

The Fervor for “Ski-Slope” Noses: An Exploration Into the Surgical Reinforcement of Colonial Beauty

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we inspect cosmetic surgery advertising based in three cities regarded at the forefront of plastic surgery: Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery in Beverly Hills, JK Plastic Surgery Center in Seoul, and Estetik International in Istanbul. We engage with postcolonial theories such as Homi K Bhabha’s concept of mimicry and W.E.B Du Bois’s theory of double consciousness to examine the way in which traditional beauty standards are reinforced in these ads through the consistent usage of Caucasian models and the popularity of particular procedures despite the geographic distance and cultural divisions between locations. Moreover, we analyze the global exchange of distinct ethnic features, investigating its coexisting and evolving relationship with the mainstream beauty standard’s idealization of the European appearance. We challenge the conventional perception that Eurocentric ideals singularly occupy contemporary beauty standards, arguing the emergence of a more complex standard through the decomposition of homogeneous colonial beauty and the growing admiration for explicitly regional characteristics.

Introduction

The most attractive nose has a straight-sloped bridge with a slight, delicate upturn at the front and a petite button-like tip that should be paired with a tight intersection at the bridge.

With the rise of social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, the creation of a perfect nose titled the “ski-slope” has been identified as the most attractive and sought after by populations across a series of ethnicities, races, and gender identities.¹ Through innovations and the popularization of cosmetic procedures, achieving this and other desired features has become feasible through simply having the right financial means. However, this nose, with its reflection of a primarily European facial structure, is a symbol of a series of ideologies dating farther back than the first performance of a modern rhinoplasty in 1887.² Cosmetic procedures serve as a catalyst for the creation and continuation of binary distinctions and prejudices among different races and ethnic features as the ideal beauty standard genetically favors specific populations, namely those with white appearances. With the formidable volume of advertising that promotes aesthetic surgical procedures resulting in a more “white” appearance, we examine the extent to which these practices reflect a continuation of racist

¹ Abbir Dib, “TikTok’s ‘Ski Slope Nose’ Trend Makes Me Want a Second Nose Job,” *Refinery29*, February 14, 2022, <https://www.refinery29.com/en-au/tiktok-ski-slope-nose-job-trend-impact>.

The hashtag #nosejobcheck has 2.1 billion views on TikTok, suggesting the wide acceptance of “ski-slope” noses as charming.

² Diane Vrabel, “Ode to the Nose,” *Pittsburgh Quarterly*, 2021 Spring, <https://pittsburghquarterly.com/articles/ode-to-the-nose/>.

ideals derived from the colonial era and question the inclusivity of our society's beauty standards towards people of color (POC).

We begin our study with an investigation into contemporary cosmetic surgery practices across the globe: Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery in Beverly Hills, JK Plastic Surgery Center in Seoul, and Estetik International in Istanbul. Garnering infamous reputations as major destinations for international cosmetic patients, these key practices constitute a vital subject of study as their popularity is evidence of the success of their advertisements and their esteemed positions in the field. Employing a racial framework, we examine their marketing of popular procedures with a focus on implied beauty and attractiveness through the use of specific models and features, revealing deeper ideologies presented to consumers. We analyze these latent ideologies in relation to postcolonial theories, including Homi K Bhabha's concept of mimicry and W.E.B Dubois's theory of double consciousness. These theories, centered around the idea of the colonized attempting to adopt and reflect traits of the colonizers, aid us in understanding the origin of the obsession with white, Eurocentric features and how its presence is perpetuated in the clinics' perceptions of attractiveness. Moreover, we delve into a series of sources ranging from examinations of race and their historical relationship with cosmetic surgery to articles on POC's underrepresentation in the face of hegemonic white beauty standards to provide frameworks to build our arguments and ideas.

These methods allow us to argue unique perspectives on the universal perception of beauty and how its "immutable" nature is entangled with the legacy of colonialism. We deeply explore the underlying nuances of glorifying primarily Caucasian models and features in our case studies' advertising in relation to the growing appreciation for regional features common to their geographic locations. We argue that modern cosmetic surgery advertising largely demonstrates a pervasive legacy of colonial ideologies in normative beauty; however, we further observe the budding idealization of regional traits revealing the development of unique beauty standards distinctive to varying POC populations.

Literature Review

Postcolonial Theories

We shape our exploration of post-colonial theories by delving into three particular sources examining different concepts and lenses: Homi K. Bhabha's theory of mimicry, Anika Keinz and Paweł Lewicki's idea of "embodiment," and W.E.B Du Bois's concept of double consciousness

Homi K. Bhabha defines his theory of mimicry as one where those who do not fit the colonial standard of beauty attempt to mimic those who do, altering their image both behaviorally and physically to distance themselves from being seen as the "other" race that is far different to the ruling class to one that is "other" but more similar to the dominant group. We apply this theory to define the motivations behind undergoing plastic surgery procedures that uphold colonial beauty and the globalized white beauty standard. Additionally, we challenge the lasting impact of this theory as we refute the notion of a solely Eurocentric standard, questioning the global rise of particularly regional beauty and features. Similarly, Anika Keinz and Paweł Lewicki's issue *Who Embodies Europe?* explores the idea of "embodying" Europe and what constitutes a European body. The thematic focus looks to past and modern culture to examine not just the physicality of what would be considered a "European body" but also the cultural norms that govern a civilized European person. Mainly, we draw from this article's exploration of the idea of "embodiment" to analyze how the essence of a European person, and by extension Europe, is a collection of white ideals that stem from the colonial era. This article helps us analyze how motivations of attaining a Eurocentric appearance are rooted in postcolonialism by exploring the origin of the physicality of the beauty standard. This concept will prove useful in helping us refer to the change or move towards a body that more deeply reflects Eurocentric ideals as well as examining a theoretical approach to the nature of European identity.

We further employ Ernest Allen's studies of W.E.B. Du Bois's original theory of double consciousness to provide a contrast to the hegemony of the Eurocentric beauty standard and explore rising regional beauty standards. Allen labels Du Bois's theory as a "double sleight of hand," exploring its impact on the position of African American's double consciousness beginning at the turn of the century. The idea of double consciousness refers to a colonized or marginalized group that continues to develop their own emergent culture in the face of a dominant culture being both explicitly and ideologically implicitly imposed onto them. We apply Du Bois's original theory to our own investigation of our cosmetic surgery practices as we attempt to understand the motivations behind an individual's decision to edit particular features. We also utilize this theory to bridge our understanding of how certain cultural preferences and unique aspects of admiration may still exist, however, in a suppressing shroud of the colonial ideas that have plagued the essence of beauty.

Historical Colonial Beauty

To form our arguments, we study works that explore the aspirational qualities of the European beauty standard that have both defined it historically and served as reason for the adherence of populations in altering themselves to conform to it. The ideas found in these texts help us illustrate the purposeful avoidance and elimination of differing cultural and ethnic traits in the beauty standard.

In Oliver Picton's article *The Complexities of Complexion: A Cultural Geography of Skin Colour and Beauty Products*, he delves into the ideologies behind colorism through a look into the South Asian skin whitening brand *Fair and Lovely*. He explores the connection and continuance of imperialism and neo-imperialism through the advertising and consumption of a product serving to create a more European appearance through skin color. We utilize this argument to understand past work that has created connections between beauty and colonialism. We create the foundation of our arguments based on the prevalent ideas of a white beauty standard evidenced through this article, moving to analyze and challenge the ideas of beauty defined in India in particular.

We further utilize Elizabeth Haiken's *Venus Envy: a History of Cosmetic Surgery*, which analyzes the growing popularity of cosmetic surgery from 1900 to the contemporary period through studying its evolution through the lens of culture. She argues that culture has adopted and marketed the perception of cosmetic surgery as a rapid solution to problems stemming from appearance based insecurities, in its wake generating complicated questions about our society as a whole and its perception of physical appearance. We utilized this text in order to analyze the rise of plastic surgery and its evolution to becoming a widely marketed and accessible commodity for minority groups in particular, specifically focusing on diverse regions such as the United States.

Chiara Pussetti's chapter on the cosmetic construction of "whiteness" in her book *Remaking the Human: Cosmetic Technologies of Body Repair, Reshaping, and Replacement* provides valuable insight into the motivations behind attaining the "ideal European body." Specifically studying beauty standards in Lisbon, Portugal, Pussetti examines how immigrants and Portuguese women of color seek cosmetic surgery in order to socially integrate into white, European culture and climb the social ladder. Similar to our research, Pussetti utilizes postcolonial theories to examine the effects of these procedures on local beauty standards and their means of existence. We utilize Pussetti's research in two ways: to establish a motivation for conforming to the colonial beauty standard and to also challenge the hegemony of the standard by examining the rise of regional beauty standards in lower classes. The duality of Pussetti's research helps guide our own analyses as we use her ideas to strengthen our arguments on both the legacy of colonialism on the beauty standard and the changing nature of it. We pull from Pussetti's frameworks in analyzing cosmetic procedures through postcolonial lenses to help draw conclusions on the implications of advertising operations that highlight Eurocentric features.

Challenging the Standard

We challenge the sources defined in the subsection above through an examination of the emergence of differing

images of beauty stemming from various races and classes, analyzing their extension and assimilation into the mainstream beauty standard. We synthesize our analysis and research from these texts with those aforementioned to argue our final stances.

Kyla Schuller's *Facial Uplift: Plastic Surgery, Cosmetics and the Retailing of Whiteness in the Work of María Cristina Mena* provides an intersectional analysis of race and beauty in Mexican–American author María Cristina Mena's short fiction which covers the use of cosmetics among Mexican women. The US cosmetic industry exports beauty standards rooted in whiteness across its southern border, resulting in competing racialized perceptions of beauty. In order to resist the accompanied racial discrimination, Mexican women resort to cosmetic surgery, correcting their perceived deficiencies and whitening their features. While neocolonial beauty standards can lead to no "racial progress," Schuller also argues that such conformity with whiteness would not trigger "racial degeneration," as Mexican women remain culturally independent despite their acceptance of whiteness. We employ this work in order to unravel the idea of a universal beauty standard that correlates and accepts only European features, discovering a variance of beauty in class.

To further complicate the past definitions of a globally accepted Eurocentric beauty standard, we apply the findings of the paper *Gangnam-Style Plastic Surgery: The Science of Westernized Beauty in South Korea*. Professor So Yeon Leem argues that current beauty standards promoted in the Korean cosmetic industry are not necessarily Western, though the decision to transform one's beauty through cosmetic surgeries is considered a part of Western lifestyle. Leem's three-year case study of the Y clinic (pseudonym) shows Koreans' collective will to be stripped from the Japanese colonial legacy and regain cultural autonomy. We consider this example as one of the crucial evidences of our argument that specific ethnic features are being assimilated into dominant beauty standards. We build off this example to explore deeper ideas about the potential for a rise in idolization in other regional features across races and classes.

Methods

We begin our research by conducting close readings of Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery, JK Plastic Surgery Center, and Estetik International, assessing elements of their websites such as "before and after" pictures, brochures, procedure descriptions, and even the racial identities of the medical professionals themselves to understand the cultural ideologies reflected in their promotional materials. We note similarities and differences among the practices' advertising and work to draw conclusions from them that help us examine the relationship between colonialism and the beauty standard. We do this by analyzing our findings through a modern postcolonial perspective on the beauty standard and use our analysis to build the foundations for our arguments. The theories and frameworks we employ focus on postcolonial lenses and ideas that the modern world is shaped by colonialism and imperialism which has birthed a dominant European culture and narrative. Under our modern postcolonial framework, a subaltern worldview from the perspective of the colonized populations substitutes a Eurocentric one, allowing minorities to speak for themselves.

Specifically, we utilize Homi K. Bhabha's theory of mimicry and Anika Keinz and Paweł Lewicki's idea of "embodiment" to illustrate the choices behind editing certain characteristics to adapt to a society favoring white European features. Furthermore, we apply W.E.B. DuBois's theory of double consciousness as a method to assess the position of traditional and culturally regional aspects of beauty in the face of the overwhelming colonial pressures of conformity specifically in colonized areas such as India. We analyze the implied biases for and against specific regional characteristics that these practices endorse and examine them in relation to Elizabeth Haiken's *Venus Envy: a History of Cosmetic Surgery* in which she notes the features commonly edited amongst races in the United States with the motive to create a European appearance. Finally, we reference Chiara Pussetti's argument in *Remaking the Human* that cosmetic procedures are sought to build "racial capital" to guide our analysis of the implicit forces affecting motivations for aesthetic surgery and the beauty standard

itself. Through examining the hegemonic beauty standard that our three case studies promote, we draw connections through postcolonial theory to examine how the effects of colonialism plague the beauty standard both nationally in ethnically diverse and homogenous countries, as well as through a more global perspective. By specifically analyzing the impact on beauty standards and motivations behind achieving certain features, our frameworks allow us to explore the lasting ideological effects of colonialism and its evolution, potentially allowing for the characteristics of specific regional features to be incorporated.

Finally, we expand our research to think critically about the incorporation of regional characteristics into the beauty standard. First, we contrast our findings about the hegemony of the Eurocentric beauty standard by analyzing the rising idolization of traditionally East Asian features through the “fox eye” procedure and the unique mission of the Y Clinic. These analyses pair with a reexamination of Pussetti’s chapter in *Remaking the Human* to examine how deviant beauty standards do not only arise in varying geographical locations, but also among different social classes. Ultimately, through synthesizing this aspect of our research with the impact of colonial ideals, we argue an emerging beauty standard that recognizes facial features across demographics straying from that of the traditional European.

Findings/Analysis

We begin our analysis of the impact of colonialism on the beauty standard by examining key postcolonial theories, ideas, and concepts and applying them to different global populations.

Postcolonialism and the Beauty Standard

Since the first demonstrations of Western power emerged through widespread colonialism, popular definitions of beauty spread surrounding light hair, light eyes, and light skin. The idea that light color is the “definition of beauty” becomes widespread.³ Alongside these colorist ideologies emerged ideas of what comprises an attractive face, resulting in a beauty standard encompassing European characteristics.

In this paper, we define the beauty standard as a collection of dominant physical features most commonly carried by people in power. A great example of multiple different ethnic groups conforming to a hegemonic beauty standard held by the ruling class can be found in the US and other white-dominated nations with diverse immigrant populations. The country’s unique position as a land of immigrants has allowed us to examine a variety of ethnic groups and races aspiring to conform to the dominant appearance. One way we can explain how this is representative of the legacy of colonialism on the beauty standard is through Homi. K. Bhabha’s theory of mimicry. He explores the idea that the colonized or minority populations attempt to adopt traits of the colonizers by imitating them, attempting to become an “other” race that is only slightly different from the ruling class.⁴ In the US, the people in power were the original settlers, those who descended from European countries, mostly Britain. The esteemed position of European descendants at the peak of the American social pyramid despite the many flows of immigration can be used as a basis to apply Bhabha’s theory to the beauty standard. White elites that constitute the ruling class enforce the normative beauty standard which leads to minorities willingly conforming to it through methods like cosmetic surgery in order to assimilate. The effects of European colonialism in the US and the beauty standard can be seen in Elizabeth Haiken’s *Venus Envy*. Haiken examines the facial changes certain ethnic groups made through cosmetic surgery in order to better fit the colonial, western European esteemed beauty:

³ Oliver Picton, “The Complexities of Complexion: A Cultural Geography of Skin Colour and Beauty Products,” *Geography* 98, no. 2 (2013): 87, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24412204>.

⁴ Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” *October* 28 (1984): 126, <https://doi.org/10.2307/778467>.

Jews, Italians, and others of Mediterranean or eastern European heritage made the “nose job” a household word early in the [twentieth] century. Asians, in the years after World War II, began to pursue larger noses and folded eyelids. Their numbers are still small, but African Americans, too, have begun to alter their features through surgery in greater numbers than before.⁵

By viewing immigrants in America adopting characteristics of a dominant group that themselves are immigrants, we see how minorities try to position themselves to hold a higher place in society through mimicking European characteristics. This representation of mimicry explains one particular way of understanding the effect of postcolonialism on beauty standards as it highlights how colonial beauty impacts the hierarchy of beauty in facial features.

In tandem with evaluating the concept of mimicry, thinking of cosmetic surgery as a form of “embodiment” allows us to understand more deeply how these procedures promote conformity to a beauty standard that upholds colonial legacies on a more global level. Anika Keinz and Paweł Lewicki discuss this idea of embodiment in their issue *Who Embodies Europe?* and how a “European body” cannot be quintessentially defined as a set of characteristics or features. Rather, they examine embodiment as dynamic and multifaceted; to embody “Europe” is not just to possess the physical features of a white European, but it is also to examine the practices, social positioning, and power relations that contextualize the embodiment.⁶ In this way, cosmetic surgery provides insight into how colonial and white legacies heavily dictate embodiment. Since cosmetic surgery frequently results in a more European appearance, the overall idea of the “European body” must be shaped by colonial ideals, at least on a physical level.

Another way in which the dominant influence of typical Eurocentric features on the beauty standard can largely be demonstrated is through Chiara Pussetti’s work with immigrant and Afro-European Portuguese women and their relationship to the beauty standard. Pussetti finds a commonality among Black Portuguese women in that many who engage in methods like cosmetic surgery to attain “white” features aren’t doing so to change their identity or race, but to position themselves to better integrate into society.⁷ She builds on the idea of racial capital, the concept that through attaining “Europeanness” (through cosmetics, fashion, expression), one can be better set to achieve wealth, status, and overall acceptance into a higher class to live a better life.⁸ Regardless of the motives of undergoing these procedures, these processes still implicitly uphold colonial ideals of what a higher class should look like to fit into a certain level of society, exemplifying the idea of “mimicry” and “embodiment.” This is further exacerbated by the fact that many cosmetic companies consumerize these biases, marketing their products and procedures as an “improvement” resulting in a “superior” (white) appearance that transcends what the customer currently looks like. These techniques display how racial hierarchies have historically dictated the beauty standard and implicitly continue to do so today.

Furthermore, we note how historically some cultures have persevered with their own traditions and beauty standards while simultaneously falling prey to the beauty ideals of the colonizers. We apply W.E.B Du Bois’s theory of “double consciousness,” which explains the ability of racial minorities—African Americans in his case—to foster their own beauty standards whilst also succumbing to those of the white-dominated society.⁹

⁵ Elizabeth Haiken, *Venus Envy: a History of Cosmetic Surgery* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 176.

⁶ Anika Keinz and Paweł Lewicki, “Who Embodies Europe?: Explorations into the Construction of European Bodies,” *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 28, no. 1 (2019): 8, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26879474>.

⁷ Chiara Pussetti, “Shaping the European Body: The Cosmetic Construction of Whiteness,” in *Remaking the Human: Cosmetic Technologies of Body Repair, Reshaping, and Replacement*, ed. Alvaro Jarrín and Chiara Pussetti (Berghahn Books, 2021), 1st ed., 2: 104, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2tsxjnn.10>.

⁸ Pussetti, “Shaping,” 2: 103.

⁹ Ernest Allen, “Du Boisian Double Consciousness: The Unsustainable Argument,” *The Massachusetts Review* 43, no. 2 (2002): 218, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25091848>.

We veer away from the national application of this theory in countries with diverse immigrant populations such as the US, Canada, and Australia with a white dominant group, seeing a stronger correlation with Homi K. Bhaba's theory of mimicry in these regions. Instead, we connect his theory of "double consciousness" to countries with dominant ethnic populations that are geographically separated from large white populations. We inspect the country of India, a previous colony of Britain known for its rich cultural aspects such as in fashion, but also their admiration of light skin. The overwhelming amount of advertisements and large consumption of skin-lightening products suggest an inbuilt belief of beauty through the lens of past colonial ideologies that simultaneously exist alongside India's beauty ideals, illustrating a "double consciousness."¹⁰

The frameworks detailed in this section allow us to grasp the effect of postcolonialism on the beauty standard and understand its homogenous legacies. These frameworks can also be applied to provide context as to motivations behind undergoing plastic surgery in order to conform to Eurocentric beauty.

Evaluation of Cosmetic Surgery Practices

We utilize our analysis of postcolonial theories to explore our three case studies' websites and draw initial, general conclusions on the ideologies perpetuated through their advertisements.

Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery (BHPS)

Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery is dedicated to providing luxurious VIP experiences to every patient. Their advertising promotes one of the most holistic and personalized cosmetic experiences in the industry, but still places a heavy emphasis on procedures glorifying Eurocentric appearances. We identify a continuous use of Caucasian models with characteristics reflecting the white ideals of beauty. BHPS's Eurocentric advertisements are worth pondering because of its ownership by Asian American Dr. Gabriel Chiu. Chiu claims to be a descendant of the Song Dynasty emperors, acknowledging his Chinese heritage.¹¹ Meanwhile, Chiu's Eurocentric biases are revealed in his clinic's advertisement of Asian eyelid surgery, in which the double eyelid "common among Caucasian" is set as a beauty standard to encourage Asians who "lack" such a facial feature to take plastic surgeries.¹² Through this, an evident superiority of the white beauty standard is marketed to potential patients, specifically Asian Americans.

Estetik International

With surgeons among the best in their field, Estetik International, headquartered in Istanbul and Bursa, Turkey, is a self-proclaimed leader of the cosmetic industry. Visiting Estetik's website presents a video clip highlighting a series of white features in an almost erotic camera angle. The clinic uses black models, sending a message that it appreciates and respects characteristics of different ethnicities. However, a Eurocentric standard of beauty is still evident, for the clinic's advertising brochure focuses on primarily past white patients and the "improvement" of their features, particularly ski-slope noses through rhinoplasty. Estetik's marketing towards the creation of more European features despite their Turkish identity depicts the deep rooted Western ideologies that have spread internationally, creating a universal, homogenic beauty standard. Turkey was never colonized in history, but the popularity of Eurocentric beauty standards in the domestic market shows the formidable global influence of Western beauty.

JK Plastic Surgery Center

¹⁰ Picton, "The Complexities," 85.

¹¹ "Gabriel Chiu," Wikipedia, accessed July 27, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel_ChIU.

¹² "Asian Eyelid Surgery," Beverly Hills Plastic Surgery, accessed July 27, 2023, <https://www.beverlyhillspasticsurgeryinc.com/asian-eyelid-surgery/>.

One of the most prominent Korean medical institutions that attracts foreign patients, JK Plastic Surgery Center naturally takes on the responsibility as a window for the outside world to see Korea. The clinic's slogan is very ambitious: "JK sets the standard of beauty." However, similar to other practices, JK's advertising caters mainly to Eurocentric beauty standards. The opening image of the website is an image of two light-skinned Caucasian models, which is a deliberate choice. These two models with ski-slope noses and double eyelids epitomize beauty which JK can help its patients achieve. However, through an exploration of the surgeries conducted, some facial features straying from the European appearance begin to emerge. One in particular is the homogeneity of the large doe eyes reflected in the 'improved' images of the patients. Even those who received surgeries that did not have any connection to eye shaping held the doe characteristic, unique to the Korean practice. While this may be simply one of the many enhancements of makeup, it still displays a varied image of beauty from the other practices which focus explicitly on European appearance in almost all procedure results. If Kyla Schuller's analysis of Maria Cristina Mena's short fiction shows the struggle of racial minorities who conform to Western beauty standards due to societal pressure, Korea as a whole shows the sign of breaking away from its colonial legacy and asserting its ethnic identity.¹³

Through these examinations of cosmetic surgery clinics, we identify a heavy emphasis on the notion that Eurocentric beauty is a standard to be achieved and strive towards. Although we do recognize some procedures that negate these standards, a vast majority of them resulted in a more "European" appearance. We argue that these exaltations of specific features point to a legacy of colonialism that has been a pervasive force in determining the beauty standard. However, through the variance of idealized traits evident in the Korean practice, we also complexify the argument that the beauty standard is one-dimensional and argue that a myriad of different versions of regional beauty alongside Eurocentric features, make up the contemporary "beauty standard." In the next section, we examine this notion further.

Integration of New Regional Beauty Standards

We synthesize our close readings with emergent trends of regional beauty standards being incorporated into the Eurocentric norm and argue what this means for the contemporary beauty standard.

Despite the entrenched colonial, Eurocentric ideals in mainstream beauty standards promulgated in cosmetic surgery advertisements, the growing popularity of cosmetic surgeries also gave rise to an appreciation for bodily features identified with particular ethnicities. In our examination of the clinics, though not widely marketed, we note the common procedure of the fox eye, also known as the brow lift, lateral canthoplasty, or even referenced as broader procedure methods such as a facelift or eye lift. The fox eye resembles the slanted and upturned angle of traditional East Asian eyes. Therefore, the global recreation of this feature on a series of races illustrates the rise in admiration of a trait straying from that of the traditional European.

Another example of the increasing appreciation for East Asian beauty, is the Y Clinic located in Gangnam, the "special plastic surgery district."¹⁴ Different from our case study on the JK Plastic Surgery Center, the advertisements of which conform to a European beauty standard, the Y Clinic is passionate about promoting an Asian or Korean counterpart. The motivation behind an alternative beauty standard is likely the profitability of the cosmetic industry. However, we also argue that as the record of Y Clinic surgeons' aesthetics suggests, the

¹³ Kyla Schuller, "Facial Uplift: Plastic Surgery, Cosmetics and the Retailing of Whiteness in the Work of María Cristina Mena," *Journal of Modern Literature* 32, no. 4 (2009): 83, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/jmodelite.32.4.82>.

¹⁴ So Yeon Leem, "Gangnam-Style Plastic Surgery: The Science of Westernized Beauty in South Korea," *Medical Anthropology* 36, no. 7 (2017): 658, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2017.1345904>.

new Korean beauty standard is an indirect form of resistance against the Japanese colonial legacy which advocates Western beauty.¹⁵

Instead of labeling specific types of facial features as superior above all, Doctor Kim (pseudonym) from the Y Clinic argues that both Europeans and Koreans can look beautiful using a beauty standard based on the proportions of facial features. The current fervor for ski-slope noses through rhinoplasty is unwise because they disrupt the natural proportionate beauty of Koreans. His aesthetics market his jaw surgery successfully, but his distinctive beauty standard on noses, eyelids, and cheekbones that contradict a preexisting Eurocentric one fails to attract popularity. Many of his patients decide to do rhinoplasty, double-eyelid surgery, and cheekbone surgery in other clinics instead in order to obtain an ideal European face.¹⁶ The resulting beauty standard in South Korea is thus both Korean and Eurocentric: the new Korean aesthetics fail to challenge the dominance of Eurocentric beauty, but they are assimilated into mainstream beauty standards. Retrospectively, it is a meaningful yet insufficient step toward greater diversity in beauty standards. It should be also noted, however, that had Kim's aesthetics become or been assimilated into the dominant culture worldwide, the construction of beauty standards that respect all ethnicities would've still been concerning. Kim's attempt to define the temperament of and homogenize ethnic features in order to participate in the conversation of Eurocentric beauty may achieve temporary diversity, but it forbids future acceptance of and suppresses appreciation for the diverse facial characteristics under the socially constructed category of ethnicity.

Another major distinction in examining how newer beauty standards are emerging across the world concerns class disparities. Chiara Pussetti's interactions with Portuguese women of color revealed that white European celebrities were seen to retain a beauty classified as "ethereal, elegant, beautiful, and not overly sensual." Conversely, women with darker skin tones were described as more exotic in nature, their "ethnic" styles reflecting a peregrine beauty. However, Pussetti also points out that today, these exotic standards of beauty are seen as more desirable or attainable compared to normative Eurocentric beauty for lower classes.¹⁷ We argue that the growing dominance of social media and influencer culture promotes standards diverging from Eurocentric beauty; lower classes that may not have the financial means to engage in procedures resulting in "white" features turn to these budding standards. This leads to the development of an unconventional beauty standard that has the potential to gain popularity among a more underprivileged population, rebelling against the homogeneity of the Eurocentric beauty standard. As more general, mainstream media that are accessible to a variety of classes increasingly challenge the existing beauty standard, the dynamic nature of the beauty standard proves to extend past a single set of white features.

The emergence of these newer beauty standards impacts the dominant idolization of Eurocentric characteristics by creating space for other types of regional beauty to be featured. This affects the beauty standard by forcing it to recognize a collection of different sets of desired characteristics and also raises questions about the legitimacies of certain types of beauty. For example, different standards of beauty being adopted by lower classes garner negative connotations that establish them as "sloppy" or "working-class" in an effort to delegitimize them. We argue that since "white" beauty is standardized by the elite and ruling classes, it has been pushed upon the general population in ways that present it as the only "correct" type of beauty and one that everyone must conform to and strive to achieve. However, this doesn't mean that newer standards of beauty lack any less quality just because they appeal to a different population or originate from different ethnic groups. A standard of beauty is simply that, and all standards must be considered when defining a "universal" beauty, which would better be described as a collection of multiple beauties. These ideas complexify the notion that the beauty standard is "universal" and that all countries hold the same value for European beauty as there is no true singularity that comprises it. Rather, the beauty standard is transforming to encapsulate a widening array of

¹⁵ Leem, "Gangnam-Style," 664.

¹⁶ Leem, "Gangnam-Style," 665.

¹⁷ Pussetti, "Shaping," 2: 94.

features and characteristics native to a plethora of ethnic groups.

Conclusion

Our research examines the advertising of three prestigious cosmetic surgery clinics using postcolonial frameworks including mimicry, double consciousness, and embodiment. It is evident through our findings that both the use of Caucasian models and the promotion of specific procedures are rooted in beauty standards that favor Eurocentric features and embody colonial ideals. However, through our analysis, we also argue the emerging presence of regional beauty standards that challenge the hegemony of European beauty standards. We see this particularly in East Asia through our analysis of the Y Clinic based in Korea. Current beauty standards continue to hold heavy European influence, although they are growing to incorporate features from all over the world. Throughout our research, our driving question revolved around the flexibility of the beauty standard and its ability to accept and accommodate traits straying from the European appearance, questioning the endurance of colonial ideologies. We conclude that though these colonial ideas remain, the beauty standard is capable of integrating divergent characteristics as admiration for regional cultural traits is spreading globally.

Although we have argued there is an emerging trend of deconstruction of the hegemonic Eurocentric beauty standard, the focus of our research does not provide an explanation for why these changes are developing, particularly in East Asia. Further research on this topic would provide a more complete picture of this trend and allow for more context on the destabilization of the Eurocentric beauty standard. Future researchers may also consider what effects the growing appreciation of particular ethnic features has on cultures like film and television and to what extent the complication of dominant Eurocentric beauty standards promotes true diversity, representation, and acceptance across other cultural products or cultural appropriation. We hope our research will provide future scholars with a holistic picture of contemporary beauty standards through the evolving field of cosmetic surgery, promoting deeper thinking on standard perceptions of beauty.

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