

Ten thousand generations pass  
 Mountain cherry blossoms  
 Bloom on this grand excursion  
 Accompanying the color  
 Of the young and old pine

By the sixteenth century there was meager interest in reviving the imperial anthology, which had clearly been one means of privileging the voice of its commissioner. After the last imperial anthology *Shinshokukokinshū* in 1439 there were some shogun among the Ashikaga who tried to excite interest in such a monumental project but it is no surprise that many such projects were left unfinished.<sup>14</sup> Clearly by Hideyoshi's day there was little hope of reinstating this ancient courtly literary practice among the warrior elite. Instead, Hideyoshi made use of the less demanding and more showy practice of ritual processions recorded by public poetry. Reminiscent of the inspiration behind the *kunimi* or land-viewing poems in the *Manyōshū*, Hideyoshi set out on an excursion to survey the land and celebrate the grandeur of nature, but this in turn became a ceremonial and poetic appeal for his family's future.

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<sup>14</sup>Yoshimasa attempted to order a new imperial anthology for the accession of Go-Tsuchimikado and Yoshihisa in 1473 actively tried to edit an anthology himself, but both projects ended in failure. See Itō Kei's discussion in *Chūsei wakashū, Muromachi-hen* in *Shin nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 47 (Iwanami shoten, 1990).

## A Note on Advertising and the Arts in the Edo Period

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The names of actual merchants, their shops, and the merchandise sold in them play so prominent a role in Edo period art, fiction and drama as to suggest that these media might usefully be understood as more narrowly focused modalities of a single general domain -- advertising. I am using this word here in its broadest sense to denote any form of representation used for the purpose of stimulating desire. The central subject and driving force of the bourgeois-oriented arts during the period in question is, after all, the representation of desire in all of its multifarious aspects, be it for money, merchandise, social status, or sex. The primary role played by desire in representation is of course nothing new or unique in any mercantile-oriented society, and whatever nice distinctions might once have been sustained between elite "high art" and plebeian "vulgar advertising" in Western Europe and America was effectively blurred long ago, the two having come to the point today of being all but indistinguishable in the form of "infotainment" or "edutainment." And this was apparently no less true in the cultural milieu of Edo Japan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Or, one may add, in Japan today. The prevalence of this phenomenon as early as the seventeenth century helps provide a context for such "postmodern" novels today as Tanaka Yasuo's *Nantonaku kurisutaru* (Somehow, Crystal), a work which reads more like a shopping catalog and list of material cultural icons than like fiction (Norma Feld, "Somehow, Crystal: The Postmodern as Atmosphere," in Masao Miyoshi and H. H. Harootunian, eds., *Postmodernism and Japan* [Duke Univ. Press, 1989], 169-188). The matter-of-fact usage of such practices as "product placement" in films, the explosion of museum-shop reproductions, the production of "three-operatenor" TV extravaganzas (exploited for public TV subscription drives), and the J. Peterman clothing catalog's novel use of short stories in place of the usual product descriptions are examples of similar practices employed in the U.S. and Japan

Popular Edo artists, writers, and actors, with their proven public appeal, were in constant demand by merchants for advertising purposes. Hayashi Yoshikazu contends that the earliest evidence of this practice are found in the numerous advertising broadsides (*hikifuda*, *keibutsu*) that were regularly turned out by the most popular writers of the day. Hiraga Gennai's (1729-79) *Hika rakuyō* (1769, published posthumously in 1783), for example, contains advertisements for Sōsekikō, a "convenient toothpaste in a box" (as it was advertised) invented by this remarkable jack-of-all-trades and sold at the shop of one of Gennai's friends, one Ebisuya Heisuke. One of the earliest examples of advertising employed as an integral part of illustrated fiction is Koikawa Harumachi's (1744-89) *kibyōshi Mimasu masu uroko no hajime* (1777), which contains an advertisement for a well-known moxa shop connected to the story's publisher. Jippensha Ikku's (1765-1831) *Kane no waraji* advertised a type of millet rice-cake sold in the popular sweet shop under his management. The *gesaku* writer Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) frequently depicted his own smoking-accessory shop in his works, and advertised it in 1795 in a playfully complex acrostic puzzle printed on special paper tobacco-pouches that he sold there (Kyōden apparently also attempted to enlarge his readership with his advertisements of special "Literacy Pills" [*dokushogan*]). *Kyokutei ippū Kyōden-bari*, written by Kyōden's friend Takizawa (Kyokutei) Bakin (1767-1848), shows Kyōden seated at the till of his busy shop among his various pipes and smoking accessories. And in *Azuma-ori kadoriki taizen*, Shikitei Sanba (1776-1822), a shop-keeper as well as popular writer, depicted his own well-known trademark on a shop-curtain containing an advertisement for one of his most popular cosmetics, "Water of Edo" (*Edo no mizu*, also plugged in his *Ukiyoburo* [1809-13] and the subject of his *Edo no mizu saiwaibanashi* [1812]). And, to round off this sort of in-group practice of self-reference, Sanba's own shop was in turn depicted by the artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi in his illustrated story *Nyōbō katagi otsunaeshi*.

Such practices may be considered simply the natural extension into the townsman world of the normal cultural context of the *za*, the all-important group frame of reference within which all today to blur the line between the arts, and advertising, entertainment and sales.

social practices were carried on in Japan since medieval times. It is found in Edo society in all manner of affinity groups that came together formally and informally to produce poetry and art ranging from "serious" works that were formally judged to "playful" works that were often the product of drink and hilarity. We know today how difficult and in fact useless it is to attempt to separate these two apparently polarized artistic activities of the Edo period, the *omote* and *ura* of the culture of the times.

Tani Minezō has reproduced and analyzed the contents of what he calls "Japan's first collection of advertising copy" [*kopii*] in a miscellany entitled *Hirougami*, compiled in 1794 by Honzentei Tsubohira, a restaurateur thought to have been a disciple of Santō Kyōden. Of the fifteen advertisements included in *Hirougami* (all written between 1792-93), four are attributable to Kyōden, eight to Tsubohira, with the remaining three bearing no name. All employ the colorful "playful" language characteristic of all *gesaku* literature, and Tani hypothesizes that these ads were most likely written in the spirit of *gesaku* exercises (he does not raise the important matter of fees). One of the shops advertised in this collection is also depicted in one of prints in Hiroshige's famous *Meisho Edo hyakkei* series.<sup>2</sup> Exactly the same movement between ad copywriting and literary activity is found in recent years in the careers of such popular writers as Inoue Hisashi, Itsuki Hiroyuki, and Nosaka Akiyuki and Kaikō Takeshi (whose writing abilities first came to public notice through his celebrated work on a famous Suntory whiskey ad campaign during the 1960s<sup>3</sup>).

<sup>2</sup>See Tani Minezō, *Edo no kopiraitaa*, 79 ff. The titles of three *gesaku* works published in 1795 under the name Honzentei Tsubohira (the sort of art-name typical of a restaurateur, Tani claims) are recorded. The title of this work is taken from the adage *suterugami areba hirougami ari*, "where there are gods of discarding, there are gods of collecting," punning on the homonymous *hirougami*, "collection of [discarded] papers." Several of these ads take the form of prefaces beginning with the clichéd phrases "*habakarinaraga*" or "*osorenagara*" ("If I might have a moment of your time..."), a more literary equivalent of the Edo street huckster's ubiquitous cry "*gorōjiro gorōjiro*" ("Hey! check it out!").

<sup>3</sup>See Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Legends of common Culture,"

Not merely prefaces but entire Edo stories as well often take the form of advertisements. Santō Kyōden, for example, wrote *Onna Masakado shichijin-geshōhin* (1792) in the form of a parody of the legend of Taira no Masakado for the opening of a cosmetics shop owned by the merchant Tamaya Kyūbei; Jippensha Ikku's *Irozuri shinsomegata* was composed for the Tokiwaya kimono shop's winter sale; and Shikitei Sanba's *Wata onjaku kikō no hikifuda* was created as an advertisement for a heating device sold by Fujita Kinroku of Odenmachi.<sup>4</sup>

The frequent depictions of popular kabuki actors in the act of endorsing products seen in Edo period woodblock prints suggest that neither actors nor artists were any more loath than were authors to capitalize on their celebrity by placing endorsements for commercial products in their work. This practice apparently began in Edo theaters as early as 1715, when famous actors in all three major theaters are reported to have begun inserting announcements (*kōjō*) into their performances for a kimono pattern sold by the Echigoya in Nihonbashi. This vogue reveals the role of advertising in joining the apparently separate worlds of merchandising and the theater. Shortly after this practice began, Ichikawa Danjūrō II (1688-1757) created his wildly popular tongue-twisting patter from the play *Uirōuri* (later included by Danjūrō VII as one of the *Jūhachiban* or "eighteen kabuki plays of the Ichikawa family"), which he inserted into a 1718 performance of *Wakamidori no ikioi Sōga*, proclaiming that the "Yüan Dynasty medicinal oil known as Tonchinkō" "sold by Toraya Fujiemon at Rankanbashi in Odawara," was responsible,

in *Cultural History of Postwar Japan* (London: KPI/Methuen, 1987), 74-76.

<sup>4</sup>See Nakada Setsuko, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon* (Tokyo: Daiyamondo-sha, 1993), 9-13; Yamamoto Taketoshi and Tsuganesawa Toshihiro, *Nihon no kōkoku: hito, jidai, hyōgen* (Tokyo: Sekai Shisō-sha, 1992), 2-22; Tani Minezō, *Edo no kopiraitā* (Tokyo: Iwasaki Bijutsusha, 1986), 1-125; Matsumiya Saburō, *Edo kabuki to kōkoku* (Tokyo: Tōhō Shobō, 1973), 117-146. Some of the historians of Japanese advertising are employed full-time in this capacity by Japan's largest advertising firms.

among its other alleged powers, for the great oral fluency being demonstrated at this very moment by the actor himself.<sup>5</sup>

A print by Utagawa Toyokuni (ca. 1825) depicts a later Danjūrō in the role of the night-watchman Kichiroku making his pitch, while the onnagata Iwai Murasakiwaka in the role of Kichiroku's wife poses demurely at his side brandishing a signboard bearing the message "Cosmetics and **TOOTHPASTES** available from Yorozuya Naosuke at the Aeidō in Kawata-kubomachi, Ushigome."<sup>6</sup> Any number of ukiyoe prints by Kunisada, Kuniyoshi and Eisen, among others, depict such well-known cosmetic products of the day as "Senjōkō" ointment and "Kumonoue" white base cream (*oshiroi*). Famous courtesans are frequently depicted wearing kimonos or carrying umbrellas with the trademarks of well-known brothels, or of popular shops such as Ebisuya, Matsuzakaya, and Echigoya, or sipping the tea or saké of certain shops, or dining in certain restaurants. Which goods and places were currently in fashion was, with the aid of such advertising, clearly at least as much a matter of common knowledge among the cognoscenti of that time as of our own.<sup>7</sup> The detailed portrayals and appraisals of actual brothels, prostitutes, customs, attitudes and connoisseur products in the theater prompts us to understand an entire famous play such as *Sukeroku* (another of the "Eighteen Plays" performed by the endorsement-minded Danjūrō II in 1713, 1716, and 1749) in the context of their function as advertisements — whether paid for or not — for the myriad particular commercial aspects of the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Matsumiya, *Edo kabuki*, 121-59.

<sup>6</sup>Nakada, *Kōkoku*, frontispiece (emphasis in the original).

<sup>7</sup>Ozaki Hisaya, "Ukiyoe no kōkoku ishō," in Haga Noboru, ed., *Edo no asobi* (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 1981), 123-27.

<sup>8</sup>Matsumiya, *Edo Kabuki*, 232.