

# Ghost in the Lantern: Consumerism, Appropriation, and Mitate in Nineteenth- Century Japanese Media.

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## ASIAN LANGUAGES & CIVILIZATIONS GRADUATE & DISSERTATION

### Ghost in the Lantern: Consumerism, Appropriation, and Mitate in Nineteenth- Century Japanese Media

*This paper has been*

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#### Abstract

This thesis examines a single, multimedia “chain” of appropriation of the image of the ghost Oiwa. Originating from an 1832 *ukiyo-e* print from Katsushika Hokusai’s popular series One Hundred Ghost Stories (*Hyaku monogatari*, 1832) by Katsushika Hokusai, the image was physically disseminated from Edo (present-day Tokyo) to Osaka and reimagined in an actor print by the Osaka print designer Shunbaisai Hokuiei. It was further circulated in the form of ivory *netsuke*—“toggles” that attached items that were hung from the belt—carved in Osaka and Kyoto in the mid- to late nineteenth-century.

I argue that each reimagining of Hokusai’s Oiwa can be viewed as *mitate*, a “double exposure” or “parallel layering” that simultaneously alludes to an appropriated work while re-contextualizing it in a significant and startling manner. An examination of the

psychological and sociological motivations behind the consumption and value of *netsuke*, which were male fashion accessories that functioned as visible status symbols, additionally reveals a performative aspect of *mitate* that is “activated” when the *netsuke* is worn.

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