

# About databases of early TV commercials:

## Examining representations in animated commercials

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This presentation introduces the database of TV commercials with which we have been involved; we will present some of the animated commercials from that database and explain their significance. Parts 1.2 and 2 of this presentation were put together by Kōno and the rest were drafted by Ishita; however, the whole body of the presentation was discussed and developed jointly by both of us.

### 1. Moving-image archives and TV-commercial databases in Japan

#### 1.1 The general state of moving image archives

[1.1.1] During the past ten years the number of institutions that could be labeled “moving image archives” – be they physical entities or within the digital space – has risen considerably in Japan.

[1.1.2] These moving image archives include radio and television programs, television commercials, documentaries, feature films, home movies and videos shot by individuals, and interview recordings and ethnographic films created by researchers. “Moving image archives” are structures and places devoted to the categorization, historical organization, storing, collecting and managing of the actual recording media (VHS tapes and DVDs).

[1.1.3] First, we will introduce several of the public facilities in Japan that are accessible to the public. Moving image archives of broadcast contents, radio programs, television programs, commercials, etc. include the following:

[1.1.4] The “Broadcast Library” of the Broadcast Programming Center of Japan (Yokohama, Kanagawa prefecture), which opened and started operating in 2000. Founded on broadcast law, it is the only domestic archive specializing in broadcast programs. It houses approximately 30,000 television and radio programs and commercials, as well as newsreels broadcast by NHK or by private TV stations during the 1950s and 1960s. The number of preserved programs increases each year at a fixed rate, concentrating on the approximately 1,500 “superior programs” designated by the Program Preservation Committee; thus, comprehensive archiving is not pursued. Access for general viewers is free of charge but is restricted

to viewing within the facility.

[1.1.5] The “NHK Archives” of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation (Kawaguchi, Saitama prefecture), established in 2003, preserves the approximately 870,000 programs created and broadcast by NHK in the past, with the number increasing every year. From these, approximately 9,000 programs are made accessible to the public upon authorization and may be viewed by any visitor free of charge at the attached “Program Public Library.” These Program Public Libraries exist in every regional NHK branch as well as in housing programs created independently by regional stations. Also, programs, program scripts, newsreels and manuscripts, etc., that are generally not open to the public were made available to researchers between 2010 and 2015, within the framework of a “trial study” program tied to application and approval.<sup>1</sup>

[1.1.6] Furthermore, there are moving image archives concentrating on TV commercials such as the Advertising Museum Tokyo, which opened in 2002 and was established by the non-profit Yoshida Hideo Memorial Foundation, and the “Television Commercial Database” established in 2003 within the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken).

[1.1.7] With regards to moving image archives for newsreels, documentaries, feature films and the like, there have been accessible facilities from earlier on, such as the Kawasaki City Museum (opened in 1988), the Yamagata Documentary Film Library (opened in 1994), and the National Film Center of The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (located in MoMA’s former main building in Kyōbashi since 1970).

[1.1.8] Thus, even though broadcast contents, radio and television programs, commercials, newsreels, and feature films are not being preserved comprehensively, there has been an ongoing collection and preservation of moving images, which are made partially available to the public. Filmic contents that can be distributed online as part of a business model, such as feature films and TV dramas that are stand-alone works, including old and rare footage as well as minor works, are easier to watch. In contrast, newsreels, live broadcast information programs and commercials have seen the least degree of systematic preservation and opening up to the general public thus far.

## 1.2 About the database of early TV commercials

[1.2.1] TV broadcasting in Japan started in 1953, the year the post-war occupation ended. “NHK Tokyo” and “Nippon Television” began broadcasting that year. Television commercials, tied by their nature to private channels, commenced in 1953 with the start of commercial broadcasting; by now, their history has reached its 62nd year.

[1.2.2] Following “Nippon Television,” further private stations were established and boosted TV commercials from the 1950s. During the early days there were numerous so-called “live commercials,” which had much longer playing times than today’s short filmic spots. Many of the film reels of these early commercials have been preserved by production companies, but only a few have been made available to the public. Award-winning and topical works have occasionally been referenced and introduced under

the heading of “good old moving images,” but since major advertising awards did not exist yet in the 1950s, and the spread of television sets had not progressed enough to affect a high number of viewers, TV commercials only rarely gained topical importance in society.

[1.2.3] In the first half of the 2000s, a movement began aimed at uncovering forgotten commercials from the 1950s, and Kyoto Seika University has been one of the hubs of this initiative. Headed by Kōno Kōhei, and with the participation of Ishita and other researchers from the Kansai area, materials stored by the TCJ (Television Corporation of Japan), the largest of the early commercial production companies, were digitalized and fed into a database between 2004 and 2009. This project is still ongoing and expanding.

[1.2.4] A first result is the digitalization and database entry of approximately 9,000 items produced by TCJ from 1954 (the year following the advent of television broadcasting) to 1968. Subsequently, commercials produced by other companies were also included, with now nearly 15,000 early TV commercials preserved by Kyoto Seika University. The collection is not open to the public due to copyright issues, but as the digitalized materials are now kept via third party, an environment that allows researchers easier access is developing.

## 2. Animation techniques found in TV commercials from the 1950s

### 2.1 Early commercials and the use of animation

[2.1.1] Next, in line with the topic of the present conference, we will show some animated commercials and introduce how they employ film.

[2.1.2] Animation techniques were often used in early commercials. TCJ, the later producer of “Iron Man No. 28” and “Eightman,” made wide use of animation techniques and in high quality.

Screening (1): The oldest animated commercial, Shiseido’s “Pearl toothpaste” from 1955.

In this film, an anthropomorphized toothpaste tube flies about in the forest, while animals brush their teeth together in a synchronized manner.

[2.1.3] This is real animation, with the images moving smoothly. It conveys the animators’ enthusiasm, their passion in making the pictures move.

[2.1.4] In 1950s television commercials, the influence of American advertising theory was practically still absent, and production decisions were left to the discretion of the actual producers. The simple understanding that a good film makes a good commercial was the basic principle of TV commercials at the time, and we can assume that animators aimed to create something fun and interesting to watch. Full animation making use of a high number of cels was the hallmark of animated commercials of the time, with many diligently crafted works.

Screening (2): Hayakawa Electrical Industries (Today: Sharp) “Sharp Television” from 1956.  
A family of six, plus a wizard and a fairy enjoy watching television as they sing.

[2.1.5] In this commercial, the characters actually move. At the time, “limited animation” that moves only the necessary parts of the characters was not generally used yet, and in this way, there was no option other than moving the entire body.

[2.1.6] Also during this period, most TV programs were sponsored by only one company; thus, time for commercials within the larger program could be freely allocated, and spots of 120 seconds were not uncommon. The standard length was 60 seconds, but 90-second and 120-second spots can also be found. This length contributed significantly to the high technical standard of early animated commercials.

[2.1.7] But not all early commercials were cel animation. There were other techniques, such as animating objects by so-called “stop-motion animation.” This is the technique of shooting dolls or merchandise frame by frame while gradually shifting their positions.

Screening (3): Tanabe Pharma Corporation “Deworming vaccine” from 1957.

A film of a boy and a girl on a swing holding deworming medicine in their hands and smiling.

[2.1.8] Another technique called “still animation” also existed. This technique involves moving photos and other still images in an animation-like manner, resembling today’s flash animation. Having the advantage of being produced on a low budget, this technique was frequently employed at the time.

Screening (4): Taiyo Fishery Co., “Juice/fruit cans” from 1961.

A cardboard theater (kamishibai)-like film featuring alternating images of a girl drinking juice and the product itself.

[2.1.9] There was a wide range of animation techniques, and animated commercials employed them all. If we count all these techniques as “anime,” the proportion of animated commercials is high. Among the TV commercials of the 1950s, many times ten percent were animated commercials in the strict sense, and taking into account partial use as well shows that approximately 70% can be considered animated commercials.

[2.1.10] Unlike the widespread animated commercials, the quality of live action commercials was not as high. Because television advertising had only just begun, it is likely that fundamental know-how was still lacking. A method for presenting strong points of a product within multiples of ten seconds had not been established yet, neither for live action film nor for animation, but while animated commercials amused viewers with their unrealistic movements, live-action commercials clearly exhibited the limitations of the technology and know-how of the time. The following clip is a textbook example of live action commercials from the mid-1950s.

Screening (5): Mission Juice “Mission Cola” from 1956.

A spot with only two simple scenes: cola being poured into a cup, and a smiling girl with the cup in her hands.

[2.1.11] Being of especially low quality, this example is a testament to the widespread preference for “live” commercials among clients. Since there were still no clear theories or methods for commercials during the 1950s, the simple understanding of “entertaining commercials are good commercials” was heeded for the time being. In other words, enjoyable animation was supposed to be effective and good films were supposed to make good commercials; accordingly many companies irrespective of industry sector had animated commercials made during the 1950s.

## 2.2 The four patterns of expression in animated commercials

[2.2.1] As for animated commercials from the 1950s, we consider the following four patterns as typical tendencies.

[2.2.2] First, we have the pattern of creating visuals that match a commercial song. Like a music video in today’s terms, the song’s lyrics were translated verbatim into visual form, a simple technique to brand itself on the memory of the viewers.

Screening (6): Sankyō “Minevital” from 1956.

Papa bear takes the medicine and then works vigorously, while his wife and son are delighted.

[2.2.3] At the time the famous commercial songwriter Miki Torirō was involved in the creation of many commercials, and “music video” clips were created for much of these. The type of commercial that employs a commercial song from beginning to end is called a “singing commercial,” and many of these have been produced even up to today. Commercial songs again reflect the understanding of that era, namely that entertaining commercials are good commercials, and many companies composed original songs.

[2.2.4] With the second pattern, we have commercials with folk-tale and fairy-tale subjects. In continuation of the pre-war mindset that animation is “for children,” this pattern was quite popular. The following two pieces are based on the fairy tale “The Three Little Pigs” and the fable “The Tortoise and the Hare.”

Screening (7): Shokusan Jutaku Co. “Shokusan Residences” from 1956.

Thanks to a well-built house the three pig brothers can live without being attacked by the wolf.

Screening (8): Kyushin Pharmaceutical “Kyushin Cardiotonic” from 1956.

The hare and the tortoise are racing each other aided by the herbal tonic Kyushin.

[2.2.5] The third tendency is a pattern of creating and animating characters. Image characters of products and companies have continued to spread since the Taishō era (the early 20th century) as a standard element of advertising; however, the age of television commercials allowed for adding movement to these characters. In order to add movement, it was essential to give them a human shape. We can distinguish between two main types, “human-like products” and “product-like humans.” Human-like products are cute personifications of the product, giving it a face and limbs. Conversely, with product-like humans a human torso becomes the product, relying on what can be termed “productification” as opposed to personification. In most cases this produces a cyborg-like, somewhat surreal impression.

Screening (9): Kansai Electric Power “Socket” from 1959.

Electrical appliances with faces, hands and feet are dancing, an example of “human-like products.”

Screening (10): Hisamitsu Brothers “Salonpas” from 1957.

A flying boy whose body is a cataplasm affixes a cataplasm on a tired person, an example of “product-like humans.”

[2.2.6] The fourth tendency, or pattern, is using the animated form for everything whether suitable or not: for example, when representing products in animated form for which visual information is important, such as with fashion and cars.

Screening (11): Yamauchi Yōkō “Swallow coat” from 1958.

Showing nothing but a man and a woman walking on the street while wearing the coat.

[2.2.7] From this commercial we get no sense of what type of product a “swallow coat” really is. Nevertheless, it can be seen to advertise atmosphere, like “how wonderful life with a raincoat can be” or “happiness.” In short, it can also be regarded as a form of image advertisement. Animated commercials might have been especially apt for depicting “happiness” or “wonderfulness.”[2.2.8] There is also a pattern of showing the effects of drugs and cosmetics, since anything at all could be represented in animated form.

Screening (12): Itōhan “Kiss me foundation” from 1956.

A female pro wrestler applies foundation after just losing a fight, and then she is approached by great number of men (becomes popular with the opposite sex).

[2.2.9] Also, shaving suddenly transforms a man into an attractive guy, taking medicine results in immediate rejuvenation, and other highly exaggerated representations are seen. In the 1960s proper advertising standards were enacted and hyperbole in relation to product effects became strictly regulated,

but prior to that extreme representations did exist.

[2.2.10] In this way the TV commercials of the 1950s pursued fun at any expense. At the time “deviation from the facts” or “faked situations” were not considered predominantly bad; amusing fiction rather than the boring truth, or things that converged upon the truth rather than the truth itself, were thought to be important. Commercials were also competing to convey the wonderfulness of products in a dramatic and impressive way.

[2.2.11] To summarize, we can identify four patterns among the animated commercials of the 1950s, 1) synced with commercial songs, 2) using fairy and folk tales, 3) using characters, and 4) using the animated form for everything whether suitable or not.

[2.2.12] Film technology improved entering the 1960s, and theory began to be applied to television commercials as well, with television becoming part of an integrated media plan. Concurrently, the number of animated commercials decreased. The heyday of animated TV commercials lasted from the 1950s to the early 1960s, a mere ten years.

[2.2.13] To end section two, we would like to introduce a commercial that could be considered the most polished of all the animated commercials from the 1950s. This 120-second limited animation is a thrilling depiction of Uncle Barusan exterminating harmful insects.

Screening (13): Chugai Pharmaceutical “Barusan” from 1959.

A Don Quixote-like old man exterminates harmful insects with insecticide.

### 3. Case study of using the Early TV Commercial Database

#### 3.1 Introduction of the published results of our joint research project

[3.1.1] In section two, we introduced the TV commercials of the 1950s with a focus on the characteristics of the animation techniques employed. In section three, we will introduce a case study utilizing the Early TV Commercial Database at Kyoto Seika University, and we would like to show several examples from the commercials that were objects of that study.

[3.1.2] As introduced in section 1.2, joint research utilizing the Early TV Commercial Database was conducted between 2004 and 2009. The volume *Archeology of Television Commercials* edited by Kōno Kōhei and Nanba Kōji (Sekai Shisōsha 2010) is a result of this research. Also, altogether four *Television Commercial Research* report booklets have been published by the Television Commercial Research Project (Kyoto Seika University Representation Research Organization), and these have been made available on the web.<sup>2</sup>

[3.1.3] Researchers who took part in this project contributed chapters to the volume “*Archeology of Television Commercials*” based on their respective research topics. For example, “On Shōwa 30s (1955-1965) Commercials” (Kōno), “The Language of Commercials” (Tsuji Daisuke), “Music in Commercials” (Ogawa Hiroshi), “Animation in Commercials” (Ōhashi Masahiro), “Fashion Represented



in Commercials” (Inoue Masahito), “The Image of Laundry Culture” (Ishita), “The Image of Youth as Seen in Commercials” (Nanba Kōji), “The Image of the Overseas” (Yamada Shōji) and so on. We would refer you to the volume itself for further details.

[3.1.4] In the following section 3.2, we have chosen to concentrate on the topic treated by Ishita in said volume, namely “laundry culture,” and while providing a general outline of “laundry culture” during the 1950s and 1960s, we will discuss the concurrent changes in animated commercials through the example of commercials relating to “laundry.”

### 3.2 Animated representations as seen through washing machine and detergent commercials

[3.2.1] Commercials related to laundry are especially commonplace among television commercials. Cute wives wearing aprons, laundry spinning round and round in washing machines, large numbers of white shirts fluttering against the backdrop of a blue sky. Images of laundry like these found in “washing machine” and “washing detergent” TV commercials have created the standards of “laundry culture.” Among various representations found in commercials there is probably no other housework more strongly tied to a “domestic sense of well-being” than “laundry.” When did this type of standardized commercial representation begin, and how did it become established? This question was at the heart of my research (Ishita 2010).

[3.2.2] Before looking at the commercials themselves, let’s briefly trace the social meaning attached to the washing machine itself. Electric washing machines were first imported from America in the 1920s, and Japanese domestically-produced machines became available in 1930, when the company that later became Toshiba launched manufacture and sales based on imported technology. At first the price was high, and other than the small number of wealthy who purchased them, they were mainly used by the military. During the occupation in the immediate post-war period, Toshiba was the only domestic manufacturer that serviced the occupying forces, but in 1947 its contract was terminated and it turned towards the general household market (Ōuchi 2001). Up until that point Japanese households generally hand-washed their clothes exclusively with “basin” and washing board, but finally in the 1950s the spread of electric washing machines began to take off.

[3.2.3] In relation to the path of technological development in washing machines, stirring-type washing machines came on the scene as the prevalent model in 1949, drum-type machines in 1950, vibrating-type machines in 1952, and jet-type machines were brought to the market in 1953. Alongside Toshiba, Fuji Electric, Matsushita, Hitachi, Mitsubishi and other manufacturers entered the market. The jet-type washing machine introduced in 1953 was developed by SANYO Electric; its simple mechanism, the shortness of the washing time, and the retail price nearly half that of previous models made it a huge hit (Household Appliance Culture Association 2007).

[3.2.4] With the success of the jet-type washing machine, the spread of household washing machines progressed rapidly from 1953 onwards, but even so its penetration rate did not surpass an estimated 3.1% in 1954. In the following years, its spread progressed further, and in 1958, when the



Economic Planning Agency started its survey, the penetration rate had reached 30% in urban non-agricultural households. On the other hand, within agricultural households it had not reached even 10%, and similar to the spread of television, a large gap existed between urban and rural areas.

[3.2.5] The 1960s saw a rapid progression; the gap between urban and rural areas had finally disappeared by 1968, and the overall penetration rate reached 80% (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistics Bureau 1988, Ishita 2010).

[3.2.6] The washing machine and detergent commercials introduced here are from this period of product diffusion. For the general populace, washing machines were still high-class products, and the shift from hand-washing soap to washing machine detergent was just beginning.

[3.2.7] First, an overview of the total number of commercials related to laundry between 1954-1968. For this 15-year period we find 58 washing machine and 156 detergent commercials in the database, the number of detergent commercials being fairly higher than that of washing machine commercials. Furthermore, if we look at washing machine commercials, for each year we find that the number of commercials produced is of a comparable magnitude, whereas in the case of detergent commercials the majority was produced in the period from 1963 onwards. This relates to the correlation between the spread of washing machines and the related increase in demand for washing machine detergent.

[3.2.8] Also, SANYO Electric accounts for the majority of the 58 washing machine commercials examined. Other manufacturers like Aichi Industries (Toyota), Mitsubishi Electric, Matsushita Electric Industrial, Hayakawa Electrical Industries (Sharp), Nippon Denso (DENSO), Toshiba, Nippon Electric (NEC), Yaō Denki (Fujitsu General), Sankyo Denki, each had only a few. As TCJ's client, the SANYO Electric of the time has left us an outstanding number of commercials. Looking at the ranking of the advertising companies in the present database, we see that Suntory (Kotobukiya) is at the top, followed by SANYO Electric in second place.

[3.2.9] In the case of detergent commercials, DKS (known for brands like “Monogen”) was the most numerous with 30% of all commercials among 156 cases, followed by KAO Soap, Nippon Oil & Fats (Nissan Soap), Lion and further companies. We can surmise that these numbers reflect to a certain degree the market share and advertising budget of each company in the household goods industry at the time.

[3.2.10] We have summarized the changes in the numbers of washing machine and detergent commercials produced each year along with the corresponding number of commercials among them that used animation techniques (Table 1). As mentioned earlier, in the case of washing machine commercials as well as detergent commercials, the number of commercials increased alongside the spread of washing machines, but animated commercials accounted for a large percentage of commercials only during the period prior to this penetration. As pointed out in the summary of section 2, the heyday of animated commercials lasted from the 1950s until the early 1960s; the data regarding laundry-related commercials also supports this point.

\* Table 1 Changes in washing machine and detergent commercial numbers

Year Product	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	Total
Washing machine	0	2	1	4	1	4	11	4	9	8	9	1	0	4	0	58
(Anime)	0	2	1	3	0	4	10	1	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	28
Detergent	0	0	0	2	1	5	6	7	2	26	14	39	50	3	1	156
(Anime)	0	0	0	2	1	3	2	6	1	7	3	1	0	0	0	26

(Based on the Early TV Commercial Database, compiled by Ishita)

[3.2.11] Now we shall begin showing representative commercials from the Early TV Commercial Database. First is one of the oldest animated detergent commercials, “Nissan 7.” One would think that fighter planes and detergents have nothing in common; however, the representation might have been linked to the animator’s specialty (i.e. drawing fighter planes) or to the fact that the audience in the age of street television consisted mainly of men.

Screening (14): Nippon Oil & Fats “Nissan 7” from 1957.

A fighter plane flies around high in the sky representing the age of speed.

[3.2.12] In a similar way, among laundry-related commercials of the second half of the 1950s, we can find a high level of disregard for the question of who actually does the laundry or purchases the product itself. Also, family images are almost completely missing.

Screening (15): KAO Soap “Blue Wonderful” from 1958.

Fully animated singing commercial. A black doll becomes a white doll (which today may be considered discriminatory representation), and it sings about the interesting and effective detergent.

Screening (16): SANYO Electric “SANYO Washing Machine” from 1959.

A sumo wrestler struggles with a lot of laundry, but introducing the washing machine makes doing the laundry fun.

[3.2.13] When SANYO Electric entered the washing machine industry in 1953, the actress Kogure Michiyo was promoted as the image character “Mrs. SANYO.” The meaning of “Americanized modern lifestyle” was associated with living surrounded by numerous household appliances, and this was successfully linked with the image of the “ideal housewife.” Unlike with previous advertisements for electric household appliances that were mostly abstract, consisting of rationale- and information-heavy explanations, a new strategy was adopted, namely the straightforward use of “characters which promote the advertised product emotionally” in order to “reach the actual user, namely the housewife.” With this advertising strategy in newspapers and magazines and the success of its jet-type washing machine,

SANYO Electric made rapid progress, increasing its market share from 4.6% in 1953 to 32.7% in 1954 and consequently becoming the industry leader (Ōuchi 2001).

[3.2.14] In newspaper and magazine advertisements of the mid-1950s, “the method of directly addressing housewives, the actual users” was held in high esteem, but insofar as our database is concerned TV commercials did not adopt that strategy. Due to the yet sparse spread of television in the 1950s, it was perhaps too early for advertisements targeting home viewers (“housewives”) as distinct from street-corner audiences (men).

[3.2.15] Between 1958 and 1963, the spread of television sets progressed rapidly, but because TV viewing was not limited to the home, its audience had not become segmented, and thus it was not the main strategy of advertising to address a specific audience segment. The emotional strategy of directly “addressing housewives” via an image character may have been successful with urban audiences and purchasers of print media, but a large gap must have existed as electric washing machines had not yet spread nationwide. “Women’s virtues” such as “laundry has to be done manually” and “it is a wife’s duty to clean dirty clothes until they are completely white” were gender norms derived from Confucian morality and reportedly still strong in the 1950s, especially in rural areas (Amano 1992).

[3.2.16] Therefore, apart from the emotional strategy of simply “addressing housewives,” washing machine commercials needed to feature various other users; that is, an advertising strategy was needed that could bridge the gap between urban and rural areas.

Screening (17): Matsushita Electric Industrial “National Washing Machine” from 1962.

Various users of washing machines are featured, such as a young wife living in a housing complex, a fishmonger’s wife, a man living by himself, a daughter-in-law living in a thatched roof farm house, and an uptown wife, with the second half of the commercial introducing a modern factory. This spot evinces the evolving quality of live action commercials.

[3.2.17] As a side note, testimonies exist that movie actress Kogure was reluctant to appear in TV commercials because of the small size of the screen (Kurokawa 2007). Maybe because of this, “Mrs. SANYO” appeared much later in TV commercials than in print media.

Screening (18): SANYO Electric “SANYO Washing Machine Mama Top 7” from 1964.

“Mrs. SANYO” Kogure Michiyo finally appears in a television commercial.

[3.2.18] With the arrival of the 1960s, a new advertising strategy imported from the US was introduced in Japan, the “brand manager system,” which concentrated all branding roles within one and the same department. Known as the very first to introduce this system, KAO divided their advertising department into a planning and a production section in 1961, and thus became able to make all their advertisements, including radio and TV, within the company (Ahn 2001). Consequently we can assume

that the KAO commercials found in our database have been produced in line with the directives of their brand management. Compared to the commercials of other companies at this time, KAO's exhibit an exceptional unity in representation style.

Screening (19): KAO Soap "New Beads" from 1965.

Although this is live action, animation is partially used to represent fragrance. It highlights domestic happiness, including images of flowers and a housewife in an apron.

[3.2.19] During this period, the conventionalized representations of detergent commercials start to appear. "Water currents," "laundry fluttering in the wind" and "women in aprons" are common to both washing machine and detergent commercials, while the detergent industry (and especially KAO) also uses other representations such as demonstrating the "causes of stains," animating flowers (as images of fragrance) and expressing "femininity" by means of the frequently featured mother and child model.

[3.2.20] From 1964 onwards, the "stay-at-home housewife" begins to take strong hold in detergent-related commercials: namely, the convention of the "apron-wearing" housewife. Both black and white television sets and washing machines spread among affluent urban households, and these purchases were connected to images of "innovation," "wealth" and "happiness." At the same time, "urban lifestyle," "being American," "life in a housing complex," and "household appliances" had interrelated and interchangeable meanings. Although the various images of women such as wives of farmers and merchants, uptown wives, working wives and widows, and single women had been featured already in early commercials, these images gradually merged into the single iconic representation of the "apron-wearing young housewife" while the other representations mostly disappeared.

[3.2.21] Our last example in this section, the detergent commercial "Number One," does not demonstrate a unified brand strategy comparable to KAO's, but it maintains a unique attitude. Perhaps the notion prevalent in early animated commercials – that is to say "anything interesting can make a good commercial" – was carried on into the production of live action commercials. In comparison, this is also a good example for understanding how KAO's commercials were based on a theoretically founded strategy.

Screening (20): DKS "Number One" from 1965.

A young woman is tossed in the river, but then the sequence is played in reverse, returning everything to its original state. A "singing commercial" with vigor and tempo that relies on interesting visuals.

[3.2.22] In the mid-1960s, the tendency to strongly associate laundry commercials with "domestic happiness" became very pronounced. The finalization of this kind of representational convention was probably due to leading companies like KAO and SANYO Electric. Concurrently, merely interesting and freewheeling animated commercials, which were unrelated to any marketing or commercial theory,

gradually disappeared.

## 4. Animated commercials of the 1960s

### 4.1 The importance of lateral archives and the formation of networks

[4.1.1] As already explained in section 2, there are four characteristic patterns in animated commercials of the 1950s: 1) synced with commercial songs, 2) using fairy and folk tales, 3) using characters, and 4) using the animated form for everything whether suitable or not. Furthermore, we saw that these characteristics were also shared by the animated commercials related to laundry discussed in section 3.

[4.1.2] Entering the 1960s, film technology improved, theory began to be applied to television commercials as well, and television became part of an integrated media plan. Along with these changes, animated commercials were superseded by live action film commercials. Although the number of both washing machine and detergent commercials increased along with the spread of washing machines, animated commercials made up a large percentage of these only during the transitional period from the late 1950s to the early 1960s.

[4.1.3] Those years were the heyday of animated TV commercials. The data on laundry commercials also confirm this trend.

[4.1.4] Further on, the producers of the early animated commercials shifted to program production, that is, the newly emerging field of TV anime series. Considering the passing on of human resources and knowhow, animated commercials can be seen to have a certain importance for Japan's animation history, and the Early TV Commercial Database is a treasure trove of precious materials that can provide clues toward research topics like this.

[4.1.5] Nevertheless, as mentioned in the beginning, presently television and radio commercial databases in Japan have not advanced systematic preservation or opened up to the general public yet, and interest from society at large cannot be considered high either. The Early TV Commercial Database introduced here spans the commercials produced by TCJ between 1954 and 1968 (approximately 9,000 items) and commercials not produced by TCJ, which together make up around 15,000 spots. This body of commercials is not at all comprehensive. This should be kept in mind when considering the data in table 1. For example, for the years 1966 and 1968 there are no washing machine commercials included, which of course does not mean that none existed, but merely that there were not any in the databases to which we had access.

[4.1.6] In order to overcome such shortcomings, the most important and pressing matter at hand is the creation of an engine that would allow for lateral searches of corporate databases, and the formation of a respective network. However, as there is no such thing as a perfect database or archive, the most important task is still the low-profile work of finding materials that are not yet contained in the databases, while always imagining the whole of the material corpus. This applies to individual research topics as

well, such as the conditions of early television commercials, laundry culture, and the creation of the image of the domestic chore of laundry.

#### 4.2 The arrival of animated commercials emphasizing authorship

[4.2.1] The most recent database in the Kyoto Seika University Television Commercial Project is the JAC (Japan Ad. Contents Production Companies Association) commercial database (first period: 1,579 items). This database collects the commercials screened at JAC’s monthly preview, in which various producers and agencies were involved. So far we have digitalized only the first five years, those spots that were screened between 1966 and 1970, and thus the amount of data is still small, but in order to enable comparison with table 1, we have attempted to find laundry-related commercials.

\* Table 2 Changes in washing machine and detergent commercial numbers (JAC edition)

Year Product	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	Total
Washing machine	3	3	0	3	0	<b>9</b>
(Anime)	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Detergent	4	12	4	7	3	<b>29</b>
(Anime)	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

(Based on the JAC Television Commercial Database, compiled by Ishita)

[4.2.2] The JAC Television Commercial Database helps in understanding the overall tendencies at the time, not only because it relates to various producers but also because we can assume that the regular screenings featured highly topical commercials as well as works of which companies were most proud. If we compare table 1 and table 2, we can see that there are nearly no animated commercials to be found in table 2 either. We can clearly see that animated commercials were heavily utilized during the 1950s but mostly disappeared in the late 1960s, at least those related to laundry. Based on joint analysis of the two databases it is possible to formulate claims, albeit hypothetically, regarding the changes in commercials from the 1950s to the 1960s.

[4.2.3] Even though animated commercials mostly disappeared among laundry-related commercials in the late 1960s, the JAC Television Commercial Database includes a few famous animated commercials that are still regarded today as part of the history of commercials: Suntory’s “Torys Whiskey” commercial, Yanagihara Ryōhei’s “Uncle Torys” series, Miki Norihei’s character in Momoya’s “Edo Murasaki” commercials, and Bridgestone Tires’ “Yokoyama Ryūichi Commercial Theater.”

[4.2.4] With respect to the characteristics of animated commercials from the late 1960s, we can identify the following two points: (1) even as short films, their quality as commercials increased and authorship came to the fore with clear indication of the names of individual creators, (2) animated commercials that were strongly connected to a specific company, and a specific product image appeared, at first as a minority and alternative form.

[4.2.5] Finally, we would like to end this presentation by showing a piece that is a monument to animated commercials. We hope that this presentation has helped to convey the fascinating possibilities opened up by research practices that utilize all types of databases.

Screening (21): Bridgestone “Yokoyama Ryūichi Commercial Theater Bridgestone Tires” from 1967.

A famous series with the commercial song “Let’s go anywhere” by Otogi Productions.

\* Table 3 Summary of commercials screened during the presentation

((1) ~ (20) produced by TCJ, (21) produced by Otogi Productions)

Screening number	Advertiser	Title	Year	Seconds
1	Shiseido	Pearl toothpaste (Forest friends)	1955	60
2	Hayakawa Electrical Industries	Sharp Television	1956	112
3	Tanabe Pharma Corporation	Deworming vaccine	1957	31
4	Taiyo Fishery Co.	Juice/fruit cans	1961	62
5	Mission Juice	Mission Cola	1956	30
6	Sankyō	Minevital	1956	97
7	Shokusan Residence Mutual	Shokusan Residences	1956	60
8	Kyushin Pharmaceutical	Kyushin Cardiotonic	1956	31
9	Kansai Electric Power	Socket	1959	30
10	Hisamitsu Brothers	Salonpas	1957	52
11	Yamauchi Yokō	Swallow coat	1958	30
12	Isehan	Kiss me foundation	1956	60
13	Chugai Pharmaceutical	Barusan	1959	123
14	Nippon Oil & Fats	Nissan 7	1957	31
15	KAO Soap	Blue Wonderful	1958	62
16	SANYO Electric	SANYO Washing Machine	1959	61
17	Matsushita Electric Industrial	National Washing Machine	1962	76
18	SANYO Electric	SANYO Washing Machine Mama Top 7	1964	32
19	KAO Soap	New Beads	1965	62
20	DKS	Number One	1965	16
21	Bridgestone Tires	Yokoyama Ryūichi Commercial Theater Bridgestone Tires	1967	63



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## Notes

- 1 Trial access for researchers to the NHK Archive  
<http://www.nhk.or.jp/archives/academic/>
- 2 Kyoto Seika University Research Laboratory  
[http://www.kyoto-seika.ac.jp/researchlab/?post\\_type=report&p=256](http://www.kyoto-seika.ac.jp/researchlab/?post_type=report&p=256)