Gender Roles the Changing Japanese Mind

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Topic Questions

- How does the Japanese Mind view gender?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
- How is this perception changing?
  - Discussion about gender and sexuality
  - Presence in Media
- What does this reflect about the Japanese Mind?
  - 和(Wa), 本音/建て前(Honne/Tatemae), Social-Norm, and 曖昧(Aimai)
  - Seen in education, entertainment, language, and business setting

Outline

- Women in magazines
  - Analyzing how women are portrayed in Magazines compared to men
  - Comparing to International trends
  - My analysis on Japanese Mind
- Sexism in Japanese Language
  - Analyzing how women are portrayed in Language
  - My analysis on Japanese Mind and changing attitudes
- Images of Male Femininity and Culture
  - Analyzing how men pursue and accept femininity through Okama culture
  - Femininity in men seen as bad by society, but adopted by women
  - My analysis on Japanese Mind
- Japanese Mind

Study One - Women images in magazines

American Portrayal of women shown to have "detrimental effects on women's self-concepts, achievement aspirations, and self-images" (Ford. Et al. 1998)

How do traditional beliefs like 男尊女卑, danson johi, relate to the portrayal of women?

82% shown women as belittled or kept in place socially. 14.8% were shown to have women equal to man and in non-traditional roles.

Japan is actually diverging from the way in which women are shown by america.

Study Two - Sexism of women in language

"It is dreadful that once married, women are reduced to the weakest status of yome(54-year-old office worker)" (Takemaru 2005).

Old Concept of 男尊女卑 (danson johi) men superior and women inferior

Can be seen in traditional work environments

However these frequencies are changing

Younger Generations see these less frequently

As well as those in higher education

The use of alternative phrases becoming common

嫁 (yome) = Wife
奥さん (okusan)
Mrs. Interior
糟糠の妻
(soukou no tsuma)
Wife who marries poor
女の癖に
(onna no kuse ni)
Although she's women
御局 (otsubone)
Older female worker

Study Three - Images of male femininity and culture

Okama culture and homosexual portrayal in Media
Freedom of masculinity

Study Three - Images of male femininity and culture

One account ""performing in a degrading manner for the entertainment of the straight partons" (McLelland 2005)

It is okay to be gay on television but not outside of entertainment

Preference to not think about sexual relations of a gay identity

Feminine traits attributed to gay men, and not despised but can accepted in culture by women.

Interview with Gay men from Japan "'In Japan, I was blinded as a gay person. I did not know who to turn to or talk to. I eventually decided to keep quiet about my sexuality." (McLelland 2005).

How these Relate to Japanese Mind?

Conservation of culture and traditional ideologies

和(Wa) - Internalization and cooperation

本音/建て前(Honne/Tatemae) - Acceptance through entertainment, while still maintaining individual preferences

Social-Norm - Maintaining social normativity and social hierarchy, taught in education/work environments

曖昧(Aimai) - Vagueness in order to prevent conflict

Globalization - Growing awareness and understanding

Changing Japanese Mind

Straying out of Vertical structure can be difficult and not publicized

Traditional Japanese Mind still prevalent

Growing steps for women and men in business settings that I discuss

Changing international concepts of gender

While some concepts cause issues for women and masculinity, they are becoming more progressive

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