

Body Image In Japan

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Slide No.1

In this short presentation I would like to touch on the topic of “tribal styling”, which enjoyed a brief vogue in Japan after 1995. Bodypiercing and tattooing were its most conspicuous attributes.

This neo-tribal fever has subsided, but has left its impact

- 1) I shall try to give a short description of the present situation in Japan Finally, I would like to share with you
- 2) My thoughts concerning the future of tribal styling
- 3) emphasizing Last but not least, the importance of dialogue between the center and periphery
I take the view that the tribal style arose as the challenge from the punk-subculture of the 80s in England
 - It was a Declaration of freedom from slavery to conformist norms of conduct, and with it came the negation of the codes of proper dressing
 - the punks expressed Their Estrangement from Conformist ,religious and ethical values, of the meritocratic society
 - penetrating flesh, blood with color, symbol and metal
 - the punks confirmed that
 - the human body is an apparatus used for a politics of display,
 - Through the very conscious display of an anti-aesthetic pastiche that showed their identification with the Illiterate /Savage /non-european /and heathen.

Slide No.2

First of all, I would like to talk about my definition of globalization

If we regard globalization as the Transmission of a set of attitudes and values

From a center towards other parts of the world or periphery

The relationship between the center and the periphery is not asymmetrical;

There are many examples of dialogue

- Kimono’s influence on Western fashion was great, but the kimono is threatened with extinction at home.
- B o d y p i e r c i n g and tattooing are a t y p e of body decoration repressed by the e u r o p e a n memory after conversion to Christianity it now experiences A revival in

various subcultures

- Illiteracy- education/Savage-civilized / non-european-european / heathen- christian
- If it is experiencing a revival, is then a typical example of dialogue
- May I add Japan is also considered to be one of the lands Of origin for tattoo.

Slide No.3

Before starting the topic, Let me just cite one interesting example of globalization from Japan regarding the Body Image: modifications, mutilations, desires

<inferiority complex> among Japanese youth

proportion of the body

Eating disorders dieting, anorexia nervosa: thinness, gender characteristics, fitness faddespisal of the bowlegged, shortlegged, long torso

plastic surgery /cosmetics/ haircoloring

<conspiration to baffle racial identity>

role of the mass media 1. Return of the Tribal in Japan In Japan, infact there is a certain affinity between the subcultures of hairdying(blondeor red),tatoeing and bodypiercing

• In Japan, initially the identification of *Chapatsu*, haircoloring, bodypiercing with the English phenomenon punk seemed to be initially clear. And therefore it would also seem legitimate to see the *Chapatsu* youth as a group in protest.

1. However, hairdyeing, for one thing, has become such a decorative clichée in recent years, it has degenerated to become just a fashion without the philosophy of anger behind it, but a ruse to forget racial identity, and to stylize oneself as an individual with ethnic identity a blank; therefore not the **rigid, hard-working Japanese copycat**; but the **bornfree, playful, fantastical creature, neither white nor asiatic with the patina of virtual reality.**
2. For instance, one good example is the singer Hamazaki Ayumi, featuring firepole-thin elfish,emaciated figures with large round eyes, pale blond hair; cyborg figures with the fascinating surreal metallic patina of computer graphics. Hamazaki looked completely Japanese before, but is reputed to have experienced a resurgence in her popularity after plastic surgery of her eyes
 - Bodypiercing attribute for nonconformist to antisocial?
 - strength of psyche
 - sexual, sadomasochistic undercurrents 1.

Slide No.4

• SHOW MAP /OSAKA/ NISHISHINNSAIBASHI

1. unusual bodypiercing appears with greater frequency in districts with known Americanizing

tendencies: *Harajuku in Tokyo*; American Village (AMEMURA) for instance in Osaka. where after 1974 a whole district of shops has sprung up, which was formerly a warehouse district, selling clothing and accessories from the USA, catering to the need of youth to dress in the (*Amekazi*) American Casual style. Especially from the West Coast multiple ear cartilage piercing/ lip piercing (labrets) eyebrow/ nostril piercing

Some Japanese find themselves in a disconcerting position as to racial identity. They would like to regard themselves as Westerners, but alas, by Virtue of Being Asiatic origin, there are whites, for instance quite noticeably the Slavs, who regard Japanese and Chinese as comrades only of Second-Rank, therefore, lest they should be compromised, the Japanese would not want to identify themselves too much with the stereotypes of tribal savagery; like piercing and tattooing. It is also considered anticonfucian to mutilate the body, an act committed against filial piety.

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1. Bodypiercing and tattooing represent a retrospective comeback to the future in our cyberjungle. Mankind is aware that now the internal frontiers of the self and psyche have succumbed to a partial breakdown, we have evolved to the cyberpunk stage of consciousness.

- living in the cyberjungle
incessant accessibility, vulnerability
engulfment

The intense degree of computerisation and the ubiquity of the internet, the electronic gadget handy has placed our psyche in an aggravated state of incessant accessibility, and the tribal subcultures express the need for

- 1) self-defense
exhibition of self-determination through action
performance of the self-destructive irrational= **mutilation, penetration of their bodies**
assertion through aesthetic shock value
- 2) The need of Rebellion against the aesthetic norms
 - of **Civilized** against savage/ **european** against noneuropean/**christian**-against heathen
 - Globalization of the tribal: **bodypiercing and tattoo**
 - Captain Cook and Theo Tattoo
 - seafarers, criminals, royalty and nobles
 - working middle class

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I analyse this return of youth and fashion towards the tribal as a self guarding mechanism, of man against the cyberjungle. Just as in primordial times, man felt the need for asserting his power to control destiny and his own body, piercing is a way of showing whose territory this body is it is mine. I am not a halfway-computerized robot, that should just be a reservoir of stereotyped imaginaries serving the advantages of multinational media giants. Man needs to know, that he exists, in his own right, with his body and epidermis as the definition to the boundary of the self. He is willing to undergo the painful process of bodypiercing or tattooing. to redefine re-delineate,, and to beautify it,

- decorating the temporal, that is, the shell, flesh, blood With the eternal, that is, metal, precious stones, sign & symbol implanting *vulnerable sensory antennae in flesh & and blood*
- Or in the outer shell the intimate package of his ego.
- The Punk-subculture brought with it The realization that hitherto the human body was exploited from the ruling classes as an docile display apparatus for political motives.
- Punks tried to Negate the Western system of aesthetics incorporating religious and ethical values of a meritocratic society
- Therefore The punks Needed to display, launch a new, anti-aesthetic
- They achieved it through Disobedience Of the aesthetic norm bringing flesh, blood, color symbol and metal in organic bondage

Slide No.7

- Computerized society will bring about
 - 1) the Sensitization of the barrier of self Engulfment by computers and internet
Communication gadgets Dependence on Imaginaries of the Massmedia The increasing importance of Intellectual and visual and *sensual stimulation*
 - 2) Preoccupation with self skincare body image body cult
In the future, it will not only be bodypiercings that will be the rage but as I suspect clever IC chips implanted by surgery which will enhance our bodily mechanism.

The division of the computer literate and the non-literates will increase, Age will become an important, but secondary factor. Part of our lives will be lived within our computers, and real time reality will lie farther and farther from our doorsteps

I am sure that the modern cult of emaciated beauty, CG graphic beauties in JAPAN will continue, until we do not know the clones or the cyborgs from human beings, I predict that the desire of on the part of some of our rather thoughtless Japanese youth, to imitate Caucasian racial characteristics will continue at an exacerbated rate.

Globalization will continue at an alarming rate, the world would seem to become more homogeneous but no, the internal fractures in our consciousnesses will become larger, so that feedbacks from the periphery towards the center or from the infrastructure back to the superstructure are bound to increase.

Bodypiercing and tattooing, if not hampered by forecasts of some epidemic will flourish. and the preoccupation and care that will go into the care of the skin, our outer shell, and our sensual and intellectual well-being will surely intensify.

The cult of the well-made muscular body is also sure to escalate itself, as the new protective outer corset to house our ever more vulnerable psyche