A Complex Fit: The Remaking of Japanese Femininity and Fashion, 1945-65.

流行の複雑な構成因子：1945-65年の日本における女性らしさとファッション再構築

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Abstract

This article explores the manner in which post-war American and European popular-culture influences, in combination with domestic economic and socio-cultural movements, acted to shape the fashion styles and expressions of femininity adopted by Japanese women in the Showa 20s (1945-55) and 30s (1955-65). Beginning with an exploration of the complex legacy of the occupation, with its combination of high-levels of prostitution juxtaposed with women's legal empowerment, it goes on to examine the impact of 1950s western and Japanese movies; dressmaking schools; fashion magazines and the mass media images of early-1960s female pop icons created and controlled by Watanabe Misa and the pioneering *Nabepro* production company. The article seeks to uncover the manner in which the aspirational female-driven consumer boom of the mid-Showa period allowed Japan's post-war fashion industry to emerge from American cultural domination and develop a European-focused sensibility that would contribute to its emergence as a style-maker and arguably the most fashion-conscious nation in the developed world.

Keywords：Fashion, Women's Magazines, U.S Occupation, Watanabe Production, Dressmaking, The Peanuts

概　要

本稿では、昭和20年代（1945-55）と30年代（1955-65）に日本の女性たちが女性らしさの表現方法として採り入れたファッション・スタイルに見られる、国内経済と文化・社会的運動の影響に加え、戦後欧米のポップカルチャーが果たした役割について考察する。まず、戦後日本で流行したファッションに焦点をあて、女性の法的、社会的地位が向上した裏側で、駐留軍人相手にセックスシンボルめかして着飾る街娼たちが出現したという、占領軍の二律背反する遺産について考察する。次いで、1950年代の映画（洋・邦画双方を含む）の影響と、この時代に出現した洋裁学校、そして1960年代初期にファッション誌やメディアを賑わせた女性ポップアイドルたちのイメージについて掘り下げる。当時のポップアイドルは、渡辺美佐と彼女が始めた、時代に先駆けるナベプロこと渡辺プロダクションによって生み出され、牛耳られていた。本稿の終着点は、戦後日本のファッション産業が、アメリカの文化的支配から抜け出

て、今日先進国の中で恐らく随一のファッション性を湛える、独自のヨーロッパ的感性を発現するにいたる過程で、上昇志向の高い女性が原動力となった昭和中期の消費ブームがどのように作用したかを解き明かすことである。

キーワード：ファッション、婦人雑誌、駐留軍、渡辺プロダクション、ドレスメイキング、ザ・ピーナッツ

Introduction

Given the very considerable literature by scholars on middle-class Japanese women's embrace of consumerism and westernized attitudes towards marriage, leisure and non-working urban lifestyles in the interwar years, it is perhaps surprising that the literature for the post-war year period remains relatively thin.[1] This is especially true in the area of fashion and its relationship with popular culture and the mass media. Here, only Ochiai (1997) and Bardsley (2000, 2002, 2008) with their examination of women's magazines and beauty contests, attempt to follow up the pioneering work in this area that Silverberg (1991, 1992), Hartley (2008) and Frederick (2010) have undertaken for the interwar years, and fill in what is a very significant gap in the historical record. There are two plausible reasons for the paucity of concrete cultural histories of post-war Japanese fashion in English. The first is the tendency of cultural studies scholars to focus mostly on marginalized groups and subcultures or on issues of gender, sexuality and identity construction. Examples of this approach are the work of scholars such as Kondo (1997) with her exploration of the "aesthetics and politics" that shape "Japanese identity in the fashion industry" and Slade (2009), with his "cultural history" of Japanese modernity. While contributing much to the overall field of cultural studies in the Japanese context, these approaches do not always include the kind of primary source-based social history needed to explore what is an inherently inter-disciplinary field. The second reason is the inadequacy of the secondary literature itself, both in Japanese or English. Thus while American and European cultural studies scholars can draw on a solid base of historical record and analysis for their own societies' discourse on fashion as identity and representation, Japanese social history scholars have yet to produce a comparable body of work that can act as an underpinning for these more theoretical concerns.

While the limitations of a solely cultural studies approach may be self-evident to the historian of mainstream fashion, the methodology involved in integrating other disciplines is less obvious. Perhaps the closest example to an inter-disciplinary approach, and one that partly informs this study, is that taken by British fashion and film historians Stella Bruzzi (1997), Rachel Moseley (2002) and Pamela Church Gibson (2006). While focusing mostly on the role of film in shaping fashion discourse, their work includes discussions of post-war popular culture and consumer trends, women's magazines and the meaning of modernity in a fashion context. To the approach taken by these scholars, the author adds a chronological and narrative-driven social history focus designed to uncover hard historical evidence for some of the anecdotal ideas and theories that have been advanced by commentators on Japanese fashion history in the past. This is done by making use of hitherto underused or neglected sources, notably web collections of 1950s and 1960s fashion magazines created by popular culture fans; print and visual media associated with mainstream movies and popular music and two important Japanese secondary source overviews by Chimura (2001) and Narumi (1995). In combination this approach attempts to fit together the intricate and complex pieces of the puzzle that is the post-war Japanese fashion sensibility.

Fashion as Sex Worker's Tool: The Occupation Years, 1945-52

The enormous hardships and shortages endured by all but upper middle-class Japanese during and immediately after the Pacific War included a ban on colorful styles of kimono, short sleeve tops and skirts as well as an injunction on the perming of hair or wearing of lipstick. While some women found creative ways to defy the ban, the government's ideological clampdown on women's efforts to express their femininity through fashion was naturally a source of resentment, especially for those of marriageable age. These feelings of youth and beauty withered by war were well expressed in later years by the poem "When I was most beautiful" written by Ibaragi Noriko. In the poem, Ibaragi, who was in her late teens when wartime prohibitions took effect, laments the way in which the war took away her chance to enjoy fashion, music and relationships with the opposite sex when she was at her most attractive (Nakamura, 2010, p. 221; Stanford, 2008, p. 258). While one cannot extrapolate too much from a single poem, it seems likely that this feeling of a deep loss of opportunity to express oneself through clothing was shared by many of Ibaragi's contemporaries. Indeed there is much in the behavior of post-war Japanese women to suggest the existence of a frantic desire for an immediate redress of their wartime conditions and a concerted effort to find opportunities to make up for lost years. It was this yearning, one shared with women in Europe, that would help fuel the immediate post-war drive to attain any fashion item that could symbolize a clear expression of physical attractiveness and femininity.

The post-war situation precluded of course, any quick return to the types of fashion styles that existed in the immediate pre-war era. Women's fashion in the ten years before the war was characterized, not by the adoption of western clothing itself, but rather by the rapid spread of inexpensive meisen silk kimonos with modern, often art nouveau-inspired motifs. The latter garment had allowed for the rise of a uniquely Japanese fashion industry built around this new style in combination with the growing interest in makeup that was promoted by Shiseido and Kanebo (Francks, 2011, pp. 22-27). The pent-up feelings of a generation denied the right to enhance and display their physical persona through such modern kimono or in the formalized traditional way that was still the norm in pre-war Japan, especially outside urban areas, can only be imagined. These feelings were doubtless complicated by the harsh conditions of the occupation years. In many respects this era (1945-52), during which an estimated 55-100,000 women worked at one time or another in the urban sex industry and in which economic survival was the paramount goal, was an especially dour period, allowing little respite from the daily grind of survival.[2)] With a very significant percentage of lower-class urbanized women involved in some aspect of prostitution, the scars left on the collective psyche of young Japanese women were surely both deep and enduring. This was especially the case for young working-class women whose interest in the consumer items that they saw in magazines such as *Shufu No Tomo* (Housewife's Companion) in the late 1940s could be no more than a fantasy. Inevitably any clothing outfit beyond the most utilitarian "mompe" (culotte style working pants) or worn-out kimono—and especially anything that could be considered frivolous or overtly feminine—would have been associated in the public mind with the seedier side of the entertainment world, since only the pecuniary benefits of this activity could justify the costs and the efforts required to fashion them into something approximating a fashionable western-style dress or accessory.

In 1946, the occupation authorities, concerned at the total failure to prevent the spread of sexual disease among its force of around 250,000 GIs, in effect fired tens of thousands of prostitutes, many of whom who had been licensed by the civilian authorities in the hastily formed Recreation Amusement

Association, immediately after the war. This domestic version of a "Comfort Woman" system had been set up with SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) approval for the dual purpose of monitoring and controlling the sexual activities of American soldiers while serving as a buffer between GIs and middle-class Japanese women. The latter were in effect encouraged to shun American soldiers and leave prostitution to designated sex workers. The dismissal of this semi-formal prostitution system in which women had been carefully assigned to different areas and ranks of the American military establishment, meant that freelance Japanese sex workers, soon nicknamed *pan-pan*, would now have to compete with each other for customers in unlicensed (though not illegal) brothels or on the streets (Dower, 1999, pp. 130-31; Tanaka, 2002, pp. 161-62). This of course necessitated clothing and accessories deemed to be sexually alluring to soldiers, the model for which, of course, could only come from American movies or magazines.

The second requirement for the successful *panpan* was a limited command of English, or so called "Panglish,"an ability that of course required regular interaction with a GI. Finally the *pan-pan* needed a high level of psychological resilience to ignore or even defy the comments of understandably resentful older women, many of whom were struggling to eke out a living and either could not, or chose not to take the same route. Success in all three areas could result in access to scarce PX store luxury goods that few middle-class men, let alone lower-class women, could hope to equal, unless involved in the dangerous underground economy. It also of course allowed for further opportunities to obtain specific western fashions, especially those that were not readily attainable from the PX, and which might provide an edge in efforts to attract officers or higher-level SCAP employees. Such fashions, while usually only encountered in magazines, were probably first seen in late 1945 when a small group of Hawaiian Nisei women in the Women's Army Corps arrived in Tokyo to work as translators. According to one American newspaper, these women would function as "mannequins for democracy" whose job would be to "model feminine Americanism in the land of their ancestors" (Moore 2003, p.125). A few months later several hundred officers wives, all of whom would have been Caucasian, arrived in Tokyo (McLelland 2010, p. 3). The behavior of these wives, dressed up in upper middle-class fashions and dining with their husbands at cafes in the Ginza, would surely have contributed to the complex feelings of bitterness and resentment that non-sex workers had for those few *pan-pan* who were able to imitate the respectable elegance of these



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Figure 1. Bennett Collection, OSU. http://library.osu.edu/projects/bennett-in-japan/images/full/04/8.jpg.
Figure 2. 1940s prostitutes. http://stretchoutandblog.blogspot.com/2010_10_01_archive.html
Figure 3. American sailors image of Japanese sex workers, 1953. William Hune Estate

unimaginably affluent American women. At the same time, however, no matter how successful they were in obtaining these resources or in actually finding something akin to a romantic relationship, all *pan-pan* were subject to roundups by police for venereal disease checkups (Takeuchi, p. 88). As such, even those aspects of the *pan-pan's* image that may have had attractive aspects—most notably the confident sexuality embodied in her fashion style—would surely not be able to counteract the stigma attached to her past behavior in the more ordered post-occupation society that would emerge on the late 1950s. This would be the case regardless of any social and legal changes that might enhance her status.

By the latter part of the occupation, an increasing number of urbanized working women felt able to discard the ubiquitous *mompe* and, either using their old clothing or some cheaply bought textiles, stitch together some basic western clothing such as a skirt, blouse or dress (Baerwald, 2002). Dresses were usually modeled on images from new magazines such as *Shufu Seikatsu*, *Fujin Seikatsu* and *Doresu Mekingu*, all of which carried household-management advice designed to help women make do with shortages in almost every area of daily life. With a relatively high ownership of sewing machines and access to the plethora of sewing schools and shops that sprang up or re-emerged in the late 1940s, most urban working-class women were, by the early 1950s, able to come into possession of at least some rudimentary western-style outfits (Koizumi, 2004, pp. 43-5). In most cases this would be a simple skirt or basic shirtwaist dress that could at least give an impression of a status akin to that enjoyed by the pre-war middle class. For those with genuine upper middle-class status and access to more elaborate materials, the style of choice was the so-called Paper Doll silhouette, a simplified version of Dior's post-war New Look designed by American designer Anne Fogarty and promoted in the U.S by *Margot Dresses* (Anne Fogarty Obituary, 1980; Clothing and Fashion Encyclopedia, 2011). This style, with its nylon-based bouffant petticoats, had by the mid-1950s, become the default image of the affluent American teenager or young housewife in the U.S mass media, both print and film (Vaughan, 2009, pp. 29-33). With some adaptions and simplifications, it would, as will be seen later in the discussion of 1960s singers and actresses, achieve wide acceptance in Japan too.

The enormous social, sexual and cultural-liberation characteristics of the occupation, most notably the abolition of the legal status of a patriarchal family system and the legalization of divorce, have been well described by occupation historians such as Dower (1999) and McLelland. For the latter, the early occupation period was "characterized by a voluble sexual discourse in which previous attitudes toward sex and the body were quite literally being rewritten...and disseminated through media such as radio, film, literature and the press" (p. 3). This window for experimentation ultimately led to a limited, but still significant reimagining of male-female relationships, one that would at least partially survive the more conservative period of the middle and late 1950s. These changes, however, should be viewed cautiously by the social historian, for the theoretical freedoms enshrined in the new constitution, while certainly a cause for some optimism and satisfaction for those middle-class women untroubled by issues of day-to-day survival, were less relevant to those merely trying to find adequate food and shelter. It also seems reasonable to assume that for women of almost all social classes, the popular culture imports that SCAP in effect afforded Japanese men as compensation for their symbolic emasculation in the face of a military occupation, namely sports, music and the liberalized sexuality of urban nightlife, were inherently of less interest or value. Thus while working-class men could and did enjoy attending baseball games; listening to jazz and country music on military radio; drinking in the new bars and strip show joints, their wives and sisters had only the radio or an occasional Hollywood movie as a break from the drudgery of everyday life. Indeed the painful fact for many urbanized working women during the occupation was that, with pre-war male mores still largely intact outside a few urban enclaves, only those women willing or forced to

risk their reputations and safety, had a chance of enjoying both the consumer items and outside-the-home entertainment that they were beginning to see in imported movies and fashion magazines published in the early postwar years.

As will be seen, by the early 1950s, the possibility of some aesthetic enrichment of their condition was on the horizon for middle-class women. This amelioration in their day-to-day lives would be embodied for many in the contents of a new class of women's magazines targeted at so-called *BG* (Business) *Girls* that began publication at this time (Ochiai, 1997, p. 155). It would also be enhanced both by imported and domestic movies and the celebrity-based entertainment media that these cultural products stimulated. In this situation, a revival of some kind of fashion industry, grounded in the dressmaking skills that so many women were acquiring, and boosted by the development of acrylic and nylon textiles produced by the rapidly expanding Toyo Rayon (a division of Toray), became a distinct possibility (Chimura, p. 91). This industry was certain to be quite different from its pre-war counterpart in terms of its scale and economic structure and would obviously be heavily influenced by the dominant expressions of American popular culture. Its exact boundaries and direction, however, were still far from determined.

Hollywood Movies, Audrey Hepburn and the Japanese Post-War Fashion Aesthetic, 1952-57

With so few leisure pursuits available to post-war urbanized Japanese women and the transformation in clothing culture triggered by the war and occupation, it would seem natural for new fashions adopted by American or European actresses to have considerable appeal in Japan. While Audrey Hepburn's short hair, slim figure and boyish styles in *Sabrina* and *Roman Holiday* (both released in Japan in 1954), are generally seen as the first movies to influence young urban fashions in Japan, little if any attention has been given to movies that predate or were contemporaneous with these. Perhaps the first western movie to have an identifiable impact on post-war fashion ideals was Michael Powell's adaption of Hans Christian Anderson's, *The Red Shoes*, first shown in Tokyo in 1950. An early color movie featuring ballerina Moira Shearer in glamorous makeup and gowns designed by French designer Jacques Fath, the release of *The Red Shoes* coincided with the end of government control of leather and apparently inspired a red pumps boom in newly revived Ginza stores such as Mitsukoshi (Tokyo Shoes Grand Exhibition, 1999). While one can only speculate on the particular reasons for its success, it is easy to imagine that this aristocratic fantasy of art and romance with its exquisite Jacques Fath fashions would have resonated with upper middle-class women looking for an escape from the overt and cheap sexuality of those outfits worn by women working around them in the city's nightclubs and jazz *kissa*. Naturally, however, a Japanese actress would be much easier to identify with, and as will be seen later, the late 1950s would see the emergence of several young women who collectively came to embody a simple but accessible femininity built around imported fashions that both straddled and transcended the images that were common in the pre-war era. While perhaps not as influential as contemporary notions might suggest, Hollywood icon Audrey Hepburn was among those influencing at least one of the Japanese screen's most important actresses in the late 1950s, namely Kuga Yoshiko.

Hepburn's two major mid-1950s movies, have been closely studied by British fashion historians Bruzzi, Moseley and Gibson. Bruzzi has argued that the New Look as revealed in movies by Hepburn and others brought back “not just femininity but pleasure in fashion” after the war (p.162). Moseley notes Hepburn's ability to suggest an innocent persona that is “perpetually caught at the moment of becoming a woman,” and whose transformation into an ideal femininity is shaped by her fashion choices (Moseley, pp. 37-8).

Her transition to womanhood and in many of the movies, higher social status too, is one that is indeed made possible through fashion itself. Thus the donning of an haute couture black satin cocktail dress designed by Paris designer Hubert de Givenchy, or the reversion to a simple all-black outfit allows her character to display control of her own appearance and to project a range of feminine expressions that match the occasion and situation. Gibson also argues that what makes Hepburn special was being "the object of female emulation" and offering women "an alternative way of looking and behaving" that was very different from that of curvaceous and glamorous actresses such Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren or Brigitte Bardot. Her appeal to women was as "an elegant clothes-horse" whose Parisian fashion style made the women of American high society appear "frumpy," but who was also confident and attractive when dressing down in "bohemian black turtleneck, slacks and trousers" (Gibson, pp. 92, 96-97).

While there is a widespread belief that Hepburn had a major impact on Japanese women's fashion orientation and that many identified with her slim body shape and dark hair, little has been written about the exact nature of her impact on Japanese women's fashion sensibility. Indeed the only serious study of the Hepburn phenomena, Zen Yipu's "Remade in Japan: The Case of Audrey Hepburn" (2004) largely focuses on contemporary constructions of her popularity and image. Yipu does, however, cite one remark about Hepburn in the Japanese media in 1954 in which the commentator notes her ability to arouse "powerful passions even though her body almost completely lacks 'volume' and is stick-thin" (p. 81). While this comment might imply that post-war Japanese women felt some physical affinity for the actress, there is only limited evidence from the 1950s at least (beyond an imitation of her hairstyle and slacks from *Sabrina*), that Hepburn's physical persona was in fact a major influence and it is important to avoid retroactive extrapolation from her present iconic status. At the same time, however, it is clear that iconic actress Kuga Yoshiko did in fact take her fashion cues directly from *Sabrina* era Hepburn. This influence can be seen in 1954's *Uwasa no Onna* (Woman of Rumor) directed by Mizoguchi Kenji in which she wears a turtleneck sweater, slacks and loafers and later in Gosho Hirano's 1957 vehicle *Elegy*. No other actress of the period, however, took on an identifiably Hepburn-style look. Of course Hepburn's mid-1950's movies, especially *Roman Holiday* (1955) and *Funny Face* (1957) clearly had considerable appeal. However, their main attraction was as European-styled fantasies of social transformation from ordinary girl to a sophisticated woman. Indeed, given that the movie icon was already in her late 20s when showcasing the Givenchy-styled fashions of *Funny Face*, Hepburn's style and image would likely have been seen as beyond reach by the average Japanese woman in her late teens or early twenties. By contrast French actress Jean Seberg's tomboyish style in her portrayal of the sexually precocious 17-year old ingénue Cecile in the 1958 movie version of the Francoise Sagan novel *Bonjour Tristesse* (Kanashimiyo Konnichiwa) was quite easy to emulate (Basye, 2011). Mesmerizing Japanese audiences, the movie and its follow up—Godard's 1959 pop-culture breakthrough *Breathless*—sparked the so-called "Cecile Cut" hairstyle which is still known in the hairdressing world (Street Fashion, p.31). Whatever the relative impact of Hepburn and Seberg on fashion trends, their popularity clearly revealed an interest in what can be seen as an early manifestation of European chic; one quite unlike that that of the innocent girl-next-door persona embodied by American stars such as singers Connie Francis and Brenda Lee or actresses Sandra Dee and Annette Funicello. The manner in which these competing expressions of femininity would play out in the fashion world, would depend on a combination of events, not all of them related to popular culture.

Sugie Toshio and Masumura Yasuzo: Fashioning the New Japanese Woman on Screen, 1958-62

While the mid-to-late 1950s is seen as the golden age of serious Japanese cinema, it also saw the release of an astonishing array of short youth-oriented movies with a remarkably prescient pop culture sensibility. Largely the product of the Toho, Daiei, Shōchiku and Nikkatsu studios, many of these films barely reached an hour in length. With some directors making as many as five movies a year, they can in some respects be seen as the equivalent of today's trendy TV dramas with their exploitation of contemporary socio-cultural issues. Among the most prolific directors of this era were Sugie Toshio and Masumura Yasuzo. Through their creative casting of some of the country's most talented young actresses, most notably Wakao Ayako, these two directors were responsible for injecting vivid depictions of most of the youth-driven cultural and fashion trends of the period into their highly topical movies. Unlike Masumura, Sugie's contribution to Japanese popular culture in general has not been much recognized by scholars. Already in his 40s by the time he emerged as a major director in 1953, he clearly had his pulse on the romantic and, arguably, sexual fantasies of those reaching their mid-teens in the late 1950s. Perhaps the most impressive of his 1950's output was *Janken Musume* (1955), an early technicolor vehicle for the so-called "Sanin No Musume" (Three Daughters) consisting of teenage singer-actresses Hibari Misora, Eri Chiemi and Yukimura Izumi, all of whom would go on to major singing careers in later years. The light romantic musical features a smorgasbord of musical and fashion styles, mostly designed by upcoming designer Yagyu Etsuko. A musical number in which Izumi Yukimura performs a cha cha-styled song in both Japanese and English personifies the innovative combination of contemporary vocal jazz, New Look style and American-inspired fashions and set design. Wearing a white knee-length dress with a black ribbon-like belt, white pumps and gloves, the waist length-haired beauty, sings on a stylish, colorful and remarkably modern set with seven backup dancers. The latter, clad in black, white and red plaid slacks, colored cowboy-style blouses and gold high-heel dancing shoes, look if anything, more contemporary than their U.S and U.K counterparts. Indeed the clothes and set design, could easily be mistaken for an early 1960s western-made movie and seem far removed from the grey utilitarian years of the occupation or indeed from the darker, introverted and serious *shoshimin eiga* (home drama) "art" of contemporary directors Ozu Yasujiro and Naruse Mikio with their "older female characters in kimonos and younger ones in the sensible skirt and white blouse of the young modern woman" (Russell, 2008, p. 276).

Janken Musume was followed by *Romansu musume* (Young Lady's Romance) in 1956, featuring the three teenagers singing and dancing to mambo songs, and the so-called *Onēchan* series of cheesecake sex comedies whose main attraction were nubile B-list actresses playing roles such as fashionable university students or office workers. Among the literally hundreds of such movies made by Sugie and his contemporaries in this immediately pre-TV decade were several that included fashion designers as either central or minor characters or which feature the new fashion industry in some scenes. The earliest of these was *Chiemi Eri no Kutusu* (Eri Chiemi's Shoes) 1956, which revolved around a young countryside shop owner who makes a pair of red high heel shoes for the actress. This was followed by *Tokyo no Kyujitsu* (Tokyo Holiday) in 1958, featuring Shirley Yamaguchi as a fashion designer and *Ginza no Onéchan* (Three Dolls in Ginza) in 1959, with Shigeyama Noriko playing a model in love with a rockabilly singer. From a purely fashion perspective, however, the most remarkable of these movies was 1961's *Onna no Kunshō* (A Woman's Pride). Made by Masumura Yasuzō, who with Sugie was perhaps the single most important director of pop culture movies, this was not the first of his movies to feature new fashion as one of its






Figure 4 Figure 5 Figure 6 Figure 7

Figure 4. Yukimura Izumi from *Janken Musume*, 1954.
Figure 5. Nozoe Hitomi from *Kyojin to Gangu*, 1958
Figure 6. Wakao Ayako, Kano Junko and Kyo Machiko in *Onna no Kunshō*, 1961
Figure 7. Illustration of Wakao Ayako's green dress from in *Onna no Kunshō*, 1961

main attractions. In 1958, he had included glamorously dressed women in *Kyojin to Gangu* (Giants and Toys), an extraordinary satire of the new ruthless business world and its use of deceitful advertising. The movie featured actress Nozoe Hitomi as a lower middle-class girl who is chosen to be the symbol of an advertising campaign. Nozoe's wardrobe undergoes a rapid transformation and by the end of the movie she is seen wearing a glamorous white coat and New Look-inspired multi-layered green satin dress, high-heel sandals, large hooped earrings and a range of accessories that, like the film's style and structure, are breathtakingly modern (Mes, 2010; Philips, 2007, p.161). In 1961 Masumura made the decision to adapt the recently serialized Yamazaki Toyoko novel ("Onna no Kunshō"), into what can now be seen as one of the most remarkable pop and fashion vehicles of the early 1960s. The movie featured Machiko Kyo and Wakao Ayako, two of the most widely admired actresses of the day, as immaculately-dressed aspiring dress designers in a successful Osaka sewing school. The throwaway plot, which includes several adulterous escapades with an ambitious textile wholesaler, allows the two women, together with former Shiseido model Kano Junko to shine in green, blue and red-themed fashions, with Wakao in particular, luminous in a green suit with leopard and flower print blouses and an array of hats.[3)]

While not always given credit, many of the outfits in the movies of Sugie, Masumura and others, were designed by Mori Hanae, then in her early 30s. Mori's major movie debut had come with the now legendary pop culture classic, *Crazed Fruit* (1956) in which she dressed Kitahara Mie in several delicate and highly feminine summer dresses. In the same year, she gave the actress a China dress for her scenes as a nightclub singer in *Balloon*. She followed this impressive fashion statement by costuming popular actress Kuga Yoshiko, in the aforementioned *Elegy*. Set in the foggy town of Kushiro in Hokkaido, Mori dressed Kuga in a turtleneck sweater, slacks and loafers. *Elegy* would solidify Kuga's image as the Japanese Hepburn, but recognition for the young designer's innovative style was slow in coming. Indeed it was not until 1960 that Mori became one of the earliest winners of the Fashion Editors Club of Japan award for costume design, an accolade that led the designer to take her talents to Paris and begin her international career (White, 2006).

Pop-culture movies such as these were not of course the only ones to feature bright American-influenced designs or fashion. As early as 1951, Kinoshita Keisuke's *Carmen Kokyō ni Kaeru* (Carmen Come Home), featured glamorous Takamine Hideko as a retired stripper in a bright red dress and western-style makeup. Five years later Mizoguchi Kenji's masterpiece *Akasen Chitai* (Streets of Shame) starred Kyo

Machiko as a gum-chewing prostitute in a tartan skirt and glamorous low-cut sweater. These characters, however, are essentially occupation-era sex workers rather than modern women who have transcended the darkness of the immediate post-war era. By contrast, *Janken Musume* with its glamorous but obviously sexually innocent girl-next-door female characters, *Onna no Kunshō* and the *Onēchan* series, suggest the impatience and excitement of a youthful generation that is primed and ready for a consumer-based lifestyle based around fashion and pop culture. As Deborah Shamoon suggests in her study of Hibari Misora's transformation from "precocious, scandalously sexualized child" to "conservative and chaste" teen icon, such movies act to place a symbolic distance between the traumatic years of the occupation and the bright future of well-dressed, unblemished young women enjoying a middle-class consumer lifestyle (Shamoon, 2009, p. 131). Indeed taken collectively, these popular modern lifestyle movies suggest the promise of a new society built around an emerging class of hard-working but well-rewarded men. Such men could show off their new status through their female partner's ability to consume those fashion and consumer goods that symbolized their entry into a middle-class world far removed from the nightmare of the occupation years. While Sugie and Masumura's comic satires often had a more serious dimension, their use of glamorous and powerful women whose impossibly elegant fashion render men hopelessly and often helplessly in awe or lust, suggest the transformative and empowering nature of the new fashions, cheaper versions of which were now making their way into department stores.

Femininity as Upper Middle-Class European Aesthetic: Women's Magazines, Models and Tokyo Fashion College

Feminist historians such as Nancy Walker (1998) have described the coordinated post-war effort by U.S women's magazines (with federal government collusion) to promote the re-employment of returning military veterans through the removal of women from their wartime employment. Such women were encouraged to end their full time work, marry and focus on family life and childrearing. The campaign was relentlessly reinforced by mass-circulation magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* which by the early 1950s, had reached a circulation in the millions. While such a government-corporate effort was obviously not a feature of immediate-post occupation Japan, a similar phenomenon of early marriage and withdrawal from the full time labor force was clearly underway in urban areas by the late 1950s. In the case of Japan, however, it would be the unfettered economic growth of this period that led the conservative LDP and it allies to conclude that a modified version of the *ryôsai kenbo* concept—under which middle-class women would focus on the home, thus freeing their husbands to devote themselves completely to their companies—could be promoted without negative economic consequences (Uno, 1993, p. 303) Given the aforementioned lack of a leisure outlet for women comparable to those enjoyed by men, it is hardly surprising that middle-class Japanese women, under pressure to resign from office jobs and marry by their mid-20s, would respond quite favorably to the same consumerist longings, encapsulated in lifestyle and fashion magazines, that their American counterparts had already succumbed to.

As mentioned earlier, post-occupation women's magazines focused largely on the problem of making do with a lack of resources, whether household-related goods or clothing. In the case of the progressive and often intellectual *Fujin Koron*, such articles went side by side with commentary on a wide range of women's issues including work vs. career issues, sexual mores and also domestic politics and peace issues (Bardsley, 2000; Katzoff, 1998). Even before *Fujin Koron* began to face pressure from its fashion-oriented mass culture rivals in the late 1950s, a precursor of this trend towards fashion as popular culture could be seen in the magazine *Soreiyu Jr* (Soleil Jr), published by well-known illustrator Nakahara Junichi.

Nakahara is known today for his role in creating the big-eyed female archetype that ultimately became a characteristic of shojo manga (Thorn 2001). He has received very little attention, however, as a fashion designer whose magazine format and style was well ahead of its time, influencing among others Mori Hanae. As early as 1953, and inspired by a visit to Paris, the talented former dressmaker-turned children's magazine and book illustrator had launched the teenage oriented *Soreiyu Jr.* The magazine featured accurate pen-drawn fashion illustrations usually of immaculately coiffed, refined dark-haired women in simple but elegant flowery dresses. With their cinched waists, long legs, large hats and gloves, these images owed much to both Parisian and American fashion designs, but also encompassed a Japanese sensibility. Among those appearing in *Soreiyu Jr* wearing Nakahara designs were a who's who of popular actresses and singers of the late 1950s, including Yukimura Izumi and *Godzilla* actress Mizuno Kumi. Significantly too, Nakahara employed both makeup artists and set designers, while almost every issue introduced new art, fashion, novels, cooking tips and movies in a configuration that predated magazines of a later era (Zassi Net Inc, n.d)

Soreiyu Jr and the magazines that followed it, most notably *Josei Jishin* (Women's Own), a publication that took its cues from the American magazine *Seventeen* with its casual ready-to-wear dresses inspired by dress designer Claire McCardell (White, 1998). Like *Seventeen*, *Soreiyu Jr* featured ready-made outfits from department stores, a trend that allowed for the use of the first professional models (Ochiai, 1997, p.155). Such models could look for inspiration to the remarkable careers of two women whose legacy has received



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

Figure 8. Paper Doll of 1959 Miss Universe, Kojima Akiko (1959)
Figure 9. Miss Universe 1959, Kojima Akiko (1959)
Figure 10. Magazine Advertisement for Kao soap featuring Kojima Akiko (n.d)
Figure 11. Dior Model Matsumoto Hiroko (n.d)
Figure 12. Model Matsumoto Hiroko in *Fujin Kurabu no Furoku* (1960)
Figure 13. Nakahara Junichi Fashion Illustration from Soreiyu (n.d)

surprisingly little attention from cultural historians These were the 1959 Miss Universe, Kojima Akiko, and the Pierre Cardin model, Matsumoto Hiroko. Both women were much commented on for their western-like height, long legs and un-Japanese personas, but their accomplishments suggest that they were significant foreshadowers of trends that developed almost a full decade later.

Bardsley has examined the controversial career of Kojima, whose "face was everywhere in the Japanese media [in 1959] advertising all kinds of products from lipstick (Max Factor's "Akiko Lipstick"), face soap and dresses to sewing machines, air conditioners and cameras" (2008, pp. 375-391). Less attention has been given to Matsumoto, the first Japanese model to find success in Paris as a muse of Pierre Cardin, but some fashion blogs have remarked on the fact that her figure and image predated the image of the exotic slim bob-haired Asian model by almost two decades (Nippon Terebi Official Homepage, 2003). There is limited direct evidence to suggest that either of these women had a major impact on Japanese fashion trends themselves and both retired from modeling in their late twenties. Yet their careers clearly indicate the potential of Japanese women from modest backgrounds to transcend their national backgrounds and invent a new identity that merged western fashion and style with traditional notions of feminine modesty.

In the same year that Nakahara founded *Soreiyu Jr*, Christian Dior held fashion shows in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Kyoto. Among those attending the Tokyo shows were students of Bunka Fukuso Gakuin (Shoji, 2005; Koizumi, 2004, pp. 32-29). Reorganized as a college in the early 1950s, Bunka began to accept male students in 1957, a decision that was soon imitated by its rival Sugino Gakuen (Sugino Gakuen Homepage). Among the first of these male students was future designer Kenzo Takeda, who as a teenager had been influenced by Nakahara Junichi's illustrations. Both Takeda and his fellow student Koshino Hiroko had grown up in western Japan, but unable to find a suitable fashion course in the Kansai area, had left their families to attend the school in the late 1950s. Once in the college, they found a strong mentor in forty-five year old dressmaking pioneer Koike Chie who had studied in Paris in 1954-55. In 1958, Koike solidified the institution's already strong European orientation by bringing Pierre Cardin to the college for a lecture, a visit that was much hyped in the media and is considered a pivotal moment in Japanese fashion history (Koike 2000). Two years later the school launched its own high fashion magazine *Mode* a decision that solidified its role as Japan's leading fashion institution (Calvert, 2008). This already solid emphasis on high-fashion European designs was further strengthened by the seminal cultural event of the late 1950s, namely the royal wedding between the future Emperor Akihito and his commoner bride Michiko. For those in the dressmaking, retail fashion and magazine industries, the events surrounding the wedding would provide a vehicle for a lucrative and enduring middle-class fashion revolution–one which would reinforce the preference for European styles and a decade later, lead to the emergence of Koshino, Kenzo and Mori as major figures in the fashion world (Kawamura, 2004).

Redefining Japanese Fashion: The Royal Wedding and Early 1960s Television

The announcement in late 1958 of the royal wedding to be held in November 1959 sparked the so-called *Michi Bumu*, a magazine-driven consumer frenzy centered mostly on the purchase of TVs and household goods, but also heavily promoting the Parisian fashions worn by the young commoner bride-to-be, Shoda Michiko (Chun, 2000, p. 222). The bride's supposedly Cinderella-like story was utilized by department stores carrying copies of her casual but sophisticated outfits. These included V-necked blouses, delicate cardigans, A-line skirts, stoles, broaches, headbands and beige shoes. Among the hundreds of images of the princess carried by the "big four" women's magazines (*Shufu no Tomo*, *Fujin Kurabu*, *Fujin*

Seikatsu, and *Shufu to Seikatsu*) whose combined circulation topped 2 million, were a wide range of consumer tie-ins featuring copies of the elegant debutante's largely Parisian-style wardrobe (Bardsley, 2002, 34).

In its commentaries on the royal wedding, the mass media made much of the growing affluence of the country, pointing to the substantial increase in household income in the second half of the 1950s alone (Chun, pp. 236-38; Miller 2006, p. 93). However, while this impressive achievement had certainly boosted the size of the urban middle-class, few, even among this relative elite, could hope to purchase the elegant fashions worn by the crown princess. What the *Michi Bumu* did achieve, however, was to consolidate the association of elegance, femininity and social mobility with a European fashion sensibility. This was especially the case among the urban upper middle-class. Whether this preference for European styles would be adopted by the growing middle class, given the latter's still strong affinity for American consumer and cultural products, however, was less certain. Much would hang on the role of television and the coming together of this new medium with both the burgeoning popular music industry and the consumption-promoting, baby-boom focused print media. The overall parameters of this role would be partly shaped by Japan's particular demographic configuration, business-structure and technological development. Ultimately, however, the particular way in which these forces unfolded, would hinge on decisions made by those specific individuals who best understood the potential of these mediums to shape the consumption and aesthetic choices of women born during or just after the war. These women's lifestyle choices and mindset, it was increasingly clear, were hardly recognizable from those of the generation that immediately preceded them.



Figure 14
Shoda Michiko in skirt and sleeveless blouse, TIME Magazine, March 23, 1959

The Royal wedding and the emergence of TV and other mass media vehicles for advertising Japan's new consumer products provided an opportunity for talented and far-sighted baby boomers to make their mark in reconfiguring and greatly expanding the boundaries and reach of Japanese pop culture. Among those best positioned to exploit these new opportunities was Watanabe Misa. The impact of future pop music impresario Watanabe, who had begun her career as the manager and interpreter for a jazz band that performed at army bases, was explored in an earlier article by the author (Furmanovsky, 2009). In early 1958, the so-called “Rokabiri Madam”, as she was dubbed by the press, had helped channel a Tokyo-based rokabiri craze created by legions of so-called *rokabirizoku* into a short-lived but explosive pop culture phenomena that dwarfed the earlier Hawaiian shirt and sunglasses boom sparked by the movie version of Ishihara Shintaro's novel *Taiyo no Kisetsu* (Shamoon, 2002). Many of the teenagers attending the concerts produced by Watanabe dressed themselves in a largely self-fashioned approximation of American rock ’n’ roll style, and the short lived, but culturally seismic boom attracted widespread local media attention and even a TIME magazine article. The latter marveled at the unexpected sight of “thousands of Japanese ‘lowteen’ girls in braids, pony tails, hula shirts, black slacks and white sweaters” screaming, and on occasion throwing paper streamers or even panties at their at their singing idols (Rittoru Daringu,1958). A year later and inspite of the rapid decline of the *rokabiri* craze, the magazine wrote of a “postwar generation” that had “traded in their kimonos for blue denims, flared jackets, skintight toreador pants” (The Girl from Outside, 1959). With her deep awareness of the potential impact of the unfolding pop culture developments from the U.S and Europe and a farsighted understanding of television's role in creating

what was a seminal socio-cultural event in Japanese post-war history, the ambitious manager of Watanabe Productions (*Nabepro*)—a company she had formed in 1955 with her jazz playing husband—was poised to put an indelible mark on the development of a Japanese fashion archetype (Watanabe Misa Profile, 1998).

The vehicle for Watanabe's assault on the new mass market was the pioneering 1960 Fuji TV music show, *The Hit Parade*. The show represented a huge gamble on a strategy that could promote western popular music and the culture of fashion and style that went with it, to the country as a whole. Having won acceptance for the show—featuring many of the *rokabiri* artists clad in suits rather than the rocker styles they had worn at Western Carnival performances—Watanabe was now faced with a need not only for backup musicians, songwriters, producers and choreographers, but also set designers, makeup artists, hairdressers and fashion stylists. Should her programs attract a significant audience, these creative young men and women had the potential to become shapers of contemporary fashion, since it would be they, under Watanabe's direction, who would design and even make the outfits that would be worn by any female artist chosen to perform on the show.

While no concrete strategy was articulated, it soon became evident that the key to success in this endeavor would lie in the ability of the image and fashion-making team to target and satisfy the hunger of young urbanized women for a youthful identity and an expression of feminine identity that was commensurate with their growing affluence. Through the consumption of identity-transcending clothing and accessories that would be featured on *The Hit Parade* and the magazines that followed its artists, these often overlooked female contributors to Japan's rapid industrial and economic revival, could be given a chance to attain something new: an image that, at least for a few hours on the weekend or the numerous special occasions that dot the Japanese calendar, might capture an element of the romantic and stylish images that both imported and domestic popular entertainment were beginning to bring them on a daily basis. With Paris now reasserting itself not only as the heart of haute couture, but also as source of a daring new youth culture fashion that borrowed from, but was clearly distinct from its American counterpart, the extent to which the ideal image adopted by the mass of young Japanese women would be European rather than American in its countenance was unclear. What was clear was that this cultural and aesthetic direction would depend in part on the decisions of handful of style and trend makers. Prominent among these was the team assembled by Watanabe and her advisors. In the first five years of the new decade these talented designers and dressmakers would outfit the array of female artists on *The Hit Parade* and the even more successful music and variety show, *Shabondama Horidē*, a TV show that during its twelve year run, would influence almost every aspect of Japanese female fashion (Furmanovsky, p. 4).

Idol Pop and European Fashion: The Peanuts as Japanese Style Icons, 1959-63

The vehicle for Watanabe Misa's onslaught on the eyes, ears and purse strings of this demographic would be an unlikely one; identical 18-year old twin sisters Emi and Yumi Ito (“The Peanuts”), who had been discovered by her husband singing in a small venue in Nagoya. With their short hair, petite frame and girl-next-door round-faced looks, the sisters were essentially a two-sided blank slate on which Watanabe employees Matsushita Haruo (manager) and Miyagawa Hiroshi (musical director and lyricist), both of whom were in their late 20s, could create a pop-cultural product with mass appeal. In a move that would be emulated by almost all music and talent production agencies in the years to come, Watanabe chose to take the inexperienced twins directly under her wing and move them into her large house. On several occasions, the sisters were taken around Ginza and Aoyama by Watanabe to observe new fashions and styles and also

to take dance lessons (Gunji, 1992, p.100). They would then return to Watanabe's house to practice these dancing skills and learn from a small but highly talented coterie of assistants, including not just dance and vocal instructors but also a team of professional makeup, hair and dressmaking professionals who had graduated from the dressmaking schools described earlier. This team initially took their image cues from the fashions of petite, dark-haired American idol singers such as Brenda Lee, Connie Francis and Annette Funicello. Indeed images of the twins on numerous magazine covers in 1959 reveal them in shirtwaist dresses, haltertops, petticoats, capri pants and almost invariably sporting white pumps or sandals, a clean-cut but feminine style very much in the American idol-singer mold. One significant decision, however, was to forgo the bouffant hairstyles of their American counterparts, thus allowing the twins to retain a much simpler short-haired look that accentuated their at times tomboyish, though never androgynous, look. At the same time, however, the sisters were among the first to partially color their hair in a manner that was considered suitable for black and white TV.[4)]

Despite considerable borrowing from the American pop idol model, The Peanuts were given mostly Latin-flavored French, Spanish and Cuban pop songs to sing, beginning with their first hit "Petit Fleur." Most of these light vocal ballads, folk songs and novelty tunes were selected and translated into Japanese



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20

Figure 15. Connie Francis (1959)
Figure 16. Connie Francis (1960)
Figure 17. Brenda Lee (1960)
Figure 18. The Peanuts on the cover of *Goraku Tokyo*. November 5, 1959 (Infantland)
Figure 19. The Peanuts Fashion Show. *T.V Guide*, June 12, 1959 (Infantland)
Figure 20. The Peanuts Voice Lessons. *Myojo*, October, 1959 (Infantland)

by Miyagawa Hiroshi, a classically trained pianist with little interest in American pop other than the Musical canon. Among those artists deemed worthy of attention by Miyagawa was the Italian chanteuse Mina Mazzini, whose slightly rock-tinged "Tintarella di Luna" (1959) was covered in a more pop-oriented version by the sisters. While dispensing with Mina's passionate on-stage vocal delivery, the Italian star's stylish looks, whether black slacks and white blouses or elegant sleeveless dresses, were plainly an influence on the style that was being shaped for the sisters. Indeed the sleeve of the duo's cover single of the Mazzini number, reveals The Peanuts demurely attired in elegant black and white chiffon party dresses. In June 1961, the Italian star, perhaps surprised at her popularity in Japan, came to Tokyo and appeared as a guest on *The Hit Parade*. Wearing her signature white sleeveless dress with black fur hem, the dark-haired Italian idol appeared standing next to the seated twins on the cover of the mass circulation *Heibon* magazine. The latter, cute rather than elegant in blue flowery petticoat dresses and pink party sandals—are contrasted in the image with the adult-like Italian diva, who appears the epitome of European chic. Gently holding the hands of one of the girlishly smiling twins, Mazzini, who was in fact the same age as the twins, seems many years older. This image of the westernized Peanuts alongside an admired European guest can be contrasted with another one exactly two years later. This time the singing visitor was 32-year old pan-European singer Caterina Valente, who in a coup for *Nabepro*, had covered the twins' Miyagawa-Iwatani Tokiko composition and major hit "Koi No Vacance." Invited to Japan in April 1963, the *Heibon* and *Toho Film* magazine covers show the sisters guiding Valente, who projects a refined European sophistication quite different from that of Mazzini, around the temples of Kyoto in full *Maiko* outfits. The image emphasizes the twins' pride in Japan's own refined cultural traditions and their ability to be the inspiration for a new generation of sophisticated but still traditional middle-class women.

The seeming preference for a stamp of approval from Europe did not of course preclude a cultural identification with the United States, especially with the student demonstrations against the ANPO military agreement with the U.S were now fading from memory. In late 1961 for example, the twins—wearing simple Connie Francis style dresses and white pumps—met with visiting "West Side Story" star George Chakiris, the child of Greek immigrants and a man with a sophisticated fashion sense. A few months later, in February 1962, they welcomed the entire cast of *Rawhide* (including Clint Eastwood), an extremely popular cowboy-style American TV drama, whose tour of Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and Kyoto drew tens of thousands of fans. For the ubiquitous *Heibon* shoot, the three main cast members' cowboy style was complemented by the twins' checked dungaree skirts, red polo neck sweaters, black tights and red high heel pumps, a look that seemed to play around with the cowgirl image in a way that perhaps foreshadows contemporary cosplay reinventions of stereotypical American outfits.

It seems likely that the decision to promote the Peanuts as Japan's answer to Latin-oriented European pop, by covering songs such as Valente's "Passion Flower" (1959) was one largely made by Miyagawa. With a combination of traditional melody, quirky novelty and old world charm, the European-bent of the Peanuts' prolific early-1960s musical output naturally required appropriate outfits. These were critical not only for their record covers and regular appearances on *Nabepro's* TV collaborations, but also for their regular photo shoots for virtually every general interest, entertainment and women's magazine in the country. With their chameleon-like ability to project a cute, identikit version of almost every conceivable fashion style, whether business suits, elegant cocktail or casual shirtwaist dresses, skiwear, bathing suits and, at holiday times, traditional Japanese attire, the twins became as close as any media figure to personifying the new young Japanese woman. With their multifaceted version of a Euro-American identity, refined and reworked for the new Japanese pop culture that Watanabe Misa and her contemporaries were

so systematically putting into place, the Ito twins succeeded in projecting a feminine aesthetic that was every bit as developed and professional as that of their western counterparts and arguably of much greater cultural influence in terms of fashion identity.

There is little to suggest that the musical preferences made by the *Nabepro* management team for the Peanuts were designed to consciously shape or promote certain fashions as part of an extension of its business. Nor is there any indication of a concerted effort to work with department stores or magazines in order to promote particular clothing lines or brands. Yet the symbiotic relationship between these three promoters of cultural products—popular music, consumption-oriented women's magazines and mass-fashion retail outlets, seems quite self-evident. The early 1960s saw all of these media outlets experiencing an unprecedented level of growth and one that gave them a major role in creating the demand needed to fuel the drive towards a middle-class society. This resurgent society, built around American-style consumer capitalism and a modernized nuclear family in which women—removed from full time work—force would make most of the consumer choices, now had the confidence to balance its almost total political and diplomatic dependence on the U.S with some degree of cultural independence.

If successful, this could allow for the fusion of the axiomatic American influence with that of the pre-war source of cultural refinement, namely Paris-centered western Europe. Both influences of course, would undergo a Japanese-style reinvention designed to smooth out the rough edges or aspects that were



Figure 21



Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25



Figure 26

Figure 21. The Peanuts with Mina Mazzini. *Heibon Weekly*, June 7, 1961 (Infantland)
Figure 22. The Peanuts with George Chakiris, *Heibon Monthly*, October 1962 (Infantland)
Figure 23. The Peanuts with Caterina Valente. *ML*, December, 1961 (Infantland)
Figure 24. The Peanuts with the cast of Rawhide. *Heibon Weekly* March 15, 1962 (Infantland)
Figure 25. The Peanuts in French-style. *Scrapbook*, March 1960 (Infantland)
Figure 26. The Peanuts in European-style winter clothes. April 10, 1961 *Weekly Bunkan* (Infantland)

deemed unsuited to Japanese culture. In the case of fashion, this meant a blending of masculine American energy and innovation with a more feminine European style and atmosphere, reinforced by the meticulous perfectionism in artistic pursuits that Japanese culture prided itself on. It would be this potent combination that the Peanuts embodied in every song and outfit that they revealed on TV or in magazines and movies to their broad fan base in the years before the Beatles-influenced youth revolution came to Japan.

Japanese Female Fashion Before the 1960's Youth Revolution: Enduring Popular Culture Template or 1950's Remnant?

The relentless schedule of fashion-related media promotion that was imposed by *Nabepro* on the Ito sisters between 1960-65, can best be seen by a look at the meticulous "Infantland" fan website. The database shows that during these six years the twins were the subject of multi-page photo shoots and interviews on a regular basis, with an average of 8-10 full page color covers per year. Given that every one of these magazines, including the influential TV Guide, had a circulation in the hundreds of thousands, it would be reasonable to assume that the Peanuts' ever-changing fashion styles were seen on perhaps a weekly basis by most urbanized Japanese women. While there is no way to assess their concrete influence on fashion designers and department store managers, it seems highly likely that their diverse, but always simple and feminine outfits, played a significant role in setting a basic standard for those aspiring to achieve a look that combined what would later be dubbed *kawaii*, with some degree of sophistication. Obviously the work of highly gifted designers and seamstresses who had absorbed the European partialities of their former teachers, these outfits frequently employed stereotypical European accents such as berets, stripes and tartans. Taken as a whole they suggest the notion that an ordinary Japanese women, with a body shape quite different from that of a western model, could do what Hepburn herself was doing in her late 1950's and early 1960's movies; namely take on a wide range of feminine identities, including those usually associated with their sophisticated European contemporaries in the arena of film and fashion. At the same time, however, Watanabe Misa, with her uncannily prescient sense of the fickleness of pop culture trends and the need to capture an ever younger generation, was ready in the early 1960s to find yet another pop culture vehicle to capture the mid-teen demographic.

Having seen the success of *Janken Musume* and other pop-oriented movies made by Sugie, Masumura and others, the now well-established media mogul launched *Spark Sanin*, a group of three sixteen-year-old girls (Yukari Ito, Nakao Mie and Sono Mari) who in 1963, were given their own TV show sponsored by the Morinaga confectionary company. While often performing in what by the early 1960s had become the standard female-idol style (white petticoat dress, necklace and shiny high heel pumps), the three teenagers were also given simpler outfits presumably deemed more suitable for high school students in the other media outlets. Photos of the three girls in the monthly *Music Life* magazine, for example, present them as unaffected and almost tomboyish except for girlish headbands (*Music Life*, pp. 236-245). In the Toho movie vehicle created for them in 1963, *Hai Hai Sannin Musume* (Yes Yes Three Daughters), the three 16-year-olds play cute but unsophisticated high school students in black uniforms, white ankle socks and red ties. Echoing the 1954 movie that inspired it, the film is a strikingly modern light romantic comedy and certainly the equal of its American and British equivalents as a teen-oriented pop culture product. In addition to the school uniforms, the three girls are shown in simple but attractive dresses and pajamas discussing their male crushes or expressing their girlish excitement through high-spirited singing and dancing. The film culminates in an energetic performance at the school festival that must surely have resonated with their demographic cohorts. In retrospect, the image projected by the three teenagers can be seen as a precursor

of the Japanese schoolgirl image that would come to dominate much of Japanese pop culture in later decades. This persona is enhanced in the black-and-white movie's color poster featuring the girls in bright knee-length skirts and white blouses looking adoringly at their male interest. Coinciding with the promotion of the three teenage singers was the enormous success in Japan of the movie *Cherchez l'idole* featuring doll-like blonde-haired Sylvie Vartain as an attractively dressed young pop singer. It was this movie that would lead to the use of the word "idol," and it seems likely that Watanabe and her team were well aware of the combination of girl-next-door and chic elegance that Vartain embodied in what was one of the earliest "pop" music movies of the decade (Sleepy Luna Blog, 2008).

With the success of almost all of their female music and novelty acts, there can be little doubt that the *Nabepro* organization played a major role in shaping Japanese mainstream fashion ideals in the early 1960s. While Watanabe's team was not alone in setting the template for pop culture's impact on the fashion trends, their influence on the presentation of women's non-couture fashion in the mass-circulation print media and TV is indisputable. It is of course true that middle-class women in the U.S, U.K and other western European countries would have been exposed to similar fashion icons in the entertainment world. Larger than life figures such as Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe, Connie Francis and Doris Day (U.S); Brigitte Bardot, Jean Seberg, Sylvie Varten, Francoise Hardy (France); Sophia Loren, Mina Mazzini and Gina Lollobrigida (Italy); and Elizabeth Taylor (U.K) obviously had a deep impact not only on haute couture but also on aspects of popular fashion throughout the developed world. At the same time, however, these iconic women possessed physical personas and images that, with the possible exception of Doris Day, rendered them largely outside the average western woman's aspirational possibilities. By contrast, the identical, ever-smiling and unthreatening girl-next-door Ito sisters and fellow *Nabepro* acts, readily embodied the dreams and objectives of middle and even lower-middle class Japanese women. They were of course also attractive to the new class of male office workers looking for a modern, stylish wife whose compliant femininity and brightness might compensate for long hours at work rebuilding the nation's economy.

By 1965, when the new wave of British and American youth culture began to penetrate Japan, the idol fashion template put into place by Watanabe and her contemporaries—a girlish doll-like teenager or early-20s woman in a sleeveless dress, high heels and accessories—had solidified in a manner that made it much more durable that its western counterpart. Indeed, this image would survive the socio-cultural currents that revolutionized American and British popular culture and brought into existence a range of new expressions of women's fashion ranging from the androgynous but sexually liberated image of Britain's Twiggy with her boyish hairstyle and miniskirts to the early counterculture images introduced by Swinging London designers Mary Quant, John Bates and Barbara Hulanicki. Even further removed from the Japanese feminine template were the bohemian chic outfits of French chanteuse, Francoise Hardy and the beads, scarves and bell-bottom jeans of American rock singer Janis Joplin. While Japanese fashion magazines certainly gave some attention to these styles and some wealthier university students briefly adopted them, the female idol prototype embodied in the fashions of the Ito twins and other Watanabe acts would remain largely unchanged during the years of the faux hippy Group Sounds era, 1967-69—a period in which men's fashions underwent considerable change. Indeed the girl-next-door ultra feminine or *kawaii* image would gain strength in the following decade when the outfits of singers such as Yamaguchi Momoe, Matsuda Seiko and the Peanuts-inspired duo, The Candies heavily shaped women's fashion styles.

Conclusion

While post-war western pop-culture is sometimes categorized into the 1950's and 1960's, the two decades 1945-55 and 1955-65, or Showa 20's and 30's, are in fact a more accurate time frame for viewing Japan's social and cultural transformation. The Showa 20's were a decade in which the trauma of war and occupation fostered a long pent-up desire among women of most social classes for a level of economic and social stability that allowed for an expanded expression of their identities as both full citizens and women. This identity would be at least partially freed from conservative pre-war strictures and naturally embrace many occupation-fostered American influences. At the same time, however, the occupation era, with its humiliating privations compounded by the degrading prevalence of prostitution as the main vehicle for access to consumer and fashion goods, was one that the first post-war generation of women understandably preferred to purge from its collective memory. As a result, the Showa 30's, with its reinvigorated movie, magazine and music industries reinforced by a veritable army of sewing schools, was a decade in which many women displayed a desire and an ability to return to the European cultural sensibility that had been a feature of the three decades before the Pacific War. It is also a period in which it is possible to see the origins of contemporary Japanese women's exceptionally high interest in fashion, rather than any other cultural expression, consumer item or entertainment product. For many of them, fashion had by the mid-1960's, become not only proof of a middle-class status, but a symbol of the ability to embody feminine expressions from other cultures, especially Europe, without compromising their Japanese identity. Conscious or not, this tendency was one that differed quite markedly from the American-oriented cultural preferences of their male counterparts. These aesthetic and cultural preferences, in combination with a range of other socio-economic forces that were set to emerge in the 1970s and 1980s, had already come together in the mid-1960s. In combination, they would lead Japanese women of the two post-war decades, towards a mode of behavior vis-a-vis the consumption of fashion and the popular culture outlets involved in its dissemination, that is entirely recognizable among women of almost all ages today.

Notes

1）Most of the leading scholars working on gender issues in post Meiji-era modern Japan have focused on the Taisho and inter war years. These include Barbara Molony, “Gender, Citizenship, and Dress in Modernizing Japan,” in Roces Mina & Edwards, Louise. eds., *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas*. London, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2007; Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*. Durham, N.C : Duke University Press, 2003; Elise Tipton, “Pink Collar Work: The Café Waitress in Early Twentieth Century Japan, *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context* Issue 7, March 2002 and “Sex in the City: Chastity vs Free Love in Interwar Japan,” *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context*, Issue 11, August 2005 and Silverberg Miriam, “The Modern Girl as Militant.” in Gail Bernstein, ed. *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

2）John Dower's discussion of prostitution in his *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War Two* (1999) has spurred what is now a considerable body of scholarship on the *pan-pan*. Discussions of the *pan-pan* as well as estimates of their numbers, are taken from his book (p. 580) and from Harada, Kazue. “Bad Girls: Male Writers’ Romanticization Of Prostitutes In The Post War Era, pp.14-25. Useful discussions of the role and image of *pan-pan* can be found in Kovner, Sarah. “Base Cultures: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Occupied Japan. *The Journal of Asian Studies*. 2009. No. 68. pp.778-786; Fujime, Yuki. “Japanese Feminism and Commercialized Sex: The Union of Militarism and Prohibitionism.” *Social Science Japan Journal*. 9:1, pp. 38–41 2006 and Koikari, Mire. “Rethinking Gender and Power in the US Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952,” *Gender & History*, 11:2. July 1999, pp. 321-33.

3）Basic information on the movies described here come from a variety of Japanese fan sites and online databases, most notably the *Internet Movie Datatbase* (www.imdb.com), the *Goo* (http://www.goo.ne.jp), *Shogakukan Jinbocho* (http://www.shogakukan.co.jp/jinbocho-theater) and *Entertainment-Tele-navipop Movies* websites (http://eiganavi.entermeitele.net). The descriptions of clothing styles and fashions in movies of the late 1950s and early 1960s are taken from two Japanese websites that focus on fashion styles in Japanese movies of the Showa Era, *Cineyoso* (Clothes in Cinema) (http://homepage2.nifty.com/cineyoso/index.htm) and Actresses and Modes of Beauty 女優とモード美の競演 (http://news.livedoor.com/article/detail/5383439).

4）The discussion of the role of Watanabe Misa and The Peanuts is based on hundreds of collected magazine articles and photos from the *Infantland* (http://homepage.mac.com/infant/home) and *Shabondama Horide* (http://peanuts-holiday.m78.com) fan websites dedicated to The Peanuts.

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