

SHIBUYA

1999



世紀末渋谷のストリートとファッション

20世紀末の渋谷は、ギャル文化が花開いていた。渋谷センター街にたむろする若者達が生み出した個性的な流行とその文化。そしてSHIBUYA109(マルキュー)で店員達が提供する最先端のファッションに憧れた若者が、全国から渋谷に集まった。この写真集は、そんな1999年の渋谷を活写している。

ギャルという言葉は、米語の「girl」の俗語の「gal」を由来とする外来語である。この言葉は当初、若くて活発な女性全般を表していたが、1990年代初頭、バブル景気時にボディコンシャス等を身に纏い派手にディスコで遊んでいた20歳前後のイケイケギャル、そして、彼女達の影響を受けた下の世代のコギャルと呼ばれる女子高校生が渋谷に登場したことにより、意味合いを変えていく。

彼らのファッションは欧米人への憧れであるように見えるかもしれないが、実は身近なストリートで魅力的なファッションをしている者、109のカリスマ店員、雑誌のモデル、国内アーティストへの憧れが中心であった。無意識的にアメリカ西海岸的な文化を、日本の文化、社会的な文脈、身体的な特徴に合わせた形で、ローカライゼーションしていったものであったといえるだろう。

1990年代初頭の渋谷センター街には、大学付属の中高一貫校の生徒を中心とする、アメリカンカジュアルのファッションに身を包んだチーマーと呼ばれる集団がいた。彼らは、大学生の手法をまねてクラブイベント(パーティー)を行う集団であったが、渋谷センター街に徒党を組んでたむろし、ナンバや傷害事件をおこし、一種の社会問題として取り上げられることが多かった。このチーマーの周りに集まり、アメリカ西海岸風のカジュアルファッション、リゾート地でバカンスを楽しむようなファッションをした女子高生は、LAギャル、バラ(パラダイス)ギャルと呼ばれ、制服着用時の丈を短く直したスカートにルーズソックスといういで立ち、そして援助交際のイメージとともに、コギャルとして認知されていく。

小麦色の肌、脱色した髪、ミニスカートなど肌を露出したいで立ちを特徴としたコギャルのファッションは、1995年にソロデビューしたファッションのカリスマでもある歌手の安室奈美恵が取り入れ、安室のファンである「アムラー」と呼ばれる女性が増えるにつれその特徴をより強めていった。

SHIBUYA109は1996年に若者向けのファッションビルへ方向転換すると、ギャル系ファッションの聖地と

Shibuya Street Fashion at the End of the Century

Gai culture flourished in Shibuya at the end of 20th century. In the late 1990s, young girls filled Shibuya's Center Gai Street and began creating a unique cultural movement that would eventually spread throughout Japan. People came from all over the country to gather in Shibuya, having long dreamt of dressing themselves in the latest outfits from Shibuya 109. This book presents the vivid scenes that unfolded in Shibuya in 1999.

The word "gal" – pronounced *gyaru* in Japanese – came straight from casual American vernacular. The word was initially used in Japan to describe young and active women, but in the early 1990s – as the country entered the bubble era – young women with luxurious lifestyles became known as "ike-ike gals" (girls in high spirits). Following in their footsteps, high school girls also started to congregate in Shibuya. Referred to as "ko-gals", they contributed to a new image for gals in Japan.

At first glance, gal fashion may seem like an imitation of its western counterparts, but at the core of this movement was the motivation to dress like people who were far less distant. Shibuya 109's charismatic shop staff, magazine models and domestic musicians. By adopting this style, the gals unconsciously created a localised version of the fashion trends that had originated on America's West Coast. In doing so, they built a movement that was not only aligned with Japanese culture and social context, but was also linked to each gal's physical characteristics.

In the early 1990s, young males – many of whom were students of university-affiliated high schools – began dressing themselves in American casual-wear and hanging out on Center Gai. They were known as "teamers" and imitated older college students by holding club events (parties) and forming groups of their own. The media often identified these groups as troublesome, in part due to the violent scenes they caused and their casual approach to picking

up girls. The teamers attracted high school girls known as "LA gals" or "para-gals" (paradise gals), who dressed in casual West Coast-style outfits or loose resort wear. Many girls would also go to Shibuya in their school uniform with skirts far shorter than school rules would allow and loose, baggy socks pushed down to their ankles. They were known as "ko-gals" due to their association with "enjo-kosai" or dating men in return for payment or luxury goods.

Their tanned skin, bleached hair and risque clothes such as mini-skirts were adopted by Namie Amuro, the singer who made her solo debut in 1995 and became a charismatic fashion icon for many teenage girls. Her followers, known as "amurans", increased in number and ko-gal fashion became even more ubiquitous.

In 1996, Shibuya 109 changed their marketing strategy to target a younger demographic, resulting in the building becoming a mecca for gal fashion. Ko-gals appeared with heavily tanned skin and became known as "ganguro-gals", with their styles roughly classified into four groups: barbie, loco, hippy and sister. The 109 building contained a host of popular gal brands including EGOIST, ALBA RONA, COCOLULU, me Jane and KAPALLUA. Kana Watanabe, one of the staff members at the EGOIST shop, became worshipped as a "charisma ten-in" (charismatic shop staff) and other shops soon began to style their staff in her image.

In previous years, the DC (designer and character) brand boom had seen shops employ "house mannequins" who provided customers with tips and advice. Although they captured the brand's image, their primary role was to sell the customer whatever they desired. On the other hand, charisma ten-ins not only embodied the brand by wearing popular outfits featuring new items such as mini-skirts, platform boots and thick makeup, but they also communicated with customers in a more casual and friendly manner. They quickly attracted large fan bases, and at the height of the boom some shop staff were selling more than one million yen per hour – an economic phenomenon. Watanabe was awarded third place in Nikkei Woman's Woman of the Year Awards in 2000 – further evidence that charisma ten-ins had made a significant contribution to gal culture.

A new wave of youths began to gather on Center Gai. With similar attributes and behaviours to the teamers they replaced, these groups were characterised by their privileged upbringing, with many coming from upper class families and attending private, elitist schools and colleges. Known as "ibe-sar" (a short-form version of "event circle") or "gal-sar" (derived from "gal circle"), the groups consisted of ganguro gals and "gyaruos", the male equivalent of gals.

These groups organised parties and could be seen dancing at clubs such as PYLON or 9LoveJ, often performing unique "para-para" choreographed dance moves to euro-beat music. They also exerted great influence on gal culture and became the center of attention in the Shibuya culture scene. Over time they continued to radicalise their fashion, language, and personal style in order to stand out from the crowd. But as the ganguro boom continued, so too did the number of gal and gyaru wannabes.

In the competition to differentiate oneself in Shibuya – the most glorious stage for gal culture – gals continued to become more and more extreme. They bleached their brown hair until it was almost white, added colour streaks, and began to heavily apply white concealer around their eyes and lips. The same sense of extreme was applied to the gal's outfits, which became increasingly risqué as they showed off their darkly tanned skin. They combined colourful nails, accessories and fashion items both luxurious and rare, along with numerous other elements in order for them to stand out.

"Gonguro gals" appeared in 1998 and used makeup to achieve an even darker skin tone than that of ganguro gals. Their style of makeup became known as "yamanba" (mountain witch), as it was too dark to achieve through natural tanning. The following year, TV programs and gal magazines such as Egg started to feature gonguro style, resulting in an even further increase in competition amongst ganguro.

As ganguro style prospered, shiro-gals (untanned girls) began to appear. Gal style

gradually began to diversify and was no longer solely tied to ganguro style. The charismatic new singer Ayumi Hamasaki emerged and drew the admiration of gals, replacing Namie Amuro as their idol. Hamasaki's light-coloured makeup quickly gained popularity among teens and non-ganguro gals increased as the gal culture became more ubiquitous. Released simultaneously, Hamasaki's single "appears" and album "LOVEppears" saw the singer present two different images of herself: one in ganguro makeup and the other in shiro-gal makeup. These images came to symbolise the year that the radical ganguro trend and the new shiro-gal movement crossed paths.

Gal fashion certainly didn't reflect the traditional image of a Japanese woman: moralistic, faithful and a good wife and wise mother. At the same time, their style was far from what most men would expect of their romantic or sexual partner. Nonetheless, judging the sexualised style of gals as a protest against the conservative values of past generations would have received little empathy on the streets of Shibuya. In fact according to some of the gals who maintained a strong presence in the late 90s, their extraordinary showiness, boldness and sexy ganguro fashion came about through their own willpower and aesthetics. And it was this distinctive sense of style that influenced their thoughts, actions and views on society.

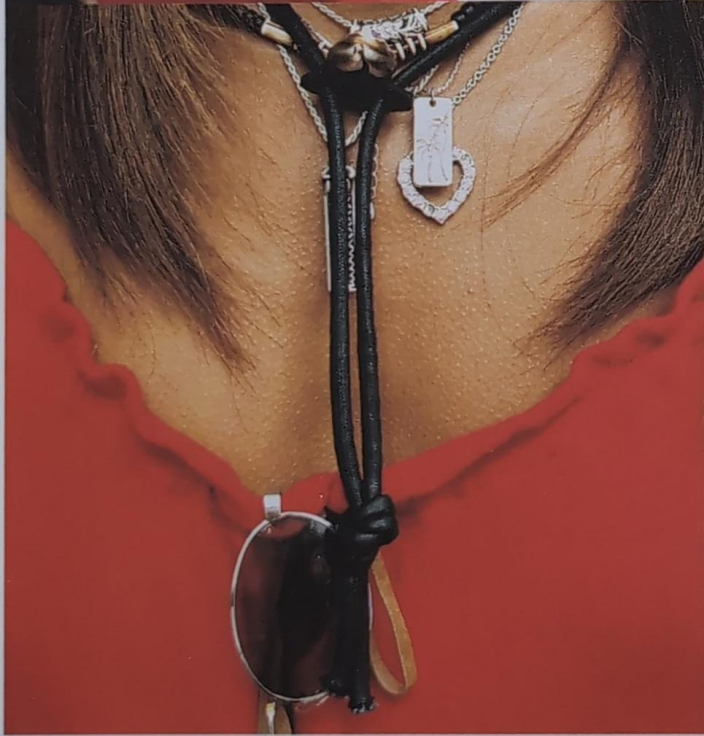
Now only a few gals remain on Center Gai, with their style and behaviour more muted than in years past. Shibuya 109, which continued to break sales records up until 2010, has been losing customers to the fast fashion retailers.

This book vividly captures the essence of youth at a time when Shibuya gal culture was blossoming. To my knowledge there are no other books that provide such a comprehensive record of ganguro gal culture. In terms of its cultural significance, this book serves as an important document of youth culture in the late 20th century.

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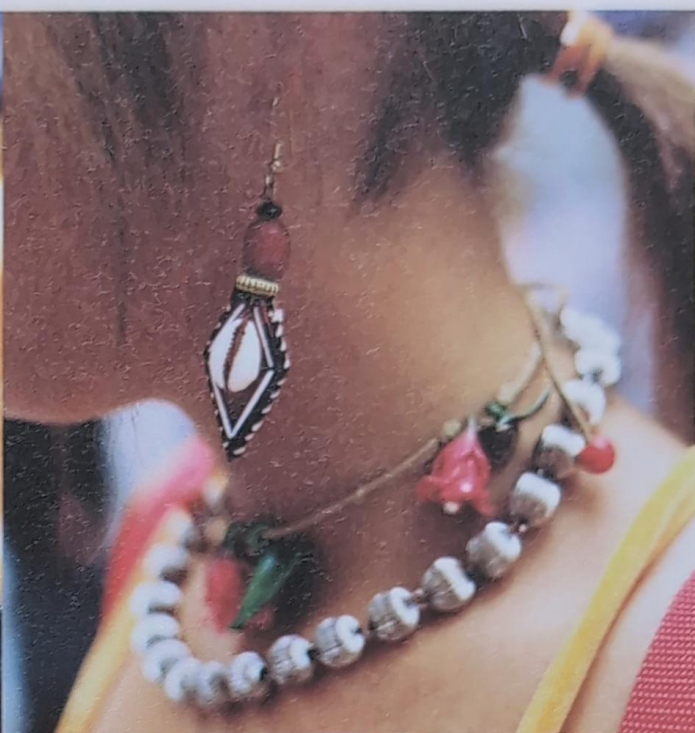


















Shibuya is where these girls gather. Many come from the suburban areas of Tokyo. Some fly from as far away as the northern island of Hokkaido on weekends to shop for their costumes and to show off on the street called "Center Gai." Shibuya has been known as a center for young people since the 70s. It is filled with boutiques, cafes, karaoke houses, nightclubs, theaters, restaurants, cd shops, manga (comic book) cafes, and video arcades. Under the bright neon signs of these stores and surrounded by so many people, it's almost like being in "Blade Runner." Every weekend, nightclubs such as "Pylon" and "9 Love J" are packed with these Gals. They dance the "Para Para" together, in sync with one another.





















