



Japan Foundation Information Center (JFIC) Library SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS 2010

## ***Do You Know 'Crêpe-Paper Books'?***

February 9 (Tue) - March 30 (Tue), 2010

The JFIC Library, 2nd floor

### **What are 'crêpe-paper books' that introduced Japonism culture to the world?**

The name 'crêpe-paper book' comes from the fact that the Japanese paper used in making the book had a finely-wrinkled surface like crêpe, and the finished book felt just like a soft and smooth cloth.



In the Meiji Era, shortly after the opening of Japan to the world, crepe-paper books were preferred by foreigners visiting Japan because of sophisticated colors and soft texture like kimono cloth.

These illustrated books of multi-colored woodblock prints featuring Japanese folk tales and life scenes were very much in favor as souvenirs of Japan.

Japonism and ukiyo-e (woodblock prints) in particular was the vogue in Europe in those days. This mode only increased the popularity of crêpe-paper books that contained the essence of Japanese culture; they were translated into several languages and even exported to the continent.

Takejiro HASEGAWA (1853-1938) was the first producer and publisher of crêpe-paper books. Through his days at a private missionary school run by a Presbyterian missionary Christopher Carrothers (which later became Meiji Gakuin) and the School for Commercial Law (later to become Hitotsubashi University) headed by another Presbyterian missionary, William Whitney, Hasegawa made many friends with missionaries, diplomats and intellectuals living in Japan, and acquired a cosmopolitan way of thinking. In 1884, he launched a publishing firm Hasegawa-Koubunsha and started publishing one of the most famous series of crêpe-paper book "Japanese fairytale series" in the following year.

Out of respect for the importance of the role that crepe-paper books has been playing in cross-cultural exchanges and their cultural excellence, JFIC library owns a collection of crêpe-paper books.



The exhibition will devote to "Japanese fairytale series" consisting of English, French, German, Spanish, and Swedish translations and crêpe-paper books sketching Japanese society and culture in the Meiji and Taisho Era.

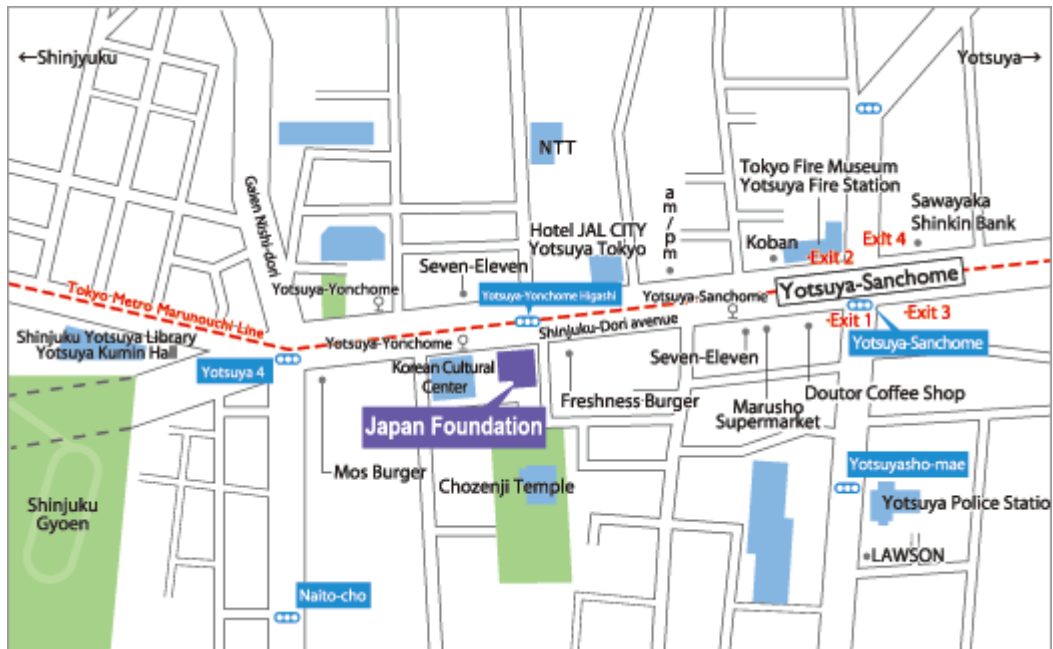
### **References:**

BAIKA Women's University 2006 < [http://manabiya.baika.ac.jp/el/contents/00007\\_jaoFij/top03.htm](http://manabiya.baika.ac.jp/el/contents/00007_jaoFij/top03.htm)>

Kansai University 2006< <http://web.lib.kansai-u.ac.jp/library/etenji/chirimen/index.html>>

## General Information

### Access Map



### The Japan Foundation Information Library

4-4-1 Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0004

Phone: 03-5369-6086

URL: <http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/about/jfic/lib/index.html>

### Hours

Monday- Friday: 10:00am-7:00pm \*\*

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday: 10:00am-5:00pm\*\*

(Closed Sundays and National holidays, Saturday except the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday and Monday following opening Saturday, The last day of every month)

February, 2010							March, 2010						
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**\*\*Please note that library's entrance is cleared thirty minutes before closing.**

### Admission

Free