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Volume 13, no. 2; Fall/Winter 2015-16 • ISSN 2167-1699 • Published April 12, 2016.
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Citation:

Want, Kaori Mori. "Haafu Identities Inside and Outside of Japanese Advertisements." *Asia Pacific Perspectives*, Vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 83-101.

Abstract:

Advertisements in Japan are full of *haafu* – a category denoting people of mixed race or ethnicity used in Japan. *Haafu* promote quite a wide range of products and services consumed by Japanese people, such as food, cosmetics, clothing, cars, electric appliances, travel, etc. in advertisements. Most *haafu* have racial heritage as part-Japanese (racial sameness) and as part-non Japanese (racial difference). Their mixed racial heritage appeals to marketers as well as consumers in various degrees. *Haafu's* racial ambiguity is also popular among marketers because their multiracial bodies can be read as at one time as that of a foreigner, another time a Japanese, and at others both at the same time, providing a versatility that serves the purposes of marketers. *Haafu* are useful commodities for marketers, which explains their popularity in advertisements.

Keywords:

Haafu in advertisements, *haafu* as useful commodities, *haafu* stereotypes and the feeling of not *haafu* enough, the diversity of *haafu* experiences; mixed-race; standards of beauty

Haafu Identities Inside and Outside of Japanese Advertisements

By Kaori Mori Want, Ph.D., *Konan Women's University*

Scholars and *haafu* have recently undertaken research on *haafu*, a category denoting people of mixed-race or -ethnicity used in Japan, themselves. This research has included topics of *haafu* identity issues,¹ representations of *haafu* in the media,² the history of *haafu*,³ etc. On the topic of *haafu* in the media, Mika Ko examines the representations of *haafu* in films, Toko Tanaka focuses on *haafu* in comic books, while Sawako Horiguchi and Yuki Imoto research *haafu* in newspapers. To date, scholars have yet to examine why *haafu* are so popular in Japanese advertisements. In the world of Japanese advertising, *haafu* promote quite a wide range of consumer products such as food, cosmetics, clothing, cars, electric appliances, trips, weddings, and so on. Their presence in advertisements addresses many aspects of consumer culture in Japan, yet no research on the popularity of *haafu* in advertisements has been attempted.

While *haafu* are quite popular in advertisements, they inadvertently contribute to the creation of stereotypes of *haafu* as good-looking, multilingual, friendly, rich, cosmopolitan, and part-Japanese. Some ordinary *haafu* undergo difficult lives because of their not fitting into these stereotypes, and they are rendered not *haafu* enough in Japan despite the fact that they are *haafu*, too. A 2013 film entitled *HAFU*, directed by Megumi Nishikuara and Lala Perez Takagi, reveals how some *haafu* are seen as not *haafu* enough in Japanese society.

This article examines the advertisements of *haafu* and discusses the following questions: Why do *haafu* stimulate the Japanese desire of consumption? Why are *haafu* used for advertisements? How has the presence of *haafu* in advertisements contributed to the stereotypes of *haafu*? How have these stereotypes contributed to some *haafu* that they are “not *haafu* enough.” This article will show how the idealized homogeneous images of *haafu* in advertisements contrast starkly with the experiences of heterogeneous *haafu*. Finally, this article argues how *haafu* themselves can challenge *haafu* stereotypes, enable *haafu* to overcome the feeling of not *haafu* enough, and embrace their heritages.

Methodology

This article examines the representations of *haafu* in advertisements

in two ways. First, through an analysis of the representations of *haafu* in advertisement made by marketers, I develop Julie Matthews's theoretical framework of mixed-race models as the embodiment of simultaneous racial sameness and difference to consider why Japanese marketers use *haafu* to promote products and services in advertisements. We will also see how *haafu* in the media have contributed to reproduction of stereotypes of *haafu* as good-looking, part-Western, multilingual/cultural, rich, friendly, and part-Japanese. Second, I will examine the representations of *haafu* made by *haafu* themselves, and discuss how ordinary *haafu* are affected by the stereotypes representations of *haafu* in the media, and how the counter-narrative on *haafu* challenges these stereotypes and empower ordinary *haafu* outside of advertisements.

In order to compare the two competing representations of *haafu*, this article focuses on advertisements for foods, cosmetics, clothing, and wrist-watches which feature *haafu*. As a counter-narrative of *haafu* representations in advertisements, this article will also draw upon stories from the 2013 film, *HAFU*, made by *haafu* themselves. The film depicts the diverse lived experiences of five *haafu*, which are not consistent with the tropes and stereotypes expressed in advertisements. Thus, the article examines *haafu* representations both inside and outside of advertisements.

Haafu in Japan

Multiracial/ethnic people in Japan are called *haafu*. The word *haafu* is originated from the English word "half." Although *haafu* is transcribed both as *haafu*⁴ and *hafu*⁵, this article uses *haafu* since it is more faithful to the Japanese pronunciation of the term. Some have criticized the term *haafu* as obscuring its multicultural roots. For example, Itsuko Kamoto points out that the word "*haafu* is used with a nuance that *haafu* are cool, but at the same time the word has a negative connotation to the ears of native English speakers,"⁶ and she lists other expressions for multiracial/ethnic people such as "double," "Amerasian," "international children," "cross-cultural kids," "mixed-roots kids," etc.⁷

On the other hand, some *haafu* themselves support the term and identify with it. For example, Sandra Haefelin, a writer and an advocate of *haafu* issues, whose mother is Japanese and father is German, writes that "I think of myself as *haafu*, and usually use the word for myself. I therefore support the word *haafu*. Personally, I think the word is natural to call myself."⁸ *Haafu* is the most common term denoting mixed-race/ethnic individuals currently circulating in Japan, so this paper uses the word *haafu* while acknowledging the problematic nature of the word.

People who have half Japanese and half non-Japanese heritage are usually referred to as *haafu* in Japan. For example, Koichi Iwabuchi defines *haafu* as follows:

Haafu are a racialized group due to their phenotype. It is a discourse

*category for the mixed-race people who are born between the Japanese and non-Japanese race, ethnic, or foreigners, all of these categories are historically constructed.*⁹

Haafu have been considered attractive by the Japanese for their exotic appearance since the Taisho era (C.E. 1912-1926). A newspaper article in 1926 introducing new *haafu* actresses reads:

*National Cinema will shoot a movie, Missing the Father, whose protagonists are mixed-race Japanese living in Kamakura or Shanghai. In this movie, actors are mixed-race, too. Shizue Okamoto and Emiko Oshima are both mixed-race Japanese, and this is their first time to act. They are exotic beauties and they will enjoy their fame as new movie stars.*¹⁰

Haafu visibility became heightened in the postwar era when the Allied Forces came to occupy Japan in 1945. Approximately 400,000 Allied Forces servicemen, mainly American men, came to Japan in order to institute democracy. Some servicemen had physical relationships with Japanese women, resulting in the birth of *haafu* children. At the time, *haafu* were called *konketsuji* (mixed blood children), *ainoko* (mixed-race children), G.I. babies, etc. As they reached their teens and twenties in the 1960s, some *haafu* became popular in show business as singers, models, athletes, and actors. Among them, there was a girls' singing group called Golden Half whose name is said to be the origin of the word, *haafu*.¹¹ Since few *haafu* were visible in show business before the 1960s, the popularity of *haafu* in the 1960s is called the first *haafu* boom, when they began to receive greater social attention.¹²

Iwabuchi's definition of *haafu* could be read that *haafu* are people who have half Japanese and half non-Japanese racial/ethnic heritages. Yet, Japan is also home to *haafu* who are not legally Japanese or who are not racially/ethnically part-Japanese. For example, children born to non-Japanese persons in Japan do not have Japanese nationality, yet there are some who claim *haafu* identity. For example, Jonathan Sieger is a Japanese *haafu* model whose parents are American and Italian. Born in Taiwan, he and his family moved to Japan when he was three years old, where he has lived and worked ever since. He refers to himself as *haafu* in his Twitter posts.¹³ His case shows that the definition of *haafu* does not necessarily depend upon having Japanese nationality or Japanese parentage.

The definition of *haafu* is thus fluid: neither Japanese nationality or Japanese ancestry is essential for membership in the category. Any person in Japan of mixed racial, ethnic, or national background could define oneself as *haafu* or defined as *haafu* by others. Others may define a *haafu* as such even if they do not consider themselves *haafu*. The definition of the word *haafu* is not legally defined; for the purposes of this paper, *haafu* will be roughly defined as people having more than one nationality, race, or ethnicity.

Haafu are perceived to possess physical differences from the average Japanese, whose facial features are usually characterized as having a flat nose, small eyes, and being short in stature. On the other hand, many popular *haafu* have Western roots, and exhibit Western facial and physical features: light skin, a pointy nose, larger eyes, and taller stature. While their facial and physical characteristics are different from the average Japanese, *haafu* who are part-Asian give a sense of racial familiarity to the Japanese. *Haafu* embody both racial difference and sameness simultaneously, and that may be one of the reasons for *haafu*'s popularity. At present, the popularity of *haafu* in show business persists, and they are quite visible in advertisements. As stated before, some scholars examine how *haafu* are represented in the media, but they hardly argue the popularity of *haafu* in advertisements. In order to address the question of the popularity of *haafu* in advertisements, this article examines why marketers use *haafu* for advertisements, and what kinds of stereotypes *haafu* in advertisements have created.

Analysis of the Popularity of *Haafu* in Advertisements

Many *haafu* are used in advertisements to promote a wide range of products and services such as foods, cosmetics, clothing, cars, electric appliances, wedding services, and so on. It would not be an exaggeration to say that *haafu* permeate every corner of Japan's consumer culture. For this analysis of *haafu* in advertisements, this article will utilize Julie Matthews's theoretical framework of mixed-race as an embodiment of racial sameness and difference.¹⁴

In her article, "Eurasian Persuasions: Mixed Race, Performativity and Cosmopolitanism," Matthews discusses how the "mixed-race other is recoded as 'cosmo chic' – familiar, knowable, sophisticated and worldly."¹⁵ Mixed-race models do not function as an 'other' evoking fear in global consumers because they have diverse racial heritages with which any consumer can identify. Consumers can identify their own ethnicity in mixed-race models, and that is why these models are knowable and familiar to consumers. Consumers regard the multicultural heritage of mixed-race models – their cosmopolitanism, in Matthew's words – as sophisticated and worldly. Mixed-race models' racial similarity to consumers, and their racial difference as cosmopolitan individuals, make them attractive to global consumers and result in their success in the world of advertisements.

Matthews' article deals with the popularity of mixed-race models in countries where Westerners are the majority of the population. In that context, racial sameness means Westernness, while racial difference means non-Westernness. The situation is reversed in Japan because of the Japan's demography in which Japaneseness is the marker of racial sameness and non-Japaneseness constitutes racial difference. However, Matthews' analysis of the mixed-race models as the embodiment of racial sameness and

difference is useful in examining the popularity of *haafu* in advertisements because *haafu* also embody racial sameness and difference in the same manner as mixed-race models in Matthews' article.

While relying on Matthews' discussion of mixed-race models as the embodiment of simultaneous racial sameness and difference, this article furthers her discussion for the analysis of *haafu* in advertisements. *Haafu* are surely used for advertisements due to their racial sameness and difference, but some advertisements focus on only one aspect of a *haafu*'s racial heritage. For example, some advertisements emphasize the *haafu*'s racial difference, and their racial other-ness is evoked, unlike in Matthews' discussion. From an analysis of *haafu* roles in Japanese advertisements, we can see that their racial sameness and difference is conveniently exploited for marketing purposes. In order to illustrate the different usages of *haafu*'s racial sameness and difference in advertisements, we will examine three types of *haafu* advertisements in advertisements of foods, cosmetics, clothing, and wristwatches.

For our first example of the usage of the *haafu*'s simultaneous racial sameness and difference, we look at an advertisement of beauty products. Meisa Kuroki (see figure 1) is an actress whose mother is Okinawan Japanese and father is Western (American). She appears in advertisements for cosmetic products made by the cosmetic company Kanebo such as blush, eye shadows, lip creams, etc.

Figure 1: Meisa Kuroki

While Kuroki has Western facial features – meaning, big eyes, a pointy nose, and chiseled face lines – which Japanese consumers consider desirable, she would not be used in advertisements if she looked exactly like Western women. How and why has the *haafu* face become the desirable face for Japanese women?

According to Hiroshi Wagatsuma and Toshihiro Yoneyama, Japanese women started using whitening powder in the Nara period (C.E. 710-794) under the influence of Chinese culture, which valued light skin for women. Since then, having light skin has been a standard of female beauty in Japan. Wagatsuma and Yoneyama also argue that Anglicized facial features became desirable in the Taisho era when Western culture became popular.¹⁶ The Japanese regarded the West as a political, economic, and cultural ideal, and Japan attempted to Westernize the nation in the early twentieth century. In the same vein, Anglicized facial features have been idealized as a standard of female beauty since roughly the same time period. While it is impossible for Japanese women to have Anglicized facial features, it seems possible to emulate the *haafu* face, which has both Western and Japanese facial features. The Japanese mentality, which regards light skin and Western facial features as beautiful, has persisted into the present. Many *haafu* have both light skin and Western as well as

Asian facial features, embodying a standard of beauty which Japanese women find possible to copy. As Japanese women idealize the *haafu* standard of beauty, and desire to be a beauty like *haafu*, they consume the products *haafu* promote.

Another illustration of marketers' use of *haafu*'s racial sameness and difference in advertisements is found in advertising for the traditional Japanese kimono company, Saganokan. In this case, it is not only the model's racial sameness and difference that are utilized by marketers but also the model's bicultural heritage. Saganokan uses *haafu* model Naomi Trauden (see figure 2), whose mother is Japanese and father is German, for its advertisements.

Figure 2: German-Japanese *Haafu* model Naomi Trauden

Saganokan's kimono incorporates traditional Japanese style as well as Western elements, such as laces, to attract young Japanese female customers. Western elements have been considered modern in Japan since Western culture was introduced in the early twentieth century. To promote both the traditional Japanese and modern Western cultural aspects of Saganokan's products, their advertising models must embody both aspects simultaneously. As the advertisement's catch phrase, "Retro Modern Style" suggests, the company uses Trauden as a model because she embodies both "retro" – read "Japanese" – cultural heritage, as well as "modern," i.e., Western cultural heritage. As Trauden represents both Japanese and Western cultures, her *haafu* heritage is useful for the purpose of marketers. Neither an ethnic Japanese or Western model could satisfy Saganokan's marketing needs.

While *haafu*'s simultaneous racial/cultural sameness and difference is valued, some advertisements place more emphasis on their racial difference. Jay Kabira is a *haafu* actor with an American mother and Okinawan Japanese father. He is featured in an Ebara Foods Industry advertisement promoting a sauce used to make traditional Japanese pickles. Rola (see figure 3), a model whose mother is part-Japanese/part-Russian and father is Bangladeshi, is featured in advertisements for Yoshinoya, which sells beef bowls, a food product quite popular among the Japanese. Some transnational food companies' advertisements also use *haafu*, and it is easy to understand why *haafu*'s multicultural backgrounds would be useful in their advertisements. On the other hand, in the case of both Kabira and Rola's advertisements, their cultural roots as part-foreigners – in other words, their racial difference – seem to be exploited because the Japanese audience believes (falsely) that foreigners do not eat traditional Japanese foods.

Figure 3: Rola

Traditional Japanese foods such as tempura and sushi are popular among foreigners but foods such as the pickled vegetables and beef bowl

that Kabira and Rola promote in their advertisements are less known among foreigners. These foods are considered very local to Japan. The Japanese audience may therefore assume that *haafu* such as Kabira and Rola would not eat traditional Japanese foods because of their part-foreigner heritage. By using *haafu*, who presumably do not eat Japanese traditional foods, the advertisements confound viewers' assumptions, impacting the audience via surprise. The false assumption among the Japanese that *haafu* do not eat Japanese foods is not a fabrication in the media but does happen in the everyday lives of *haafu*. Haefelin recounts her experience of eating *soba* (buckwheat noodles) with her friend while living in Japan:

When I was eating soba noodle with my haafu friend, who is half-Japanese and half-Swedish, a middle-aged Japanese lady talked to us. She said to us that "you two use chopsticks very well! You speak Japanese well, too."¹⁷

The Japanese woman's remark could be read as her surprise on seeing two "foreigners" eating a Japanese traditional food with chopsticks. She was surprised because she falsely assumed that girls were foreigners, and thus did not eat *soba*. The same kind of false assumption seems to function in Kabira and Rola's advertisements. The Japanese audience forget the fact that Kabira and Rola are part-Japanese, and share the false assumption that *haafu*, who are part-foreigners, do not eat Japanese traditional foods. They are still read as foreigners by the Japanese. Kabira and Rola betray the false assumption that foreigners do not eat Japanese foods, surprising the audience, and increasing consumer interest in the products Kabira and Rola promote. This explains why Japanese traditional food companies frequently use *haafu* for their advertisements.

In beauty product advertisements, *haafu*'s racial sameness and difference are recognized simultaneously, but in Kabira and Rola's case, it is their racial difference which is emphasized more in advertisements. Japanese marketers' emphasis of *haafu*'s racial difference reveals an ambivalent attitude towards *haafu*. Many *haafu* have part-Japanese heritage, and that makes them familiar to a Japanese audience. Yet, the emphasis on their racial difference in some advertisements signals that *haafu* are still regarded as the racial "Other" in the mind of the Japanese. Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu explains the Other status of *haafu* as follows (he calls *haafu* Amerasians or American-Japanese).

The increased appearance in the Japanese media of Amerasians who have been raised bilingually and biculturally has added a much more positive, even fashionable, image to the popular stereotypes of *haafu*. But whether denigrated or exoticized, the American-Japanese are always depicted as the Other, making it difficult for them to be treated as individuals or as ordinary Japanese.¹⁸

No matter how popular *haafu* are in the media, they are still reduced to the status of the Other because of their racial difference. Their racial

sameness is not fully accepted by the Japanese. The emphasis upon the racial difference of Kabira and Rola in advertisements reveals the Other status of *haafu*.

While *haafu*'s racial difference is used in advertisements, some advertisements emphasize their racial sameness. We can see an example of this in Grand Seiko's ad utilizing sports figure Yu Darvish (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Yu Darvish

Darvish, the child of a Japanese mother and an Iranian father, is a successful major league baseball player who currently plays for the Texas Rangers in the United States. He appears in the advertisements of wristwatch maker Grand Seiko, where he is billed as "the pride of Japan." Grand Seiko is a very expensive wristwatch brand which appeals to Japanese consumers' desire to display their economic success.

This advertisement is different from other appearances of *haafu* in advertisements. As we have seen, many advertisements play upon *haafu*'s racial difference or their simultaneous racial difference and sameness, but the Grand Seiko advertisement primarily emphasizes Darvish's Japanese heritage. A successful *haafu* in an international setting is usually praised not for their multicultural heritage but for their Japanese heritage. Successful *haafu* are regarded as Japanese, while their racial difference is forgotten. Darvish is the pride of Japan, not the pride of Japan and Iran. This suggests that he is treated exclusively as a Japanese and his Iranian heritage is less acknowledged in Grand Seiko's advertisement.

Some multiracial athletic national stars have had a similar experience in the media. For example, Abdul Hakim Sani Brown, born in Japan to a Ghanaian father and a Japanese mother, is a track and field athlete who ran the 200 meters in the 2015 World Youth Championships in Athletics in a record 20.34 seconds, beating the record held by Usain Bolt in 2003. The media wrote of Brown as the representative of Japanese track and field¹⁹ and praised his achievement as the first of its kind made by a Japanese.²⁰ Another *haafu* athlete, Okoe Ruis is a promising professional baseball player, just 18 years old, who has a similar racial heritage as Sani Brown. Raised in Tokyo, his mother is Japanese and father is Nigerian. Ruis is hailed by Japan's media as the new star of professional baseball.²¹ Despite his popularity, Ruis is quite conscious of discrimination against both he and Sani Brown. He commented in an interview:

*It is normal that there are people with many skin colors overseas but not in Japan. In Japan, if your skin is dark like mine, you are discriminated against. That is why people like me and Sani Brown need to excel in sports or whatever, and have the Japanese recognize us.*²²

Ruis's interview exposes the fact that dark-skinned *haafu* are discriminated against in Japanese society. Unless they achieve something, they are

subjected to social prejudice. Yet, if *haafu* contribute to enhancing the international status of Japan through their achievements, their part-foreigner heritage is overlooked, and they are hailed as Japanese heroes. Like Ruis and Brown, Darvish would not be “the pride of Japan” in the advertisement if he was not a successful major league baseball player. The media aligns with the hypocritical attitude of Japanese society towards *haafu*, and advertisements use social sentiments to promote their products. From Darvish’s example, we can see that *haafu*’s multiracial identity is conveniently manipulated by marketers.

From the analysis of advertisements above, we can see that *haafu* are useful commodities for marketers because of their racial ambiguity. In some advertisements, *haafu* could be racially different Others. In others, they could be seen as Japanese. Their simultaneous racial sameness and difference satisfies Japanese consumers’ yearning for Western beauty, while the *haafu*’s Japanese facial features make such beauty accessible. *Haafu* promote products in either role.

Haafu serve the various purposes of marketers, and they are therefore popular in advertisements. However, the proliferation of *haafu* in advertisements inadvertently contributes to strengthening *haafu* stereotypes in general. Next, this article will examine how the presence of *haafu* in advertisements has created *haafu* stereotypes, and illustrate how the idealized homogeneous images of *haafu* in advertisements contrast starkly with the actual experiences of heterogeneous *haafu* in Japanese society.

Not *Haafu* Enough: Contradictory Desire and Repulsion towards *Haafu*

Haafu are everywhere in Japan’s consumer culture via their appearances in advertisements, promoting products that cover almost all aspect of Japanese life. Looking at their overwhelming presence in the media, some entertainment magazines explain why *haafu* are so popular. Critic Shoichi Inoue comments:

*In the world of entertainment, something unrealistic or exotic has been popular. In the current globalization era, haafu embody something unrealistic and exotic. With the continuation of globalization, the popularity of haafu may continue.*²³

According to Hideo Horikoshi, “Japan is an insular county and the Japanese have a yearning for foreign cultures. *Haafu* reflect the Japanese yearning for the abroad.”²⁴ Tomokazu Takashino writes that “*Haafu* are very popular in show business because they have beautiful face (sic), and outgoing personality (sic).”²⁵ Miruo Shima writes that “*haafu* are not aggressive like Westerners because they are part-Japanese.”²⁶ From these remarks, we can see that the Japanese perceive *haafu* as exotic, cosmopolitan, friendly, wealthy, good-looking and part-Japanese. *Haafu* in advertisements embody all of these qualities. However, actual *haafu* in general

do not necessarily share the qualities portrayed in these *haafu* stereotypes. In reality, *haafu* individuals are quite heterogeneous in appearance, class, cultural background, linguistic ability, family roots, personality, etc.

In order to illustrate the diversity of *haafu*, Haefelin categorizes *haafu* into four types: (i) Ideal *haafu*: they are good-looking, and have bilingual ability (ii) Beautiful *haafu*: they are good-looking but have no bilingual ability (iii) Bilingual *haafu*; not good-looking but having bilingual ability; (iv) Disappointing *haafu*: not good-looking and having no bilingual ability.²⁷ Haefelin contends that more than 80% of Japanese people believe the stereotype that *haafu* are “pretty like fashion models, speak English and Japanese, and are rich enough to travel back and forth between Japan and overseas.”²⁸ She explains that as some *haafu* are exposed to these stereotypes, they internalize them, and experience discomfort in their everyday lives because they do not fit in these stereotypes. *Haafu* who are categorized as “disappointing” have the most difficult time in Japan. Haefelin notes that “there are many *haafu* who are not beautiful, speak only Japanese, and [are] financially disadvantaged,”²⁹ emphasizing that while the actual lives of *haafu* are quite diverse, many Japanese people cannot see the diversity of *haafu* because of the stereotypes. To be seen as *haafu* in the eyes of the Japanese requires *haafu* to be good-looking, multi-lingual, friendly, rich, and part-Japanese. *Haafu* who do not possess these characteristics are rendered “not *haafu* enough.” *Haafu* stereotypes thus trouble some *haafu*, and give them a feeling of being not *haafu* enough.

We can see how stereotypes of *haafu* made in advertisements render some *haafu* not *haafu* enough in the film *HAFU*. This 2013 film directed by Nishikura and Takagi depicts the diverse and sometimes difficult lives of some *haafu*, which are invisible behind the smiles of *haafu* in advertisements. By explaining why and how the five *haafu* figures in the film do not feel not *haafu* enough, I will argue that the stereotypes created by advertisements have had negative influences on ordinary *haafu*.

The film introduces the diverse lives of five *haafu*. First is Sophia Fukunishi, the daughter of an Australian mother and a Japanese father. After living for a certain period of time in Japan, Sophia has grown a sense of not being *haafu* enough due to her lack of Japanese language ability. Born and raised in Australia, she desires to find her cultural roots, and decides to move to Japan. Although she tries to fit into Japanese society, she finds herself isolated from the Japanese due to her lack of Japanese language skills. Her lack of language ability makes her not *haafu* enough because of the Japanese belief in the stereotype of *haafu* as being bilingual. Without such skills, monolingual *haafu* are perceived and treated as foreigners.

The second *haafu* figure introduced in the film is David Yano, a Japan-born *haafu* whose mother is from Ghana and father is Japanese. He is seen as not *haafu* enough because of his dark skin in Japanese society. One of

the stereotypes of *haafu* circulating in advertisements is that *haafu* have light skin. Yano recounts negative experiences he went through as a child such as being bullied by Japanese children, and being stared at in public, which caused him to hate Japan. Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu explains the Japanese racial views towards *haafu* skin color (whom he refers to as Amerasians):

*The Japanese still have the prejudice that light skin is the standard of beauty, and Western culture and Caucasian racial features are better than other races. Dark skinned Amerasians [haafu] face harsher discrimination because of their skin color. Their skin color is associated with African and African-American culture, which the Japanese regard as inferior.*³⁰

The Japanese view of *haafu* is that they have light skin and Western facial features, and this belief is reflected in advertisements. Dark-skinned *haafu* are discriminated against in Japanese society, and because of that, Yano's dark skin disqualifies him from being considered "haafu enough" in Japan.

The film next introduces a pre-teen named Alex Oi, who is not *haafu* enough due to his shy personality which runs counter to stereotypes that *haafu* are sociable and friendly. Alex has a Mexican mother and Japanese father, and he uses three languages, Spanish, English, and Japanese at home. Due to his multilingual home environment, his Japanese language ability has developed slightly behind that of other Japanese students. Alex's teacher, unaware of his multilingual family environment, incorrectly concludes that he has a learning disability. He develops a stutter due to stress, which combined with his shyness prevents him from adjusting to the school environment. Alex's withdrawn attitude allows his classmates or teachers to see him as not *haafu* enough. While *haafu* in advertisements look very happy and friendly, real *haafu* who do not behave consistent with *haafu* stereotypes are regarded as not *haafu* enough. The resulting harsh reality experienced by some *haafu* in Japanese society is invisible to many Japanese.

The fourth person the film focuses on is Edward Yutaka Sumoto, child of a Japanese mother and a Venezuelan father. He was raised only by his mother in Japan but he carries a Venezuelan passport. As *haafu* in advertisements are mostly part-Japanese and have Japanese nationality, many Japanese assume that *haafu* are Japanese nationals. This assumption makes Sumoto not *haafu* enough because he does not have Japanese citizenship.

Sumoto was born before Japan revised the Nationality law in 1985. Until then, Japanese women marrying non-Japanese men could not legally pass down Japanese citizenship to their children. The law was challenged by parents of *haafu* children in the early 1980s. Although the parents lost the lawsuit, the Japanese government decided to revise the law anyway. The revision was made possible because Japan signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereafter

called CEDAW) in 1980. Article 9 of the CEDAW stated the equality of the sexes in acquiring, changing, or maintaining nationality, including the bestowal of nationality on children. To make the CEDAW effective in Japan, the government had to revise the Nationality law, which prohibited Japanese women from giving the right of nationality to their children. In addition, Japan has become a more globalized society where more Japanese women marry non-Japanese men. The Japanese are more aware of women's rights now. For these reasons, the Nationality law was revised to allow Japanese women to give Japanese nationality to their children regardless of father's nationality. Now all *haafu* who are born to either a Japanese mother or father can have Japanese nationality as an innate right. But as Sumoto's mother did not opt to gain him Japanese citizenship, he could not enjoy that right, which renders him not *haafu* enough.

The last *haafu* in the film is Fusae Miyako, child of a Japanese mother and a *Zainichi* (Korean resident of Japan) father. Her parents are both Asian, and physically she does not look *haafu*. One of stereotypes common to *haafu* that circulates in advertisements is that *haafu* have a part-Western heritage, and therefore they are physically different from Japanese. Since Miyako has no Western physical features, her appearance renders her not *haafu* enough. A biethnic *haafu*'s social position like Miyako's is complex. Since many of them physically look Japanese and their names usually do not reveal any ethnic difference, it is easy for them to pass as Japanese. Their mixed ethnic heritages are therefore usually not acknowledged by anyone. They are subsumed into the homogeneous Japanese ethnic landscape, and it is rare for them to be recognized as *haafu*. These Asian biethnic *haafu* are thus not *haafu* enough due to their physical similarity to the Japanese.

Kohei Kawabata problematizes the invisibility of biethnic Asian *haafu*, focusing on the case of Korean-Japanese *haafu*. He contends that since Korean-Japanese *haafu* are physically not different from the Japanese, their difference is unacknowledged, and they feel alienated from other *haafu*. Their issues are excluded from the discourse of *haafu* and *Zainichi*.³¹ Unlike part-Western or dark-skinned *haafu*, biethnic Asian *haafu* have no physical features that mark them as *haafu*. Their existence is therefore more invisible than other *haafu*.

The invisibility of biethnic Asian *haafu* is strange if we look at Japan's demographic statistics. Japan's Population and Social Security Research statistics reveal that the number of international marriages was 21,448 in 2013. The majority of these couples are non-Japanese Asians married to Japanese (e.g. 39.8 per cent were Japanese women married to Chinese or Korean men; 58.2 per cent were Japanese men married to Chinese or Korean women).³² In other words, most *haafu* are Asian biethnic *haafu*. They are more dominant than other *haafu* in numbers but are the most invisible because they do not fit into *haafu* stereotypes. In this case, it is

their physical similarity to the Japanese that makes them not *haafu* enough.

The stories of five *haafu* in the film illustrate the fact that some *haafu* are seen as not *haafu* enough in Japanese society and suffer in ways unique from one another. *Haafu* in advertisements have inadvertently contributed to the creation of *haafu* stereotypes, and the pain of *haafu* who do not fit the stereotypes. The more *haafu* glitter in advertisements, the more ordinary *haafu* face pain in their everyday lives because they are seen as somehow not *haafu* enough even though they are ethnically or culturally *haafu*.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the proliferation of *haafu* in advertisements is quite wide-ranging, and the *haafu* stereotypes they inscribe in the Japanese mind are also deep-rooted. As long as *haafu* are useful commodities to promote consumer products in advertisements, marketers will not stop using them. Rather, they will continue to exploit the stereotypes of *haafu* as much as possible to stimulate the Japanese desire for consumption, and to maximize profits. If this is the case, can there be any hope for changing *haafu* stereotypes so that ordinary *haafu* who do not fit the stereotypes can negotiate the difficulties they face?

As stated, *haafu* themselves, such as Haefelin, Nishikura and Takagi have begun giving voice to more diverse experiences of *haafu*, and consciously challenging *haafu* stereotypes. Natalie Maya Miller and Marcia Yumi Lisa, who are also *haafu*, started the Hafu Project in 2008. In a 2010 pamphlet, they interviewed and photographed *haafu*, and questioned the problematic social position of *haafu* in Japanese society. While their project has halted due to their parental responsibilities, another group has begun disseminating the reality of *haafu*. Edward Sumoto (one of the subjects of the film *HAFU*) has launched a group for multicultural people called Mixed Roots Japan, whose purpose is described as follows:

*Japanese culture, language and customs are an indispensable part of us, multicultural individuals. Dialogues between multicultural individuals and Japanese society are necessary so that multicultural individuals can enrich their cultural heritages. In order for Japanese society to embrace the diversity of its population, we also work together with academia to accumulate and analyze statistics on multicultural individuals.*³³

The group attempts to promote dialogue between mixed-roots people, including *haafu*, and the Japanese by holding various activities such as radio broadcasts, meetings, etc. In doing so, they try to convey the reality of mixed-roots people to the Japanese.

Taking a cue from the stated purposes of Mixed Roots Japan, scholars have started examining *haafu* issues in academia. For example, 2014 saw the publication of an edited volume on *haafu*, entitled *Who is Haafu? Race Mixture, Media Representation, Negotiation*, which analyzed the various

representations of *haafu* in the media as well as *haafu* experiences. In 2015, several universities (including Konan Women's University, Kyoto Women's University, Ritsumeikan University) held a joint symposium on *haafu* where scholars discussed problems experienced by *haafu* in an effort to discover solutions. With the emergence of more *haafu* voices in many areas of Japanese society, *haafu* stereotypes are increasingly challenged.

The reproduction of *haafu* stereotypes will continue in advertisements because *haafu* are useful for marketers. But with the spread of more and more heterogeneous voices of *haafu* throughout Japan via many media, *haafu* who have been perceived as not *haafu* enough may gain confidence in what they are, and embrace their multiracial/ethnic heritage. This task is on the shoulders of not only *haafu* themselves but on all Japanese.

Figures



Figure 1. Meisa Kuroki, Kose advertisement, *No More Rules*, © 2015.

<http://www.nomore.rules.net/>



Figure 2. Naomi Trauden, *Saganokan* advertisement, © 2015.

<http://www.saganokan.com/furisode/>



Figure 3. Rola, *Yoshinoya* advertisement, © 2015
<http://www.yoshinoya.com/>



Figure 4. Yu Darvish, *Grand Seiko* advertisement, © 2015
<https://www.seiko-watch.co.jp/>

Notes

1. Murphy-Shigematsu, *Amerasian Children*; Haefelin, *It Is an Illusion*; Miller and Lisa, *The Haafu Project*.
2. Ko, "The Genealogy of Representations of Mixed Race"; Tanaka, "The Representation of Haafu in Girls' Comics;" Horiguchi and Imoto, "How Are Mixed-Race Represented."
3. Welty Tamai, "Multiraciality and Migration;" Spickard, *Mixed Blood*.
4. Small and King-O'Riain, introduction.
5. Nishikura and Takagi, *HAFU*.
6. Kamoto, *A Theory on International Marriage*, 151.
7. *Ibid.*, 145.
8. Haefelin, *It Is an Illusion*, 17.
9. Iwabuchi, "Cultural Politics of Mixing," 13.
10. *Yomiuri News Paper*, "A Unique Movie of Mixed Blood Actors," 5.
11. Horikosi, "Haafu Beauties," 29.
12. Murphy-Shigematsu, *Amerasian Children*, 101.
13. Sieger, comment on himself, "Jonathan Sieger Twitter."
14. Matthews, "Eurasian Persuasions," 50.
15. *Ibid.*, 43.
16. Wagatsuma and Yoneyama, *A Structure of Prejudice*, 26.
17. Haefelin, *It Is an Illusion*, 64.
18. Murphy-Shigematsu, "Multiethnic Lives," 212-213.
19. [N.a], "Mixed Race Athletes."
20. "Sani Brown as the First Japanese Athlete."
21. "Okoe is Bright."
22. "Okoe Fighting against Prejudice."
23. Inoue, "Expiration Dates of Haafu Female Beauties," 187.
24. Horikoshi, "Haafu Beauties Dominating Show Business," 29.
25. Takashino, "Nineteen Haafu Beauties," 1.
26. Shima, "Why Are There So Many Haafu Celebrities."
27. Haeflin, *It Is an Illusion*, 7.
28. *Ibid.*, 3.
29. *Ibid.*, 4.
30. Murphy-Shigematsu, *Amerasian Children*, 95.
31. Kawabata, "A Boundary where Double Becomes an Issue," 224.
32. National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Demography Trend*, 106.
33. "Mixed Roots Japan."

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