
The Modern Girl around the World: A Research Agenda and Preliminary Findings

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The Modern Girl emerged quite literally around the world in the first half of the twentieth century. In cities from Beijing to Bombay, Tokyo to Berlin, Johannesburg to New York, the Modern Girl made her sometimes flashy, always fashionable appearance. What identified Modern Girls was their use of specific commodities and their explicit eroticism. Modern Girls were known by a variety of names including flappers, *garçonnes*, *moga*, *modeng xiaojie*, schoolgirls, *kallege ladki*, vamps and *neue Frauen*. By wearing provocative fashions and pursuing romantic love, Modern Girls appeared to disregard the roles of dutiful daughter, wife and mother. Contemporary social scientists, members of the press and the public debated whether Modern Girls were looking for sexual, economic or political emancipation. They also raised the possibility that the Modern Girl was just a product of clever advertising campaigns in the new commodity culture.

How did the Modern Girl become a global phenomenon? The Modern Girl Around the World Research Project at the University of Washington seeks to answer this question. Our group is comprised of six faculty members working in the departments of English, History, International Studies and Women's Studies, and possessing regional expertise in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States. Through collaboration and area expertise, we trace the Modern Girl's various colonial and national incarnations and reveal links among the multiple

geographic locations in which the Modern Girl phenomenon appeared. Our research considers how the Modern Girl was produced through twentieth-century multinational corporations, imperial relations, the mass media and modernist literary, aesthetic and political discourses. We also seek to develop new feminist forms of study and new cross-disciplinary, inter-regional methods.

Our research has found that in any given locale, what made the Modern Girl distinctive was her continual incorporation of elements drawn from elsewhere. She occupied the liminal space conjoining the indigenous and the imperial, the national and the international. Often, the Modern Girl combined and reconfigured aesthetic elements drawn from disparate national, colonial and racial regimes to create a 'cosmopolitan look'. These characteristics, in our view, make the Modern Girl a valuable heuristic category that enables us to analyse how global processes intersected with and were reconfigured by gendered and racialised social hierarchies and political and economic inequalities in specific locales. The Modern Girl also allows us to consider the international inequities that shaped and were reshaped by these global processes. In this article we specifically develop and deploy the Modern Girl heuristic category through a study of how the Modern Girl was represented in cosmetics and toiletries advertisements from the 1920s to the 1950s.

Problematics: globalisation and gendered modernity

Our research on the Modern Girl sheds light on two general problematics: globalisation and gendered modernity. First, we seek to provide a case study of globalisation before the invention of the term. In much scholarship published under the rubric of globalisation, the term describes processes of economic and cultural integration that are specific to the second half of twentieth century.¹ Though some scholars have argued that economic globalisation is, in fact, as old as capitalism,² we are less interested in identifying the temporal origins of globalisation than in providing a nuanced analysis of how global commodity and cultural flows have shaped modern femininity in divergent contexts. Unlike previous studies of *moga*, *garçonnes*, *modeng xiaojie*, *neue Frauen* and flappers, which have focused on one nation or, at best, bilateral relations between a nation and its direct colonies,³ our ongoing work examines how the Modern Girl became a global phenomenon through economic structures and cultural flows that stretched far beyond the bounds of any one national regime. Several studies have made reference to the significance of US influences in shaping the Modern Girl. We insist, however, that Americanisation was not a uniform

phenomenon and that it needs to be understood in relation to other transnational phenomena, including British colonialism and the international circuits in which advertising designers operated.

In developing our analysis, we have been influenced by anthropologist Richard Wilk's argument that globalisation comprises a series of social and economic processes in which commonalities are expressed differentially – that is as 'structures of common difference'.⁴ The heuristic category of the Modern Girl provides us with the means to identify commonalities – for instance, the cultivation of a svelte body and prescribed application of whitening creams or tanning lotions – and then to examine how these shared practices emerged through the international strategies of corporations and the mass media as well as transnational ideologies of consumption, individualism and emancipation.⁵ This leads us to propose the Modern Girl as a gendered and racialised formation that is web-like, comprised of multi-directional citations: mutual, though non-equivalent, influences and circuits of exchange connecting disparate parts of the world.

An important manifestation of this imbrication of the local and the global in these web-like circuits is the Modern Girl's repeated role in processes of racialisation and articulations of nationalism. Everywhere, the Modern Girl indexed the racial formation of the nation or colony in which she resided. The Modern Girl also spoke to the complex of racialised ideas about femininity that were part and parcel of the transnational and imperial circuits in which she participated and through which she took form. As we will demonstrate in our analysis of cosmetics and toiletries ads, images of the Modern Girl often encouraged the use of products to cleanse and alter the colour of teeth and skin, and to change the shape and shade of eyes and lips. In so doing these images engaged hygienic practices and aesthetic hierarchies drawn from *multiple* racial, colonial and national orders.

Our project's second central problematic is to recast the study of gendered modernity within an international framework. The focus on the Modern Girl opens the obvious, if difficult, question of what was modern about her. In order to address this question we examine how this female figure was singled out in different locales as a marker of modernity. Scholars in the humanities and social sciences have long sought to define and explain modernity.⁶ Recently, a wide range of new opinions has emerged. Johannes Fabian and Donald Donham have emphasised how both academic and popular discussions of modernity are inevitably hierarchical, distinguishing some societies as ahead and others in need of 'catch up'.⁷ Other scholars, such as Detlev Peukert, Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Harry Harootunian, have been preoccupied with the problem of fascist modernity and its relationship to

capitalism and liberal democracy.⁸ Others, including Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, Brian Larkin, Dilip Goankar, Lisa Rofel and Dipesh Chakrabarty, have challenged the notion of a singular modernity, arguing instead that modernity should be understood as having 'multiple', 'alternative' or 'parallel' forms forged through the complex interplay of imperial and indigenous concerns.⁹ Tani Barlow, Antoinette Burton, Lin Chun and Andrew Jones posit 'colonial modernity', stressing the colonial roots of revolutionary modernisation and the markets and civic institutions that linked 'semi-colonial' areas, including parts of China, to the larger capitalist world system.¹⁰ And lastly, James Ferguson has reminded us that modernity has become a yardstick by which people around the world often assess their own lives: for example, on Zambia's Copperbelt, which has experienced profound economic decline in recent decades, many feel 'cheated' out of modernity's promises.¹¹

Our project intervenes in these discussions that de-centre or provincialise western modernity through study of the multifaceted links among the locales in which the Modern Girl appeared. We pay particularly close attention to how people in different contexts defined the Modern Girl as *modern* and to how dominant modernist ideologies – such as those of individual autonomy, scientific racism and social reform – conditioned her emergence around the globe. Moreover, we are interested in how modernist aesthetics emanating from multiple contexts shaped and were shaped by the Modern Girl 'look', which frequently featured a stylised elongated body, painted face and, very often, bobbed hair. We ask how a commodified Modern Girl became recognisable, consumable and locally intelligible. Ultimately, we are interested in what the Modern Girl conveyed to contemporaries about the possibilities and dangers of modern life and how she figured in the modern political formations of nationalism, fascism and communism. Like other scholars of gendered modernity, we examine how definitions of and debates over the modern relied upon and reworked notions of femininity (and, consequently, altered ideas of masculinity) in specific locales.¹²

The Modern Girl's near simultaneous emergence across contexts troubles narratives of modernity that have emphasised a diffusion of processes, things and ideas from the West to the rest.¹³ Rather, such simultaneity suggests that modern forms of femininity emerged through rapidly moving and multi-directional circuits of capital, ideology and imagery. The Modern Girl appeared as the flapper, *neue Frau*, *garçonne*, *moga* and *modeng xiaojie* in the United States, Europe and East Asia during the 1920s. Actual Modern Girls worked as café waitresses in Shanghai or Tokyo and as factory girls sporting bobbed haircuts in Berlin or New York. They also circulated as internationally renowned

performers, popular in multiple contexts, including the Paris-based African American performer Josephine Baker, and silent film stars such as Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Ri Koran, Mary Pickford, Louise Brooks, Clara Bow, Devika Rani, Butterfly Wu, Anna May Wong and Pola Negri. In the United States, Europe and East Asia, the Modern Girl was the subject of countless films, novels and social commentaries and was endlessly featured in advertisements for cigarettes, cars and cosmetics.

In the colonial contexts of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the white Modern Girl also made her appearance in the 1920s, sometimes taking the form of a strong-willed adventurer or fashionable settler, and other times being featured in films and advertisements viewed by colonisers and colonised alike. Textual sources from southern and West Africa reveal that by at least the early 1930s a black Modern Girl had emerged. Black African Modern Girls were usually identified as school-girls or graduates with panache for fashion and for choosing their own lovers. For example, Setswana-speakers in the Bechuanaland Protectorate (today Botswana) referred to the Modern Girl as *boengwe dipedi* ('those who trip along one-two', referring to the sound their newly acquired shoes made as they hit the ground) or *bosejêwa ke pelo* ('those eaten by the heart').¹⁴ The Indian Modern Girl made an appearance in the 1920s as an English-educated college girl and, in commodity advertising and early film culture, as the *sitara* (starlet), *swapno ki rani* (dream girl/queen), *romance ki rani* (romance queen), 'sex symbol', vamp and *kallege ladki* (college girl). Indian Modern Girl film actresses came from the social margins; they were Anglo-Indian and Jewish girls and the daughters of Muslim courtesans, singers and dancers who defied gender norms that forbade women from 'good' families from performing on stage or in film.

Although this quick survey reveals that the Modern Girl's social position was not the same in all locales, certain cultural meanings clung to her across contexts. Modern Girls were always young women – 'girls'¹⁵ – with the wherewithal and desire to define themselves in terms that exceeded conventional female roles and that transgressed national, imperial or racial boundaries. In contrast to the 'New Woman' who, in many contexts, was her predecessor or contemporary, the Modern Girl was less often identified with directly advocating social and political reform than with ostentatiously refashioning her appearance and refining her body. It is the transnational and imperial formation of these new 'technologies of the self'¹⁶ and their relation to processes of racialisation and articulations of nationalism that we seek to discern in the following examination of the Modern Girl and cosmetics advertisements.

Modern Girl cosmetics and toiletries advertising

Advertising was one of the primary transmitters of the Modern Girl style and aesthetic. We chose to focus specifically on cosmetics and toiletries advertisements in newspapers and magazines because of their capacity to index the role of capitalist enterprises in shifting representations of femininity. The visual dimension of ads also enabled group members to undertake comparative work readily and to raise questions about the overlap and distinctions among Modern Girl images across regional and linguistic divides. Moreover, the emphasis of such representations on cleansing, colouring and transforming facial and bodily features allowed us to foreground the Modern Girl's promotion of and participation in new technologies of the self.

Although print sources in which the Modern Girl is depicted reveal that her appearance during the 1920s and early 1930s was nearly simultaneous in all our research contexts, she was not equally visible everywhere. In the United States, Germany and China, advertisements featuring the Modern Girl were more ubiquitous than in Africa and South Asia. Thus, the archive of Modern Girl ads that we have compiled is necessarily uneven. For the United States, which by the 1920s was the biggest producer of magazines and print advertising, we have principally drawn ads from three journals catering to white middle- and working-class readers, (*Vogue*, *Ladies Home Journal* and *Cosmopolitan*), and from two publications targeted at black readers, *The Crisis*, the journal of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) that was edited during the 1920s by W. E. B. Du Bois, and the more populist weekly newspaper, the *Baltimore Afro-American*.¹⁷ For Germany, we have collected ads from three illustrated magazines directed at middle- and upper-class audiences, the *Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung*, *Die Woche* and the women's magazine *Die Dame*.¹⁸ In the Chinese press, Modern Girl ads were as pervasive as in the American and German press. The cosmetics and toiletries ads we have collected are from the treaty port newspapers *North China Daily News*, *South China Morning Post*, both of which were published in English as well as Chinese, and from the illustrated Chinese-language magazines *Ladies' Journal* (*Funü zazhi*) and *Young Companion* (*Liang Yu*), which addressed an upper- and middle-class clientele.¹⁹

By comparison with the US, German and Chinese contexts, we have found that in Africa and India, cosmetics and toiletries ads featuring the Modern Girl were not as commonplace or as evenly distributed in the 1920s. For Africa in the 1920s and 1930s, we collected ads from the *Cape Times* (Cape Town), a newspaper catering to the white and, to a lesser extent, 'coloured'²⁰ populations in the British dominion of South Africa. The *Cape Times* often carried ads featuring white Modern Girls similar

to those that appeared in the US, German and Chinese press. From the early 1930s onwards, we focused on the black newspapers *Bantu World* (Johannesburg), *Bantu Mirror* (Salisbury) and the *Times of West Africa* (Accra), which carried some ads for facial creams that featured the black Modern Girl. Lastly, we gathered ads from *Drum* (Johannesburg and, later, Lagos, Accra and Nairobi), a monthly magazine established in 1951, in which the black Modern Girl became widely visible. For India, we collected ads from *The Statesman* (Calcutta) and the *Times of India* (Bombay), major English-language pan-subcontinental dailies, which catered to British colonials and Indian elites. In these papers, advertisements featured mainly the white Modern Girl until 1930, after which some ads for toiletries and cosmetics products began to feature the Indian Modern Girl. We also drew ads from the *Illustrated Weekly of India* (Bombay), one of the first English-language magazines to publish ads explicitly targeted at elite Indian women that became ubiquitous in the 1940s and 1950s.²¹

In all locales, over time, both multinational and local companies deployed the Modern Girl to market cosmetics and toiletries products. During the 1920s, US companies were at the forefront of these developments as they consciously employed advertising to create new markets abroad.²² Ads appearing in newspapers and magazines around the world featured US more often than German, British or other European products. In the periodicals that we examined, we found no evidence that cosmetics companies based outside of the United States, Europe and Japan were able to market their products abroad before World War II.

The Modern Girl's deployment in advertising varied. Some multinational companies simply recycled the same ad in a number of national and colonial contexts. One example of this recycling is the ubiquitous advertising for Pepsodent, a toothpaste made by a US-based company of the same name. In three ads that appeared in the Shanghai-based Chinese language magazine *Funü zazhi* (*Ladies' Journal*), the *Times of India* newspaper and US *Vogue* between 1926 and 1931, the image of the Modern Girl varies little (Figures 1, 2 and 3). In fact, apart from translation into Chinese, the three Pepsodent ads are nearly identical. All feature a young white woman with bobbed hair (while two of these ads also feature an older man resembling future US president Franklin Roosevelt). All proclaim that Pepsodent removes the 'dingy film' from teeth and encourage readers to send away for a free sample with the clip-out coupon provided. Advertisers used such coupons to track the effectiveness of their campaigns. A similar ad featuring a lone white Modern Girl appeared in the *Times of West Africa* in 1934 (Figure 4). In an ad from Germany, the young woman with bobbed hair flashes her bright teeth thanks to Pepsodent (Figure 5). The Modern Girl in all



Save Teeth Now in a new way

Old ways of brushing failed to prevent tooth troubles.

The reason lies in film which constantly forms on teeth. It holds food particles which form acid. Millions of germs breed in it.

The way to combat film is with Pepsodent. The basis is a special cleansing material, unique in film-removing power. Twice as soft as those commonly used in tooth pastes, it is ABSOLUTELY safe.

Prove it. See how teeth whiten as film disappears. Try Pepsodent today.



Figure 4



Lassen Sie den Reiz Ihres Lächelns nicht durch Film zerstören!

*Entfernen Sie den Film um auf-
fallend schöne Zähne zu erhalten!*

Pepsodent tut zweierlei: es entfernt den Film und poliert den Zahnschmelz.

Film ist ein schlüpfriger, die Zahnverfall verursachenden Bakterien beherbergender Belag. Seine Entfernung ist wichtig für Ihre Gesundheit. Die Zahnpasta, die Sie verwenden, bestimmt das Aussehen Ihrer Zähne. Das schonend wirkende Pepsodent verleiht ihnen unvergleichlichen Glanz durch die Entfernung des Films.

Verlangen Sie noch heute gratis eine 10-Tage-Tube von dem Apotheken - Bedarfs - Contor, Berlin SW. 68, Friedrichstraße 19.



Figure 5

Figure 4: Pepsodent ad, the *Times of West Africa*, 1934. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

Figure 5: Pepsodent ad, *Die Dame* and *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1931. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

these Pepsodent ads exhibits an aesthetic that evokes 'Americanness': an open easy smile, big white teeth and body language that is noticeably athletic, sensual, relaxed, at leisure.

By contrast, other ads that we have found indicate that international companies adjusted advertisements – images and copy – in order to appeal to specific colonial and national markets. For example, from the 1920s to the 1950s the US-based Pond's Extract Company (after 1955, Chesebrough-Pond's) adapted advertisements for its so-called 'vanishing cream' to a wide array of local contexts. The Pond's campaigns were designed by the New York-based advertising agency J. Walter Thompson (JWT), which by 1950 had offices in at least twenty-five foreign locations, including at various times Berlin, Bombay and Johannesburg. Pond's was JWT's oldest client, dating back to 1886. Once JWT went global they used the Pond's account to showcase the value of working with an agency whose international offices could tailor a company's message for local markets. Instructively, an ad from a 1925 issue of the Chinese *Ladies' Journal* renames the product as Pond's White Jade Cream and explains how the cream could be applied underneath powder to 'keep your makeup in place for the day'. While one side of the cream bottle featured in the ad carries an English trademark, the other side offers explanations in Chinese of the virtues of the product. The same ad evokes verses from a famous fourteenth-century drama to allude to the beauty that one could achieve by using Pond's (Figure 6). In Germany, JWT and Pond's told magazine readers in ads in 1930 that 'trendsetting women' in fifty countries depended on Pond's cold cream and vanishing cream to make their skin 'smooth'.²³ Another Pond's ad from a 1942 issue of the *Illustrated Weekly of India* proclaims that 'Beauty needs no adornment – real beauty does not depend on fine silks'. According to this ad, Pond's enables women to achieve 'real beauty' regardless of their class and caste (Figure 7). A fourth Pond's ad appeared in 1955 in *Bantu Mirror*, a Southern Rhodesia weekly that targeted black readers and consumers. In contrast to the other Pond's ads, this one from the colonial African context focuses on skin colour, proclaiming that Pond's vanishing cream will make skin 'lighter, smoother, softer' (Figure 8).

The crucial observation to take away from comparison of these ads is that Pond's and JWT attached different Modern Girl images and attributes to the same product depending on where it was marketed. Whereas Pepsodent apparently tried to create a new 'American' standard of white teeth across the globe, JWT marketed Pond's facial creams by appealing to existing standards of beauty among local elites, at times stressing the global reach of its products. In all our contexts, we also found Modern Girl ads for cosmetics that were produced and marketed by local companies exclusively for national or sub-national consumption. For example, in the 1920s and

請認明由婦女雜誌介紹
 請認明由婦女雜誌介紹
 姓名 住址
 姓名 住址

未敷粉 先搽旁氏白玉霜
 依粉長日存在 顏色格外艷麗

他眉兒是淺淺描
 他臉兒是淡淡紅
 他粉香膩玉搽咽項
 前錄西顧托借船三點句

上 昌 怡
 洋 行 經 理

旁氏白玉霜

POND'S EXTRACT
 VANISHING CREAM

請認明由婦女雜誌介紹 Please mention the LADIES' JOURNAL.

Figure 6

Figure 6: Pong's Vanishing cream ad, *Funü zazhi* (Ladies' Journal), 1925. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

Beauty needs no Adornment

Real beauty does not depend on fine silks, nor will costly ornaments bring out a charm which is not there. But one essential there is, without which real beauty cannot exist: the attribute of a clear and lovely skin. Pong's Creams are a sure and proven aid to a petal-like complexion. In just a few weeks your skin will be softer, smoother and glowing.

POND'S COLD CREAM should be rubbed gently into your face night and morning, and removed after a few minutes. It melts away into the pores, softens away oil and grime and provides essential nourishment.

POND'S VANISHING CREAM is refreshing and so can be used during the day. It smooths the skin and provides a thin film of protection against exposure to sun, dust and grime.

Pond's Creams

Figure 7

Figure 7: Pong's cold cream ad, the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 1942. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

Your skin can be as lovely as mine!
 POND'S VANISHING CREAM makes it
 Lighter, Smoother; Softer

You, too, can have new beauty when you use POND'S VANISHING CREAM. Pong's soft, cool cream (with the big V on the jar) cleans your skin wonderfully. It takes away all those tiny flakes of dead skin that make your face look dark and dirty—and leaves it lighter and clearer than ever before. Your complexion will never look shaly if you use POND'S VANISHING CREAM—and even on the hottest days, it keeps your skin smooth and soft. Always handy to look at, delightful to touch.

POND'S
 for a beautiful skin

MORE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN USE POND'S
 THAN ANY OTHER CREAMS IN THE WORLD

POND'S VANISHING CREAM

Figure 8

Figure 8: Pong's vanishing cream ad, *Bantu Mirror*, 1955. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

1930s, women with bobbed or short hair, a telltale sign of the Modern Girl, could be found in ads for Afghan Snow 'emollient' in India and Keppels face powder in South Africa (Figures 9 and 10). Such examples suggest the overlap and intersection among advertising strategies of local and multinational companies.

The Modern Girl and technologies of the self: aesthetics, bodies, venues

Comparison of ads produced by both international and local companies has allowed us to discern a changing Modern Girl aesthetic that cuts across national and imperial boundaries. In the 1920s and into the 1930s, the Modern Girl usually possesses an elongated, wiry and svelte body that first appeared before World War I in cigarette and car advertisements in the United States and Europe, where it signified the attractions and dangers of androgyny and sexuality outside reproduction (Figure 11).²⁴ The Modern Girl's body is also depicted as excessively refined; individual female body parts are elegantly polished, carefully scrubbed, meticulously sprayed or, in an astounding variety of ways, cleaned and covered so that lips, teeth, mouth, hair, skin, armpits, legs and vagina are all stylishly produced. Moreover, the Modern Girl's beauty and youthfulness are often linked to scientific hygiene.

In a series of ads for Odo-ro-no, a humorously-named anti-perspirant and deodorant introduced by a US company and widely distributed in the United States, China, South Africa, India and Germany, many characteristics of the Modern Girl are evident. In all Odo-ro-no ads the copy specifies that by applying the product to the armpits, the young, active, trim and glamorous Modern Girl can prevent unpleasant odours and ensure that social interactions, especially romantic ones, are never spoilt. With references to 'sanitary sponge applicators', a 'quick-drying formula' and the 'doctor' who invented the product and supervised its production, these ads evoke scientific hygiene to render an unseemly topic legitimate (Figures 12–16). The Odo-ro-no ads, like many other cosmetics and toiletries ads from the late 1920s and early 1930s, frequently feature angular drawings of women with long necks and limbs that connote elegance. Graphic designers of ads appearing in all our contexts frequently emphasised diagonal lines to create dynamic images. Often, the proportions used in such drawings suggest 'real' women seven or eight feet tall. Heavily indebted to the international art deco movement, such aesthetic exaggeration of bodily proportions was employed by international and local companies.²⁵

Modern Girl image designers always took advantage of the most advanced visual technology available. In the United States, China,



Figure 16: Odo-ro-no ad, printed in *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 1947. Courtesy of Unilever plc.

Germany and India, the format of many Modern Girl ads changed from the earlier line drawings to lithographic watercolour posters in the 1920s, and to photographs (often featuring film stars and other well-known performers) in the late 1920s. In many African periodicals, the shift to photos took place later, during the 1930s and 1940s. Over the decades, influenced by developments in photographic technology and techniques such as the close-up shot in filmmaking, Modern Girl ads in all locales demonstrated changes in the method of representing the female figure, shifting from locating her in the middle of a landscape or room, to showing only the portrait of her head, highlighting her hair, eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, lips or teeth. Occasionally this special attention to a particular facial feature was

emphasised by having the Modern Girl's hand touch or caress it.

Another aesthetic in the US and German cosmetics and toiletries ads and the early Indian and South African ads that targeted white colonials is what we cautiously describe as the 'Asianisation' of the Modern Girl image. We use the term reservedly, underscoring that Asianisation in the way we refer to it – as an aesthetic – is a process of imaging and imagining that is loaded with western power; it is most definitely not about how 'Asians' thought about 'Asianness'. We distinguish Asianisation from Orientalism not only to suggest the chronological precedence of Orientalism as a form of racialised power, but also in order to specify the particular manner in which Asianisation creates identity through the assertion of difference from the Other. Whereas Orientalism distinguishes the Occidental from the Oriental in order to produce the Occidental's superiority and prowess, Asianisation expresses the ambition to transform oneself into the Other, if only temporarily, and if only from the position of relative privilege.²⁶

Caricatured, elongated eyes are the main signifier of the Modern Girl's Asianisation in the cosmetics ads we have collected, particularly

in those that employ a modernist art deco style. This stylisation is amply evident in an ad for De Kama facial cream that appeared in 1924 in US *Vogue*, an ad for Pomeroy Skin Food in the 1925 *Cape Times* and an ad for Ven-Yusa face cream in the *Statesman* from 1930 (Figures 17–19). An especially striking example is a 1929 poster by German graphic designer Jupp Wiertz for the German company F. Wolff and Sohn's Vogue Perfume (Figure 20). The women drawn in these ads are never clearly identifiable as Caucasian, black or East Asian, though their eyes are caricatured expressly as 'Asian'.

In still other ads that appeared in Germany and the United States the entire *mise-en-scène* of the ad was deeply Orientalised. Wiertz (probably influenced by the Orientalism of the English illustrator Aubrey Beardsley) placed the Modern Girl among paraphernalia or landscapes that visually invoked Chinese or Japanese art (Figure 21).²⁷ The designers of a German ad for 'Matt-Creme' and 'Cold Cream' by the domestic brand 4711 urged a Modern Girl with bobbed hair and caricatured eyes, and sporting high heels and a parasol (evocative of China or Japan) to protect herself against the sun while 'sunbathing' on the beach (Figure 22). Such ads were part of the art nouveau craze sweeping Europe and the United States, which included the fetishisation of various forms of chinoiserie and japonisme, as well as of objects deemed 'primitive', often African.

In addition to the commonalities of body and facial aesthetics, such as caricatured eyes, bobbed hair and elongated bodies, the Modern Girl is most frequently depicted in one of four specific activities or venues in all our research locales: she is figured as a film star; she is represented as an outdoor and sports enthusiast; she is depicted in romantic or intimate poses; and, she is found making up or admiring herself in front of her vanity or in a hand-held mirror. Each of these activities or venues suggests a cluster of values and attitudes that contemporaries associated with the Modern Girl.

It appears that the Modern Girl image, in part, reflects observation and adaptation of female bodily practices performed on the silver screen. We know from previous research on *moga* in Japan, flappers in the United States, *modeng xiaojie* in China and *neue Frauen* in Germany that film watching was a leisure activity routinely associated with the Modern Girl. Contemporaries often viewed Modern Girl postures, hand gestures and ways of walking and talking as mimicking the movies.²⁸ Beginning in the late 1920s, many ads for cosmetics feature a film star; in each of our locations well-known actresses were used to promote products. In an ad for Palmolive soap that appeared in a 1939 issue of the *Times of India*, for example, the Modern Girl and movie watching are linked (Figure 23). This ad prominently features a photograph of

It is a fact proven by medical science that within our bodies there are many glands which secrete certain substances—hormones—into the blood stream. These secretions are of such drastic importance that they absolutely govern our growth, development, vitality, and even our emotions.

It was, therefore, only logical to incorporate these vital and beneficial elements in the form of a facial cream which would produce the desired results upon the skin.

Dr. Kama, a scientist, after years of study and research, was the first to discover the importance of hormones in the preservation of a youthful complexion and was the first to develop them for plastic surgeons for their work in rebuilding depleted facial tissues.

Results were so amazing that he introduced the same extracts in his original hormone facial preparations—to be used easily by every woman in the finest cosmetics available. The active hormone substance—extracted by Dr. Kama's own exclusive method—is not available to other cosmetic producers and cannot be duplicated.

Dr. Kama's preparations represent the first basic improvement in cosmetic development and are different from all other creams in principle, composition, and effect upon the skin.

For spirit and best results use in conjunction De Kama Cleansing Cream, 1.50, 2.50 and 4.50, De Kama Cream V-Tone, 3.50, 6.00, De Kama Cream-Hormones, 7.50
De-Kar-Mine \$35 **Crema Hormonale Special \$35**
 For neck, hand and chest For the dehydrated skin

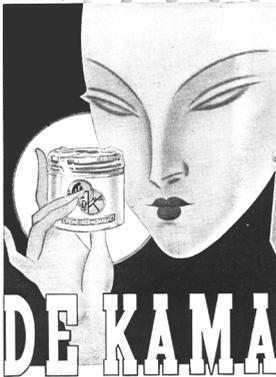


Figure 17



FACE MASSAGE

is one of the oldest forms of Beauty Culture

In all highly civilised eras this has been the method used to preserve and rejuvenate the complexion.

With a jar of Pomeroy Skin Food
EVERY WOMAN

can practise this ancient art before she goes to bed. By doing this the pores of the skin are freed from the fine layers of grime absorbed from the atmosphere during the day: the circulation is invigorated; the glands are fed; and the nerve endings are soothed.

Pomeroy Skin Food

At all Chemists and Stores

Made by Mrs. Pomeroy, Ltd., 29 Old Bond Street, London, W.

Figure 18



Give Your Skin An Oxygen Bath

VEN-YUSA virtually gives the skin an "oxygen bath." This famous *non-greasy* face cream rejuvenates the jaded tissues and makes the skin velvety-soft. Ven-Yusa keeps the complexion fresh and attractive even on the hottest days. It prevents sunburn, discoloration, dry skin and prickly heat.

VEN-YUSA

Obtainable at perfumers and stores everywhere. Price Re. One.

Figure 19

Figure 17: De Kama ad, US *Vogue*, 1934.

Figure 18: Pomeroy Skin Food ad, printed in *Cape Times*, 1925.

Figure 19: Ven-Yusa ad, printed in the *Statesman*, 1930.



Figure 20: Jupp Wiertz, poster for Vogue perfume, 1929, reprinted from Arnold Frednch, *Anschläge: Deutsche Plakate als Dokumente der Zeit 1900–1960* (Ebenhausen: Langewiesche-Brandt, 1963), p. 64. Courtesy of Langewiesche-Brandt.



Figure 21: Auxolin ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1937.



Figure 22: 4711 Matt-Creme ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1924. Courtesy of Cosmopolitan cosmetics Cologne.

DEVKA RANI
CHARMING INDIAN
SCREEN STAR
SAYS

"Palmolive keeps the complexion clear and smooth."

Devika Rani

PALMOLIVE is a beauty soap. Its cosmetic oils of olive and palm are blended in a secret formula solely to foster and beautify your skin—to keep it young. Palmolive's rich olive oil differs from any other—penetrates to the very pores—cleansing and beautifying. This is why millions of women in England, France, Germany, America and 67 other countries prefer and use it for face and body to keep them smooth, supple and radiant. Palmolive contains no animal fats that is why it is the *softest* beauty soap. Try Palmolive. Get three tablets today.

Large Tablet 3 Annas
Small Tablet 1 Anna

HAIR LOVELINESS TOO
Palmolive Liquid Olive Oil Shampoo will give it to you. Palmolive Shampoo keeps the scalp healthy, brings out the natural waves and leaves the hair soft-as-silk, glossy and fragrant. Give yourself this luxurious shampoo today and once a week always. It costs less than expensive preparations, lasts longer.

P A L M O L I V E

Figure 23: Palmolive ad, *Times of India*, 1939.

Devika Rani, a major Indian film star. In so doing, a British company capitalises on the glamour and fame of a local celebrity to cast its product as a 'beauty soap' with global reach and nationalist appeal. The text explains that Palmolive is used by 'millions of women in England, France, Germany, America and 67 other countries'. It also specifies that it 'contains no animal fats', a clear attempt to assuage potential alarm among Hindu and Muslim consumers at whom it is targeted. Devika Rani, a globetrotting local star, thus effectively ties together the international consumer of Palmolive and the Indian everywoman; the use of her image suggests to the female fan/consumer that social mobility is possible through cultivation of

glamour and purchase of beauty products of world renown.

Ads that depict the Modern Girl engaged in outdoor activities invariably valorise her robust physicality. This trend is readily apparent in toiletries and cigarette ads from most locales in which the Modern Girl – particularly the white European or American Modern Girl and the Chinese Modern Girl – is depicted swimming, sunbathing, golfing and especially playing tennis (Figures 12, 24 and 25). By the early 1930s, Indian newspapers and ads also featured the Indian Modern Girl as an ace tennis player. Although a black tennis-playing Modern Girl did not appear in ads in the African press during the 1930s, she was the subject of written commentary indicating that tennis was an oddly physical yet fashionable pursuit for young African elite women, like their Indian counterparts. By depicting the Modern Girl as an outdoor enthusiast and athlete, such ads glorified her strength, desire for adventure and unwillingness to be restricted to the domestic domain. Notably, these images were also likely voyeuristically viewed in those contexts in which public displays of female body parts, such as nude shoulders, had previously been eschewed.

In all the geographical contexts in which we have conducted research, the Modern Girl is associated with dating, romantic love and the

legitimation of premarital sex. Although nearly any selection of ads quickly reveals this, those we find most interesting depict the Modern Girl as aware of her allure and using it to her advantage. A 1939 ad from South Africa's *Bantu World* features a dancing Modern Girl under the slogan of 'the smartest woman in the hall' (Figure 10). In other ads, the Modern Girl's sexuality suggests lesbianism (or, as we shall see, autoeroticism). In an American ad for Elizabeth Arden's Sun-pruf Cream that appeared in *Vanity Fair* in 1934, for example, a Modern Girl clad in beach wear proffers the tube of tanning product to her companion in a markedly phallic manner (Figure 24). Most of the time, Modern Girl sexual desire as expressed in cosmetics or toiletries ads did not cross racial boundaries, and was thus in line with contemporary anxieties about interracial sex and intimacy. One 1924 German ad for a perfume with the English name 'Poppy', however, depicts a sparsely clad woman – part Modern Girl, part tropical temptress – pursued by a man coded through dress and skin-colour as a person of colour. This perfume ad appealed to consumers by hinting at multiple transgressions: a smell that 'enchanted and intoxicated the senses' and an openly sexualised body associated with desire for 'Otherness' (Figure 26). Although such racial transgressions are infrequently expressed in the cosmetics or toiletries ads, filmic and literary representations of the Modern Girl produced in the United States, Africa and Europe routinely suggest that at least some contemporaries strongly associated the Modern Girl with interracial sexual desire.

When ads represent the Modern Girl at home, she is neither cooking and cleaning nor tending children, but rather is situated in front of her vanity caring for her own body. In such ads, instead of being family-minded, the Modern Girl is represented as self-possessed, even to the point of being self-indulgent. In an ad for Richard Hudnut's Three Flowers Dusting Powder that appeared in the June 1937 issue of *Young Companion*, a young woman sits on a stool in a modern, luxurious bathroom, and powders herself in front of her mirror (Figure 27). She has on only a short slip, the kind worn under a *qipao*, a dress popular with Chinese Modern Girls. Her partial nudity draws attention to her sleek body, while her self-caressing hand gesture presents it as a delicate and precious object, suggesting autoeroticism.

In many cosmetics ads, the Modern Girl is depicted gazing into a mirror (Figures 28–32). This literal self-reflection of the Modern Girl has a dual meaning. On the one hand, it suggests the possibility of the Modern Girl's self-possession. Through hints of a self-touching erotics, it sexualises as it celebrates the Modern Girl's identity. On the other hand, mirror-gazing also suggests the Modern Girl's constant obligation to judge herself against the beauty and social standards presented in the



A picture of LOVELINESS under the SUN...

Elizabeth Arden, who solves your beauty problems the year round, has made a speciality of studying the effect of the sun on various types of skin, in order to tell you exactly how to protect and enhance your loveliness under the sun. As a result, no matter what kind of sun-life you prefer to lead, Elizabeth Arden has the preparation that will make it a very happy, lovely one.

There is Ardena Sun-proof Cream for those who do not want to burn

Don't burn, it isn't smart. What's more, it hurts. And since the advent of Miss Arden's Sun-proof Cream last season, burning and peeling and the accompanying torture have become unnecessary evils. Under Sun-proof Cream the most sensitive skin will not burn. And that makes this lovely preparation a positive boon to blondes. It isn't sticky or greasy and it does not show. If you want to tan a little, spread Ardena Sun-proof Cream on lightly. If you do not want to tan at all, apply it generously...and you won't!

Ardena Sun-proof Cream . . . \$1.25 the tube.

There is Veiva Beauty Film to make you appear tanned and chic
This velvety paste that covers blemishes and gives

you a smooth, delectable color, is really a perfect, ready-made tan! It is absolutely indispensable with shorts, for it gives the legs an exquisite finish. Select the shade you want to look like Veiva Film prevents burn and tan, you can preserve your natural color underneath to rub the film in well... Dust with the matching talcum. And there you are—tanned just the shade you want to be. An ideal Emerge delicately pink and white in the evening after being tanned all day. Everyone will wonder...

Veiva Beauty Film...four shades...Light, Dark Evening and Sun Tan (a new ruddy bronze \$1.25 the tube)
Veiva Beauty Talcum (in matching shade) \$1.25

There is Sun Oil...if you want a rich tan Brunettes, whose skin, when it is made plump and supple, can take the sun, alone Miss Arden's Sun Oil. It prevents dryness, keeps your skin soft and smooth, and helps to give you a lovely, rich even tan. It comes in delectable kidney-shaped lozenges in costume-colored waterproof cases for the beach, at \$5. Also in attractive bottles for the dressing table, \$1.75. Two shades—Honey and Cash

ON SALE AT ALL SMART SHOPS

ELIZABETH ARDEN

691 Fifth Avenue, New York City • LONDON PARIS BERLIN ROME TORONTO
© Elizabeth Arden, Inc.

Figure 24

Figure 24: Elizabeth Arden ad, *Vanity Fair*, 1934.

運動之後 奮興妙品

運動勞力·身熱汗出·如于浴湯
中酒
四七二都是佳古龍香水少許·
則浴後週身舒暢涼爽·精神大振·
豈非快事·
四七二都是佳除古龍香水外·
尚有雪花精與香水精等·均為名
貴化妝品·賜顧之時·務請認明
藍底金字貼頭上印四七二號為
為記。

沐浴三寶

四七二香皂
四七二浴鹽
四七二爽身粉
四七二爽身粉
質細除塵

各大藥房均有出售
高店均有出售
中國總發行
張美最洋行

Figure 25

Figure 25: 4711 ad, *Liang Yu* (The Young Companion), 1935. Courtesy of Cosmopolitan Cosmetics Cologne.



Figure 26: Parfümerie Poppy ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1924

ads and elsewhere, and thus to predict the opinions of others and to adjust accordingly. Though commodities do not necessarily offer the Modern Girl-as-consumer freedom from gendered social constraints, or create new social and sexual norms, our research suggests that commodities may have opened up new possibilities in the realm of self-reflection, self-creation and self-valuation. This use of commodity culture to create openings for representing a femininity that is self-consciously elected and crafted is a theme that has come up again and again in our collaboration as a principal characteristic of the Modern Girl.



Figure 27: Richard Hudnut ad, *Liang Yu (The Young Companion)*, 1937. Courtesy of Pfizer Inc.

Facial cosmetics, skin colour and racial formation

A large proportion of the cosmetics ads that feature the Modern Girl promotes products that promise to provide new colour or to transform the existing colour and/or quality of the Modern Girl's skin. Such products include make-up and face powders as well as cold, acne, vanishing, bleaching and tanning creams. In our analysis of ads for whitening, colouring and tanning products, we seek to elucidate further how the Modern Girl's bodily self-fashioning is knitted into processes



人生之過程由少而老其最顯著之徵象即皮膚之枯敗現於生理必然之結髮如年即有現

不 知 老 之 預 兆

試 兼 有 俊 嫩 也 常 紅 術 今 結 少 而 老 其 最 顯 著 之 徵 象 即 皮 膚 之 枯 敗 現 於 生 理 必 然 之 結 髮 如 年 即 有 現

能 治 標 本 不 爽 有 滋 潤 皮 膚 之 功 效 使 皮 膚 潔 淨 油 滑 潔 淨 油 滑 潔 淨 油 滑

武 兼 有 俊 嫩 也 常 紅 術 今 結 少 而 老 其 最 顯 著 之 徵 象 即 皮 膚 之 枯 敗 現 於 生 理 必 然 之 結 髮 如 年 即 有 現

上 處 百 貨 店 均 有 出 售 登 公 司 謹 啓



Figure 28: Palmolive ad, *Funü zazhi* (Ladies' Journal), 1930.

Alluring Perfection



What is more charming than a velvety-smooth complexion of lovely, transparent tone combined with silken hair, lustrous, soft and glowing.

Make this loveliness your own

USE

Madam C.J. Walker's

EGYPTIAN BROWN FACE POWDER

GLOSSINE



Clinging, invisible and admirably perfumed. Imparts an olive tint to fair complexion and harmonizes beautifully with the darker skin. For sale by Walker agents everywhere.

Oils and accessories. Imparts a rich, healthy luster. Invaluable for bleached hair and unweakened in the opinion of social leaders and well known gentlemen. For sale by Walker agents and good drug stores.



Figure 30: Madam C. J. Walker's ad, *The Crisis*, 1928.

'HAZELINE'

(Trade Mark)

SNOW

Improves the skin from the first application



Results will delight you . . . the cleansing action on your pores . . . the smoothness of your skin . . . the cool, refreshed feeling which follows its use and the complete absence of greasiness.

Your nearest chemist or store can supply you with 'HAZELINE' SNOW in dainty glass jars.



BURROUGHS WELLCOME & CO. LONDON (ENG.)



APEX GLOSSATINA The Master Straightener for use with the straightening comb or iron. It imparts to the hair that smooth, satiny, shimmering finish that no other preparation can duplicate. It is also an excellent dressing for the hair and used by men, women and children.

APEX SPECIAL GROWER (Double Strength) This is a special preparation for stubborn cases of dandruff, thin and falling hair. It nourishes and stimulates the hair-roots. Produces a healthy, quick growth and is excellent for thin temples.

APEX SKIN BLEACH It not only bleaches but is a skin purifier. Removes tan, freckles, liver spots, blackheads, pimples, collar marks, sunburns, acne, etc. It beautifies, making the skin soft, clear, and its consistent use brings to the skin new life and color. Instantly lightens complexion.

THE APEX HAIR Co., Inc. 1725 Arctic Avenue Atlantic City, N. J.

Join the APEX SCHOOL OF BEAUTY CULTURE & HAIRDRESSING

It will make you independent by giving you a valuable profession

Write for particulars:—

APEX HAIR Co., (S.A.)

P.O. Box 5731, JOHANNESBURG.

Figure 31: Apex Hair Co. ad, *Bantu World*, 1933.

same women to charges of artifice and, by association, with the life of the theatre and with prostitution. By the end of the nineteenth century, in part in reaction to the taint of 'artifice', 'looking natural' became a commonplace aesthetic ideal. By the 1920s, ads for thickly applied 'lily-white' powders and paints had all but disappeared, while ads promoting products that hygienically augmented 'natural' beauty and skin tones had become pervasive.²⁹

Cosmetics ads featuring the Modern Girl that appeared in the US, European and colonial European press during the 1920s frequently focused on feeding and protecting fair skin. An ad published in the German press in 1928 by a Lever subsidiary, Elida, marketed skin creams for ladies that healed the skin, made it clear and transparent – 'even and like alabaster' – and 'protected it against harsh winds and bright sunlight' (Figure 32). Here, as in the earlier US ads from the turn of the century, fair and refined skin is a sign of upper-class breeding. It could also be a sign of white superiority over people of colour; however, unlike earlier European cosmetics ads, such as those for British Pears Soap or German *Lilienmilchseife*, the Elida ad invokes fairness without making explicit reference to people of colour.³⁰ In other words, whiteness is distinctive – linked, if not fully reducible to, racial 'phenotype'.

Concerns about protecting white skin from the sun and harsh elements of tropical climes often appeared in cosmetics ads that ran in the colonial press in India and Hong Kong. An ad for Ven-Yusa, 'The Oxygen Face Cream', that appeared in a 1930 issue of the *Times of India* conveys a similar message to the Elida ad (Figure 19). Other ads recommended the use of bleaching creams for white women (Figure 33). All these ads expressed an anxious obsession with maintaining whiteness in a world of phenotypic others by claiming to banish what historian David Arnold has referred to as 'fearful tropicality'.³¹ To stay 'natural' that is, naturally white one, paradoxically had to disable 'nature'.

Skin product ads targeting indigenous consumers illustrate the variety of ways that cosmetic whitening was interpolated into pre-existing, pre-colonial skin preferences. In China, for instance, skin product ads played on the intersection of skin colour hierarchies and Euro-American ideologies of white racial superiority. Lighter skin, long a mark of high status and prestige, indicated the distance between peasants and scholar-officials. A light, non-tanned complexion formed an important element of feminine beauty. Classical literature often likened the ideal woman's skin colour to congealed ointment, white jade or fresh lychee. Yet, in classical convention 'whiteness' never stood as the sole criterion for beauty or ideal skin; a healthy radiance of rosy colour always accompanied clear skin as the ideal.³² An illustration of this continuing preference is a 1940 ad, which features products claiming to provide the

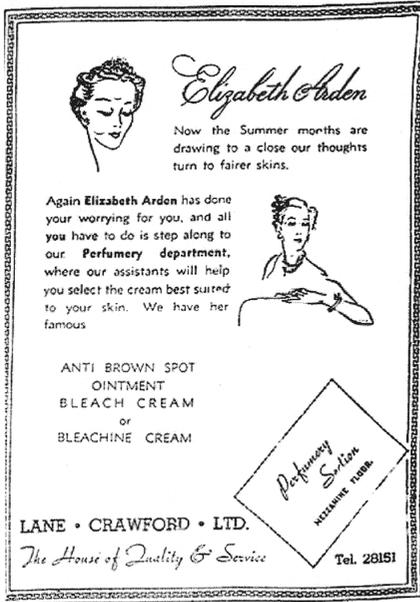


Figure 33: Elizabeth Arden ad, *South China Morning Post*, 1937.

‘natural’ whiteness associated with elite Chinese women. ‘Why do high class women feel beautiful and pleasant when they apply Sparrow Face Powder?’ the ad enquires; because ‘it will make a woman’s skin look white and soft in a natural way’ (Figure 34). While this and other ads mention the colour white, they do not explicitly reference European or Euro-American whiteness.

Likewise, in India, the preference for light-coloured skin during the 1920s, especially for women, is undeniable. Skin colour had social significance in the subcontinent before European colonialism and prior to the influence of US and European conceptions of race. Yet, light skin was never an unambiguous sign of status or merit. Indian epics and artefacts are full of references to superior beings who are dark-skinned.³³ The history of skin colour hierarchies in India is further complicated by Turkish and later Mughal conquests of the thirteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, when systems of grading people by skin colour – fair, ‘wheaten’, dark – were used to categorise certain dark-skinned groups as criminals and rebels. This form of codification passed directly into the British colonial police records from the mid-nineteenth century on.³⁴ However, Mughal miniature paintings



Figure 34: Sparrow Face Powder ad, Liang Yu (*The Young Companion*), 1939.

and folk-tales of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while expressing a preference for 'translucent' colour, also associated 'too white' skin with leprosy. The feminine ideal was for 'translucence', not simply fairness.³⁵ European colonial ideologies of racial superiority (from the first Portuguese landings on the west coast of India in 1498 to the expansion and post-1857 establishment of the British empire until 1947) thus encountered extant skin colour hierarchies and were themselves reshaped in the process. Colonial anthropological discourses in the mid-nineteenth century linked Indian aesthetic preferences for whiteness to caste-based social and economic stratification. Fair skin colour, in these accounts, was more than an aesthetic preference; it symbolised superiority in a hierarchical social structure and moral order. Over time, metropolitan outlooks on racial difference, and the representation of whiteness, were transformed by discourses on medicine and science.³⁶ These articulations intersected with pre-existing Indian tendencies to pay close attention to skin colour.³⁷

We have found cosmetics ads in China and India where the Modern Girl promotes what appear to be models of beauty that hark back to these older ideologies of whitening by evoking 'nature'. In China during the 1920s and 1930s ads such as one for Three Flowers Vanishing Cream which appeared in 1931, promise to improve facial beauty by making skin 'smooth', 'uniform' and 'fresh' (Figure 35). The text refers to the product's 'secret formula', using an archaic word usually reserved for discussions of Chinese medicine. The ad also offers a Modern Girl's body that is expressly Chinese and cast as 'naturally' beautiful. A similar ad for Afghan Snow, a white foundation also referencing 'nature', appeared in a 1949 issue of the *Times of India*. This ad depicts an Indian Modern Girl with flowers in her hair, who clearly exudes 'natural' beauty, 'charm' and 'allure' (Figure 36). Notably, these Chinese and Indian ads link whitening to 'nature' without coding race as scientifically verifiable.

At other times, ads for skin products in India and China combined references to older skin colour hierarchies with evocations of scientific authority. For example, an Indian ad for Pearlex depicts a white woman and declares that scientific progress could make long-standing desire for whiter skin a reality (Figure 37). An ad for Palmolive Soap from China explains in similar terms that new 'scientific developments' can enable one to keep one's skin 'rosy and moist' (Figure 28). In these Indian and Chinese ads, the ideal for skin does not appear in terms of scientific race theory's Caucasian whiteness, but in a vocabulary loaded with indigenous cultural references, such as 'fair' and 'pearly-white' in the Indian case, or 'rosy' in the Chinese case. These ads give pre-existing preferences for lighter skin a 'scientific', thus modern, twist. In other words, they sell the dream that by consuming scientifically produced cosmetics

三種名花精製之化妝品。係照赫德納公司之美顏秘方精製而成。質料純細。色麗香濃。堪稱女界之寶。

三花牌香霜。搽皮膚上。立被吸收。功能滋養肌膚。不受風日塵垢之侵犯。搽後即敷三花牌香粉。則為效更妙。粉既勻淨。色更鮮明。

(三)

三花之香

各種房化妝品店洋貨店均有出售

總經銷赫德納公司精製

中國分公司

上海廣東路三號

Figure 35

Charm and allure come with a beautiful complexion. AFGHAN SNOW is a skin food of unparalleled quality, that renders the coarsest skin satin smooth and lovely.

AFGHAN SNOW

FOR THE WOMAN WHO ARDENTLY DESIRES TO KEEP HER COMPLEXION FREE FROM BLEMISHES

Patanjali

FOR PERFUMES & COSMETICS

Figure 36

Figure 35: Three Flowers Vanishing Cream ad, *Funü zazhi (Ladies' Journal)*, 1931. Courtesy of Pfizer Inc.

Figure 36: Afghan Snow ad, *Times of India*, 1949. Courtesy of E. S. Patanjali.

**DARK SKIN
TURNS FAIR**

Beauty's first requisite since time immemorial has been a fair complexion. Formerly it was nature which decided the face, but now fortunately science steps in and a pearly-white skin may be easily attained by any one who uses — PEARLEX. Rs. 5/- per bottle, available everywhere.

PEARLINE,
P. O. Box 493, Bombay.

**PEARLEX
WHITENS
DARK SKIN**

Figure 37: Pearlex ad, *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 1942.

one can assume the look of a cosmopolitan, upper-class woman and be both desirable and modern.³⁸

As in the Chinese and Indian contexts, beginning in the 1930s ads featuring the Modern Girl for products that promised to lighten dark skin appear in the African press. For instance, in 1939 the South African Company Keppels ran an ad for its lightening product, Freckle Wax, in *Bantu World*, a paper that targeted a black African readership and published articles and ads in English, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, Venda, Afrikaans and Tsonga languages (Figure 10). A decade later, Keppels ran an ad in the *Cape Times* promising that products developed by the 'famous Keppels laboratories' could combat the harmful effects of South Africa's 'cruel' climate by restoring 'pristine skin-texture and colour' (Figure 38). Although the *Cape Times* was a daily newspaper aimed at both white and 'coloured' readers, the avocado-tinted make-up and dark grey skin colour of the ad's primary female image suggest that Keppels was targeting the latter group. These Keppels ads show how a

**SOUTH AFRICAN CLIMATE
RAVAGES COMPLEXIONS**

but *Youthful Beauty* can be preserved with Keppels cosmetics*

Skin specialists all agree that our South African climate is cruelly destructive to women's complexions. The extremes of heat and cold, the intensely dry air, the dusty winds and the intensely strong sunlight all combine to destroy the skin texture. But there is no longer any reason to despair. The famous Keppels laboratories have evolved a full range of cosmetics all specially designed to counteract these unfavourable conditions. With the help of these scientific Keppels cosmetics you can fight off the effects of a harmful climate and keep your skin young. *All Keppels products are easily obtainable everywhere.*

Some Keppels AIDS TO BEAUTY

- Keppels Avocado Face Powder
- Keppels Undertone Lipstick
- Keppels Undertone Rouge
- Keppels Avocado Foundation Cream
- Keppels Avocado Skin Food
- Keppels Avocado Cold Cream
- Keppels Freckle Wax
- Keppels Dab
- Keppels Oil-Sorbent (for Greasy Skin)
- Keppels Liba (Liquid Powder Base)
- Keppels Dermatone Lotion (Skin tonic)
- Keppels Acne Cream (for pimples)

* Keppels have made an exhaustive, scientific study of this difficult local beauty problem

Figure 38: Keppels ad, *Cape Times*, 1945.

South African cosmetics company appealed to a marketplace structured by racial hierarchies through asserting scientific command of local conditions and reconfiguring distinctions of skin colour as matters of climate.

In southern Africa, skin colour hierarchies emerged through the long history of European colonialism, dating back to the mid-seventeenth century at the Cape. Under Dutch, and later British, colonial rule, whiteness and light-coloured skin became associated with civilisation, cleanliness, intelligence and power.³⁹ Some mid-twentieth century ethnographies of relatively remote southern African communities mention preferences for 'light-skinned girls' or 'light brown skin', suggesting a local aesthetic predilection for light- (not white-) coloured skin that may not be entirely reducible to colonial racial hierarchies.⁴⁰ Within some southern African communities, light brown skin may have been a long-standing beauty attribute for young women.

During the 1930s, these colonial racial hierarchies and, perhaps, indigenous preferences for light brown skin began to become entangled with American racial preferences and dynamics, as some US companies began to promote skin lighteners as a key Modern Girl commodity. The New Jersey-based Apex Company ran the earliest bleach ads to appear in a black South African newspaper. Apex, one of the largest black-owned businesses in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, was, according to one ad, the first 'all Negro Company' in South Africa.⁴¹ A 1933 *Bantu World* ad, featuring a line drawing of a bobbed-hair and bare-shouldered black Modern Girl gazing into a hand-held mirror, promises readers an improved appearance through use of Apex hair products and skin bleach (Figure 31). During the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in *Drum* magazine, ads for skin lighteners and bleaches manufactured in the United States became more pervasive, despite their toxic levels of ammoniated mercury and hydroquinone.⁴² Many of these ads featured light-skinned black African Modern Girl film stars or beauty queens. Some ads continued to claim the US origins of their product as a point of pride and to situate African Americans as role models of racial betterment.⁴³ These ads suggest that in Anglophone African contexts at least, colonial ideologies of white racial superiority and scientific improvement became linked to colour-coded hierarchies emanating from the United States. These developments underline the fact that Americanisation included a number of complex processes, which at times involved African Americans as capitalist entrepreneurs and racialised role models.

In the black US press, representations of the African American Modern Girl were often strategically deployed to contest Jim Crow racial hierarchies that were buttressed by *de jure* and *de facto* racial segregation. Cosmetics ads, especially those that were run by the

C. J. Walker Company in the NAACP's journal, *The Crisis*, are a perfect example of a black contrapuntal politicisation of advertising. Madam C. J. Walker, one of the most influential and well-known black businesswomen at the turn of the twentieth century, founded a hair treatment and cosmetics company that flourished for several decades by selling hair-care and beauty products to African American women. C. J. Walker's ads (particularly, though not exclusively, those that were produced during Madam C. J. Walker's lifetime) often express race pride. Typically, ads proclaimed that the company's products produced 'loveliness', 'allure' and 'charm' as opposed to whiteness or lightness.⁴⁴ For instance, a 1928 ad that features a black Modern Girl with bobbed hair looking into a hand-held mirror, promises to bring out the beauty of already existing blackness with treatments that bestow a 'transparent tone' as opposed to a lighter or whiter complexion (Figure 30). In the case of a product in this ad that the C. J. Walker Company labels as 'Egyptian Brown Face Powder', the subversive idea of Black Egypt as the archetype of civilisation at its most beautiful and most advanced (an idea popularised in aesthetics, literature and pageantry associated with the Harlem Renaissance) is adumbrated. This powder, the ad copy explains, does not lighten skin; rather, it embellishes existent black beauty by being 'invisible', by imparting an 'olive tint' to 'fair complexions' and by harmonising 'bewitchingly with the darker skins'. This last claim, firmly establishing the beauty of blackness, is consistent with the other advertising markets that we have examined. As we have already pointed out, such assertions of racial pride speak to the interface between prior, often counter-hegemonic traditions of cosmetics use in and outside of the hardening conventions of Euro-American racial hierarchies and of the scientific racial theories by which such conventions were subtended. In other words, in such C. J. Walker ads, we find a politicised celebration of blackness, even as the ads in question appeal to black bourgeois ideals of hygiene and deportment that were contoured by more problematic discourses of 'racial uplift'.

Within the white US press, Modern Girl cosmetics ads often elaborated taxonomies of ethnicised whiteness. By the mid-1920s, many ads specified and celebrated an array of 'beauty types' that were heavily coded according to the various racial and ethnic groups that together comprised the national populace (and thus the US market) in this period. US Nativist and Restrictionist anxieties about immigration from southern and eastern Europe and South and East Asia were expressed in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as intensified anti-immigrant animus, and were assuaged through implementation of immigration exclusion laws that reached an apex in the 1924 Immigration Act, which effectively curtailed non-European immigration

to the United States for several decades.⁴⁵ In the mid-1920s the Pompeian company, for example, routinely ran powder ads that referred to skin types ranging from 'white' to 'olive' to 'dusky'. In a particularly evocative 1928 ad, the range of acceptable ethnicities and thus ethnic 'looks', or 'skin types', ranges from 'Dresden China Blonde' to Spanish 'Creole Beauty' (Figure 39), while in another Pompeian ad from the same year, recently assimilated Americans are celebrated as those truest of Americans, the 'in-betweens' (Figure 40). Overall, these ads index the history of immigration to the United States in their exclusionary identification of the multiple types of 'American Beauty' and the glory of each beauty's particular 'shade'. In so doing they mobilise the idea of a mixed nation – but one that is mixed within precise racially and ethnically circumscribed parameters. By buying facial powders and creams, these ads suggest, the immigrant to the United States – she who aspires to full inclusion in the nation – may buy a place in the 'melting pot'. For although the immigrant's skin shade and hair colour may vary from the Anglo ideal, a Modern Girl may become an American among other Americans through commodity consumption. Such ads indicate to consumers which immigrant groups have gained the status of whiteness; through occlusion or non-representation of other groups they also indicate who is deemed 'not-quite-white', and thus remains as inassimilable within the representational strategies of the advertisements as within the nation at large.

Significantly, Pompeian twisted its ethnicised advertising formula when marketing its powder to Indian and South African consumers. In these contexts, corporate advertisers appealed to colour diversity among whites without any reference to 'ethnic' differences. In a 1925 issue of *The Statesman* (Calcutta), Pompeian ran an ad featuring a white brunette Modern Girl named Judy (Figure 41). The ad does not disclose the company's Cleveland, Ohio base; rather, the ad casts Judy as possessing the characteristics of a British colonial, since astoundingly, readers are told that she is being 'sent out to India to have a good time' and to obtain the skin colour of 'fair "English peach" Bloom'. Like the Pompeian ads that appeared in the US press in the same year, this one delineates a range of beauty types, 'Naturelle', 'Rachel', 'White' and 'Rosée', while dropping any mention of 'in-betweens' or 'Creole beauty'. Nearly identical types appeared in a 1925 Pompeian ad that ran in South Africa's *Cape Times*, featuring the story of Modern Girl Dulcie Chetwynd, who was transformed from unmarried 'wallflower' to 'charming wife' through the use of Pompeian products (Figure 42).⁴⁶ Together, these ads suggest how Pompeian adjusted its beauty types for British imperial markets by anglicising copy, narrowing the spectrum of



**Not Her MIDNIGHT EYES
But Her DUSKY SKIN**

As she becomes a beauty, her eyes and hair are dark? No you a beauty because you are like and your hair is light? It would be impossible to say that a Parisian girl is always made of ivory, a Lamer of rufes. Hair and eyes do not determine the type - but the tone of the skin does. There are as many gradations of types among beautiful women as there are in the rainbow. Among them you will find one more variation than among those of any other nation. There's the ivory blonde descended from the Normans - the golden blond from the Saxons - the brunette dark beauty who traces her lineage to Latin ancestry.

Perhaps you are a Parisian, or it may be that you are not even like her.

POMPEIAN BEAUTY POWDER and BLOOM.

Figure 39: Pompeian ad, Ladies Home Journal, 1928.
Figure 40: Pompeian ad, Ladies Home Journal, 1928.



CREAM-CRISP BLONDE
The most perfect combination of pink and cream skin, the skin of a blonde is soft and smooth, and she is the most beautiful of all women. To get this skin, use Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.



MAVEN BRONZE
The skin of a maven is the most beautiful of all. It is a rich, warm, golden-brown color, and it is the most beautiful of all. To get this skin, use Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.

**Send for Beauty Sampler
Discover your type!**

My fascinating Beauty Sampler contains free little vials of the five perfect shades of Pompeian Beauty Powder with my new waterproof beauty blotter, showing contrasting types of lovely women, in natural tones. You will find your type among them. If there's any question about the correct "your skin, your face" I am at your service and will be glad to help.

Garnett de Laet

Mail to: Pompeian Beauty, 1111 F St., N.W., Washington, D.C. or 1111 F St., N.W., New York City. Enclose 10¢ stamp for your Beauty Sampler and label, "Your Type of Beauty."

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
In Canada, The Postpaid Co., Ltd., Toronto, Ont., Canada

A new powder **NUDE**
created expressly for
AMERICA'S
"IN-BETWEENS"



MADAME JEANETTE DE CONDOE

IN this land of varied ancestry... a pageantry of types! How few blonde women with such lovely coloring... and here, as in an other land, a mingling of the two - blonde and "in-between" - the color of all types of hair!

WHATEVER YOUR COLORING
... blonde... or "in-between" have your type and make the most of it! To know your type for sure, you must study the tone of your skin... for distance holds the key! Then an expert - some true coloring - and you'll be... discover your type!

**SEND FOR BEAUTY SAMPLER
DISCOVER YOUR TYPE**
My fascinating Beauty Sampler contains five little vials of the perfect shades of Pompeian Beauty Powder with my new waterproof beauty blotter, showing contrasting types of lovely women, in natural tones. You will find your type among them. If there's any question about the correct "your skin, your face" I am at your service and will be glad to help.

Re-remember about this shade... will you have tried it?
Nude has a surprising way of matching perfectly in many, many shades! Even if you had not thought of yourself as an "in-between," you may find it just the shade for you!

COULMING BLONDE
The skin of a coum is the most beautiful of all. It is a rich, warm, golden-brown color, and it is the most beautiful of all. To get this skin, use Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.

NEUTRAL BEAUDE
The skin of a neutral is the most beautiful of all. It is a rich, warm, golden-brown color, and it is the most beautiful of all. To get this skin, use Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.

POWDER AND BLOOM EACH 40c
POMPEIAN BEAUTY POWDER and BLOOM

Figure 40

The Reward of Loveliness

"MY dear child," Judy's experienced married sister, Linda, spoke decisively to her, "social success is only despised by the girls who never have it."

Judy was miserably silent. But oh dear! how she dreaded the dance that night. Why had they sent her out to India to have a good time—she couldn't have a good time. Nobody was attracted by her. Nobody ever wanted to dance with her. It was all very well for Linda. She looked simply stunning nowadays. No wonder she married so well. All the exciting and wonderful things of life only happened to you if you were lovely, thought Judy longingly.

Miserably, she was slipping into her frock, when Linda returned.

"Now, my dear, don't look so wretched," she exclaimed, "for I am going to tell you a simple beauty secret which has made all the difference to me. Use Pompeian BEAUTY Powder.

"Powder very lightly all over your face and under your chin, not just your nose. Thus your skin will gain the admired fair English peach Bloom. And there's another reason why people are enraptured with the fine silky texture of Pompeian BEAUTY Powder. It stays on as no ordinary powder could, making re-powdering unnecessary. Just look and see what a difference it has made to you."

Judy exclaimed with delight, "Why, I really look pretty!"

"You do," Linda assured her; "and now go and enjoy yourself!"

That night Judy was the most sought-after girl in the room. Excitement lent sparkle to her eyes and gaiety to her voice.

"Who is that fascinating little thing with the beautiful complexion?" asked George Chester, the guest of the evening.

He was introduced, and a closer view of Judy's youthful bloom, the glorious fairness of her cheeks, completed his conquest.

To-day, Judy has attained life's highest happiness. The future looks golden



Judy was the most sought-after girl in the room.

indeed, and all—she says—is due to Pompeian BEAUTY Powder.

Pompeian Beauty Powder

NATURELLE for skins of medium to warm colouring.

RACHEL for creamy, brunette complexions.

WHITE for very light blondes.

ROSE for bright complexions.

Don't Envy Beauty—
Use Pompeian—and Have It.

Use these three for
Instant Beauty.

Instant girlish beauty can be yours in a few minutes if you use the complete Pompeian Beauty Toilette: First a touch of cooling Pompeian DAY Cream (vanishing and non-greasy) to whiten the skin and make the powder cling. Then apply Pompeian BEAUTY Powder, it makes the skin beautifully fair and smooth. Now a touch of Pompeian BLOOM for lovely youthful colour. Look in the glass! Instant beauty is indeed yours.

Sole Distributors:
VICKERS, WILSON & Co.,
102, ADELPHI 24, Chowringhee, Calcutta.



Think what Beauty would mean to you. Glorious, all-conquering Beauty! You can be the centre of attraction. You can win all hearts. Don't envy Beauty—use Pompeian and have it!

Happiness is Beauty's Birthright

Everybody loved Dulcie Chetwynd but at the same time they all envied her. It was not surprising that her husband, John, wealthy, distinguished and handsome, also adored his charming wife.

Yet once Dulcie had felt neglected

How well she remembered the occasion. She had not been asked to be Hamilton's dance. She shed bitter tears for she knew the reason. Her friend Nora did not want any "well-dowered"

What Nora told her

Yet it was Nora herself who had the kindness to tell Dulcie why she had not been asked. Nora explained that no matter how sweet a girl is, if she is not attractive, the men would not sufficiently notice her to discover the fact. Dulcie realised that Nora's attraction was her rosy, rosy cheeks and the creamy tint of her skin,

and pressed her to divulge the secret. Finally, Nora consented—it was so simple that it was hardly believable—nothing but the Pompeian Instant Beauty Toilette.

Dulcie's happiness dates from that day. The marvelous results of this inexpensive treatment had transformed her into a "thing of beauty and a joy forever." Her loveliness brought her perfect happiness. Why not follow Dulcie's example?

Try this to-day

First, a touch of Pompeian DAY Cream, fresh and cool as perfumed snow, to remove shine and make the powder cling. Then, dust Pompeian Beauty Powder, to give your skin a lovely flower-like tint and even tone. Lastly, a touch of Pompeian Bloom (rouge) to give the colour of charming youth to the cheeks. Look in the glass—Instant Beauty, glorious, captivating, is indeed yours!

Pompeian Beauty Powder

This Powder is exceptionally fine. It not only stays on for hours but does not give you an over-powdered effect. You will be delighted and captivated by its alluring fragrance.

Pompeian Beauty Powder can be secured in four shades, each especially adapted for a particular type of Beauty—Naturelle, Rachel, White and Fresh.



THE POMPEIAN COMPANY
CLEVELAND, OHIO, U.S.A.

Sole Distributors:
SIVE BEGS & KARNOVSKY,
Kerk and Fraser Streets.

Figure 41

Figure 41: Pompeian ad, *The Statesman*, 1925.

Figure 42

Figure 42: Pompeian ad, *Cape Times*, 1925.

conceivable whiteness and, in the case of the Indian ad, obscuring the US origins of the product.

By the post-World War II period, and in keeping with the United States' new geo-political hegemony, the Americanness found in Indian ads is no longer masked but celebrated. In an ad for a multi-purpose complexion product called Pimplom, which appeared in the *Illustrated Weekly* in 1947, whiteness is idealised and Americanised (Figure 43). Pimplom, according to the ad, was developed by Dr K. F. Michael of California to kill the 'germs' that cause pimples and to lighten complexions by 'double and treble shades'. The United States is further referenced in the name of the Bombay-based distributing agent, The Californian Products Co. Like some of the skin bleach ads we found in the African press, this Pimplom ad situates American scientists at the cutting edge of skin-lightening innovations and insinuates the applicability of white American models of betterment and progress the world over.

One of the most striking features of US and European Modern Girl imagery from the mid-1920s onwards is the embrace of tanning. From

Miami to the Riviera, upper-class light-skinned Modern Girls tanned. Whereas maintenance of a fair complexion marked upper-class standing in the nineteenth century, starting in the mid-1920s, tanning became an attractive way to distinguish bourgeois and upper-class women from working-class and poor women who toiled indoors and thus wore on their faces the pallor of their confinement in factories or offices. Discussion of the 'tan fad' in contemporary US trade magazines like *Advertising and Selling* and *Printers' Ink Monthly* located its origins with flappers and their enthusiasm for outdoor activities and desire for 'freedom', 'colour' and 'nothingness in apparel'. One marketing man described the tanning

Your face is Your Fortune

GUARANTEED TREATMENT for PIMPLES and DARK-COMPLEXION

Dr. K. F. Michael M.D., S.C. (U. S. A.) of California has recently made a startling discovery that the root cause of Pimples lies in a particular kind of germ caused by accumulated acid in kidneys and bladder, which originates only between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. These germs not only cause Pimples on the face, but at the same time make the complexion darker and sallow. But now Dr. K. F. Michael brings new hope to millions known as Pimplom. This mixture formulated by him, after having dissolved into the body not only kills the germs in the time, which it eliminates but at the same time makes the complexion lighter by double and treble shades. Start this famous treatment today and acquire a flawless, velvety complexion!

PIMPLOM
Rs. 6/- per bottle—Half size Rs. 3/8/-
Obtainable from all good chemists.

FREE TRIAL Chronic sufferers for FREE TRIAL with the condition if reduced will permit us to publish their photo. No application will be considered unless accompanied by photo and testified by Medical Doctor.

People doubting the genuineness of these testimonials may kindly correspond directly to these persons.

V. Fernandes, Sangolda, Goa.

After using Pimplom for one month what more can I say except that this is wonderful. My only regret is why I didn't know of Pimplom before.

SOLE AGENTS:
The Californian Products Co., (India), Lakshmi Building, Sir P. M. Road, Bombay.

Figure 43: Pimplom ad, the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 1942

'vogue' in the following terms: '[Flappers] flocked to the beaches day after day in bathing suits as close to the ultimate zero as was permitted ... and return[ed] to their Northern and Eastern haunts to display an expanse of deeply tanned skin that would arouse the envy of an Indian'.⁴⁷ This quote suggests how contemporaries identified tanning as part of the Modern Girl's panache for outdoor leisure and bodily display and recognises how darker skin unsettled the rigidity of racial distinctions. Yet, it was precisely the light-skinned Modern Girl's confidence in her privileged whiteness that made tanning in emulation of an 'Indian' both desirable and possible.

By the end of the 1920s, some cosmetics companies in Europe, the United States and European colonies adjusted their marketing of skin whiteners and bleaches to accommodate the tanning craze. We have already seen evidence of this trend in the Elizabeth Arden ad pitched at white colonials that appeared in the *South China Morning Post* in 1937, which recommended that Bleachine be used to regain the 'fairer skins' more appropriate for autumn (Figure 33), and in the erotically charged ad for Elizabeth Arden's Sun-Pruf Cream that appeared in *Vanity Fair* in 1934 (Figure 24). Indeed, these and many others, including a Helena Rubinstein ad from 1928, enjoined the Modern Girl to 'Bleach your way to Autumn Beauty' (Figure 44). Appealing to an imagined upper-class clientele alleged to spend summers in the country or at the beach, the

Rubinstein ad warns: 'The loveliest tan soon turns sallow and looks unsightly against city backgrounds'. The Pompeian ads earlier discussed had suggested to white Euro-American women that they should either adjust their powder to match their 'natural' facial colouring or to alter their facial colour by using differently tinted powders. Bleach ads, on the other hand, encouraged white women to seasonally adjust their skin colour. For such Modern Girls, skin was evidently another accessory.

Cosmetics companies' segmentation of the market according to the seasons also

BLEACH
your way to
AUTUMN BEAUTY



Up from the sea and down from the sunset — faces come to open. But so many of them bear the marks of a tan.

Yes, being long parched skins, new or long, large pores, in addition to all shadows. The loveliest tan soon turns sallow and looks unsightly against backgrounds.

Helena Rubinstein warns you — "Now your skin is bleached of dull tallowiness. Lines and wrinkles must be smoothed away and coarse pores must be closed. Otherwise youth will be forgotten. Even a beautiful skin needs special care at this change of the seasons."

Use first skin in town should be a visit to one of Helena Rubinstein's Salons. Here for a luxury diagnosis and treatment, the most quickly restful known. But about the new Autumn make-up — the talk of all smart Paris.

For cannot visit the Salons try the home system given here. Beside by the knowledge and the astounding new discoveries of the leading beauty authority!

AUTUMN BEAUTY TREATMENTS
— AT HOME
*Use with HERALD CLEANSING CREAM — usually different. A pore-deep cleanser & removes the tanned, irritating away.
*Then of youth in every skin. 1.50 to 7.50.
*Use with SKIN-CLEANSING CREAM (Beauty Skin-soot) — specially handles cultured skin-tanned. Specially cleans (tanned) and skin. Reveals the fine, delicate radiance. For use alone. 1.50, 2.50.

If the skin is also lined and parched, alternate SKIN-CLEANSING CREAM with the richly nourishing YOUTH-FIXING TONIC CREAM. It banishes crows'-feet, lines, wrinkles and restores the luscious smoothness of youth. A beauty necessity to dry skins. 2.00, 3.50.
Finish with SKIN TONIC LOTION — soothing, refreshing. 1.25, 2.50, 5.00 for a large jar.
*Use with SKIN-CLEANSING LOTION (Gentle). Marvellous for tired, lined eyes. 1.25, 2.50.
*Alternative treatment for every night. Two or three times a week, wash with BEAUTY CREAM to brighten and soften the skin. Correct blackheads, remove tan. 1.00. Follow with PASTELIZED BLEACHING CREAM. Bleaches in 48 hours. 1.00 (size 73).

SALON YOUTH-FIXING TREATMENTS
now prepared for home use
YOUTH-FIXING HERALD MASQUE — magical! — Tans for a few moments to spread on the face, a few minutes to dry and only half an hour to set. Leaves the skin fine, smooth, radiant, and the complexion glowing. A new face! Available in a quick apartment for every pore and age. Economical, 500—700, 5.00 (jar) — could last 10 and 25 treatments.
HERALD BEAUTY MASQUE — will make cosmetic, luscious Unique biological preparation, containing the vital youth-giving, tissue-rebuilding hormones. Delicately pink, silky in texture, an aesthetic pleasure to use. Its effects are almost miraculous. Beautifies skin and wrinkles. Revitalizes drooping contour. Used twice a week, it brings a moist tone, radiates new youth to faded and ageing faces. 7.50. (Thirty treatments.)

AUTUMN BEAUTY ACCENTS

WHITE LILY FOUNDATION — this exquisite semi-liquid cream is based on the purest essence of White Lily buds. Keeps make-up smooth and fresh for hours. A glamorous touch, becoming to all types. Conceals face blemes. 2.00, 3.50.
HELENA RUBINSTEIN POWDER — Alabaster. Glorious tones. Tinted for Normal, Olive, Dry Skin. 1.00, 1.50, 3.00 to 7.50.
HELENA RUBINSTEIN BLEND — "Beauty's" delicate Alabaster. Red Raspberry, Red Poppy, Red Coral, Red Geranium and "Eve-ning" for the ocular look. 1.00 to 5.00.
HELENA RUBINSTEIN LIPSTICK. Contains a secret ingredient which removes the surface and layers of spath in the lips! To match Rouge. Indelible. 1.00, 1.75, 1.75, 1.00.
PINKISH MASCARA — New! Does not run nor smudge. Tissue shades. 1.00, 1.50. EYELASH GROWTH AND DARKENER. Growth builder, luscious. Cosmopolitan tinted make-up. 1.00.
Beauty for the Bath — ENCHANTED BATH ESSENCE — exhilarating. Heavenly fragrance. 3.50. — ENCHANTED BATH POWDER to LUXE — Bath foam. Heavy foam. 2.50. — WHITE LILY DISCREET Talc. 1.00.
Helena Rubinstein Beauty Preparations and Facinating Parisian Make-up available at her Salons and all smart stores.

heleena rubinstein
1 East 57th Street, New York

PARIS
LONDON
MONTREAL
TORONTO

Figure 44: Helena Rubinstein ad, *Vogue*, 1928

led to the selling of summer products on the promise of 'healthy tanning'. In 1927, the German company Beiersdorf advertised its Nivea cream using photos of tall, slim white women with bobbed hair and in bathing suits. One ad encouraged consumers to cream themselves before sunbathing in order to become *braungebrannt* (deeply tanned) without getting sunburnt (Figure 45).⁴⁸ Meanwhile, Nivea's winter season ads retooled the message to suggest that the cream protected against wind and rain.

By 1933, when the Nazis came to power, most of the women featured in Nivea tanning ads were blonde, perhaps in line with the ideal of athletic blondeness featured in much Nazi propaganda. Nivea's advertising campaigns were explicitly condoned by the Nazi regime, but Nivea's focus on what one might call a blonde 'Aryan' ideal was also a response to antisemitic campaigns levelled against the Beiersdorf company, which had Jews among its founders and board members. In Nivea ads, tanned skin is part of a normative healthy white female body, which, despite its darkened surface, is depicted as robustly white (Figure 46). German advertisers had changed many of their aesthetic strategies by the first half of the 1930s. Gone in particular were Wiertz's stylised art deco drawings, replaced by photographs of tall white Germans with wavy bobs whose whiteness is explicitly depicted. While blondes became more prevalent in cosmetics ads of the Nazi era, depictions of a range of

Herzlich ist's,
den Körper von der Sonne bestrahlen zu lassen, aber Vorsicht ist dabei geboten. Reiben Sie Ihre Haut, **bevor** Sie sie den Sonnenstrahlen aussetzen, gut mit der eucerithaltigen **NIVEA - CREME** ein; sie beugt dem schmerzhaften, ja gefährlichen Sonnenbrand vor und gibt Ihnen überdies eine **wundervoll bronzene Hauttönung**.
Aber vorher einreiben!

Dosen 20, 30, 60 u. 120 Pf.
Tuben 55 u. 90 Pf.
Glasdosen M 1.20 u. 2.75

NIVEA-CREME

Figure 45: Nivea Creme ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1927. Courtesy of Beiersdorf Inc.



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Mit Nivea in Luft und Sonne

FÜR HAUS UND SPORT
NIVEA CREME
ZUR HAUTPFLEGE

Sie bräunen besser und Ihr Aussehen wird sportlich
Ihre Haut wird geschmeidig und trocknet nicht aus
Sie schützen die Haut und wehren dem Sonnenbrand

So ist's richtig: gut abtrocknen, mit Nivea-Creme oder Nivea-Öl gründlich einreiben und dann in die Sonne. Sie wehren so dem Sonnenbrand und bekommen – weil Nivea durch ihren Gehalt an Euzerit tief in die Haut eindringt – eine nachhaltige, natürlich-schöne Hautbräunung, Ihre Erholung wird dadurch auch für andere so recht erfreulich sichtbar.

Crema: Dosen 15 Pf. bis RM 1.–, Tuben 40 und 60 Pfg. / Öl: 35 Pf. bis RM 1.20

NIVEA HÄRSL

Figure 46: Nivea Creme ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1936. Courtesy of Berersdorf Inc.

white looks continued, including ads featuring visibly made-up brunette Modern Girls (Figure 47). Nazi acceptance of such images reveals that certain features of the Modern Girl, such as her tanned athletic body, were acceptable and even desirable. These could be mobilised by a racist regime, which at times defined itself explicitly in rejection of ‘Girllkultur’.⁴⁹

In contrast to Nivea’s strategy of stressing the tanned Modern Girl’s physicality and ‘Aryan’ features, numerous ads in the United States in the 1930s (notably after formal enactment of anti-immigration measures) exoticised the Modern Girl’s body as ‘not-quite-white’. As



W 7124

Warum SOLLTEN SIE
WENIGER schön SEIN ...?

Ist Ihre Haut so schön wie sie sein könnte? – Oder wünschen Sie sich Ihren Teint zarter und leuchtender – Ihrer Haut mehr Spannkraft und Frische? – Sie können es in wenigen Wochen erreichen durch die einfachste Behandlung der Welt. Unzählige Frauen haben die verblüffende Wirkung einer Kaloderma-Kur von wenigen Wochen aus eigener Erfahrung erlebt. Kaloderma-Seife ist auf physiologischer Basis zusammengestellt. Ihr sahniger, milder Schaum erwirkt eine gründliche und tiefgehende Reinigung der Poren, belebt die Hautatmung und führt dem

Hautgewebe die einzigartigen Kaloderma-Bestandteile zu, die den Teint zart, rein und durchsichtig machen und der Haut Transparenz und Frische geben.

Machen Sie einmal folgenden Versuch: Waschen Sie morgens und abends Ihre Haut gründlich mit Kaloderma-Seife und warmem Wasser und spülen Sie mehrmals abwechselnd warm und kalt nach. Augenblicklich werden Sie die erfrischende Wirkung dieser einfachen Behandlung spüren. Setzen Sie sie konsequent mehrere Wochen lang fort und beachten Sie die auffallende Verschönerung, die mit Ihrer Haut und Ihrem Teint vor sich geht.

KALODERMA
DIE Seife NACH DER IHRE HAUT VERLANGT
Stück RM —.53

F · WOLFF & SOHN · KARLSRUHE

Figure 47: Kaloderma ad, *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung*, 1935.

film scholar Sarah Berry has documented, in this period Hollywood joined forces with cosmetics companies such as Max Factor to promote actively Modern Girl exoticism for the first time. Ethnicised Hollywood styles commodified dark 'exotic' skin tones and tanned skin as 'Other' and desirable, a possibility that was precluded from the German Nivea campaign. Make-ups that gave the effect of tanning, or simply of dark luxurious beauty, came to be marketed alongside lotions that claimed to enable darkening and tanning. Actresses starring in early Technicolor films were especially selected for their 'exotic' skin tones, or were transformed by the studios from blondes into 'exotics', a make-up effect that could be marketed to viewers as a commodity that, like the clothing styles worn by actresses, could be purchased and tried on for size. According to Berry, stars such as Steffi Dunn, Dolores Del Rio, Tala Birell and Anna May Wong were deemed to have the right type of 'colourful beauty' and thus were natural 'Technicolor types'. Similarly, actresses such as Hedy Lamarr, Rita Hayworth, Joan Bennett and Dorothy Lamour could be transformed into dark divas to fit the bill.⁵⁰ After all, the studios reasoned, such dark beauties allowed them to show off the advantages of the technology, just as the technology made the most of their 'exotic' looks.

Given the eventual celebration of 'exotic' darkness, it is not particularly surprising that the fashion for tanning also affected the marketing of skin bleaches to people of colour. During the 1920s, 'removing a tan' became a euphemism for bleaching in cosmetics ads run in the African American press. A Madam C. J. Walker Company ad run in 1928, nine years after the death of the company's founder, partially eschews the race pride message of other C. J. Walker ads of the period by promoting the suggestively named lightening product Tan-Off. In this ad, an athletic Modern Girl in a natural setting prevents her skin from becoming darkened by protecting it from the sun while she plays sports (Figure 48).⁵¹ Similarly, an ad from 1929 for a product named Fan Tan evokes both tanning and exoticism through discussion of lightening of phenotypically dark skin. Fan Tan, the ad explains, comes in three different shades: "Sun Tan" is for very dark complexions and lightens them to a fashionable Sun-Brown"; "Ochre" is for medium complexions ... [and gives them] that flattering Spanish tone"; and "Naturelle" is for the girl or man who wishes a creamy ivory skin' (Figure 49). The names and descriptions of the first two shades suggest how Fan Tan sought to situate black women's desire for lighter skin *outside* the boundaries of the stark black/white binary held in place by Jim Crow racial formation by aligning the Modern Girl's consumer desire with a trendy appreciation for tanned skin that was placed within an international rather than a national racial formation. The euphemistic evocation of tanning is also

found in an ad for a skin bleach called Whitex that appeared in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* in 1947 and featured head shots of a white-looking Modern Girl. As the ad copy proclaimed, this bleach could turn 'Ugly, Sun-Tanned Skin ... Whiter in 3 minutes'. This ad targeted Indian elites by attributing dark skin to sun exposure and casting it as a temporary condition that could be quickly remedied (Figure 50). Together these bleach and anti-tanning ads showcase yet another strategy used by cosmetics manufacturers and advertisers, who deployed the Modern Girl in promoting their racialised marketing appeals.

Conclusion

Our research group has sought to elaborate the Modern Girl as a heuristic category for investigating globalisation and gendered modernity. Our research on cosmetics ads and the contexts in which they appeared shows conclusively that the Modern Girl image became visible in each of our research locales, if to varying degrees and in different forms. There is no longer any doubt that the Modern Girl phenomenon was global in scope. The Modern Girl's distinctive bobbed hair, her self-reflexivity, her presumed acquisitiveness and the commodification of her skin, brows, athleticism, body shape and allure – in short the Modern Girl's technologies of self – are recognisably related across contexts, whether the cosmetics and toiletries ads are targeted at consumers in Durban or Shanghai, New York or New Delhi, Beijing or Berlin.

Our analysis further suggests that in all our locales, Modern Girl images were implicated in the production of national racial formation. In other words, various national racial formations were produced and racialisation processes practised through the circulation of the Modern Girl images. Our analysis of ads suggests the multiple ways in which ideas about skin colour and race are mobilised and transformed as they are swept up in imperial and transnational flows. While some companies like Pepsodent promoted a global image of the Modern Girl as a white American, others such as De Kama advertising in the US press, or Apex in the South African press, promoted an image of Modern Girl with caricatured 'Asian' eyes or brown skin. Still other companies, most notably Pond's, featured drawings and photos of Modern Girl models who shared the phenotypic features of the consumers being targeted. In each locale, these varied Modern Girl images were no doubt apprehended through long-standing colour-coded hierarchies and racial formations. At the same time, Modern Girl images also contributed to the reworking of such hierarchies and formations. By the mid-twentieth century in all our locales, discussion of desirable skin colour and tone

had become entangled with racialised appeals to 'nature', science, tanning and whiteness. These appeals in turn intersected with promises of class mobility that advertisers frequently used to sell products.

Companies based in the United States clearly played an important role in globalising these appeals. As we have indicated, a large proportion of the Modern Girl ads that we collected are for US-based transnational corporate manufacturers. American advertisers operated with much larger advertising budgets than any of their competitors and particularly during the 1920s and 1930s, US-based corporations like Artra, Odo-ro-no, Pompeian and Palmolive were aggressively transnationalising by rooting their appeal in a perception that 'American' modernity was rational, scientific, efficient and thus desirable everywhere. The preponderance of ads for US-based manufacturers also reflects the fact that US capital benefited from linguistic affinities and cultural continuities in the vast imperial markets constructed through centuries of British conquest. The ads for Pompeian face powders that appeared in the Indian and South African press, for instance, suggest how British and American whiteness could easily be blended and conflated, producing an Anglo-American imperial whiteness. Other ads indicate how Americanisation could take the form of African-Americanisation with black Americans appearing as the model consumers and, at times, the corporate promoters of skin-lightening products. The particular and often contradictory manner in which Americanness was engaged in disparate contexts remains a subject of further investigation for our group.

We understand the Modern Girl's near simultaneous appearance around the globe in terms of historical processes of multi-directional citation. In cosmetics and toiletries ads we have found that some of the most intriguing evidence of mutual influences and non-linear circuits of exchange is aesthetic. In artistic renderings of the Modern Girl that appeared in the US and German press (and to a lesser degree in the early Indian and South African press), we have cautiously noted an Asianised aesthetic. While we recognise that what we have labelled 'Asianisation' was a product of European and American designers' conception of the 'Other', we have noted that Chinese, Japanese and 'primitive' aesthetics and figurations influence the representation of the Modern Girl. Conversely, we have found that drawings of the Modern Girl by Chinese illustrators are indebted to French, German, Japanese and American artistic styles that arrived in advertising and graphic design magazines. In other words, everywhere the Modern Girl shared a proclivity to incorporate aesthetic elements drawn from *multiple* colonial and national contexts.

Preliminary research in other sources including press commentary, social science research, fiction, film, photography and autobiography suggests that what we are calling the Modern Girl's multi-directional citation extended far beyond the realm of advertising aesthetics and design. It also involved other discourses, texts and venues and, as importantly, historical agents living in different parts of the world. Indeed, our research shows that actual Modern Girls travelled over, around and through colonial and national boundaries. They engaged the latest trends from abroad as they encountered them in magazines, newspapers and films, and they journeyed or even sometimes worked outside their home colonies and countries. Importantly, with additional research we should be able to clarify how the Modern Girl's political significance differed in various locales and over time. Although the Modern Girl's provocative fashions and explicit eroticism across the globe appear to have animated similar social anxieties about unruly and frivolous behaviour, the political import of these anxieties varied from location to location. Future research must necessarily pay close attention to the Modern Girl's class position and politics, and her capacity to challenge pre-existing ideologies of female subservience and self-sacrifice. Focus on Modern Girls as sexual agents selecting their own sexual partners (male and female) and their desire to delay or avoid marriage will enable future examination of how Modern Girls established, transgressed or reworked modern regimes of heteronormativity.

Thus far, our research has led us to one conclusion above all others: the Modern Girl, like no other figure of the twentieth century, embodies the complexity of international power relations in a new world order.

Notes

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1. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (eds), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (eds), *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).
2. Paul Bairoch, 'Globalization Myths and Realities: One Century of External Trade and Foreign Investment', in Robert Boyer and Daniel Drache (eds), *States Against Markets: The Limits of Globalization* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 173–92; David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Frederick Cooper, 'What is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historian's Perspective', *African Affairs* 100 (2001), pp. 189–213.
3. For Japan, see Miriam Silverberg, 'The Modern Girl as Militant', in Gail Bernstein (ed.), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 239–66, and Miriam Silverberg, 'The Cafe Waitress Serving Modern Japan', in Stephen Vlastos (ed.), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 208–25. Silverberg's path-breaking essays on the *moga* in Japan, which analyse the ambiguity of *moga* in debates of the 1920s and 1930s, have inspired the work of our group. See also Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). For the United States, see Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998); Linda Mizejewski, *Ziegfeld Girl: Image and Icon in Culture and Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Angela J. Latham, *Posing a Threat: Flappers, Chorus Girls, and Other Brazen Performers of the American 1920s* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000). For China, see Shu-mei Shih, 'Gender, Race and Semicolonialism: Liu Na'Ou's Urban Shanghai Landscape', *Journal of Asian Studies* 55 (1996), pp. 934–56. For Africa, see Ilsa M. Glazier Schuster, *New Women of Lusaka* (Palo Alto: Mayfield, 1979). For India, see Reena Mohan, *Of Wayward Girls and Wicked Women: Women in Indian Silent Feature Films* (Mumbai: Majlis, 1996). For Europe, see Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization Without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917–1927* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Atina Grossmann, 'Girlkultur, or thoroughly Rationalized Female?' in Judith Friedlander (ed.), *Women in Culture and Politics: A Century of Change* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 62–80; Katharina von Ankum (ed.), *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
4. Richard Wilk, 'The Local and the Global in the Political Economy of Beauty: From Miss Belize to Miss World', *Review of International Political Economy* 2 (1995), pp. 117–34, here p. 124.
5. The analysis of globalisation that our collaboration proposes is only possible by combining the regional and linguistic expertise of a coordinated group of scholars. No one person

- could handle the multiple languages and specific historical contexts that such research demands. To pay more than lip service to the diversity of contexts and cultures at play, studies of globalisation, like ours, must involve regional and disciplinary specialists who agree to bring their knowledge to bear on a single problem or a shared set of questions. Members of our group work in Chinese, German, English, French, Hindi and Swahili.
6. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, tr. Talcott Parsons (1904–5; repr. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1976); Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, tr. John Cummings (1947; repr. New York: Herder & Herder, 1972); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, tr. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (1962; repr. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction*, tr. Robert Hurley (1978; repr. New York: Vintage Books, 1980); Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982); Bruno Latour, *We Have never Been Modern*, tr. Catherine Porter (1991; repr. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
 7. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Donald Donham, *Marxist Modern: An Ethnographic History of the Ethiopian Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999).
 8. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*; Detlev J. K. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity*, tr. Richard Deveson (New York: Hill & Wang, 1992); Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
 9. Jean and John Comaroff (eds), *Modernity and Its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Brian Larkin, 'Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers: Media and the Creation of Parallel Modernities', *Africa* 67 (1997), pp. 406–40; Dilip Goankar, 'On Alternative Modernities', *Public Culture* 11 (1999), pp. 1–18; Lisa Rofel, *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China after Socialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). For other approaches to plural modernities, see Bruce M. Knauft (ed.), *Critically Modern: Alternatives, Alterities, Anthropologies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).
 10. Tani Barlow (ed.), *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Tani Barlow, 'Eugenic Woman, Semi-Colonialism and Colonial Modernity as Problems for Postcolonial Theory', in Ania Loomba, Suvir Kaul, Matti Bunzl, Antoinette Burton and Jed Esty (eds), *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Antoinette Burton (ed.), *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities* (London: Routledge, 1999); James Hevia, *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Lin Chun, *The Transformation of Chinese Socialism: A Critical Commentary* (unpublished book manuscript); Andrew Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).
 11. James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meaning of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), p. 14.
 12. Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Rofel, *Other Modernities*; Holly Wardlow, "'Hands-Up"-ing Buses and Harvesting Cheese-Pops: Gendered Mediation of Modern Disjuncture in Melanesia', in Knauft (ed.), *Critically Modern*, pp. 144–72.
 13. Our larger project, an edited volume, juxtaposes an array of Modern Girl-inspired studies in different locales, and is thus part of an ongoing project that works to displace the privileging of a singular European modernity.

14. Isaac Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy and Native Opinion: A Note on Social Change', *Africa* 6 (1933), pp. 59–89, p. 87.
15. Questions about our use of 'girl' have emerged every time we have presented this paper (someone even struck out 'girl' and wrote 'woman' on all the posters announcing our presentation at the University of Washington campus). The troublesome-ness of the term 'girl' is one reason we like it. 'Girl' signifies the contested status of women who lie outside childhood and outside contemporary social codes and conventions relating to marriage, sexuality and motherhood and is a preferable theoretical alternative to the over-determined category 'woman'.
16. Michel Foucault, 'Technologies of the Self', in Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick Hutton (eds), *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), pp. 16–49, p. 18. Foucault defined 'technologies of the self' as those 'which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality'.
17. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, and Davarian Baldwin, 'Chicago's New Negroes: Race, Class, and Respectability in the Midwestern Black Metropolis 1915–1935', unpublished PhD thesis (New York University, 2002), show in their ground-breaking work that black beauty products were also sometimes marketed to white ethnics, especially in the Jewish press. For the purposes of this article we have focused on the white and black press only.
18. The *Arbeiter Illustrirte Zeitung*, which was directed at Communist workers and was no longer published in Germany after the Nazi rise to power in 1933, featured the Modern Girl, or *neue Frau*, in articles and photographs, but contained hardly any cosmetics ads. On *neue Frauen* among workers, see Eric Weitz, *Creating German Communism, 1890–1990: From Popular Protests to Socialist State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), ch. 6; Patrice Petro, *Joyless Streets: Women and Melodramatic Representation in Weimar Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).
19. Compared to elite magazines such as *Young Companion*, lower-class tabloids such as *Luobinhan* (Robin Hood) and *Fuermosi* (Sherlock Holmes) rarely contained cosmetics ads, so we do not consider them in this article.
20. Since the mid-nineteenth century, 'coloured' has been a common racial designation used to refer to the descendants of mixed marriages and sexual liaisons between Europeans, African peoples indigenous to the Cape region, and enslaved peoples brought from Southeast Asia, South Africa, Madagascar, West Africa, East Africa and elsewhere during the Dutch colonial period. After 1948, South Africa's apartheid regime deployed 'coloured' along with white/European, Bantu/African and Asian as one of its four racial categories. Beginning in the 1970s, Black Consciousness and some other progressive political activists rejected these categories, arguing that all non-whites should identify as black.
21. We have drawn on the pan-Indian English-language press mentioned, primarily because of the difficulty in accessing the vernacular Indian popular presses from afar. However, we know from preliminary perusal and discussions with feminist scholars who are familiar with the archives of popular magazines and newspapers in Marathi, Hindi and Telugu that the history of commodity advertising in each of those locales varies and is complex in its deployment of 'modern' and 'traditional' women's imagery.
22. On the role of advertising in the expansion of US business abroad, see Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*; James P. Woodward, 'Marketing Modernity: The J. Walter Thompson Company and North American Advertising in Brazil, 1919–1939', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 82 (2002), pp. 257–90.
23. German Pond's ad, Microfilm Collection, Reel 41, J. Walter Thompson Collection, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University.
24. See especially Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*; Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of

- California Press, 1985); Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), pp. 99–100.
25. On the United States, see Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, especially pp. 140–63; for Germany, see Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), especially pp. 81–91.
 26. Our caution stems from objections to the term ‘Asianisation’ that we encountered at an international workshop on ‘The Modern Girl, Asia, and Beyond,’ Ochanumizuo University, Tokyo, September 2004. We recognise that the politics of assimilation under Japanese imperialism also took place under the rubric of ‘Asia’ and the project of ‘Asianising’ bodies in Japanese colonies. On the possibilities and problems of visual identification of and with ‘Asianness’, see also Valerie Steele and John S. Major, *China Chic: East Meets West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Patricia Laurence, *Lily Briscoe’s Chinese Eyes: Bloomsbury, Modernism, and China* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003).
 27. See Linda Gertner Zetlin, *Beardsley, Japonisme and the Perversion of the Victorian Ideal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
 28. See works cited in note 3 as well as Susan A. Glenn, *Female Spectacle: The Theatrical Roots of Modern Feminism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Petro, *Joyless Streets*; Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Shelley Stamp, *Movie-Struck Girls: Women and Motion Picture Culture after the Nickelodeon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
 29. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, pp. 39–43; Sarah Berry, ‘Hollywood Exoticism: Cosmetics and Color in the 1930s’, in David Dresser (ed.), *Hollywood Goes Shopping* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 108–38, here p. 109.
 30. For toiletries ads in the United Kingdom, see Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 119–67; Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995); for Germany, see David M. Ciarlo, ‘Rasse konsumieren: Von der exotischen zur kolonialen Imagination in der Bildreklame des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs’, in Birthe Kundrus (ed.), *Phantasierieche: Zur Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Kolonialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2003), pp. 135–79. For the German example of *Lilienmilchseife*, see Manfred O. Hinz, Helgard Patemann and Arnim Meier (eds), *Weiss auf Schwarz: 100 Jahre Einmischung in Afrika: Deutscher Kolonialismus und afrikanischer Widerstand* (Berlin: Elefant Press, 1984), p. 57.
 31. David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture and European Expansion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 143.
 32. For example, see Cao Xueqin and Gao E, *Honglou meng* (Dream of the Red Chamber) (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1998), p. 38; *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry*, tr. Arthur Waley (New York: Grove Press, 1996), pp. 21, 48.
 33. Sumit Guha, ‘Skin color preferences in South Asia’, E-post, 22 March 2002, available at <<http://www.h-net.org/~asia/>>, accessed 25 February 2005.
 34. Susan Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 104.
 35. Guha, ‘Skin color preferences in South Asia’.
 36. The meaning of ‘tropical’, for example, shifted from a preoccupation with climatic factors to those that were man-made. In the process, physiological explanations of racial difference could be addressed scientifically and through the civilising mission of British imperialism. Mark Harrison, *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
 37. In contemporary times, the attention to skin colour borders on the obsessive. Indian matrimonial ads inevitably specify the desire for ‘fair’ brides and the market for skin lighteners has expanded at a rate of more than 20 per cent a year since the late 1990s.

38. Please note that in China, skin colour was not the primary or single focus of racial discourse and nationalisation. This could provide an explanation for the lack of emphasis on whitening by bleaching in Chinese advertisements compared to what we have seen in other parts of the world.
39. Jean Comaroff, 'Medicine, Colonialism, and the Black Body', in John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff (eds), *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 215–33; Timothy Burke, *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women: Commodification, Consumption, and Cleanliness in Modern Zimbabwe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), esp. chs 1–2.
40. Isaac Schapera, *Married Life in an African Tribe* (New York: Sheridan House, 1941), p. 46; Monica Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest: Effects of Contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 222.
41. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, pp. 39–43, 92; Apex ad, *Bantu World*, 7 July 1934.
42. Timothy Burke, *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women*, pp. 158–9.
43. On the long and varied history of African-Americans serving as potential role models and mentors for black South Africans, see, Tim Couzens, "'Moralizing Leisure Time": The Transatlantic Connection and Black Johannesburg (1918–1936)', in *The New African: A Study of the Life and Work of H I E Dhomo* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), pp. 82–124; Veit Erlmann, "'A Feeling of Prejudice": Orpheus M. McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa, 1890–1898', in *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 21–53; James Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Amanda Denise Kemp, "'Up from Slavery" and Other Narratives: Black South African Performances of the American Negro (1920–1943)', unpublished PhD thesis (Northwestern University, 1997).
44. Although Madam C. J. Walker herself refused to manufacture skin bleach, following her death in 1919 the Walker Company began to market a lightening product called 'Tan-Off', as we discuss shortly. On Madam C. J. Walker, see Gwendolyn Robinson, 'Class, Race, and Gender: a Transcultural Theoretical and Sociohistorical Analysis of Cosmetic Institutions and Practices to 1920', unpublished PhD thesis (University of Illinois, Chicago, 1984); Noliwe M. Rooks, *Hair Raising: Beauty, Culture, and African American Women* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), esp. ch. 3; Perry Bundles, *On Her Own Ground: The Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker* (New York: Scribner, 2001); Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, pp. 108–14, 203–37; Baldwin, 'Chicago's New Negroes', unpublished manuscript.
45. Matthew Frye Jacobsen, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).
46. Pompeian Beauty Powder ad, *Cape Times*, 4 November 1925.
47. Quote from Donald S. Cowling, 'Will the Vogue for Tan Last?', *Printers' Ink Monthly*, August 1929, p. 31. Also see Marie Du Bois, 'What is Sun-Tan Doing to Cosmetics?', *Advertising and Selling*, 12 January 1929, pp. 19–20, 62, 64; Marie Du Bois, 'The Sun-Tan Mode Arrives: What it is Doing to a Score of Industries', *Advertising and Selling*, 1 May 1929, pp. 28, 76, 78, 80; Berry, 'Hollywood Exoticism', p. 117.
48. *Leipziger Illustrirte*, 5 May 1927, p. 644; 23 June 1927, p. 920.
49. On Nivea and the Nazis, see Ulrike Thoms, 'Dünn und dick, schön und häßlich: Schönheitsideale und Körpersilhouette in der Werbung 1850–1950', in Peter Borscheid and Clemens Wischermann (eds), *Bilderwelt des Alltags: Werbung in der Konsumgesellschaft des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1995), pp. 242–81, here pp. 260–62; Rainer Gries, *Produkte als Medien: Kulturgeschichte der Produktkommunikation in der Bundesrepublik und der DDR* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2003), pp. 467–86. More generally on contradictory Nazi attitudes, see Dagmar Reese, 'Straff, aber nicht stramm – herb, aber nicht derb': *Zur Vergesellschaftung von Mädchen durch den Bund Deutscher Mädel im soziokulturellen Vergleich zweier Milieus* (Weinheim and Basel:

- Beltz, 1989); Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Berg, 2003); Dagmar Herzog, 'Hubris and Hypocrisy, Incitement and Disavowal: Sexuality and German Fascism', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11 (2002), p. 3–21, here p. 12.
50. Berry, 'Hollywood Exoticism', pp. 119–26.
51. During the 1920s and 1930s, Tan-Off was, in some markets, the Walker Company's best-seller. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, p. 113.