than a xenophobic epithet. Fumiteru Nitta has discussed how the word "*gaijin*" is not usually used to refer to Asians, and often functions as a highly racialized marker used to connote "non-Japanese" phenotypical features such as skin, hair, and eye colour. This is consistent with how Miyamoto is said to look like a "*gaijin*." See Fumiteru Nitta, "The Japanese Father, American Mother, and Their Children: Bicultural Socialization Experiences in Japan" (PhD diss., University of Hawai'i, 1989), 199-201.

¹⁰ Ibid. "*Misu Yunibāsu Japan wa...are? Nanijin? Nihonjin ja...nai...yone...*" While "*nanijin*" literally translates to "what (kind of) person?", in a given context it might inquire as to a variety of subject labels including nationality, race, or citizenship. Race is the main concern of the context given, and so I have translated accordingly.

the category of “Japanese” to be limited to one’s holding Japanese citizenship, being born and raised in Japan, possessing native fluency in the Japanese language, or demonstrating Japanese cultural knowledge and capability. Whatever those denouncing Miyamoto’s selection as Miss Universe Japan on Facebook, Twitter, and in the pages of the press understood “Japanese” to be, it was certainly *not* represented by the dark-skinned beauty queen.

An article from CNN.co.jp offered the following commentary on the situation: “Japan is a conservative society where about 98% of citizens are made up of the same race. [In such a society where] ‘Japanese-like’ light skin is considered a symbol of beauty, Miyamoto’s selection has been talked about as an exceptional occurrence.”¹¹ This statement asserts that light-coloured skin is Japanese-like (*nihonjin rashii*) – and it does so by using very similar language to that employed by critics to claim that Miyamoto is *not* Japanese-like (*nihonjin rashikunai*). Miyamoto being crowned Miss Universe Japan is seen to be outside the norm not only because she is *not* light-skinned and therefore *not* “Japanese-like.” More specifically, her crowning is viewed as unprecedented because she is not light-skinned in a country where purportedly 98% of the citizenry belong to the same racial category – a racial category, that per the logic of the above statement, can be defined at least in part by its members possessing light-coloured skin. CNN.co.jp’s racializing commentary does not just other Miyamoto as a dark-skinned anomaly, but also stands as a prime example of Japanese homogeneity discourse – a long-standing paradigm of the Japanese cultural sphere that insists on the racial, cultural, and linguistic uniformity of the Japanese people. It is a discourse that fervently denies the possibility that any Japanese person could differ from this model, as it does the possibility that anyone differing from this model could in fact be Japanese. The discourse has been famously historicized by historical sociologist Oguma Eiji as becoming a dominant cultural paradigm by the 1960s, and has since become an object of scholarly critique.¹² Continued belief in and reproduction of the discourse of

¹¹ “Beikoku no chichi wo motsu 20-sai, misu yunibaasu nihon daihyō ni.” “*Nihonjin wa kokumin no yaku 98% o onaji minzoku ga shimeru hoshuteki na shakai. ‘Nihonjin rashii’ shiroi hada ga bi no shouchou to sareru naka, Miyamoto-san no senshutsu wa irei na dekgoto toshite wadai o yonda.*” I have left the word “*minzoku*,” which is a problematic term with multiple and often overlapping meanings, untranslated. The term is discussed later in greater detail, but it is worth noting now that several scholars – including Michael Wiener (1995) and Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1998) – have acknowledged the term as a racial signifier, and it is following this that I have chosen to translate it as “race” in the context of a discussion of so-called “Japanese” skin colour.

¹² In addition to Eiji Oguma, *A Genealogy of ‘Japanese’ Self-images*, trans. David Askew (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2002), see also John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), Harumi Befu, *Hegemony of Homogeneity*, (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2001), Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-inventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation* (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc, 1998), Jane Hisa Yamashiro, “When the Diaspora Returns: Transnational

Japanese homogeneity has resulted in not only a limited consciousness regarding the reality of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic plurality in Japan, but also, at times, its outright *denial* – resulting in the erasure of the histories of many Japanese *as* Japanese from Japan’s social imaginary.

Regardless of the facts of Miyamoto’s place of birth, citizenship, native language, and cultural fluency, her status as a Japanese is denied on the basis of one and only one factor: *race*. The racial assumption that the category of “Japanese” depends upon rears its head when biracials – the so-called *hāfu* – such as Miyamoto are discussed, revealing the lingering power and influence that the concept of race continues to have in the Japanese discursive space. Biracial people, assumptions of “Japaneseness,” and race as a category of classification have a very particular relationship as objects of discussion. The sort of discourse referencing Miyamoto in a manner that not only racializes her, but also manages to oppose her to a putatively homogenous “Japanese” alternative, is in no way a recent phenomenon. In fact, the discursive racialization of biracial Japanese possesses a unique history of its own that stretches as far back as the immediate postwar period. During the American Occupation of Japan, relations between Occupation personnel and Japanese women resulted in the births of a large number of biracial Japanese children. Censorship policies enforced by the American military government in Japan (GHQ)¹³ limited mainstream reports on these children from 1945 to the early 1950s, but after the formal end of the Occupation in 1952, racializing discussions of so-called *konketsuji* or “mixed-blood children”¹⁴ occurred with great frequency in Japanese print media. These 1950s dialogues often functioned, implicitly or explicitly, to disassociate biracials from the category of “Japanese.” They have much in common with the 2015 commentary on Miyamoto Ariana, and are an integral part of the history of biracial Japanese – a socially-defined group that only continues to grow in the 21st century.

Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation Among Japanese Americans in Global Tokyo,” (PhD diss., University of Hawai’i, 2008). and Kanō Mikiyo, “Konketsuji Mondai to Tan’itsu Minzoku Shinwa no Seisei,” in *Senryō to Sei: Seisaku, Jittai, Hyōshō*, ed. Keisen Jogakuen Daigaku Heiwa Bunka Kenkyūjo. (Tokyo: Inpakuto Shuppankai, 2007).

¹³ General Headquarters, often used interchangeably with SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers). SCAP functioned both as General Douglas MacArthur’s formal title while administering occupied Japan, as well as a catch-all referent for the Occupation administration in general.

¹⁴ The term “mixed-blood child” (*konketsuji*) is now recognized as a politically incorrect and pejorative term for a child of mixed Japanese and (usually non-Asian) foreign heritage. During the postwar period, it often carried a certain resonance with whiteness and/or blackness and thus tended to connote the children of American soldiers. It is distinct from the more contemporary Japanese term *hāfu*, and due to its historical specificity, is used in this study.

Yet the 1950s *konketsuji* discourse exists in a very specific historical moment, and differs in significant ways from the later reactions to Miyamoto. Whereas Miyamoto is racialized in terms of her appearance only, postwar *konketsuji* were racially referenced not just in terms of phenotype – but in incredibly diverse and creative ways so as to position them as something very *alien* to the idea of “Japanese.” Simultaneously, 1950s *konketsuji* discourse said as much about so-called “pure” majority Japanese as it did “mixed-bloods,” and may have played a significant part in making the idea of a homogeneous Japanese race seem credible in the first place.

0.2 The Purpose of this Study

The goal of this study is twofold. The following pages first aim to define and explore Japan’s 1950s *konketsuji* discourse as an othering, racist discourse that sought to disassociate biracial Japanese – as the figure of the *konketsuji* – from the very category of “Japanese.” The second aim, dependent on the first, is to illustrate how this process of racist knowledge production in turn conceptualized an idea of “Japanese” as a pure, uniform category in opposition to “*konketsuji*.” *Konketsuji* discourse constructed a normative sense of the Japanese racialized self that was *not* “mixed,” perhaps rendering plausible the idea of a homogeneous, alien-free Japanese race that would later rise to prominence. This study focuses on biracial Japanese primarily as figures in discourse. I argue that the discursive division between biracial Japanese and their “pure” opposites occurring in the 1950s was manufactured and rationalized by way of a complex racialization process that was not limited to othering *konketsuji* merely in terms of somatic characteristics such as skin colour; *konketsuji* were further racialized in terms of behaviour, social origin, mentality, and even political potential – and consequently situated as a highly non-normative *racial* icon. I illustrate my claims by way of primary source analysis. Working with a collection of 1950s-era texts, I analyze racialized representations of *konketsuji* in popular discourse from the years following the Occupation. This study uses race theory to specify the mode, method, and variety of racialization and racist expression at work in discursive representations of *konketsuji*, allowing for understandings of “race” and “racism” as they relate specifically to *konketsuji* and their implied objects of opposition – so-called “Japanese.”

0.3 Theory and Methodology

A project such as this, which takes the topic of race as so central a concern, requires a strong understanding of the concept. That race has no credible basis in scientific fact as either a system of classification for human groups nor as a physically observable reflection of biological reality has been well-established in scholarly circles for some time. Although the concept of race has been clearly demonstrated to be without scientific validity, racial categorization has nevertheless remained a social phenomenon into the 21st century. Race is accorded social significance despite its lack of ontological integrity, and scholarly consensus holds that race can be understood at the most fundamental level as a socially-constructed phenomenon.

However, when endeavouring to go beyond a baseline social scientific definition of the term, scholars have been considerably challenged in theorizing race – and racism – in terms of its referents, function, and ideology. Race has been commonly thought of as referencing phenotypical characteristics such as skin colour and hair texture, as seen in Pierre L. Van den Berghe’s definition of race as “a human group that defines itself and/or is defined by other groups as different from other groups by virtue of innate and immutable physical characteristics”¹⁵ – but certainly not exclusively. For instance, Étienne Balibar has spoken of race functioning as a *class* signifier,¹⁶ and Frantz Fanon has connected race to a certain *cultural* identity and way of living.¹⁷ Theories of racism have proven equally variable. Some scholars mainly conceptualize racism in terms of ethnic prejudice and discrimination,¹⁸ while others have been more inclined to reference racism as pertaining to a process of value judgement based on race.¹⁹ Race and racism are evidently highly plural and interpretive concepts. As Takashi Fujitani has observed, “race is a signifier that has no stable substance and that is why racism can manifest

¹⁵ Pierre L. Van den Berghe, *Race and Racism* 2nd ed., (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1978), 9.

¹⁶ Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991). See especially 37-67, “Racism and Nationalism,” and 204-216, “Class Racism.”

¹⁷ See for example “The Black Man and Language” in Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, (New York: Grove Press, 2008) 1-23, and “Racism and Culture” in Frantz Fanon, *Toward The African Revolution* (New York: Grove Press, 1969), 31-44.

¹⁸ See for example, Francisco Bethencourt, *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 1.

¹⁹ See for example, Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Racisms,” in *Anatomy of Racism*, ed. David Theo Goldberg, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 5-6.

in so many complex and sedimented ways – from those types based upon biological and phenotypical differences, to blood, to cultural dispositions, to religion and even ... non-normative subjectivities – and why it so often becomes conflated with other forms of discrimination including sexism.”²⁰

Thus, given the plural, diverse, and historically specific nature of race and racism, the concepts tend to resist the establishment of a definitive theoretical framework. For this reason, the theoretical treatment of race and racism(s) employed by this study mainly follows the work of leading race theorist David Theo Goldberg. In his 1993 book *Racist Culture*, Goldberg speaks of “race” and “racial” as “the various designations of group differentiation invoked in the name of race throughout modernity,”²¹ and the term “racialized” as including “any and all significance extended both explicitly and silently by racial reference over discursive expression and practice.”²² Race is only what it is *said or thought to be* for the purpose of dividing humanity into groups, and a group is racialized whenever they are referenced by an utterance connoting race. Racial reference may thus take on a myriad of forms, and with this in mind, Goldberg voices the need for an “open-ended” theory of race and racism that “would have to account for historical alterations and discontinuities in the modes of racial formation, in the disparate phenomena commonly expressed in racialized terms, as well as in those expressions properly considered racist.”²³

Goldberg begins to develop this framework by positing a broad *field of discourse* composed of *all* racialized expressions, including beliefs, verbalizations such as slurs and epithets, and even those racialized expressions that come about when discussing the logics of racial thinking.²⁴ Goldberg describes this field as follows:

It is the (open-ended) theoretical space in which the discourse emerges and transforms in and through its expression(s). What is established in this emergence of discourse is a set

²⁰ Takashi Fujitani, “The Japanese Monarchy and Modern Racism,” (unpublished paper for the Jinbunken Project on a Japan-based Global Study of Racial Representations, March 2nd, 2014), 4.

²¹ David Theo Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning*, (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), 2.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, 41.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 41-42.

of *discursive* or *expressive objects*. Rules of implication (implicatures) constituted in the establishment of the formulation of the discourse define the object(s) of discursive expression. Racism turns out to be one such object among possible others in the emergence and elaboration of racialized discourse. As the formative rules are historically specific and thus subject to change, so, too, is the discursive object in question. Racism is not a singular transhistorical expression but transforms in relation to significant changes in the field of discourse.²⁵

Goldberg's proposed framework thus allows for the accommodation of notions of race and racism in *all* their variations of form, expression, meaning, and historical variation, without falling into the trap of conceptually isolating them via a theorization that insists on a narrow and rigid definition of terms. Goldberg thus insists that "there is no generic racism, only historically specific racisms each with their own sociotemporally specific causes,"²⁶ and encourages the researcher to historicize and specify racisms in terms of their signifiers and signified, and objects and implicatures.²⁷ Goldberg only further elucidates the need to specify racisms and racist expressions by discussing their plurality within similar contexts of time and/or space:

There may be different racisms in the same place at different times; or different racisms in various different places at the same time; or, again, different racist expressions—different, that is, in the conditions of their expression, their forms of expression, the objects of their expression, and their effects—among different people at the same space-time conjuncture. Examples of these varying types abound. The racisms that sustained as well as those that informed opposition to slavery in the United States differ from postslavery segregationism, and each differs substantially from contemporary racist expressions. The racisms that buttressed British colonial rule in South Africa differ in some fundamental ways from the establishment of apartheid in the 1940s.²⁸

Yet a complete understanding of a given racism is not to be had only through identifying its particular incarnation and function, in a particular place, at a particular time. Goldberg is also very much concerned with the *effects* of racist expression, which must be understood independently from relatively neutral racialized expression that lacks a racist resonance.²⁹ He

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

attempts to stipulate criteria which the researcher may utilize to identify instances of racism within racialized expression. Goldberg declares that “*racisms* involve promoting exclusions, or the actual exclusions of people in virtue of their being deemed members of different racial groups, however racial groups are taken to be constituted.”³⁰ Following this, Goldberg is careful to stress that much like racism itself, the *ends* of racist exclusion should not be understood as singular in form: “Racism excludes racially defined others, or promotes, or secures, or sustains such exclusion. Often racist exclusions will serve as a means to some form of exploitation, but there are times when the exclusions will be undertaken or expressed for their own sakes, for the recognition of the putatively inherent value the expressions are claimed to represent.”³¹ For Goldberg, it is the presence of a politics of *exclusion* – varied in purpose and intent – that signifies the presence of racism within racialized expression. He observes that “classification, valuation, and ordering are processes central to racial creation and construction. The ordering at stake ... must at least identify difference; and the valuation ... must minimally sustain ... a criterion of inclusion and exclusion. It follows that race is irreducibly a *political* category.”³²

Goldberg has thus furnished the researcher with an indispensable toolkit with which to analyze racist discourse. Race cannot be thought of as an ahistorical, monolithic designator that subsumes multiple categories of group differentiation. That which functions as race (*object*) and that which serves to reference it (*implicature*) in a given spatiotemporal moment must first be understood by historicizing, particularizing, and specifying a given sample of racializing expression in its own context. Once the particularities of a racial reference are understood, racism may then be identified within a racialized utterance by deconstructing a politics of exclusion that seeks to differentiate one political category (race) from another. When the basis of this exclusion is laid bare, the specific variety of a given racism can be understood – be it racism that excludes a racialized identity defined primarily in terms of phenotype, class, gender, culture, religion, and so on.

Thus, for this study’s purpose of analyzing racialized representations of *konketsuji* in postwar Japanese discourse, what race is, or what race is *not*, is not significant. What is significant is how *konketsuji* discourse references and articulates race, what race means *to* and

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 98.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

³² *Ibid.*, 87.

within the discourse, and the racist exclusions that the discourse makes on the basis of those references and articulations. Towards the goal of unearthing significance in racialized representations of *konketsuji*, I will couple Goldberg's theoretical framework of race with a mode of discourse analysis informed by the theories of Foucault and Derrida. I follow Stuart Hall's summary of Foucault's notion of discourse:

A discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – i.e. a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. When statements about a topic are made within a particular discourse, the discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way. It also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed. A discourse does not consist of one statement, but of several statements working together to form what ... Foucault ... calls a “discursive formation.” ... Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language.³³

This study thus makes a distinction between Japanese children born of American fathers and Japanese mothers – and *konketsuji*. *Konketsuji* are understood to be a representation of a particular type of knowledge regarding such children. They are the objects systematically constructed as such by the discursive formations that represent them in a given way.

One of the central tasks of this study is to demonstrate how said construction is facilitated by racial reference and racist exclusion. Towards this aim, I apply a deconstructionist approach to discourse analysis in order to identify the presence, method, and character of racist exclusions within *konketsuji* discourse. “Deconstruction,” as applied in this study, “signifies a project of critical thought whose task is to locate and ‘take apart’ those concepts which serve as the axioms or rules for a period of thought.”³⁴ I follow Laurel D. Kamada's summary that “*deconstructionism* ... tries to show how the structures formed in discourse, which we take as general ‘truths,’ are politically produced and distributed by people with privileged access to power and control. By pulling apart and *deconstructing* the ‘commonsense’ structures, the political processes that hold them together can be revealed – for example ... construction of

³³ Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben, *Formations of Modernity* (Oxford: Polity in Association with Open University, 1992), 201.

³⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), xxxii.

associations, such as the connection of a certain ‘race’ of people with laziness.”³⁵ For the purposes of analyzing what I will demonstrate to be racist discourse, deconstruction will occur through identifying the racism (the political process of racialized exclusion) within a statement, and separating it from the representation of *konketsuji* given by the statement (the “truths” it presents). In so doing, I will also attend to the actors behind the political process – namely the speakers of the *konketsuji* discourse – as one racialized political category discussing another, and determine which of these categories the so-called “truths” being produced benefits and how.

I may now clarify my usage of the terms “biracial” and “*konketsuji*,” both of which I reference frequently throughout. By “biracial,” I mean a person born to parents of different socially-constructed racial categories. Historically, the racialization of these categories in Japan has often – but not always – been articulated along phenotypical lines, especially where non-Asian peoples regarded as “white” and “black” have been concerned. As such, when I speak of “biracial Japanese” throughout this study, I refer to those Japanese born to one ethnic Japanese parent and one parent of a separate, phenotypically-distinct racial category. I am thus concerned with those Japanese who have been seen to differ significantly enough from ethnic Japanese in terms of phenotype to have acquired labels such as “*ainoko*,”³⁶ “*konketsuji*,” and “*hāfu*” throughout history. Such terms have not been used on a frequent basis in Japan to connote biracial Japanese of East Asian ancestry – even when categories such as “Korean” and “Chinese” have carried a racial resonance. In the historical context handled by this study, biracial Japanese thus tend to refer mainly to Japanese of Euro-American and African-American ancestry.³⁷ By “*konketsuji*,” I refer only to the figure referenced as such in *konketsuji* discourse – a figure named, defined, and constructed by way of a racialized discursive formation.

³⁵ Laurel D. Kamada, *Hybrid Identities and Adolescent Girls: Being 'Half' in Japan* (Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2010), 21-22.

³⁶ Often translated as “child of mixture,” or “in-between child,” *ainoko* preceded *konketsuji* as the standard term of reference for biracial Japanese. Also applied to animals so as to denote a “crossbreed” or “mongrel,” it has long held a pejorative connotation in Japan and is now considered even more politically incorrect than *konketsuji*.

³⁷ 1950s discourse often figured the fathers of *konketsuji* as exclusively American, differentiating them only as “white” or “black” – and as such, in analyzing said discourse, I am only able to focus on representations of these particular racial categories. In truth, despite it not being a popular preconception at the time, *konketsuji* fathers were made up of servicemen and Occupation personnel from not only the United States but also Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, and India. See Walter Hamilton, *Children of the Occupation: Japan's Untold Story*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013), viii.

0.4 Organization and Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 seeks to place biracial Japanese and the discourse of *konketsuji* into historical context. I first give a historical treatment of Japanese identity discourse from the Meiji period to the 1960s in order to view how the category of “Japanese” has been popularly constructed over time. This task is crucial to understanding the significance of 1950s *konketsuji* discourse as a discourse that defined knowledge of majority Japanese in addition to biracials. I then historicize both the figure of the *konketsuji* as represented in the 1950s, as well as the historical moment in which it emerged. It is important to understand how biracials were thought of *prior* to the 1950s in order to make sense of the unprecedented volume of press activity that surrounded them in the aftermath of the Occupation, as well as the racialized manner in which they were represented.

Chapter 2 focuses on the racialized representation of *konketsuji* in terms of their assumed birth origins. I explore the relationship between the *konketsuji* and another discursive figure of postwar Japan: the streetwalking, foreigner-bedding prostitute called the *panpan*. The *panpan*, a figure that had been thoroughly othered in popular discourse as an icon of subversive female sexuality, served as a useable alibi explaining away the births of *konketsuji*. After the formal end of the Occupation in 1952, *konketsuji* discourse increasingly promoted the idea of such “improper” women as mothers of *konketsuji*. In terms of their social origin, *konketsuji* were more broadly represented as being born of a certain type of immoral sexual union that was interracial in nature and took place out of wedlock. *Konketsuji* were thus racialized and alienated in terms of who their parents were, and the conditions under which their conceptions took place.

Chapter 3 explores how the definitive qualities of *konketsuji* were manufactured and represented. The racial difference of *konketsuji* was presented as not just their skin colour, but also their psychology, political potential, IQ, and status as objects of prejudice and disdain. By claiming *konketsuji* were the property of America, an alien element, non-Asian, sufferers of inferiority complexes, and lower in intellect than “regular” Japanese children, the *konketsuji* discourse of the 1950s constructed a racial archetype that was recognizably non-“Japanese.”

Chapter 4 looks at the debate to integrate or segregate *konketsuji* into Japanese society via enrollment in regular public schools. Segregationists consistently made racializing arguments in favour of keeping *konketsuji* out of public education by focusing on their difference as an obstacle to assimilation. Differences contrasting *konketsuji* to mainstream Japanese children were given not only in terms of physical differences in skin, eye, and hair colour. A perceived

potential for criminality on the part of *konketsuji* as well as the assumed high likelihood of *konketsuji* suffering from bullying served to license their exclusion also. Even when an integrationist stance was taken, *konketsuji* discourse was reluctant to include *konketsuji* within the category of “Japanese.” Integrationists instead argued for coexistence between “Japanese” and othered *konketsuji*, or the outright elimination of *konketsuji* as a category in and of itself.

Chapter 1

The Discourse of *Konketsuji* in Historical Context

1.1 The Genealogy of Japanese Homogeneity Discourse

The doubting of Miyamoto Ariana's status as "Japanese" is indicative of the lingering power of the discourse of Japanese homogeneity in the 21st century. The ideology behind the discourse is the myth of the homogenous nation (*tan'itsu minzoku*), which Oguma Eiji identifies and historicizes in *A Genealogy of 'Japanese' Self-images*¹ as a paradigm of Japanese self-identification that came to social prominence post-World War II.² Oguma presents his baseline definition of the myth as the belief that "the Japanese nation has consisted, and today still consists, of only the Japanese nation, which shares a single, pure origin, and a common culture and lineage."³ Beliefs such as this that focus on a so-called pure origin of the Japanese race have been in existence since the Meiji period, but it was not until the postwar years that the myth became rooted as a truly paradigmatic ideology.

Theories on the origin of the Japanese nation have been in competition since the very foundation of the modern Japanese state. Oguma observes that by the 1880s, such theories had developed into two main streams of thought. In the early Meiji period, Euro-American anthropologists claimed that the Japanese were a mixed people descended from both the indigenous inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago and their immigrant conquerors.⁴ Some Japanese intellectuals, such as nativist scholar Yokoyama Yoshikiyo, accepted these theories and argued in their favour,⁵ but others began to argue against them in the late 1880s – such as Kurokawa Mayori and Naitō Chisō who claimed that no alien peoples had ever dwelt upon the Japanese islands,⁶ and that they had been inhabited only by the Japanese since the dawn of time.

¹ Originally published in Japanese in 1995 as *Tan'itsu Minzoku Shinwa no Kigen*.

² Oguma, 316.

³ Oguma, xxx.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

Both lines of thought existed throughout the entirety of the prewar period, but it was the “mixed” theory that rose to prominence in the interwar years. As Tessa Morris-Suzuki observes, racial purity rhetoric did not serve any practical purpose in a reality where Japan, a colonial power at the time, could not benefit from ideologies that alienated its colonial subjects. Morris-Suzuki states that “ideas of the Japanese as a unique race bound by blood to a quasi-divine imperial family were hardly calculated to temper the opposition of Koreans or Taiwanese to foreign rule.”⁷ Prevailing theories of the Japanese national makeup during the imperial era were exemplified in the work of historian Kita Sadakichi, who advocated a “mixed-nation theory” of the Japanese race in a 1929 study.⁸ Kita’s characterization of the Japanese nation was a far-cry from the idea of enduring homogeneity:

Japan ... had originally been inhabited by a variety of races These races had been subjugated and molded into a single ethnicity by a group of bronze-age newcomers who included ancestors of the Japanese emperors Later migrants from Korea and China had also been absorbed into the racial mix, as had Ainu inhabitants of northern Honshū. In other words, the *Yamato minzoku* ... had emerged from an intermingling of people drawn from most corners of the present-day Japanese empire.⁹

Morris-Suzuki states that, not surprisingly, this “‘melting pot’ image of Japanese origins ... meshed beautifully with colonial assimilationist policies. If Japan, in the past, had succeeded in melding together people from a wide range of racial and linguistic backgrounds, surely it could do the same again with its new colonial subjects in Taiwan and Korea.”¹⁰ The mixed-nation theory was later intersected with the national polity (*kokutai*) theory, a line of thought which “saw the Great Japanese Empire as a large Family State presided over by the Imperial Family ... [with] the Emperor as the patriarch.”¹¹ This allowed for the figuring of Koreans and Taiwanese as “adopted children and brides”¹² within the family (*ie*) of the empire – an effort to

⁷ Morris-Suzuki, 90.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹¹ Oguma, 31.

¹² *Ibid.*, 121.

instill obedience and solidarity amongst imperial subjects through national polity rhetoric couched in a language of Confucian ethics and filial piety.¹³ This “Asian-friendly” theory of the Japanese race was promoted by the Japanese Ministry of Education in a series of lectures conducted in February 1928,¹⁴ after which, as Oguma asserts, “the mixed-nation theory had been incorporated fully into the logic of the empire and lay there until the time when it would be able to contribute to Japanese aggression.”¹⁵ During the pre- and wartime period, what it meant to be “Japanese” according to the dominant ideology of the time was to belong to the family state of the Japanese Empire. There was no paradigmatic understanding of the Japanese as possessing a pure, homogenous national essence that would preclude colonial subjects such as Koreans and Taiwanese from being accounted for *as* Japanese within the national polity. On the contrary, not only were they fully accounted for within mixed-nation discourse, but the mixed-nation theory created a deterministic, teleological view of the destiny of Koreans and Taiwanese as people who were fated to be absorbed into the Japanese nation.¹⁶

However, with Japan’s surrender and the resulting loss of its colonies, many of its “adopted children and brides” were lost,¹⁷ with those that yet remained in Japan proper perceived by many as constituting only a small minority of the population.¹⁸ The consequence of this would have great implications on understandings of the Japanese nation:

Japanese intellectuals could no longer call upon the logic of the past, such as the theory of assimilation or the Family State, and lost the framework with which they could discuss alien ethnic groups within Japan. Most of these intellectuals found it impossible to talk about coexistence with alien peoples except in step with the expansion of empire. Everything that had previously been thought to be correct was, of necessity, turned upside down.¹⁹

¹³ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁶ Morris-Suzuki, 92. See also Michael Wiener, “Discourses of Race, Nation, and Empire in Pre-1945 Japan,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18, no. 3: 433-456, 1995.

¹⁷ Oguma, 298. Korean and Taiwanese subjects alone had constituted approximately one third of the empire’s population at the time of Japan’s surrender.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Where those Koreans and Taiwanese who *did* remain in Japan were concerned, the prevailing attitude was to see them “returned” to their homelands instead of incorporating them into any newly-conceived “multinational” Japan.²⁰ Oguma asserts that “it was in this environment that a number of theorists emerged, who argued for a peace-loving homogeneous state to replace the prewar militaristic multi-national empire. The self-image of Japan as an island nation that contained no aliens and was therefore peaceful and tranquil, proved to be very attractive to a people tired of war.”²¹ Yet theorists would soon re-figure this new interpretation of “Japaneseness” as having been in effect since time immemorial – so much so that the mixed-nation theory would be rendered passé.²²

Both Oguma and sociologist John Lie agree on the 1960s as the key period in which a discourse of “Japaneseness” characterized by a strong belief in homogeneity became entrenched as a cultural paradigm. Oguma clearly states that, to the best of his knowledge, “it was in the 1960s, when Japanese economic growth took off, that the phrase [homogenous nation] began to appear frequently in the press,”²³ and presents two rough ways by which the myth of homogeneity came about. He first argues that a conservative discourse (attributed to the likes of Koizumi Shinzō, Ishihara Shintarō, and Mishima Yukio) that emerged in the 1960s disseminated the myth into the public imaginary by insisting on the idea of a Japan whose strengths lay in the “fact” of a homogenous people, language, culture, and unbroken political unity existing in the Japanese islands since time immemorial.²⁴ Secondly, Oguma asserts that the myth was also established by critics of Japanese society such as Nakane Chie and Masuda Yoshio who argued that cultural homogeneity and pure blood in existence since the remote past was responsible for Japan’s apparent lack of skill in dealing with other nations on the world stage.²⁵ Lie sees the

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 299.

²² Ibid., 311-312.

²³ Ibid., 316.

²⁴ Ibid., 317.

²⁵ Oguma, 318.

belief in homogeneity as a response to renewed questions of Japanese identity in the 1960s.²⁶ During what he describes as a period of “nullity” in the aftermath of catastrophic defeat and foreign occupation, Lie asserts that any search for Japanese identity defied logic and evidence “when tradition had been so thoroughly pulverized,”²⁷ and that intellectuals only began to once more ponder the meaning of “Japaneseness” in the late 1960s. As Oguma states, by this time, a myth of homogeneity claiming that due to millennia of isolation from the outside world, the Japanese had never experienced conflict with outside nations, were culturally unified, were unskilled in both war and diplomacy, and knew only peace,²⁸ would “proffer a usable narrative of Japanese identity and uniqueness.”²⁹

This genealogy is incomplete without the addition of 1950s *konketsuji* discourse. *Konketsuji* discourse arose in the midst of the postwar “nullity” period in which prior conceptions of “Japaneseness” were being abandoned, and commonsense notions of Japanese identity were open to drastic re-configuration. The presence of biracial Japanese in this moment could have conditioned a new discourse of Japanese *heterogeneity*. However, history shows that it did not – and it did not because the racialization process that biracial Japanese underwent as the figure of the *konketsuji* made certain assertions about them that in turn gave way to certain inferences about the “Japanese.” The result was the label of “Japanese” connoting normativity in opposition to the anomalous racial other that was *konketsuji*. By opposing “Japanese” to “mixed-blood,” assumptions of normativity were equated to assumptions of racial purity.

1.2 A Brief History of “Mixed-Blood” Japanese to the 1950s

That biracial Japanese were suddenly singled out in the popular discourse of 1950s Japan as the figure of the *konketsuji* calls to attention the historicity of Japanese society’s postwar encounter with these “problem” children. In order to properly understand why – in the specific spatiotemporal moment that was 1950s Japan – these so-called “mixed-blood children” came to occupy the historical position that they did as objects of racially-othering discourse, it is

²⁶ Lie, 125.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

²⁸ Oguma., 322.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

necessary to first examine the history of biracial Japanese from its very beginnings to the postwar period. History shows that Japanese “mixed-bloods” began to be identified as such in the 16th century. However, prior to the prewar period, biracial Japanese were not objects of widespread, racializing discussion. In fact, while European racial thinking began to seep its way into the cultural sphere of the Japanese elite as early as the late Tokugawa period, coherent ideologies of race did not appear in Japan until the late 1800s.³⁰ Yet even in the first half of the 20th century, biracials did not seem to be a cause for much concern on the part of most Japanese. However, in the postwar era, it is very important to think of biracial Japanese – as *konketsuji* – as a group placed firmly *outside* the category of “Japanese” on the basis of *race*. The *konketsuji* figure of the postwar period was a *new* type of biracial Japanese – a historically-constructed racial avatar that stood apart from the “mixed-bloods” of the past.

European traders and missionaries were active in Japan as early as the 16th century. Inevitably, relationships of a sexual nature formed between these travellers and the local Japanese. Gary P. Leupp claims that prior to the late 1630s, there is little to no evidence suggesting that most Japanese were anything but tolerant and accepting of the children produced by these unions,³¹ and he has even observed that some Japanese commoners willingly adopted such children during these times.³² While some scholars have emphasized that “mixed-bloods” existed in such small numbers throughout the Tokugawa period as to be almost negligible,³³ there is evidence that by 1627 the “mixed” Japanese population was so large in places like the port of Hirado in Kyūshū so as to cause Dutch governor of Taiwan Pieter Nuyts to fear that soon Hirado would have “as many Dutch mestizos as thorough Japanese for inhabitants.”³⁴ There

³⁰ Gary P. Leupp, *Interracial Intimacy in Japan: Western Men and Japanese Women, 1543-1900*, (London: Continuum, 2003), 181.

³¹ *Ibid.*, x.

³² *Ibid.*, 41. “Mixed” Japanese are referenced only sporadically in primary source material prior to the postwar period, but when they do appear it is almost exclusively as people of *Euro-American* stock. Where pre-1950s time periods are concerned, this section thus deals only with the “mixed-blood” Japanese who were denoted as such (and whose history has been recorded): biracial Japanese of Euro-American parentage.

³³ Robert A. Fish, “Mixed-Blood Japanese: A Reconsideration of Race and Purity in Japan,” in *Japan’s Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, Michael Wiener ed., 2nd ed., (New York: Routledge, 2009), 43.

³⁴ Derek Massarella, *A World Elsewhere: Europe’s Encounter With Japan in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 234.

were also most definitely no discussions of Japanese racial purity and homogeneity functioning to differentiate “mixed” Japanese at a time when race as a concept did not exist in Japan. It should then come as no surprise that attitudes in late 16th century Japan were rather lenient when it came to mixing. As Leupp explains, “in Japan there was no discourse comparable to the Iberian discussion of *limpieza de sangre* ... [and] there seems to have been little concern with insuring the ‘purity’ of Japanese blood.”³⁵

Attitudes towards “mixed” children underwent some changes in 1636 – but for reasons entirely unrelated to race. Paranoia over the spread of Christianity prompted the Japanese shogunate to issue an expulsion edict targeting the Portuguese, their wives, and children. This also included two-hundred eighty-seven³⁶ “mixed” children and their Japanese foster parents.³⁷ Three years later, thirty-two additional mixed-bloods – mostly the children of Dutchmen and their Japanese consorts – were expelled along with their parents on the supposed fears that they might one day rise up to rule over Japan.³⁸ Yet, despite the sort of argument that Timon Screech makes regarding the expulsion edicts of the late 1630s signifying an institutional attack on racial hybridity,³⁹ the fact remains that there *was* no ideology of race in 17th century Japan. Tessa Morris-Suzuki instead rationalizes the expulsion efforts as more of an exercise in state power to curtail the spread of a subversive religion in Christianity – and prevent *its* coming to rule over Japan.⁴⁰ Historian Takekoshi Yosaburō even explicitly states that the children were exiled “to weed out the seeds of Roman Catholicism.”⁴¹ While it is true that the expelled Dutch had no connection to the Catholic missionary effort,⁴² this should not suggest that the 1639 expulsion

³⁵ Leupp., 42.

³⁶ Yosoburo Takekoshi, *The Economic Aspects of the History of Japan*, vol. 2, (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1967), 111. The misspelling of Takekoshi’s first name as “Yosoburo” instead of “Yosaburō” appears in the original source.

³⁷ Leupp., 65.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

³⁹ Timon Screech, “Race and Gender,” in *Disrupted Borders: An Intervention in Definitions of Boundaries*, Sunil Gupta ed., (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1993), 138-139.

⁴⁰ Morris-Suzuki, 81-82.

⁴¹ Takekoshi, 111.

⁴² Leupp, 105.

edict was really some sort of “purification” effort devised to stamp out “mixed-bloods.” Derek Massarella has read the situation as one in which the shogunate “preferred to be rid of people tainted with Christianity no matter how indirectly.”⁴³ A good piece of evidence to support the idea that the expulsions were not a direct attack on “mixing” is the fact that the shogunate continued to provide women to the Dutch in Hirado well after the expulsion edict.⁴⁴ In the end, whether or not these Dutch-Japanese children, and the Iberian-Japanese before them, were expelled as part of a racial culling effort is ultimately unimportant – because there is no evidence to suggest it, nor any evidence for any sort of discourse of racial homogeneity that would have justified it.

Indeed, 1639 did not see the end of “mixed-blood” Japanese. In fact, there were enough of them in Nagasaki in the early 18th century to warrant the special attention of the Shōtoku-era (1711-1715) shogunate in the form of a number of edicts *prohibiting* mixed-bloods from leaving the country.⁴⁵ This being the height of the *sakoku*-era, where all Japanese were barred from exiting Japan, “mixed-bloods” are seen to have been treated no differently from other Japanese. In fact, Dutch references attest to their full acceptance in mainstream Nagasaki society as “altogether Japanese.”⁴⁶ With the lifting of the ban on Christianity in 1873, mixed marriages were officially recognized and registered once more. Citizenship, however, was patrilineal – so any children of foreign nationals were denied Japanese citizenship (a practice that continued as late as 1985).⁴⁷ Leupp demonstrates that not only was there a fair amount of biracial Japanese living in the country in the late 19th century, but also that there is little evidence to suggest that they were racially differentiated from other Japanese or even discriminated against on the basis of race.⁴⁸ While it would be short-sighted at best to deny the possibility that discrimination in the Meiji-era did in fact occur, there is actually more historical evidence to specifically suggest that biracial Japanese were *not* excluded from Japanese society – such as primary source documents

⁴³ Massarella, 234.

⁴⁴ Leupp., 106.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 196-197.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 204.

that attest to biracial children being included in Japanese family registries (*koseki*) and also being legally adopted by grandparents.⁴⁹

There is some evidence that biracial Japanese experienced discrimination in the first half of the 20th century, but just as much evidence to suggest that many of them lived as comfortable members of Japanese society.⁵⁰ The lives of late Meiji, Taishō, and pre-1945 Shōwa era biracial Japanese did not conform to one single pattern, though these people generally tended toward the higher echelons of society. Many were the offspring of missionaries, business magnates, and scholars – completely unlike the postwar biracials born to Allied Occupation servicemen and (usually lower-class) Japanese women.⁵¹ Walter Hamilton has, however, brought some attention to instances of discrimination experienced by exactly three biracial Japanese at the height of Japanese ultranationalism in the late 1930s.⁵² Yet whether biracial Japanese prior to the postwar period were discriminated against or not, the fact remains that they were – in direct contrast to the *konketsuji* of the postwar period – never discursively positioned as a “problem” nor as racially different from other Japanese. It is certainly true that by this time racial ideologies indeed existed in Japan, as did discourses of Japanese “blood purity,” but eugenic-minded Japanese were far more worried about Koreans and other Asian colonial subjects constituting a threat to “pure” Japanese blood than biracials of European and African ancestry.⁵³ The biracial Japanese of this time did not attract any significant attention from the press or government – nor were they discussed with much frequency.⁵⁴ There is no evidence of any concerted effort to engender an understanding of biracial Japanese as anything *but* Japanese from the 16th century through to the first half of the 20th century. The same cannot be said for the biracial Japanese of the postwar era.

During the Allied Occupation of Japan of 1945-1952, “fraternization” between Japanese women and Occupation personnel occurred frequently. At least initially, contact between the

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵⁰ Hamilton, 112. See also Egawa Ureo et al., “Konketsuji ni umarete,” *Bungei Shunju*, March, 1953, 232-241.

⁵¹ Fish, 44.

⁵² Hamilton, 117-118.

⁵³ Fish, 44.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

occupiers and local Japanese women was largely facilitated by the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA), a Japanese government-sponsored, and U.S. co-opted, project that provided so-called “comfort” facilities (brothels, dance halls, etc.) for the exclusive use of the Occupation forces.⁵⁵ The RAA was established on August 18th of 1945, only three days after the Japanese surrender. Anticipating a wave of barbarous rapes in the aftermath of defeat in war, the RAA mainly recruited lower-class and poverty-stricken women to service American soldiers in an enterprise couched in a rhetoric of “self-sacrifice” that sought to “protect” the chastity of middle-class Japanese women from rapacious American sexuality.⁵⁶ The RAA was short-lived, however. A steadily-growing rate of venereal disease infection among servicemen prompted the American authorities to declare the RAA establishments “off-limits” in February of 1946, and the RAA was shut down after only a few months of operation.⁵⁷ This effectively deregulated the sexual outlets available to the Americans,⁵⁸ and Occupation personnel subsequently sought sex elsewhere.

Thus, the Japanese government’s attempts to limit the scope of American sexual activity failed. The subsequent sexual partners of American servicemen were highly varied. Included among them were previous employees of the RAA who had literally spilled out onto the streets to become *panpan* – streetwalkers.⁵⁹ Many of the relationships between Occupation personnel and Japanese women resulted in the birth of children, albeit not always under the same circumstances. These children were the products of sexual encounters encompassing a wide spectrum of relationships from one-time meetings, ongoing arrangements, rapes, and marriages to name a few.⁶⁰ The important point to consider is that there was no single pattern in regards to

⁵⁵ Yuki Shiga-Fujime, “The Prostitutes’ Union and the Impact of the 1956 Anti-Prostitution Law in Japan,” *U.S.-Japan Women’s Journal: English Supplement* 5, 1993, 7.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁵⁸ Sarah Kovner, *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 15.

⁵⁹ Mire Koikari “Rethinking Gender and Power in the US Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952”, *Gender and History* 11, no. 2 (July 1999), 321.

⁶⁰ Robert A. Fish, “The Heiress and the Love Children: Sawada Miki and the Elizabeth Saunders Home for Mixed-Blood Orphans in Postwar Japan” (PhD diss., University of Hawai’i, 2002), 32.

how children of U.S. servicemen and Japanese women were conceived,⁶¹ despite a prevailing perception throughout the postwar years that biracial children were exclusively the offspring of prostitutes.⁶² Some had anticipated the births of these children, such as a female American missionary who sought approval and aid from Colonel Crawford Sams, head of GHQ's Public Health and Welfare Section, to open a care facility for the new, soon-to-be born generation of biracials.⁶³ The proposal was rejected. Sams countered that there was no way to know how many children might be born, suggesting that the mothers of these children receive vocational training instead.⁶⁴ Official statistics regarding the new generation of biracial children were not collected until the Occupation had formally ended. By early 1953, a report released by the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare placed the number of "mixed-blood children" in Japan at 5,013 – the vast majority of whom were the offspring of American soldiers and other Occupation personnel.⁶⁵

Popular discourse treated the presence of so great a number of phenotypically-distinct biracials as an unprecedented occurrence in the country's history. To be sure, biracial Japanese had grown far more visible to the nation at large than ever before – but many anxiously estimated that this new *konketsuji* population was much larger than it was.⁶⁶ This contributed to an air of paranoia, especially as expressed in the Japanese media. The existence of these children would soon be rendered in discourse as a major "problem" for Japanese society, yet the *konketsuji mondai* (mixed-blood children problem) was not discussed in the mainstream media with any great frequency at first. This is due in no small part to GHQ censorship policies, instituted in 1945, which sought to eliminate media criticism of the Occupation⁶⁷ – but also

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² A matter dealt with in great detail in Chapter 2.

⁶³ Hamilton, 47.

⁶⁴ Kanō, 218

⁶⁵ "Konketsuji mondai: Rūzuberuto-fujin shinken ni torikumu," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 28, 1953, early edition, 7.

⁶⁶ See for example, Taitō Sadayo, "Mibōjin to konketsuji: sensō to chūryū no sanbutsu," *Kaizō*, August, 1952, 186, where an estimate of 200,000 is discussed, and Aoki Kei'ichi, "Konketsuji wa nihonjin ka," *Ushio*, October, 1952, where the estimate is given somewhat awkwardly as no less than 100,000 or 200,000.

⁶⁷ Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution During World War II and the US Occupation*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 125.

discussion of fraternization and biracial children.⁶⁸ However, when the Occupation drew to a close, and the children grew, they became increasingly more conspicuous and harder to ignore. Consequently, a storm of discussions regarding these children and their “problematic” nature ensued after the formal end of the Occupation. Matters reached a crescendo in 1952 when the first generation of children began to approach school age, and discussions on whether or not to institute segregated education for the children filled the pages of newspapers and magazines. Eventually, the Japanese National Diet and Ministry of Education settled on a policy of integration, and biracial children would go on to share classroom space with majority Japanese children.⁶⁹

Reactions to the children that had come to be referred to as *konketsuji* were diverse. Many saw fit to uniformly stereotype these children as the sons and daughters of *panpan*, the infamous streetwalking prostitutes of postwar Japan known for their flashy dress, smoking habits, and tendency to cater to foreign clientele. Some anticipated lives of misery for the *konketsuji*, owing to the belief that they would suffer as lifelong victims of racial discrimination. The sentiments of others tended towards expressions of outright fear and anxiety. Some were afraid of the possibility of these children someday growing up to constitute a domineering social class. Others were apprehensive about the implications a significant population of mixed-bloods might have on the future stability of Japanese society. Still, many commentators expressed pity for the *konketsuji*, perceiving them as unwanted, abandoned children doomed to bear an unfair burden cast upon them by the irresponsible excesses of their parents. Under American military law, U.S. servicemen were accorded freedom from any and all parental responsibility when it came to their Japanese children.⁷⁰ This, among a host of other possible factors,⁷¹ led to the abandoning of

⁶⁸ Hamilton, 40.

⁶⁹ Fish (2009), 52.

⁷⁰ Yukiko Koshiro, *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 162.

⁷¹ Robert A. Fish’s dissertation (2002) gives considerable attention to the circumstances surrounding the abandonment of biracial children in this period. While Fish is clear to point out that it is difficult to arrive at any set of conclusive details (31), he surmises that regardless of the social and economic backgrounds of their Japanese mothers, most of the children who were abandoned were simply the products of unwanted pregnancies (44). Considering the facts that many American soldiers were not making proper use of the condoms provided to them by designated prophylactic stations (46), abortion was not legalized in Japan until 1949 (37), and sexual relations between Occupation personnel and Japanese women were occurring at such a great volume given the nature of the Occupation itself (33), Fish’s observation is not unfounded.

children to the sole care of their economically destitute Japanese mothers, their grandparents, surrogate guardians, or orphanages and care facilities. The “problem” of *konketsuji* was figured along more explicitly racial lines as well. As Yukiko Koshiro observes, some of the Japanese public felt that “the differences in skin color and physical appearance ... of the mixed-race babies constituted a major threat to the wholesome integrity of Japanese society.”⁷² As this study’s primary source analyses will demonstrate, even when making no explicit reference to phenotype, even when discussing *konketsuji* as abandoned, pitiable, threatening, or wretched, and even when expressing *sympathy* and *sentimentality* in regards to this new generation of children – discursive representations still alienated *konketsuji* on the basis of race with great frequency.

Biracial Japanese living prior to the end of World War II did not represent, to the public at large, a sexualized breaching of racial barriers. Biracial Japanese in the postwar period were a different story altogether – highly differentiated from majority Japanese as racial and even social aliens. This othering process entailed the creation of an entirely new discursive object in the *konketsuji*. In the 1950s, biracial Japanese were being thought of and spoken about in ways they never had been before. The newness of the figure of the *konketsuji* was a *racial* newness – and it was reified through the numerous discussions of *konketsuji* throughout the 1950s that incessantly racialized biracial Japanese either explicitly or otherwise.

1.3 The Discourse of *Konketsuji*

Oguma implies that because statements proclaiming the homogeneity of the Japanese race began to frequently appear throughout the Japanese discursive sphere in the 1960s, the belief in Japanese homogeneity had become a dominant one by this time. For Oguma then, widespread discussion (and in an accepting and matter-of-fact tone at that) equals paradigm. Widespread press activity is exactly what birthed the figure of the *konketsuji* in the 1950s. The characterizations, portrayals, and stereotypes of biracial Japanese that were promoted in the 1950s must be understood as a paradigmatic epistemology of the time. That epistemology brought into focus the idea of the Japanese as everything that *konketsuji* were not. Even if the discourse of Japanese homogeneity was not widespread until the 1960s, something very much related to it *was* just a decade or so earlier. The racialized, othered figure of the *konketsuji* was

⁷² Koshiro, 164.

integral to the construction of normative “Japanese” subject status in the 1950s. Japan’s discursive encounter with the figure of the *konketsuji* played a significant role in allowing “Japan” to construct a convincing self-image of itself as such. It is now to a detailed examination of this discourse of *konketsuji* that I now turn.

Chapter 2

Where *Konketsuji* Came From: Representing Mixed-Blood Origins

2.1 The Othering of *Panpan*

A 1953 survey regarding the topic of prostitution conducted by Japan's National Public Opinion Poll group described 60% of its respondents as feeling more animosity and disdain for "foreigner-oriented" (*gaijin aite no*) prostitutes than others.¹ The racial implications of this hostility were evident in 1950s discussions of *konketsuji* as well, which increasingly drew connections between *panpan* and *konketsuji*. *Konketsuji* were commonly represented as the children of *panpan* in popular discourse, a trend that is directly related to mainstream discussions of *panpan* that often disdained and othered Japan's postwar streetwalkers. Themes and rhetoric that would later function to connect *konketsuji* to *panpan* in the 1950s are evident in late 1940s *panpan* discourse. Discussions of *panpan* would gradually come to incorporate more talk of *konketsuji*, with the process crystallizing by the close of the Occupation. By that time, commonsense discourse, such as that espoused in a 1952 issue of *Refarensu*, had it that "most mothers [of *konketsuji*] are relatively uneducated, careless Japanese women or the streetwalking prostitutes called '*panpan*.'"² However, this characterization depended on a thorough alienation of *panpan* that pathologized them. In the aftermath of war and occupation, mainstream Japanese were not ready to consider that "regular" Japanese women consorted with white and black foreign soldiers and produced *konketsuji*. Only an othered female icon, a vessel of subversive sexuality, would be viable in the public imaginary as the mother of *konketsuji*.

The discursive othering of *panpan* began in the late 1940s with no explicit reference to *konketsuji*. A 1949 issue of the left-leaning magazine *Kaizō* presented an early exposé of *panpan* in the form of an article purporting to depict a conversation with actual streetwalkers. The article took the form of a question-and-answer roundtable discussion moderated by social psychologist and Japan Women's University professor Minami Hiroshi. The respondents consisted of five *panpan* working in the Tokyo area, among them a thirty-two-year-old widow whose name was

¹ Kanzaki Kiyoshi, "Kyōfu kara no jiyū o: gaikoku hei no seiteki hanzai no bōshi," *Fujin Kōron*, October, 1953, 128.

² Tanaka Toshi, "Konketsuji mondai wa dō natteiru ka," *Refarensu*, September, 1952, 47.

given as Fujisawa Nanao, and a twenty-six-year-old widow named Itō Akiko. The following is an excerpt from Minami's questioning of the women:

Minami: ... Before the war, in the case of licensed prostitution, prostitutes were women who were sent into the licensed prostitution system by their parents because of their poor households. However, today this is not the case. Rather, I think it is possible that you [all] thought for yourselves in selecting this kind of work. I think we would like to ask you about your home situations and why you have chosen this kind of work.

Itō: I think the circumstances differ from person to person. There are those who enter this sort of society out of necessity, having been forced into a hopeless and desperate situation. There are those who enter it just out of vague curiosity. Then there are those who, yes, enter it out of an extreme longing [*akogare*] for *gaijin*. But then again, it's been said that this has been a weak point of Japanese women for a long time [*mukashi kara*]. There are also those who have been seduced by someone into entering [the profession].

Fujisawa: The most horrible cases are of those who have [become *panpan* because of having] been raped. ... The most worthless [*panpan*] are the ones who work for no serious reason.

Minami: Those who do it for no serious reason do it because, for example, they want to eat good-tasting food and whatnot...?

Fujisawa: Yes, that's right.

Itō: Isn't it just that they want to follow [American] fashions? That's about what it boils down to.

Minami: So it isn't that they're in any particular economic trouble, but rather that they just want to enjoy a better daily life...³

Here there is a distinction being made between types of *panpan*, with a focus on their differing motivations for selling their bodies to Americans. *Panpan* are portrayed as coming from diverse social circumstances and entering the trade for a variety of reasons that differ from person-to-person – but the only ones presented as disdainful are those who work for selfish reasons. Whereas economically-desperate and raped women are seen as tragic, and curious women seen as weak, it is only the women who become *panpan* out of vain, hedonistic desires that are called “worthless.” Being of the era of GHQ-imposed censorship, there is no explicit discussion of *konketsuji* – but these sorts of portrayals of *panpan* as freewheeling, vain, and greedy would be reproduced frequently in later discussions of them as *konketsuji* mothers.

³ Minami Hiroshi et al., “Panpan no sekai,” *Kaizō*, December, 1949, 74.

Further, distinctions between different types of *panpan* were seldom forgotten in *konketsuji* discourse. Where a *panpan* was depicted as a *konketsuji* mother, it was often as a selfish, vain, and disdainful one.

The othering process continued into the 1950s, where *panpan* were increasingly differentiated from other types of sexual labourers in terms of dress, appearance, attitude, personality, and even virtue. Popular discourse increasingly positioned *panpan* as an “unacceptable” form of sexual labourer in contrast to other kinds of prostitutes who were usually more immobile in terms of their working area. Immobility tended to connote service to *Japanese* as opposed to foreign patrons, and sexual labourers such as brothel girls and barmaids were often distinguished from *panpan* even if the issue of their partners was not voiced explicitly. In the April issue of *Josei Kaizō*, Sumitani Etsuji makes such a distinction:

Barmaids wear Japanese-style clothing, while streetwalkers wear Western-style clothing. [Streetwalkers] gather together wearing flashy overcoats and affecting a slovenly, unfit-for-public appearance. Both their hair and makeup are a mess – yet they still wear bright lip colour. In contrast to the timid, submissive attitudes of barmaids – attitudes that are meek, unassertive, and passive – most streetwalkers have a sprightly vigour and fearless, aggressive attitude. Streetwalkers stand out so much that one can tell them apart from barmaids as soon as they take just one or two steps into the room. Most barmaids are from rural villages, especially ones that are poor and destitute. They engage in feudal ‘*miuri*’ out of filial duty to their families. These sad, submissive, sexually ignorant women sacrifice their bodies in order to help [their families] economically. In contrast to these women who are thus shamed and poor ... streetwalkers are mostly from the city and surrounding area, enjoy much freedom in their lives, and live rude and lewd lives. Unlike the head-hanging, downtrodden, hopeless ... barmaids, streetwalkers do not have gloomy personalities. On the contrary, they feel a force of personality that allows them to carve out their own fates with their own bodies, all the while having bad manners. ... It has been said that the most vigorous and animated [people] of post-defeat Japan ... are ‘dark women.’⁴

Sumitani does not directly distinguish barmaids and streetwalkers in terms of the patrons that they serve, but he certainly makes specific enough statements to assign a foreign air to streetwalkers without explicitly connecting them to American soldiers. Of particular note is his labelling of barmaids’ dress as “Japanese” (*wafuku*) and the dress of streetwalkers as “Western”

⁴ Sumitani Etsuji, “Gaishō no jittai,” *Josei Kaizō*, April, 1950, 45. “Dark woman” or “*yami no onna*” was a common euphemism for a streetwalking prostitute in postwar Japan. “*Miuri*” or literally “the selling of one’s body” refers to the practice of (willingly) selling oneself into bondage, often to support one’s family.

(*yōsō*). It is also significant that this is the very first distinguishing mark between the two that he stipulates, as it allows for the association of all subsequent distinctions with either a “Japanese” or “Western” icon. Thus, the “Japanese” barmaids are portrayed as docile, virginal, selfless, dutiful daughters, while the “Western” streetwalkers are seen as loud, aggressive, independent, free-spirited thrill-seekers. Later in the article, Sumitani makes some sweeping statements about the mentalities and education levels of streetwalkers that only other them further:

It’s very difficult to grasp what their common personalities might be, but in generally they are very vain and lack self-control. Many of them are impatient, fickle, and make rash judgements such as running away from home. Not many of them act out of courage. They thoughtlessly drop out of women’s schools and vocational schools. According to our survey, out of ninety-five that attended middle school thirty-three of them dropped out, and out of sixteen that attended women’s vocational school, eleven dropped out.⁵

An emphasis on the mental deficiencies of *panpan* would be reproduced in later discussions of *konketsuji* and come to characterize these children as well.⁶ A recurring theme in *konketsuji* discourse is the inability of *panpan* to make good decisions – and it is this inability that is often seen as being responsible for the births of *konketsuji*.⁷ Yet before such connections could be made, *panpan* had to be definitively associated with *konketsuji*. This began subtly, with talk of the *mothers* of *konketsuji* and not *panpan* specifically. For example, in the December 1951 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, Matsushita Shizuko, a care worker at the Elizabeth Saunders home,⁸ discussed her experiences working with orphaned *konketsuji*.⁹ She had much criticism for the mothers of *konketsuji* who would bring their children to the home:

Other than those children entrusted to us by the Child Consultation Center, there are also cases in which the mothers of the children come to us directly [and entrust their children]. Sometimes I can’t hold back my indignation for these mothers and I hate having to feel

⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶ See Chapter 3, section 3.5 “*Konketsuji* Have Low Intelligence.”

⁷ See Chapter 3, particularly sections 3.3 “*Konketsuji* are not Asian” and 3.5 “*Konketsuji* Have Low Intelligence.”

⁸ The Elizabeth Saunders home was a well-known care facility for orphaned biracial children located in Kanagawa prefecture.

⁹ Matsushita’s article, published in 1951 and entitled “*Konketsuji* o Sodatete,” apparently got past GHQ’s censors.

angered by their arrogance. Most of them are dressed extravagantly and stand in the hallway of the home speaking in a haughty manner. They say, ‘your job is to raise children right? Well here, I’ll leave you with this child.’ In the face of such careless and overbearing words and attitudes, the timid care-workers sometimes even shrink up as if they’re being scolded. To these mothers their children are nothing more than burdens, and they appear to have no shame nor motherly modesty or humility. . . . Be they sly or innocent, all of these women are people who have had their lives fundamentally destroyed by the war. Yet when the people of the nation were starving and beset by mental turmoil, these women took an easy way out as if it was the only choice they had.”¹⁰

Matsushita reproduces much of the rhetoric employed by Sumitani and others to characterize *panpan* in her own characterizations of the mothers of *konketsuji*. Without explicitly identifying them as *panpan*, Matsushita’s portrayal of *konketsuji*’s arrogant, flashily-dressed, immoral mothers juxtaposed against an image of cowering care-workers mirrors Sumitani’s image of the aggressive “Western” streetwalker versus the meek “Japanese” barmaid. Even if not explicitly voiced as such, a lot of the characteristic qualities of *panpan* are being projected onto the figure of the *konketsuji* mother. Matsushita, however, seems to be well aware of what her descriptions of these mothers imply when she speaks of them as taking “an easy way out as if it was the only choice they had.” She does not say what exactly this “easy way out” entailed, but her preceding *panpan*-like depiction of *konketsuji* mothers suggest a definite connection to the type of “selfish” prostitution discussed by Sumitani.

By the close of the Occupation in 1952, the media explicitly linked *konketsuji* to *panpan*. Just days after the formal end of the Occupation, *Tōyō Keizai Shinpō* published an article by noted postwar anti-prostitution activist Ichikawa Fusae in a special May issue. The opening line of Ichikawa’s article, entitled “‘Independent’ Japan’s Woman Problems: On a Solution to the Panpan and *Konketsuji* Problem,” read “‘Independent’ Japan’s woman problems are first the *jinshin baibai* problem, the problem of prostitution in the so-called “red-line districts,” the problem of the American soldier-oriented streetwalkers called “*panpan*,” and the problem of their products [*sanbutsu*]: white and black *konketsuji*.”¹¹ Here there is no mistake: Ichikawa is very clearly and explicitly figuring *konketsuji* as the children of *panpan*, and commentators at

¹⁰ Matsushita Shizuko, “Konketsuji o sodatete,” *Fujin Kōron*, December, 1951, 77-78.

¹¹ Ichikawa Fusae, “‘Dokuritsu’ nihon no fujin mondai,” *Tōyō Keizai Shinpō Bessatsu*, May, 1952, 51. *Jinshin baibai* (literally “buying and selling of human bodies”) is commonly rendered in English as “human trafficking,” and in this case references the much-discussed postwar problem of destitute families selling children – especially daughters – into servitude and prostitution.

large would continue to do so throughout the 1950s. By 1952, the figure of the *panpan* had been so othered and disassociated from the Japanese feminine ideal that the idea of them – and only them – as the mothers of *konketsuji* seemed all but natural. The *panpan*, an icon of liberated, selfish sexuality tainted by Western influence and greed, was the perfect scapegoat upon which to pin the blame for a new population of racial aliens – and continued to be featured prominently in the discursive racialization of *konketsuji*. *Panpan* and the type of sexual union that they represented worked to disassociate *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese.”

2.2 “*Konketsuji* are Children of *Panpan* and Born out of Wedlock”

The post-Occupation period saw a wave of popular representations positioning *konketsuji* as children of *panpan*. A June 1952 article by Ōtaku Sōichi appearing in *Shōsetsu Shinchō* focused specifically on black *konketsuji*, making the following observations:

While one might be surprised at the courage of those Japanese women who give their bodies up to blacks, it seems that blacks actually pay much more [than whites]. Those *panpan* with one million yen or more in savings usually partner with blacks. However, when a child is born, that child is unaware of [its mother’s] surroundings. Consequently, while babysitting the child, the woman’s mother or grandmother will secretly bring the child to a *konketsuji* housing facility. Apparently it is not uncommon for them to quietly abandon the child either. When the women find out later, they might cry and shout for a time, but they seem to quickly forget about it and once more set out to peddle their wares.¹²

Ōtaku presents a dual implication: to lie with blacks is to be a *panpan*, and to be a black *konketsuji* is to have a *panpan* as a mother. He also reproduces a portrayal of *panpan* as lacking in motherly virtues before proceeding to make the powerful racializing statement that “although there are [*konketsuji* who], due to recessive genes, look just like a GI from the eyes up and a *panpan* below, there are also some that have the best of both worlds and might become magnificent beauties.”¹³ Ōtaku does not say that *konketsuji* look like black men from the eyes up and Japanese women below – his language is much narrower than that, and it racializes *konketsuji* as half-GI and half-*panpan*. They are *not* half-Japanese, but half-*panpan*. Such a

¹² Ōtaku Sōichi, “‘Taiheiyō sensō’ o meguru ‘chi’ no mondai,” *Shōsetsu Shinchō*, June, 1952, 70-71.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 71.

statement assumes that *konketsuji* are born between soldiers and prostitutes, but also posits a genetically deterministic link between their appearance and prostitution by saying they specifically resemble *panpan* and not Japanese women. Furthermore, the statement is also a racist exclusion that categorically denies “Japanese” status to *konketsuji* – and even their mothers.

Of note is the fact that even when not disdaining *panpan* or even when defending them, *konketsuji* discourse still tended to position them as *konketsuji* mothers while resisting the possibility that “regular” Japanese women could in fact be mothers of *konketsuji*. In a July 1952 roundtable discussion published in *Fujin Kōron*, Nogami Yaeko does just that:

I am not trying to conclude that the mothers [of *konketsuji*] being *panpan* works like a bad natural predisposition that has an effect on their essence. While it goes without saying that *panpan* are not anything desirable, they are also a type of victim [*giseisha*] of the war. I want to believe that when you closely analyze their individual circumstances and mentalities, [you will see that] they are not all immoral, good-for-nothing people lacking character.¹⁴

Whether her intentions are good or not, Nogami perpetuates the image of *konketsuji* as children of *panpan* with her statement. Sawada Miki, founder of the Elizabeth Saunders home, soon follows Nogami’s statement, saying that “[*konketsuji*] are born with a minus, and after several months come to zero, and from there can continue on towards plus. Children born of a proper marriage start at zero, and just a day or two later start to become plus. [*Konketsuji*] have that kind of handicap.”¹⁵ Sawada clearly draws a dividing line between *konketsuji* and children born of a proper union. Taking both Nogami and Sawada’s statements together, the implication is that all *konketsuji* are born to *panpan*, and all *konketsuji* are born outside the boundaries of proper marriage. This logic dictates that children who are *not* mixed must necessarily be born in wedlock. The idea that there may in fact be “full-blooded” Japanese children born out of wedlock as well is never broached. Nogami and Sawada’s comments thus discourage *konketsuji* from being thought of as Japanese, and Sawada’s comments in particular racially exclude *konketsuji* from a superior “plus” status enjoyed by children born in wedlock.

¹⁴ Nogami Yaeko et al., “Keredomo konketsuji wa...sodateyuku...: konketsuji no genjō to shōrai,” *Fujin Kōron*, July, 1952, 56.

¹⁵ Nogami et al., 56.

This sort of focus on “birth conditions” and “proper marriages” figured much into *konketsuji* discourse, which at times presented a larger relationship subsuming the “*panpan*’s children” characterizations; it was not just that *konketsuji* were seen to be the children of *panpan*, they were more broadly seen to be children produced by a certain type of sexual relationship – in which *panpan* were the archetypical participants. An article by Uemura Tamaki in the May 1952 issue of *Fujin Kōron* is a notable example of this:

“In Japan right now, there are a great many unequal, thoughtless *kokusai danjo* relationships. The majority of the *konketsuji* born of these unfortunate relationships are abandoned and become orphans. In the past six and a half years, it has been said that two-hundred thousand *kokusai* orphans have been born. The oldest of them will enter primary school next spring. Most of these children’s mothers are certainly women who are unrefined, of course uneducated, and lacking in sentimentality. However, I don’t think their fathers can be called gentlemen possessed of Anglo-Saxon democracy either. Japanese *bushidō* despises these types of men, and I think Euro-American chivalry would reject them as well. Sad as it may be, one cannot overlook the fact that this state of affairs contributes to misunderstandings between both countries.”¹⁶

Uemura’s use of the term “*kokusai danjo*” (literally, international men and women) in regards to relationships is a barely-disguised euphemism for *interracial* – and she sweepingly defines interracial relationships and therefore interracial intercourse as thoughtless, exploitative, and unfortunate. Thus, it is specifically this sort of *negative* relationship that results in the births of *konketsuji* according to Uemura – and she confirms this negativity by representing *konketsuji* as unfortunate orphans. In criticizing the parents of *konketsuji* – their mothers as lacking in education and culture and their fathers as somehow lacking the regular goodness of Anglo-Saxons – Uemura implies normative subject statuses that the parents are seen to deviate from. Therefore, by Uemura’s rationale, a better woman than a *konketsuji* mother would be partly defined by refinement, education, and sentimentality. More specifically however, whether it is stated explicitly or not, such a woman would be defined by her *not* being involved in an interracial relationship – and therefore not being engaged in sexual activity that produces *konketsuji*.

Uemura soon takes her implications even further by stating that “most young Japanese women are naïve, and seem to think that Euro-Americans are outstanding people. They try to

¹⁶ Uemura Tamaki, “Panpan ni atarashii michi o hiraku tame ni,” *Fujin Kōron*, May, 1952, 38.

speak in broken English to show [Euro-Americans] good will. These young women are easily seduced, easily lose their virginites, and ultimately fall into prostitution.”¹⁷ In implying that associating with white Americans creates prostitutes out of Japanese women, Uemura is not only saying that *konketsuji* come from abnormal parents – but also that they have prostitutes for mothers. She perpetuates a characterization of *konketsuji* than claims they cannot have originated in wholesome circumstances. This is a major act of racist exclusion, and not merely because Uemura excludes *konketsuji* from a category of children birthed in “good” circumstances. By painting so negative a portrait of interracial sex, both in terms of the low quality of its participants and the unfortunate effects on the children it produces, Uemura draws a deterministic link between biraciality and negative birth circumstances. Therefore, to be mixed-race is to not come from good birth circumstances. It then follows that to be “pure” – and by definition not a *konketsuji* – is to come from good birth circumstances. That the so-called “unfortunate” (read: interracial) relationships producing *konketsuji* are dependent on the presence of Anglo-Saxon men in Japan calls attention to the types of relationships in Japan where such men are not involved. If sexual relationships with Anglo-Saxon men produce *konketsuji*, any relationship with a *Japanese* man obviously would not. This brings into focus the idea of the designator “Japan” as defined in part not just by an absence of mixture, but also by a lack of the ability to *produce* mixture. Uemura’s discussion of interracial relationships and *konketsuji* parents functions to disassociate *konketsuji* from the organizing category of “Japanese” and in so doing generate the image of a wholesome, *intraracial* “Japan.”

In the August 1952 issue of *Kaizō*, Taitō Sadayo explicitly excludes *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese,” but takes matters a step further than Uemura by presenting their difference as the root of the negative feelings directed towards them by the Japanese:

In addition to [*konketsuji*] being different from *Japanese children* (my emphasis) in terms of their hair and skin colour, they are also children who were born of out-of-wedlock relationships with the occupying soldiers. What is directed at these children born in these kinds of circumstances is not simply racial prejudice, but feelings for the occupying military, and complicated attitudes towards the children’s mothers who gave up their bodies for money. Considering the state of affairs in our country, it should come as no

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

surprise that [*konketsuji*] would be easily looked on with scorn. This casts a dark shadow on *konketsuji*'s future, and it is feared that it will lead to significant social misfortune.¹⁸

Konketsuji are clearly differentiated from “Japanese children” not only in terms of their physical qualities but also the circumstances of their birth. Taitō also uniformly characterizes their mothers as prostitutes. The racist exclusions in this example are clear, as they are in a March 1953 article by Kubushiro Ochimi stating that, “there may be some [*konketsuji*] who know their fathers and receive financial support from them, but most are likely [with] single mothers, and suffer the dual pains of being the child of an unmarried mother and mixed-blood. It is likely that among such children, the majority will probably be unhappy in the future or become delinquent.”¹⁹ Once again, a characterization of *konketsuji* mothers as unmarried is presented. This “fact” coupled with the state of being of mixed-blood, is cited by Kubushiro as “pains” implied to lead a *konketsuji* towards anti-social behaviour. Kubushiro does not explain her rationale for labelling biraciality a “pain,” but her statements communicate the idea that being mixed is the difference maker between a “good” and “bad” child. By associating negativity with being biracial, Kubushiro *racially* marks *konketsuji* as different from “good” children. The implication is that to be “good” is to be racially different from *konketsuji* – or in other words, “Japanese.”

This idea of “good” versus “bad” children in relation to *konketsuji* was also expressed by Itagaki Setsuko in the May 1953 issue of *Kaizō*, but Itagaki complicates the issue further by discussing different types of *konketsuji*:

I think there is some percentage of *konketsuji* among great people in cultural history. Historians say that Stendhal, author of *The Red and the Black*, was endowed with supreme talent because one of his parents was French and the other Italian. Since international relations will only continue to broaden in the future, marriages between different *minzoku* will also increase. On eugenic grounds alone, we should probably welcome these kinds of *konketsuji*. However, even though it is now 1953, Japanese people are still faced with an unfortunate reality brought on by the war. ... The more than ten-thousand “Occupation babies” in the country – the *konketsuji* born out of wedlock – will be entering primary school this spring, and have thus ... begun to be specially featured in newspapers and magazines. Among [these *konketsuji*], the black type in particular will always draw our attention. Schools enrolling these kinds of *konketsuji*

¹⁸ Taitō, 186-187.

¹⁹ Kubushiro Ochimi, “Konketsuji no atarashii shomondai,” *Nyū Eiji*, March, 1953, 26.

have already become a problem, but it seems the Ministry of Education has decided on a plan to integrate them into regular primary schools. Consequently, it looks like the PTA will have strong resistance to this. ... The reason the PTA does not want to enroll the war *konketsuji* is mainly due to the problem of their mothers' backgrounds.²⁰

Itagaki presents the “great” Italian-French *konketsuji* Stendhal as an example of a “good” *konketsuji*, and only a few lines later cites a black “Occupation baby” as a problem *konketsuji*. The racist exclusion in this example is an interesting one in that Itagaki is not necessarily defining biraciality as a negative, but all the same attaches negativity to a certain type of race (black) and associates that race with Japan's *konketsuji*. Thus, Itagaki excludes black *konketsuji* from the category of “good” *konketsuji* – a group that exists “among great people in cultural history.” She takes things further, however, by attributing part of *konketsuji*'s negativity to the backgrounds of their mothers. The characterization of *konketsuji* mothers as unmarried is reproduced by Itagaki as well:

Women were not able to see through the soldiers and understand that most of them were only looking for temporary wives while in Japan. They were all the more foolish to not make the decision to abort their pregnancies, believing their departed partners would return. This is especially the case of pregnancies by rape, where the women probably could not even get into the frame of mind in which they would want to abort even at the cost of their own lives. Because there were many women who, whether they gave birth to the children or abandoned them [after birth], thought they could deceive society and fulfill their own ends of self-protection, many unfortunate children now exist – and the state has had to bear the burden of ten-thousand war *konketsuji*.²¹

Yet even when *konketsuji* were not uniformly characterized as born to unmarried mothers, it was still those who *were* that were seen to be a problem. This is evident in a January 1953 article by Maki Ken'ichi appearing in *Shakai Jigyō*:

What we are now viewing as a problem is not [the *konketsuji*] who have been conceived and born in the past, nor the *konketsuji* who are being raised by a responsible mother and father who are either living together or properly married. [We view as a problem] those *konketsuji* who are not in the care of their fathers either purposely or due to unavoidable circumstances such as [their fathers] dying in war, [those *konketsuji*] who are only in the care of their mothers on account of their fathers being unknown due to the mother's

²⁰ Itagaki Setsuko, “Konketsuji no ryōshin,” *Kaizō*, March, 1953, 162.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 163.

ignorance, [and those *konketsuji*] who are growing up even separated from their mothers.²²

Maki's statements are significant for one important reason: his discussion is not one of *children* born out of wedlock as a problem, but specifically *konketsuji* born out of wedlock as a problem. While he does recognize the fact that being born a *konketsuji* does not necessarily mean one *was* conceived out of wedlock, he makes the implication that being born a *konketsuji* *and* being born out of wedlock necessitates a problem. What he does is assign some sort of fundamental problem potential to biraciality that is seen to come into play only when the element of out-of-wedlock conception is also present. What Maki brings to attention is a discussion of the *qualities* of biraciality – the qualities of being *konketsuji*. *Konketsuji* discourse at large had perhaps even more to say about these qualities than it did *konketsuji's* origins – and it often imbued them with more negative potential than is evident Maki's example.

²² Maki Ken'ichi, "Konketsuji no mondai," *Shakai Jigyō*, January, 1953, 25.

Chapter 3

What *Konketsuji* Are: Defining Mixed-Blood Qualities

3.1 “*Konketsuji* are Better off in America”

In the early days of the *konketsuji* discourse in 1952, much talk ensued of who bore the greater responsibility for *konketsuji*. Pearl Buck was an early advocate of the mass adoption of *konketsuji* to America, and identified them as American and *not* Japanese: “I believe that *konketsuji* belong to America, and that they should be brought to America. Most Americans will likely love the *konketsuji*, adopt them, and give them happy homes and a fine education.”¹ Buck characterized the United States as something of a sanctuary for mixed-blood people where assimilation was easy, and where she believed *konketsuji* would be accepted and integrate well into society.² The implicit statement here was that they would *not* assimilate well in Japan, and were *not* Japanese. Pearl Buck’s position was echoed by a number of Japanese commentators as well, but often found expression in the form of racist discourse that discouraged thought of *konketsuji* as Japanese, and even functioned to justify their removal from Japan.

In the August 1952 issue of *Kaizō*, Taitō Sadayo directly responded to Buck’s sentiment, stating that “no matter what circumstances these children were born under, it is still prejudice to view these very young children with even the slightest of cold eyes. However, these children are in reality the objects of scorn, and assuming prejudice will not disappear [from Japan] any time soon, Miss Buck’s call [to have the children adopted to America] should be answered and implemented for the time being.”³ As seen in Chapter 1, Taitō did not place *konketsuji* in the same category as “Japanese children” due to their physical characteristics as well as the circumstances of their birth. With this particular statement though, she not only reproduces the common perception of *konketsuji* as being objects of prejudice, but also intimates that these racial others should be removed from Japan simply *because* they are the objects of prejudice. In speaking for Japan, *as* a Japanese, Taitō constructs an image of the country as a place steeped in anti-

¹ Pearl Buck, “Te to te o tsumaide konketsuji no kōfuku o,” *Fujin Kōron*, July, 1952, 47.

² *Ibid.*, 49.

³ Taitō, 187.

konketsuji prejudice in order to justify the expulsion of *konketsuji* from Japan. More specifically, Taitō justifies the expulsion of *konketsuji* to America – implying that unlike Japan, Americans did not harbour prejudices.

In this example, *konketsuji* are racialized as *objects of prejudice*, and for that reason, a logic arises in which they are seen to be better off in the United States than they would be in the prejudiced environment of Taitō's Japan. Taitō does not present her desire for the *konketsuji* to be removed from Japan to America as motivated by the same prejudice that she claims consumes Japan. On the contrary, Taitō's comments might ostensibly appear to have the *konketsuji*'s best interests in mind in supporting their adoption to an America free of prejudice. Yet the fact that America is presented as a prejudice-free nation in opposition to a prejudice-full Japan works to mask the process of racist exclusion carried out by Taitō's comments. On the surface Taitō's sentiments may appear to be well-intentioned and not at all racist, but as a discursive statement they at once differentiate *konketsuji* as objects of prejudice (implying that "Japanese" are not so) and endorse their removal from Japan *on the very basis of* their being objects of prejudice. *Konketsuji* are thereby not only racially excluded from the category of "Japanese," but are also depicted as something to be *physically* excluded from the country of Japan. America is presented as the proper place for *konketsuji*; they are not welcome in Japan. "Japan" in this example is constructed as a place defined by prejudice directed outwards, towards "alien" *konketsuji*, with no mention whatsoever of any kind of internal prejudice that might work to harm or differentiate groups *within* the category of Japanese. To be "Japanese" is therefore to not be a victim of prejudice on the part of other "Japanese." As a statement, Taitō's comments not only exclude *konketsuji* from "Japanese," but also suggest that "Japanese" are a uniform group, composed of no populations whose alien nature would render them objects of prejudice in Japan.

In a supplementary May 1952 issue of *Tōyō Keizai Shinpō*, Ichikawa Fusae perpetuates the paranoia surrounding the true number of *konketsuji* in Japan:

It is said that there are two-hundred thousand white or black *konketsuji* that have been left in Japan. Since they are registered under Japanese names though, there does not seem to be a way to find out [for sure]. ... Among these children there are some who will reach school age next year, but these children are innocent. When I think about their future, [I think that they are] pitiable and will definitely cause a variety of social problems.

Furthermore, it is unfair for a poverty-stricken Japan *to be the only one* (my emphasis) to have to deal with this.⁴

Ichikawa specifically references the second implied party soon afterward, calling for government officials to “negotiate with the United States and try to get them to adopt *konketsuji*. That would probably be best for the children as well.”⁵ Ichikawa immediately racializes *konketsuji* as a white/black group that is nevertheless masked within the Japanese collective by Japanese names. Her disassociation of *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese” is clear; for Ichikawa their Japanese names do not function to mark them as “Japanese,” but rather as aliens *in disguise* as “Japanese.” These *konketsuji* are *whites* and *blacks*, and Ichikawa’s paranoid apprehension regarding the difficulty of ascertaining just how many of them exist in Japan subtly paints *konketsuji* as a group of hidden invaders. Further, by specifically situating a Japanese name as a sort of racial camouflage covering whiteness or blackness, Ichikawa racially excludes *konketsuji* from the normative racial status usually connoted by a Japanese name. In addition, she constructs a category of “Japanese” defined not only by the presence of a Japanese name, but more significantly the *absence* of whiteness or blackness.

Ichikawa appears to express some sympathy for *konketsuji*, but labels them as a potential source of social unrest in the very same breath. She concludes, much like Taitō, that *konketsuji* are better off in America – but unlike Taitō, Ichikawa is more explicit in her belief that *Japan* would be better off without *konketsuji*. In fact, her statement that adoption to America would be good for *konketsuji* is almost an afterthought to her representation of Japan as a poor victim that does not deserve to deal with the assumed social problems brought on by a *konketsuji* population. The removal of *konketsuji* from Japan to America is once again promoted, but in this case it is explicitly seen to be for the sake of minimizing Japan’s suffering. *Konketsuji*, as invasive white/black elements, are further racialized as alien vessels of social disharmony threatening a feeble and destitute Japan. To be “Japanese” is therefore to be a victim – but specifically a potential victim of *konketsuji*. It follows that to be “Japanese” is most certainly not to be a *konketsuji*.

In the May 1952 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, Nogami Yaeko explains why she feels *konketsuji* are better off in America. Nogami states that “while [*konketsuji*] have borrowed the wombs of

⁴ Ichikawa, 54.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

Japan's women, their fathers are American citizens. Therefore, it must be said that they are more America's children than Japan's."⁶ Her discussion soon turns to talk of black *konketsuji* specifically. Nogami speculates on the integration of black *konketsuji* into Japanese primary schools as possibly causing "friction" and leading to a negative effect on the children themselves.⁷ Nogami continues, discussing how inappropriate it is for black *konketsuji* to remain in Japanese society, noting that "in [America], which has over ten million good black citizens – many of whom have become world-renowned singers, boxers, and accomplished scholars – black children are also not peculiar, and will blend in naturally like a group of black islands fading into the dark of night. ... This will absolutely not happen in Japan."⁸ To illustrate her point, Nogami proceeds to relate a stereotypical narrative of a *konketsuji* mother at a bathhouse secretly switching her black child for a "regular Japanese baby."⁹

Nogami defines *konketsuji* as not only America's children, but also as specifically *black*. America is seen to be the appropriate place for *konketsuji* not only because they are black and will blend into an American society *full* of blacks, but also because they are more America's children than Japan's. Thus, removing them from Japan and to America seems only natural. By referencing America as something of a black paradise, home to numerous successful blacks, Nogami clearly associates it with blackness – and therefore *konketsuji*. Likewise, by stating that *konketsuji* could never assimilate into Japan like they could in America, Nogami completely disassociates blackness from Japan. The racist exclusion is laid bare; the idea of blackness is being utilized to justify the denial of *konketsuji* as Japanese, the affirmation of them as American, and the removal of them from Japan. Nogami constructs a decisively "non-black" Japan that has no place for *konketsuji* – who are not "regular Japanese babies." Thus the category of "Japanese" is seen here to be one that is definitely not black, and definitely possessed of a normative "Japaneseness" that *konketsuji* are bereft of.

⁶ Nogami Yaeko, "Konketsuji o kōfuku na michi e," *Fujin Kōron*, May, 1952, 33. This statement is indicative of the belief in a patrilineal determination of citizenship and personhood.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 34

⁹ *Ibid.*, 34

3.2 “*Konketsuji* are *Ibutsu*.”

The discourse of *konketsuji* often positioned biracial Japanese as *ibutsu*, a term literally meaning “different thing” and translated as “foreign body/substance/matter.” *Konketsuji* as *ibutsu* were discussed in specific reference to a community of *konketsuji*, separate from the Japanese majority. Fear over the possibility that *konketsuji* could someday form a privileged social class not only functioned to racially differentiate them from a “pure-blooded” Japanese mainstream, it also implied a threatening and even antagonistic relationship between the two groups. By articulating such a relationship, *konketsuji* discourse would ardently exclude biracials from the category of “Japanese” and emphasize the presumed pure makeup of the “Japanese” race.

In the March 1953 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, Kanzaki Kiyoshi invokes the image of the domineering half-caste in discussing *konketsuji*. In “White and Black – An Investigative Report on American/Japanese *Konketsuji*,” Kanzaki, in a section entitled “Don’t Make Eurasians” (*yūrashian o tsukuruna*), notes a swelling of American interest and concern for Japanese “GI babies” as a result of Sawada Miki’s “propaganda” efforts.¹⁰ Stating that this is objectively “something to be happy about,”¹¹ Kanzaki goes on to warn about the dangers of American financial aid for orphaned *konketsuji*:

In a state of affairs such as the current unbalanced relationship between the United States and Japan, to only wrap *konketsuji* – who have American blood mixed into them – in warm baby clothes is likely to open the way for Eurasians. In the context of colonial control, how much agony had the birth of halfway-complete Eurasians, who were higher [in status] than natives but lower [in status] than Americans, caused the Philippines? Even if mixing in and of itself is not something to be feared per se, as a Japanese who knows the shared history of Asian nations that have been dominated by so-called “free states,” such as India and Indonesia, I wish to avoid the disaster of inserting [*konketsuji*] in the form of the hard foreign substance [*ibutsu*] called Eurasian.¹²

Here, *konketsuji* are racialized in terms of their *political potential*. For Kanzaki, American financial aid runs the risk of creating a privileged racial class that would eclipse “native” Japanese in status. Speaking “as a Japanese,” Kanzaki is positioning himself – and the people he

¹⁰ Kanzaki Kiyoshi, “Shiro to Kuro: nichi-bei konketsuji no chōsa hōkoku,” *Fujin Kōron*, March, 1953, 138.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

is speaking for – as categorically separate from *konketsuji*. These *konketsuji* are partly defined in terms of their ability to use their mixed nature to both advance socially as well as oppress non-mixed Japanese. Yet by also opposing *konketsuji* to “native” Japanese, Kanzaki is positioning those natives as non-mixed – and more importantly, as normative Japanese. By locating the potential for “Eurasian-ness” within *konketsuji*, Kanzaki identifies them as a potential foreign substance within the racial sphere of Japan. *Konketsuji*, as potential Eurasians, are not only racially excluded from the category of “Japanese” – a group that does not possess the potential to become Eurasian – but also figured as an alien element within a putatively “native” Japan. Kanzaki, speaking as a “Japanese,” does not want to see *konketsuji* turn into a certain type of politically category that would hold power over the majority – a category in which he places himself.

Kanzaki’s sentiments are evident again in a later roundtable discussion published in the July 1953 issue of *Jidō Shinri*. In conversation with Nakano Sazō, Kanzaki again speculates on the threat of *konketsuji* Eurasians:

Nakano: It is extremely worrisome [to think about *konketsuji*] getting older. I think social problems will come about. In truth, you have to think about it as maybe a larger problem than even the American Civil War was.

Kanzaki: The Saunders Home children say mama-chan, mama-chan – as if they’re making out Sawada Miki to be the boss of some sort of mixed-blood corps. It’s taking shape in that way. There’s that kind of danger – the danger of Eurasians or Negrasians being inserted into Japanese society as a foreign substance [*ibutsu*].¹³

Once again, *konketsuji* are represented as a foreign *ibutsu* outside of Japanese society. They are racially excluded from the category of Japanese, but with the additional invocation of the American Civil War and a “mixed-blood corps,” Nakano and Kanzaki construct an image of a Japan on the road to conflict with a racial adversary. This oppositional depiction of *konketsuji*, tempered by allusions to war and violence, only serves to further distance them from discursive recognition *as* Japanese.

¹³ Kanzaki Kiyoshi et al., “Kokusai rikai to kichi no kodomo,” *Jidō Shinri*, July, 1953, 11.

In the April 1953 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, Koya Yoshio continues the *ibutsu* narrative in an article entitled “Mixed-Blood Tale – The *Konketsuji* Problem Viewed Globally.” Koya focuses on phenotype in racializing *konketsuji* as *ibutsu* early in the article:

At a lecture the other day, I warned that ... even if today’s *konketsuji* are lower in number than we thought, that number is still nothing to make light of. The reason being that, unlike in the case of mixing with Koreans or Chinese, the mark of mixing [*konketsu no kokuin*] will shadow *konketsuji* conceived with whites and blacks for generations. As such, visible *konketsuji* will only increase in number in the future, have a tendency to “gather by type,” and likely constitute an alien element [*ibutsu sonzai*] in society. Such an alien element will be taken advantage of [for the purposes of] nationalism and communism, and we should not rule out [the possibility] that this could develop into a burdensome problem of governance for the country.¹⁴

Koya racializes *konketsuji* not just as white or black, but as *visible*.¹⁵ The implication is that “Japanese” do not particular stand out from one another visually, but a *konketsuji* can be visually distinguished from a “Japanese.” This idea not only implies phenotypical homogeneity on the part of the Japanese, but also positions the very visibility of *konketsuji* as potentially threatening to Japanese society. *Konketsuji*, as non-homogeneous elements not seen to conform to the phenotypical norms of “Japanese,” are accordingly excluded from the category of “Japanese.”

Koya later speaks about the problem of how *konketsuji* will be viewed and treated as they grow older and increase in number, saying that Japan can learn of how this might occur by looking at historical examples from around the world.¹⁶ Koya calls attention to the “mulatto problem” in Haiti as one example, discussing how mixing between French and blacks gave rise to a mixed class.¹⁷ Koya states that this mixed class fought for citizenship and even staged rebellions that resulted in the abandonment of colour line policies in the late 1700s – and says that the Haiti example shows that social conflicts inevitably occur when a mixed class is created.¹⁸ Koya continues to talk about Indonesian Eurasians, and how they tended to initially

¹⁴ Koya Yoshio, “Konketsu monogatari: sekai teki ni mita konketsuji mondai,” *Fujin Kōron*, April, 1953, 164.

¹⁵ The original Japanese is “*mikakejō*,” meaning “to be so judging by outward appearance.”

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 167.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

think of themselves as white, but came to identify more with the natives as they experienced discrimination. According to Koya, this inevitably resulted in social problems.¹⁹

Should [the *konketsuji* population] rise above a certain number, they will create an isolated group and class and very easily form an alien social element [*shakai no ibutsuteki sonzai*]. Again, I want to reiterate that this alien element [*ibutsu*] will be easily influenced by the outside. Right now, the *konketsuji* in Japan are young and weak, so a problem is not likely to occur – even if there is someone with something to gain by using these *konketsuji*. However, consider the future when these children have grown up to marry and have children and grandchildren of their own – and consider how many more of them there will be at that time. How, then, should we deal with them from now going forward?²⁰

Here, Koya promotes a representation of *konketsuji* as a possible alien threat to Japanese society with a line of reasoning very similar to that of Kanzaki. He appears worried over the potential of a *konketsuji* class that would separate itself from society and thereby cause serious social conflicts and problems. What is interesting in this case though, is how Koya implies that social issues would occur because the *konketsuji* class would be *isolated*. Once again, the peace and integrity of Japan is seen to rest on its being home to a pure, homogeneous people. Any isolated element would by definition entail heterogeneity, and a heterogeneous Japan would, according to Koya, be beset by social problems. By racializing *konketsuji* as non-conforming *ibutsu*, Koya brings into stark focus the image of “Japan” as a pure, uniform society.

3.3 “*Konketsuji* are not Asian”

One of the more interesting forms of racialization that functioned to exclude *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese” was their positioning as members of a non-Asian race – or more specifically, as children whose blood was mixed with that of a non-Asian race. In 1952’s “The Focus of The *Konketsuji* Problem,” Suda Masāki compares the births of biracial children in occupied Germany to the case in occupied Japan, noting how even though Germany was occupied just like Japan, births of *konketsuji* there were few due to there being measures put in

¹⁹ Ibid., 169.

²⁰ Ibid.

place beforehand to specifically curtail them.²¹ He cites a few other differences between the German and Japanese cases however: “The circumstance of having never before experienced defeat in war probably invited misfortune for our country. In addition, the problems are probably more numerous in our country in particular because [we are dealing with] mixing between two *minzoku* that appear to be completely different.”²² For many, this apparent difference between *minzoku* carried real implications for *konketsuji*. Ōtaku Sōichi explains:

In my experience, “blood” is not really a problem between mutual Asians. Depending on the environment that they are raised in, things work out one way or another. Japanese were originally a mixed breed [as it is]. However, there are few children born between Europeans and Orientals (*tōyōjin*) who are superior from a mental standpoint. The same can be said for the physiological. When the traditional ways of the parents are too different from one another, the child does not seem to turn out well.²³

Here, Sōichi is comparing “good” mixed-bloods and “bad” mixed-bloods. By attributing mental and physiological inferiority on the part of *konketsuji* to the lack of unity in the traditions of their racially separate parents, Sōichi posits a genetically deterministic relationship between culture and both physical and mental attributes. *Konketsuji*, as “bad” mixed-bloods whose parents do not share cultural traditions, are racialized as lacking in quality – and simultaneously rendered the object of a racist exclusion that denies them the possibility of possessing mental or physiological superiority outright.

Sōichi’s statement also brings to attention the question of assimilability. For Sōichi, a mixed child who is nevertheless of dual Asian parentage can assimilate into an Asian society (including Japan) due to the similar traditions of his or her Asian parents. However, a mixed child of European parentage cannot. By locating the ability to assimilate within Asian mixed-bloods specifically, Sōichi subtly ascribes to them a certain potential to *be* Japanese that he does not give to non-Asian *konketsuji*. *Konketsuji* are racially excluded once again, this time from the category of “Japanese” or more specifically “potential Japanese,” but in labelling the Japanese as

²¹ Suda, 31.

²² *Ibid.*, 31. Suda appears to ignore the fact that the births of black biracials in Germany were figured as particularly problematic in similar fashion to how they were in Japan. This point is not lost on Tanaka Toshi, who criticizes the false perception that the difference between the *konketsuji* issue in Germany and in Japan was the presence of black biracials in the latter and not in the former. See Tanaka Toshi, 52.

²³ Ōtaku, 71.

“originally a mixed breed,”²⁴ Sōichi positions *Asian* mixing as not out of the ordinary for the Japanese. The category of “Japanese” is thus emphasized as one in which members possess a certain similarity in terms of traditions, regardless of their actual place of origin. This insistence on similarity and coterminous raciality paints an image of “Japan” as a society defined by uniformity.

In discussing *konketsuji* in “The *Konketsuji* Problem,” appearing in the January 1953 issue of *Shakai Jigyō*, Maki Ken’ichi makes a point of specifying exactly who he refers to as such: “I say *konketsuji* but it goes without saying that Oriental yellow-types are not included.”²⁵ He elaborates, being very explicit about what exactly makes *konketsuji* problematic in his mind:

What we are now viewing as a problem are not [the *konketsuji*] who have been conceived and born in the past, nor the *konketsuji* who are being raised by a responsible mother and father who are either living together or properly married. [We view as a problem] those *konketsuji* who are not in the care of their fathers either purposely or due to unavoidable circumstances such as [their fathers] dying in war, [those *konketsuji*] who are only in the care of their mothers on account of their fathers being unknown due to the mother’s ignorance, [and those *konketsuji*] who are growing up even separated from their mothers. ... *Konketsuji* of Filipino and Chinese [parentage], as well as others whose skin colour is similar to ours, are all of the same Oriental race [*tōyōjinshu*], and therefore are not seen as much of a problem right now. White and black [*konketsuji*], the ones that can be clearly distinguished as an alien race [*ijinshu*], are thought of as a problem. This is especially the case with black *konketsuji*, and it goes without saying that they are the most severe problem if only because this is the first time their blood has mixed with that of we Japanese [*wareware nihonjin*].²⁶

Ken’ichi positions black and white *konketsuji*, as well as *konketsuji* from unstable home environments, as the problematic ones. “Oriental” *konketsuji*, defined by their possessing a skin colour similar to that possessed by “Japanese,” are not viewed as a problem – but also not viewed as having been conceived out of wedlock, as living in single-parent households, or as orphans. The racialization process utilized by Ken’ichi locates problematic status within

²⁴ Sōichi’s statement is indicative of the lingering influence of the “mixed-nation” theory of the Japanese race in the 1950s. Both mixed- and pure-nation theories are represented within 1950s *konketsuji* discourse with neither featured more prominently than the other. This lends credibility to Oguma’s claim that Japanese homogeneity discourse was not dominant until the 1960s.

²⁵ Maki, 25.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

whiteness or blackness. Similar skin colour to that of a “Japanese” marks a mixed-blood as “Oriental,” but also as the product of a union not seen to be problematic. This racialization of social conditions necessarily entails the racist exclusion of *konketsuji* from a social normativity defined in terms of “Oriental-ness,” and by including “Japanese” within the category of “Oriental,” denies the possibility of a black or white *konketsuji* being thought of as “Japanese.”

Ken’ichi clearly identifies himself as “Japanese” in this example, frequently using the pronoun “we” (*watashitachi*) and making reference to “we Japanese” (*wareware nihonjin*). His taking on of Japanese status in this way would appear to lend a high degree of credibility to his logic and observations. Ken’ichi, as a “Japanese,” exercises a certain authority in stipulating what is and is not a problem for “Japanese.” This works to license the racist exclusions he makes in regards to *konketsuji*, and allows him to define the boundaries of “Japanese” as a category. He terms “Japanese” an “Oriental race” that does not include white or black *konketsuji*. In so doing, he authoritatively disqualifies whiteness and blackness as defining characteristics of “Japanese,” emphasizing the people of Japan as a racial group that is defined as such only narrowly.

In a 2007 article, Kanō Mikiyo discusses an interesting document pulled from the public archives of Shizuoka prefecture’s Suntō district.²⁷ The document, entitled “Regarding the Survey of the Conditions of So-Called Mixed-Blood Children” (*Iwayuru konketsujidou jittai chōsa ni tsuite*) is dated February 11th, 1953, and was issued in cooperation with the Child Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Welfare.²⁸ The document defines a *konketsuji* as “a child taking as its father a member of a foreign country’s military or a man affiliated with a foreign country’s military and taking as its mother a Japanese.”²⁹ However, it adds the following caveat to the definition: “This does not include such aforementioned children whose fathers are of Japanese, Chinese, or Korean blood descent (*kettō*). It also does not include such aforementioned children whose hair quality resembles that of Japanese or Koreans, or whose skin is yellow in colour.”³⁰

This document makes similar racial assumptions to those of Sōichi and Ken’ichi by not including children with Asian fathers within the parameters of *konketsuji*, yet it makes two interesting stipulations that the previous examples do not: the Japanese parents of *konketsuji* are

²⁷ Kanō, 226.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 227.

³⁰ Ibid., 227

specifically their *mothers*, and the *konketsuji* themselves are specifically defined as mixed children whose fathers belong to *foreign militaries*. This characterization drastically limits the scope of *konketsuji* as a category of organization. Not only does it racialize *konketsuji* as produced only within relationships between Japanese women and foreign military men, it also denies the possibility that these foreign military men could be Japanese, Chinese, or Korean. This immediately separates any foreign resonance from the label of “Japanese,” but also from “Chinese” and “Korean” as well. For all intents and purposes, Asians are not seen to be foreign – meaning they are not racialized as anything different from Japanese – when the topic of *konketsuji* is concerned. To be a *konketsuji* is therefore to be foreign, that is, not Asian, and certainly not Japanese. The racist exclusion in this case is evident.

What is also evident, is the political implication of labelling *konketsuji* specifically as children of Japanese women and foreign *military* men. This immediately implies that *konketsuji* are only born in historical moments like the American Occupation, where the spoils of conquest consist partly of native women. To say only that *konketsuji* are born of Japanese women and foreign men is not necessarily to imply any sort of relation of submission per se, but to specify the men as belonging to a military is to clearly place them in a position of political power not seen to be shared by the Japanese mothers of *konketsuji*. Yet more significantly, Asians like Chinese and Koreans are thus denied this power over Japanese women by their exclusion from the category of *konketsuji* fathers. The implications smack of classic Orientalism: to be Japanese is to not only be a woman, but to also be submissive to a foreign male – a foreign male who is not Asian. The self-racialization of “Japan” in this sense opposes the nation to a domineering, non-Asian foreign presence. “Japan” is consequently defined in terms of what it is *not*, a process that again limits the scope of how “Japan” can be conceptualized.

3.4 “*Konketsuji* Have an Inferiority Complex”

1950s *konketsuji* discourse frequently characterized biracial Japanese as tragic figures, doomed to bear their mixed status as a curse guaranteeing discrimination and hardship in Japanese society. One particular manner in which *konketsuji* were racialized was in terms of their purported inferiority complexes, but what is especially interesting in this case is that they were racialized as such in direct opposition to majority Japanese. A very early example of this appears

in the December 1951 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, where Elizabeth Saunders home worker Matsushita Shizuko, discusses *konketsuji*:

We definitely tried to carefully raise them [without discrimination]. However, there is absolutely nothing we can do about the skeptical feelings that flare up within the children that have become aware [of their difference]. There was a child who asked ‘why am I black?’, and no matter how much I assured [the child] that [he or she] was the same [as other Japanese], the child did not accept it. At one point the child looked in the mirror and burst into tears wailing. These children who have played together innocently have just recently started to notice the differences in skin colour between one another. In turn ... they have come to ... distinguish the slight differences in eye colour between visitors [to the Saunders Home]. There have even been times when [discerning] the eye colours of thoughtless people has completely overturned our careful non-discriminatory treatment and left a deep-rooted inferiority complex within the child. ... Thinking about the children’s future, right now we feel that arranging for their adoption by sympathetic people *of the same race* (my emphasis) is one solution, but it is hard to say.³¹

Matsushita presents *konketsuji* as acknowledging a difference setting them apart from Japanese, and considering that this tendency for *konketsuji* to racially distinguish themselves from others is subsequently framed as a means to an inferiority complex, certain implications arise. The first is the idea that to be different in and of itself is to be inferior. Regardless of whether Matsushita claims that she tells the *konketsuji* at the Saunders Home that they are no different from other Japanese, the fact that she does not depict the children as believing her but rather disbelieving appears to lend the idea some validity. The same can be said for her later conclusion that *konketsuji* should be adopted by “members of the same race” as if this is the only solution to the problem, and *konketsuji* could not hope to surmount their complexes otherwise. The second implication is that *konketsuji* assume these inferiority complexes themselves. Matsushita does not make any direct racist statements by calling *konketsuji* inferior – but in the end she is still petitioning for them to be removed from Japan on the basis of their inferiority complexes – and therefore their differences that lead them to assume those complexes. The statement that *konketsuji* must be adopted by members of the same race at once racializes them as something *other* than Japanese, and also entails a racist exclusion licensed by the resigned attitude taken by Matsushita that *konketsuji* possess inescapable inferiority complexes. By inscribing a racial identity to *konketsuji* defined in part by an inferiority complex conditioned by difference, Matsushita actually ends up implying that *konketsuji* are different from Japanese

³¹ Matsushita, 78.

despite herself. Simultaneously, this creates an oppositional racial identity on the part of the “Japanese” – one that does not include within its boundaries *konketsuji*.

A July 1953 roundtable discussion published in *Jidō Shinri*, presented a dialogue between Kanzaki Kiyoshi, Suzuki Bungo, Suda En, and psychologists Nakano Sukezō, Katsura Kōsuke, Kamitake Masaji, and Nagashima Sadao regarding the ability of *konketsuji* to coexist with majority Japanese children:

Nakano: Children from the same neighbourhood seem able to play together in most cases, but one can imagine that if a serious problem occurred there would likely be a falling out that would prevent them from playing together anymore.

Suda: That sort of thing happened at [a school in] Tachikawa. Even though this was a kindergarten, it seems the teacher still told the [majority Japanese] students to also treat [the *konketsuji*] well from the very beginning. They played together just fine, but one day at lunch [a *konketsuji*] started a fight with a child sitting next to [him/her]. When that happened, the other children all started calling [the *konketsuji*] *kuronbo* and *panpan*'s child. Due to this they ultimately stopped [having the *konketsuji* and majority Japanese children together].

Katsura: Sawada Miki's children get along well regardless of whether they or black or white. This is probably because they are all in the same boat [*onaji naka ni iru kara*].

Suzuki: I heard that even in Tachikawa they dress them in Japanese clothes and have them play together just fine, but even if you ask the teachers, when it comes down to it [*iza to iu toki ni*], problems still happen.

Nakano: That coming down to it is a problem. Some children will grow timid from an inferiority complex, and some will act out. This is worrisome.³²

The dialogue discusses an attempt at equal treatment and integration of *konketsuji* backfiring. The *konketsuji* appearing in Suda's anecdote cannot coexist with other children because he/she starts a fight and as a result is racially bullied. The bullying is portrayed as being the *konketsuji*'s own fault and an unavoidable consequence of his/her starting a fight. Suzuki and Nakano both allude to an *iza to iu toki ni* in which *konketsuji* will inevitably cause problems. The real statement here is that attempts to integrate *konketsuji* with majority children will always fail because *konketsuji* will inevitably cause friction. The racist exclusion in this example is disguised, but powerful; *konketsuji* are racialized as troublemakers who invite bullying because

³² Kanzaki Kiyoshi et al., 10. “*Kuronbo*” is a racial epithet used to refer to a black person.

they are *konketsuji*, and thus cannot take part in activities with “Japanese” children. The distinction between *konketsuji* and majority children is made clear with Suzuki’s reference to *konketsuji* causing problems despite being dressed in Japanese clothes, and the exclusion is bolstered by the discussion of the Saunders home *konketsuji* as getting along together just fine because they are “in the same boat” (as *konketsuji*) – implying that majority Japanese children exist in a different “boat.” By implying that the inability of *konketsuji* to mix well with majority Japanese children results in inferiority complexes, Nakano draws a deterministic relationship between racial difference and feelings of inferiority – as well as antisocial behaviour.

Seki Kazuo, in the March 1954 issue of *Kyōiku to Igaku*, also asserted that *konketsuji* suffered from inferiority complexes – but offered a different theory as to their origin. Seki theorized that racial inferiority complexes in general stemmed not from phenotypical differences, but rather from *minority status*,³³ and offered the following observation on *konketsuji* specifically: “The inferiority complexes that *konketsuji* have are on account of their numbers being few. If *konketsuji* constituted over 60% of citizens, the relationship would be the opposite. The pure Yamato *minzoku* ... would be the [group] with the inferiority complex today.”³⁴ Seki’s rationalization for the presence of inferiority complexes in *konketsuji* may be different from those presented by Matsushita and the participants in the *Jidō Shinri* roundtable, but it still makes the racializing assumption that *konketsuji* qua *konketsuji* suffer from inferiority complexes. Seki’s comments go much further in their racialization, however. While the situation of *konketsuji* as minorities in Japan obviously functions to disassociate *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese,” Seki also explicitly speaks of the Japanese race as being “pure.” This statement alone racializes *konketsuji* as a non-Japanese race, and racially excludes them from the category of “Yamato *minzoku*.” Seki, in 1954, is making a clear an explicit claim to Japanese racial purity – and he is using *konketsuji* to do it.

3.5 “*Konketsuji* Have Low Intelligence”

Minority status was not the only factor that Seki believed responsible for inferiority complexes in *konketsuji*. He outlines these reasons in the following excerpt:

³³ Seki Kazuo, “Konketsuji no mondai,” *Kyōiku to igaku*, March, 1954, 166.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 167.

Of course though, there are several more reasons why the *konketsuji* of the bases in our country develop inferiority complexes. The first is because they are the children of *panpan* – meaning they are the bad illegitimate children born of acts of prostitution and not proper marriages. Now this of course only applies to some *konketsuji*, but it is impossible to tell them apart from those *konketsuji* born in proper wedlock based on outward appearance. ... The second reason, related to [the first], is the problem of their intelligence standards. There are few *panpan* who excel on an intellectual level, and one cannot have high expectations of the intelligence of the *gaijin* that they partner with [either]. One can imagine that children born of such a union will also be intellectually inferior.³⁵

Seki racializes *konketsuji* as unintelligent, but more significantly, he presents this lack of intelligence as inherited from their *panpan* mothers and john fathers (who he also typifies as stupid). This is pure racialization at its most fundamental level, with low levels of intelligence being ascribed to *konketsuji* on a *genetic* level. Therefore the implication is that if one's parents were neither a *panpan* nor a *gaijin* john, one would not genetically inherit low levels of intelligence, therefore one would not be a *konketsuji*, and therefore one would not suffer from an inferiority complex.

The representation of *konketsuji* as inheriting low intelligence levels from their prostitute mothers and foreign fathers was also expressed by Koya Yoshio in the April 1953 issue of *Fujin Kōron*:

The intelligence of *konketsuji* is also an issue. ... If a child is born mentally feeble due to being a *konketsuji*, this means that one of the child's parents – or both of them – was mentally feeble. We have to take this approach in looking at the current problem of the mental quality of *konketsuji* in Japan as well. If you look at a prior survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, there is not a single instance of properly married parents among the parents of [*konketsuji*] in the country's child care facilities and nurseries. Women in the sex trade, prostitutes, and [professional] mistresses make up about 50%, and women affiliated with the stationed military and general office girls were 30%. Now, the GIs who impregnated these women are lower than the average American in terms of dispositions, and so it is obvious that a *konketsuji* born [to such people] will be lower on average than both an American and a Japanese. There are, of course, exceptions. You cannot say that there are not women whose dispositions, while not bad,

³⁵ Ibid., 167-168. Seki's contradiction in this example is notable. He first states that not all *konketsuji* are children of *panpan*, but then goes on to say that *konketsuji* are lacking in intelligence because they are children of *panpan*. It is safe to assume that Seki probably means to say that of the *konketsuji* that are children of *panpan*, they lack in intelligence because of that fact.

nevertheless out of economic necessity and similar reasons have no choice but to fall into this sort of work. A genetically good disposition can hide within a bad phenotype.³⁶

Koya makes an immediate racializing statement by declaring as almost a given that *konketsuji* are mentally defective – and that this is due to their parents being mentally defective. For the mothers, their being unmarried yet conceiving a child – specifically with a GI – is cited by Koya as indicative of their lower mental quality. For the fathers, Koya indicates their having impregnated a Japanese woman out of wedlock as representative of their lack of intelligence. Koya gives nothing more than these as explanations for the apparent mental defects of *konketsuji* parents that they in turn pass on to their mixed children. He thus draws a genetically deterministic link between the intellectual ability of *konketsuji* and the type of sexual relationship seen to have produced them. Further, the mothers of *konketsuji* are characterized as sex workers – and then themselves racialized as a *phenotype* (given in the originally Japanese as “*hyōgengata*,” a technical term meaning “phenotype,” with katakana ruby text reading “*fenotaipu*” inscribed above). Koya presents sex work as indicative of a bad disposition and thus mental inferiority. However, the self-sacrificing prostitute is shown to possess a good genetic disposition because she only engages in sex work because she has no other choice. This implies that sex workers lacking in intelligence with “bad” dispositions *do* have a choice or otherwise willingly engage in sex work.

Thus the racialization is as follows: to be a *konketsuji* is to have a selfish sex-worker for a mother and to therefore genetically inherit her stupidity indicative of that selfish, bad genetic disposition. The racist exclusion made in Koya’s statements is that because *konketsuji* are mixed, they are not thought of as coming from mothers with “good” dispositions, and only from inferior genetic stock. Therefore by Koya’s rationale, to *not* be a *konketsuji* – that is, to be full- or pure-blooded – would be to have a mother who does not willingly or selfishly engage in sex work. Subsequently, *konketsuji* cannot be situated logically within the same category as “pure” children – and insofar as “pure” children can be spoken of as “Japanese,” *konketsuji* cannot be situated within that category either. This not only positions the alternative to *konketsuji* – “pure” children – as coming from better stock and thus more moral mothers, it also others sex workers as the *creators* of the non-Japanese other in *konketsuji*. “Japanese” is thus constructed by Koya as a category that does not include *konketsuji*, but it is his specific focus on the activities of their

³⁶ Koya, 166.

mothers in this case that works to racially exclude them from it. In turn, intentionally or otherwise, Koya (self-) defines the category of “Japanese” in terms of its inclusion of moral, selfless mothers.

An article appearing in the same issue of *Fujin Kōron* as Koya’s entitled “What Will We Do With *Konketsuji*?” collected a number of reader responses regarding the question of how to handle *konketsuji*. One reader, identified as a thirty-one-year-old female primary school teacher, had the following to say:

Even if we put *konketsuji* in special facilities and give them special treatment now, it will be difficult to continue to do so until they become adults. All humans are equal, so instead of suddenly sending them off into society when they mature, I want them to be treated the same as any member of society from the day they are first born. If you inquire into their origin, you’ll hear that even the Japanese are a mixed race made up of Asians, whites, and others. I’ve even heard that there are *konketsuji* among some current famous people. As *konketsuji* have more and more descendants, you are not able to tell that they were ever even mixed. When you think of it that way, there’s nothing to worry about. However, it is a shame for Japan that these *konketsuji* are of very low intelligence and have American soldiers for fathers. The way things are right now, it is impossible for the American military to leave [Japan] anytime soon. As long as American military bases are in Japan, the *konketsuji* problem will remain a tough one to handle.³⁷

Initially it appears that this reader is on the side of integration and ascribes no great significance to difference, racial or otherwise. However, she soon says that the mixed phenotype will eventually be bred out – and that this is a reason to not feel apprehensive about *konketsuji*. She implies here that a lack of visible difference is a good thing, and while she cites this as a reason to not feel bad about *konketsuji*, she subsequently cites a reason to feel bad: *konketsuji* are unintelligent and have American soldiers for fathers. She gives no grounds for this apparent lack of intelligence – only a sweeping statement affirming it. She subsequently connects the *konketsuji* problem to the lingering presence of American military bases in Japan – and thus the presence of American soldiers. The implication is that as long as there are American soldiers in Japan, there will be unintelligent *konketsuji*. She is not explicit about it, but she seems to be drawing a thread between a lack of intelligence on the part of *konketsuji* and American soldier parentage, much like Koya and others. She makes postwar *konketsuji* out to be a certain kind of *konketsuji* (who are unintelligent and the children of American soldiers), distinct from the

³⁷ “Konketsuji o dōsuru ka,” *Fujin Kōron*, April, 1953, 173.

konketsuji who she earlier identifies as ancestors of the Japanese. In so doing, she simultaneously racializes postwar *konketsuji* as “bad”, and disassociates them from the category of “Japanese” in a powerful act of racist exclusion. Even in stating that the Japanese descend from *konketsuji*, the difference that she draws between “those” *konketsuji* and “these” postwar *konketsuji* limits the boundaries of the category of “Japanese.”

The 1953 *Jidō Shinri* roundtable discussion also produced representations of *konketsuji* as unintelligent. Specifically focus on black *konketsuji*, the discussion also managed to limit the scope of “Japanese” as a category of organization:

Kanzaki: With things as they are these days, raising a *kuronbo* child is probably just miserable. Although cold winds and thrown stones may come their way, there is no choice but to encourage the children to walk together hand-in-hand.

Nagashima: I think that the more socially capable they become, the more they will be able to open doors for themselves [in life].

Kanzaki: A *kuronbo* could become a baseball player and create that sort of mood...

Nakano: That would be a good thing.

Nagashima: Let’s look forward to the Olympics in fifteen years (laughs).

Kanzaki: A black-as-Japanese [*nihonjin toshite no kokujin*] might do well as an entertainer also.

Nakano: But in general how intelligent are these children? Apparently [*konketsuji*] in Suginami have considerably low intellect. I think it would be good if this was not the case with all *konketsuji*, but it is still a problem. In any event, it is still good if they become baseball players or something of the sort. It would be nice if some skilled and talented [*konketsuji*] came about.

Kanzaki: Determining whether their intelligence is low depends on the method of the study, but up until now most psychologists have determined that it is. However, there still is not anything known from the anthropological side of things.³⁸

Of immediate note in this excerpt is Kanzaki Kiyoshi’s reproduction of the racist epithet “*kuronbo*” in reference to black *konketsuji*, which does nothing but contribute to the racialization process of *konketsuji* as *black* taking place in the discussion. According to Kanzaki, since *konketsuji* are black, they are therefore suited to lives as athletes and entertainers – but Nakano

³⁸ Kanzaki Kiyoshi et al., 12.

further racializes them as unintelligent, and once again, therefore suited to lives as athletes and entertainers. The racist exclusion here lies in the term “*nihonjin toshite no kokujin*” being used in reference to black *konketsuji* – meaning that they are black *before* they are Japanese. Therefore the logic that follows dictates that insofar as *konketsuji* are Japanese, they are at best Japanese with an asterisk or caveat attached. They are not necessarily being included as “Japanese,” and “Japanese” is definitely not being presented as a category that includes “blacks,” as evident once again from the use of the term “*kokujin toshite no nihonjin.*” Once more, the category of “Japanese” is constructed narrowly.

Towards the end of the above excerpt, Kanzaki notes that anthropological studies of intelligence levels in *konketsuji* have yet to be published. These studies would come the following year, in 1954, and would contain data and characterizations of *konketsuji* that would only function to disassociate *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese” in similar fashion to the examples of *konketsuji* discourse preceding it. One such example is a short excerpt from a report authored by Ishihara Fusao entitled “An Anthropological Study of Mixed-Blood Children of Japanese White and Negro Parentage” published in the March 1954 issue of *Jinruigaku Zasshi*. Ishihara’s study represents anthropological fieldwork undertaken between 1949 and 1954 in the Tokyo area and Kanagawa prefecture, where 201 white *konketsuji* and 66 black *konketsuji* under the age of six were surveyed.³⁹ Under the heading “Intellect and Personality Test,” Ishihara reports the following:

[The intelligence quotients] of *konketsuji* were 43.3 [on average], deviating from the standard Japanese values. The [average] value for a Japanese child in a similar home was 48.75 according to the same method, for a 5.45 point difference. This difference was significant, and the *konketsuji* was inferior. ... There was no evidence that the intelligence of black *konketsuji* was lower than that of white *konketsuji*.⁴⁰

This excerpt explicitly differentiates *konketsuji* from “Japanese” twice, and by stating that the intelligence values of *konketsuji* were lower than the standard Japanese values, *konketsuji* are strongly situated as non-normative. Racial reference in this example is explicitly given to the opposed signifiers “*konketsuji*” and “Japanese” – and the significance attached to these racial

³⁹ Ishihara Fusao, “Nihonjin to hakujin oyobi kokujin no konketsuji no idengakuteki kenkyū,” *Jinruigaku Zasshi* 63, no. 4 (March 1954): 121.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 126.

markers is given as the presence of a relative lack of intelligence. Since *konketsuji* are not “standard” Japanese because their intelligence is low, they are racially excluded from “Japanese” as a category. “Japanese” in this regard is being defined by a certain standard average level of measurable intellect, once again limiting what can and cannot be thought of as “Japanese.” Also of note is that this is an example of *konketsuji* discourse where black and white *konketsuji* are not distinguished in terms of what is being said to distinguish *konketsuji* from “Japanese” (intelligence). Ishihara therefore presents white *konketsuji* as no closer to the tightly-defined category of “Japanese” than black *konketsuji*.

Chapter 4

Where *Konketsuji* Will Go: Speculating on Mixed-Blood Futures

4.1 Arguments for *Konketsuji* Segregation

Where discussions of whether or not *konketsuji* should be sent to regular primary schools alongside majority Japanese children were concerned, *konketsuji* discourse produced a number of arguments discouraging integration. Ōtaku Sōichi espoused such views in June of 1952:

It appears that even though both white and black children are treated equally and without discrimination in orphanages, once they become even slightly aware of themselves they naturally become conscious of differences of type between themselves and their friends. I have heard that while bathing, [black *konketsuji*] ask why their bodies are so dirty and why they cannot get them to be as white as their friends' no matter how much they wash. Their caretakers are at a loss to answer. It is even said that there are some children who, upon looking at themselves in the mirror for the first time since birth and seeing their faces, burst into tears. There are even those who, when one actually looks hard enough, look like miniature King Kongs. If these sorts of children enter regular primary schools, they will definitely suffer horribly.¹

Ōtaku uses black tragedy rhetoric in order to rationalize his support against the integration of *konketsuji* into primary schools. The idea is that since black *konketsuji* in particular will inevitably suffer and be mistreated due to their differences, they should not share the same classrooms as majority Japanese children. Given that it is their difference that is seen to result in suffering and mistreatment, it follows that their difference in fact justifies their segregation. In short, *konketsuji* should be segregated because they are black.

Segregationist sentiments were also expressed in the July 1952 roundtable discussion with Nogami Yaeko, Sawada Miki, and others. Nogami others *konketsuji* with the statement that “the reason why the issue of *konketsuji* has become a big problem in general is the fact that just next year they will be old enough to enter primary school. The problem is that they will ... be entering as a group of unusual (*fūgawari*) children that have not been seen in Japanese society before.”² Her othering process in this example has interesting implications for the construction of

¹ Ōtaku, 71.

² Nogami et al., 52.

a category of “Japanese.” Nogami positions *konketsuji* as unusual oddities – but she also makes the statement that *konketsuji* are completely new to Japanese society and that they have not been seen in the country before. This paints the portrait of a “Japan” unused to race-mixing, and coupled with the explicit racial othering of *konketsuji* as “unusual,” presents the image of a “Japan” defined by the absence of racial mixture and therefore purity – but more significantly, a “Japan” defined as such that has *always* been defined as such. Nogami and Sawada go on to discuss segregation further:

Sawada: According to statistics, more than half of the people who commit crimes in Hawaii, Manila, and Hong Kong are *konketsuji*. It is said that Mata Hari had the blood of a rich Dutchman and a Japanese prostitute. *Konketsuji* criminals are numerous worldwide. If *konketsuji* do not receive guidance, it is possible that they will commit crimes easily.

Nogami: Black children in particular feel jealous as if they have been wronged. They cannot get the same good positions in society [as others can] and they cannot expect matters to get any better in the future.

Sawada: ... Americans certainly harbor discriminatory feelings towards black people. If *we* (my emphasis) treat black people too nicely, we may offend Americans and be disliked [by them]. For example, at our [care facility] we definitely struggle with the racial problem of whether or not we should accept any more blacks.³

Sawada’s invocation of Mata Hari, a WWI-era spy, not only sows paranoia over the possibility of *konketsuji*-committed crime in the future, but also strengthens the comparison between her and Japan’s postwar *konketsuji* by identifying her mother as a Japanese prostitute. Nogami then speculates on the antisocial proclivities of black *konketsuji* in particular, racializing them through a connection of jealousy to blackness. She concludes with a statement that things will not improve for them in Japanese society either, which alludes to a justification of their exclusion on the basis of difference. Sawada echoes this sentiment, yet adds an additional reason to exclude black *konketsuji*. Clearly speaking for Japan, Sawada expresses apprehension over criticism from America should her country integrate black *konketsuji* into society, and admits that her own child care facility considers not accepting black children. Yet Sawada’s segregationist stance is made even more obvious with her statement that “I do not mean to say that they should be in a special enclosed area, but...well, I often take about eight of them or so

³ Ibid., 54.

out for a walk, and when I do we cannot walk straight down the street without everybody crowding around us. Even intelligent adults cannot help pulling on their kinky hair. This will have a bad effect on the children.⁴ Despite herself, Sawada's feelings are less than well-disguised.

The theme of criminal potential on the part of *konketsuji* also figured into a segregationist argument by a reader in April 1953's "What Will We Do With *Konketsuji*?" – as did their apparent status as orphans:

Children born as *konketsuji* are the most pitiful. Things will be alright while they [are still young and] don't know anything, but once they [get older] and figure out how things are there is a high possibility that they will get desperate and eventually become criminals. That is why people think it is ideal that specific religious-based education facilities be set up for *konketsuji*. *Even in our country* (my emphasis), it is often that children without parents get desperate and find themselves in dire situations. *Konketsuji* are all the more [prone to this]. From a social standpoint, it would be difficult to educate them along with regular children (*ippanjidō*).⁵

For this reader, identified as a twenty-six-year-old construction worker, just being born a *konketsuji* equals a high possibility of becoming a criminal. He clearly takes the approach of a spokesperson for Japan and explicitly disassociates *konketsuji* from the category of "Japanese" by corresponding them to "regular children." While it may ostensibly appear that he is stating that children without parents in general are anomalous, he makes the sweeping statement that *konketsuji* – as a group – are parentless without making any effort to differentiate this group internally. The result is that he situates orphan status as conditional for "Japanese" children, but inherent to *konketsuji*. He thus constructs a normative "Japaneseness" defined by this conditionality, and categorically excludes *konketsuji* from it.

4.2 Arguments for *Konketsuji* Integration

Perhaps what most markedly reveals the racist nature of *konketsuji* discourse is the fact that even when it appeared to advocate inclusionary treatment of *konketsuji* – it still somehow managed to manufacture and license racial exclusion. An example of this is a September 1952 article published in *Ibaraki Kyōiku Jihō*. The article presents a conversation with Suda Masāki,

⁴ Ibid., 56.

⁵ "Konketsuji o dōsuru ka," 171.

who proclaims that “the idea of *konketsuji* [itself] is not right. Since the Japanese *minzoku* is mixed in terms of blood according to the theories of *minzoku* and race scholars, there is no need to get angry and fuss [over mixed children].”⁶ Suda instead identifies the real problem as the circumstances of the *konketsuji*’s birth. He says that criticism of birthing children in temporary relationships is justified, but remains integrationist:

However, as for the ones who have already been born, I think society needs to warmly accept them. Also, I do not think future *konketsuji* born in proper wedlock should be labelled *konketsuji* and thus be incited to develop a consciousness as such. When you look at past eras of our country’s history, we warmly embraced naturalized citizens (*kikajin*) from places like Korea (*Chōsen*) and China (*Shina*) and maximized their individual talents and abilities. After that, they came to contribute to Japan’s development. They had relatively few problems adjusting. The assimilation of the Ainu was essentially the same matter with only minor differences. Whether it is the mixed-nation theory of the Japanese *minzoku*, or historical precedents [of assimilation], either could be extremely illuminating in the case of the *konketsuji* problem.⁷

Suda first seems to imply that the “real” *konketsuji* are those born out of proper wedlock, and that those born in proper unions should not even be labelled *konketsuji*. Suda is equating mixing with “improper” sexual activity and calling *konketsuji* the products of such. He offers no alternative term for the “good” *konketsuji*, but he does not explicitly reference them as Japanese either. Suda discusses their identity in terms of their consciousness – or rather their *lack* of consciousness – as *konketsuji*. He advocates doing away with the term “*konketsuji*” specifically so that these biracials do *not* develop a consciousness of being mixed – and then goes on to praise Japan’s colonial-era assimilation projects. Despite appearances, Suda is not so much an advocate for inclusion as he is for the *elimination of difference*. By opposing the development of a “mixed” consciousness, Suda’s argument differs little from those of the segregationists – because like them, he does not desire “*konketsuji*” in Japan either. The racist exclusion is laid bare, as is the disassociation of *konketsuji* from “Japanese”: whether he takes the stance that the Japanese are in fact a mixed race or otherwise, he is emphasizing “Japanese” as a people *without* consciousness as *konketsuji*.

⁶ Suda Masāki, “Konketsuji no shōten,” *Ibaraki Kyōiku Jihō*, September, 1952, 32.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

In the March 1953 issue of *Fujin Kōron*, Kōno Hisako identifies as a *konketsuji* integrationist with the statement that, “we should release [*konketsuji*] into society as soon as possible. In other words, we should not house them in special schools.⁸ However, she makes some interesting statements later in the article:

It is possible to think of *konketsuji* as having different personalities [from Japanese] because of their racial difference, but the goodness of humanity can be found even within a different personality [*kotonatta seikaku*]. In short, we should create an environment where [*konketsuji*] can be received not with feelings of curiosity but rather warmly and equally.⁹

What Kōno does here is explicitly identify *konketsuji* as racially different from “Japanese” and subsequently connect that *racial* difference to a difference in personality between *konketsuji* and “Japanese.” Despite her apparently integrationist views, her rhetoric functions to exclude *konketsuji* from the category of “Japanese” on a racial basis. Kōno does not in fact advocate the inclusion of *konketsuji* as Japanese, but rather the *coexistence* of *konketsuji* and “Japanese” as two separate categories and not one. What results is a focus on “Japanese” as a unified group simply because it can exist side by side with a distinct “*konketsuji*” group.

Integrationist arguments also appeared in *Fujin Kōron*’s “What Will We Do With *Konketsuji*?” A reader identified as a thirty-nine-year-old housewife was one such proponent of integration, declaring that “isn’t thinking of *konketsuji* as separate just indicative of a closed-minded, insular island-country mentality? [What *konketsuji* are,] are the misbegotten children of *panpan*. Other than putting them in special places that cannot raise them, they should be put in proper households with properly married people. They were born in Japan with Japanese mothers, so I want them to be integrated and not looked on with scorn.¹⁰ Despite her support of *konketsuji* integration, this reader presents an all-encompassing characterization of *konketsuji* as the children of *panpan* that immediately others them. She also never explicitly calls *konketsuji* Japanese, but does mention that their mothers are – as well as the fact that they were born in Japan. For these reasons, she states that *konketsuji* should be integrated – but by “integration” she seems to mean having them live in “proper” households with married couples. She thus

⁸ Kōno Hisako, “Konketsuji ni shin ichinensei o mukaeru,” *Fujin Kōron*, March, 1953, 142.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁰ “Konketsuji o dōsuru ka,” 173.

makes the blind assumption that *konketsuji* are not already living with married parents and are thus necessarily the children of *panpan*. The racist exclusion embedded in her comments renders *konketsuji* as an outsider group defined as such in terms of their birth circumstances who must be *integrated* into “Japan” and are therefore not *already* a part of it.

Conclusion

Biracial children in 1950s Japan were thoroughly othered via an elaborate racist process that discussed their physical appearance, made claims about their mentalities and intelligence, speculated on their potential for criminality and ideological subversion, associated them with sexual labour, drew conclusions about the relationships of their parents, and lamented them as hopeless victims of racial prejudice. No matter the emphasis or focus of the discursive formations that it employed, this multifaceted process functioned to remove biracial Japanese children from normalized notions of social origin, family, nationhood, class, and racial makeup. Biracial children were transmogrified into *konketsuji* by way of a discourse that adamantly refused to acknowledge them as “Japanese,” and positioned them as a postwar icon of racial non-normativity.

The discourse of *konketsuji* should be understood as having laid the groundwork for the dominant discourse of Japanese homogeneity that rose to prominence in the 1960s. Racist representations of *konketsuji* could only seem credible insofar as there existed an opposing, normative racial icon that was not only conceptualized as separate from *konketsuji*, but as not racially mixed. Alongside the racist process in which *konketsuji* were disassociated from “Japanese,” a mirrored process that reified “Japanese” as an exclusive, uniform category of began to unfold. The effects of this reification process are still felt today, as seen in the case of Miyamoto Ariana. When considering the contemporary “*gaijin*-ization” of biracial Japanese like Miyamoto, one must not ignore the 1950s discourse of *konketsuji*.

It is perhaps the following March 12th Twitter post that best illustrates the position of a biracial like Miyamoto in relation to Japanese homogeneity discourse: “That Miss Universe Japan is a *hāfu* is a contradiction.”¹ This statement is indicative of an assumption of normative binary categories within the discourse of Japanese homogeneity that has been elaborated upon in scholarly literature. For instance, Jane Hisa Yamashiro notes:

¹ Holley, “Why some critics think Japan’s Miss Universe contestant isn’t Japanese enough.” “*Misu Yunibaasu Japan ga hāfu to iu mujun.*”

There are two major categories for social identification in Japan: “Japanese” and “foreigner.” With this sort of dichotomization, much like the categories of “self” and “other,” the two classifications are assumed to be mutually exclusive and diametrically opposed. In other words, “Japanese” is constructed against “foreigner.” ... “Japanese” refers to people who are presumably not “foreign” in any way and “foreigner” likewise describes people who are supposedly not “Japanese.”²

John Lie makes a similar observation, asserting that “[the fact] that many Japanese are more or less aware of various nonethnic Japanese living in Japan does not challenge the assumption of Japanese ... homogeneity. The strategy of normalization is to insist on the binary and distinct categories of Japanese and foreigners; everyone is either one or the other.”³ Miyamoto – much like the 1950s figure of the *konketsuji* before her – are “*gaijin*-ized” and placed outside the category of “Japanese” and inside the category of “foreigner.” As Yamashiro notes, the discourse of Japanese homogeneity does not allow for a third category – a liminal space – between “Japanese” and “foreigner.”⁴ “Japanese” is seen to be a category distinct from that of *hāfu* and *konketsuji*, and not inclusive of it. The complex racialization process undertaken by the discourse of *konketsuji* in the 1950s did not allow for such “*gaijin*-ized” biracial Japanese to play a part in the genesis of a new dominant discourse of Japanese heterogeneity in the postwar period – but the potential for biracials to affect a re-consideration of the racial dimensions of “Japanese” yet remains.

A biracial person like Miyamoto Ariana blends racial categories. She is “Japanese” in all respects save her “foreign” outward appearance; she was born in Japan, resides in Japan, and speaks the language and practices the culture of Japan natively. What she lacks is so-called “Japanese” raciality, yet she manages to blur the distinction between “Japanese” and “foreigner” due to her possessing criteria *other* than race that would nevertheless appear to qualify her as “Japanese.” Only through such a blending – a *mixing* – of racial categories can the supports of race be shaken and a viable critique of the concept arise. What is known and understood to be “Japanese,” as a racial category, is suddenly called into question by someone like Miyamoto –

² Yamashiro, 94.

³ Lie., 48.

⁴ Yamashiro, 105.

who may be placed outside of the category of “Japanese,” yet strikingly resembles that which is *inside* of it and therefore challenges the discourse that supports it. The very fact of Miyamoto’s selection and presentation to the public *as* Miss Universe Japan runs contrary to the discourse of Japanese homogeneity, blurs the distinct categories of “foreigner” and “Japanese,” and therefore challenges its integrity and elicits contention.

Biracial Japanese are quite possibly the only significantly visible, discursively recognized group of “others” within the Japanese social space that may appear vastly different from other Japanese in terms of phenotype, but nevertheless adhere in every other way to an archetypical model of “Japaneseness.”⁵ As biracials receive increasing mainstream exposure and thus become more and more normalized within the Japanese cultural sphere, they pose a growing potential to shake the discourse of Japanese homogeneity to its foundations. Since they are only differentiated from other Japanese in terms of the explicit racial marker that is phenotype, the fact that race is absolutely integral to the stability of the discourse of Japanese homogeneity is made very clear. When the viability of race as a concept – as an organizing principle – is questioned, discredited, or otherwise shown *not to matter*, the entire discourse of Japanese homogeneity – and indeed the discourse of *race* itself – runs the risk of falling completely apart.

⁵ Barring of course any discursively-recognized populations of “full-blooded” phenotypical others (such as Caucasians for example) who have nevertheless been born and raised in Japan and possess native linguistic and cultural fluency.

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