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AND INFORMATION
CONGRESS:
78TH IFLA GENERAL
CONFERENCE
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Japanese picture books

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Session:

99 — *Picture books in libraries now!* — Libraries for Children and Young Adults

Abstract:

1. *Origin of the picture books*

What Emaki (picture scroll) is and where did it come from.

It contains Narrative Literature. Legend, myth, fairy tale were used as raw materials.

It also contains Tale of Genji Picture scrolls which pick up some scenes from the Tale of Genji and draw pictures.

It contains Chojugiga too. In Chojugiga, pictures of playing monkey, rabbit, and frog in a personifying way in a caricature are drawn. It is said that this scroll give various ideas and energy to both modern picture books and manga illustrators.

2. *Kusazoushi: In Edo era, Akahon, Kurohon, Aohon, Kibyoushi were published.*

In these books, picture books of old tales for children were included. Sizes were about 10 pp.

3. *Meiji era (1868-)*

3-1. Akahon: succeeding style of Edo era. They included old tales and warrior tales

3-2. Chirimenbon: using shrunken Japanese paper and multicolored printing
Japanese Fairy Tale Series.

4. *Translations*

Study from USA and European countries after the SWW.

5. *1950s--the beginning of modern picture books in Japan*

5-1. Role of Iwanami Shoten and Fukuinkan Shoten (Publisher)

These two publishers greatly influenced Japanese children's publishing.

6. In and After the 1960s

The 1960s were the most energetic time for the publishing of Japanese children's books. New publishers took an active part in children's books.

7. Help for Asian Countries publishing

Asian countries began to focus on children's books and made big success.

II. Publication of Children's Books

1. Transition of picture books

Reading campaigns in the 1970s and it's result.

I. Short history ~ From Emaki to Modern Books ~

1. Origin of the picture books

Emaki (picture scroll): It is composed with pictures and writings in a scroll. When you want to see and read them, you can unroll the scroll gradually from right to left for a hand length and at the same time roll up right to left at the same pace. Pictures flow from the beginning without stopping to the end. The contents are various; explaining a sutra by means of pictures, old tale, narrative literature (*1), venerable priest's story, history of shrine, etc. They came from Chinese style at 8-9 century and established their unique art style at 10-12 century. It has become golden age at 12th century and created several masterpieces such as The Tale of Genji Picture Scrolls (*2) and Chojugiga (*3).

They are not for children but there are some stories for children such as old tale and narrative literature among them.

*1 Narrative Literature: Legend, Myth, Fairy Tale are used as raw materials.

*2 Tale of Genji Picture scrolls: pick up some scenes from the Tale of Genji and draw pictures.

*3 Chojugiga: draw pictures of playing monkey, rabbit, and frog in a personifying way in a caricature. It is said that this scroll give various ideas and energy to both modern picture books and manga illustrators.



One of the scenes from “Chojugiga”

2. Kusazoushi: In Edo era, Akahon (Red Covered book, 1660s – 1710s), Kurohon (Black covered book), Aohon(1740s-), Kibyoushi (Yellow covered book, 1775-) were published.

In these books, picture books of old tales for children were included. Sizes were about 10 pp.

Examples:

Momotaro (Little Peach Boy)

Kachikachiyama (Kachi Kachi Mountain)

Shitakirisuzume (The Tongue-Cut Sparrow)

Sarukanigassen (The Crab and the Monkey)

Urashimataro (Urashima)

Hanasakajii (The Old Man Who Made the Dead Trees Blossom)



Sarukanigassen (The Crab and the Monkey) Emaki - Edo period

3. Meiji era (1868-)

3-1. Akahon: succeeding style of Edo era. They included old tales and warrior tales

3-2. Chirimenbon: using shrunken Japanese paper and multicolored printing

Japanese Fairy Tale Series (translated into English by European and American people) were published in Japan and some of them transported to European countries.

The contents are similar to the 2nd chapter.



'Chirimenbon' Japanese Fairy Tale Series

4. Translations:

After the SWW, Japanese publishers, writers and librarians went to USA and Britain to study children's books. Among them are Ms. Momoko Ishii, Ms. Kyoko Matsuoka and Mr. Shigeo Watanabe. All of them translated many English picture books into Japanese and contributed to establish public libraries in Japan.

5. 1950s--the beginning of modern picture books in Japan

5-1. Role of Iwanami Shoten and Fukuinkan Shoten (Publisher)

In 1953, Iwanami Shoten started publishing "Iwanami Children's Books." It contained mostly translated books from the USA, Britain, and European countries. Among them are The Little House, Pitschi, Curious George, The Story of Ferdinand the Bull, Ask Mr. Bear, Schlllen-Ursli, and so on. This series is still continuing.

Following the "Iwanami Children's Books", Fukuinkan Shoten started "Kodomotomo (Children's Friends) in 1956. This was a monthly and contained both Japanese and foreign authors and illustrators. The series is also still continuing.

The above mentioned two publishers greatly influenced Japanese children's publishing.

<Author-illustrator>

Suekichi Akaba/ *Kasajizou (Woven Hat Jizo)*

Yasuo Segawa, Masako Matsuno (retold)/ *Fushiginatakenoko (Taro and the Bamboo Shoot)*

Chiyoko Nakatani, Eriko Kishida (text)/ *Kabakun (Mother Hippo and a Little Hippo in the Zoo)*

Mitsumasa Anno / *Tabi no Ehon (Journey Book)*

Yuriko Omura (Yamawaki), Rieko Nakagawa (text)/ *Guri to Gura (Field Mice Named Guri & Gura)*

Kayako Nishimaki/ *Watashi no Wanpi-su (My One-piece)*

6. In and After the 1960s

The 1960s were the most energetic time for the publishing of Japanese children's books. New publishers took an active part in children's books. The following are my favorite authors:

<Author/Illustrator>

Shigeo Nishimura (ill.), Masamoto Nasu (text)/ *Hiroshima no Genbaku (Atomic Bomb in Hiroshima)*

Susumu Shingu/ *Ichigo (Strawberries)* * written in five languages: Japanese, English, French, German, and Italian.

Kazuo Iwamura/ *14 Hiki no Asagohan (Breakfast for Fourteen Field Mice)*

<Author/Poet/Translator>

Shuntaro Tanikawa/ *Maza-gu-su no Uta (The Songs of Mother Goose)*

Naoko Kudō/ *Noharauta (A Field Sing-A-Long)*

7. Help for Asian Countries publishing

Since 1990, Asian countries began to focus on children's books, and they wanted help to encourage the development of authors and illustrators and promote publishing. Ms. Kyoko Matsuoka (mentioned in chapter 4) and Mr. Tadashi Matsui (former CEO of Fukuinkan Shoten) poured much energy into these activities. Many Asian countries, especially Korea, have published unique and high-quality picture books after the 1990s.

II. Publication of Children's Books

8. Transition of picture books

According to the yearbook of publication, the number of new books is as follows, after the Second World War:

	Picture books	Children's books (%)	All books
1946	---	385 (11.1)	3,466
1950	---	1,408 (10.8)	13,009
1955	---	1,993 (15.3)	13,042
1960	---	1,176 (9.0)	13,122
1965	---	1,161 (8.2)	14,238
1970	---	1,407 (7.5)	18,754
1975	---	1,503 (6.6)	22,727
1980	856 (Y.1981)	2,102 (7.5)	27,891
1985	914	2,310 (7.4)	31,221
1990	965	2,986 (7.4)	40,576
1995	1,418	3,510 (6.0)	58,310
2000	1,269	3,334 (6.1)	65,065
2005	2,218	5,064 (6.5)	78,304
2009	---	4,813 (6.1)	78,501

With the upsurge in reading due to the reading campaigns in the 1970s, the number of publications became larger and larger, and it reached over 5,000 in 2005. It is relevant to all publications.

Recently, the number of picture books has increased, and over 2,000 picture books are published annually. However, there is a good demand for long-seller books and most new books end after the first printing.

Peekaboo by Miyoko Matsutani (text) and Yasuo Segawa (ill.) achieved over 4.45 million sales after the first printing in 1967, and *Guri and Gura* by Rieko Nakagawa (text) and Yuriko Omura (ill.) has achieved 4.25 million sales.

On the other hand, out-of-print books are republished according to the demand of librarians, Bunko staff, and others.

References:

History of Japanese Picture Books I, II, III – *Published by Minerva Shobou – Edited by Shin Torigoe*

Children's Library Services 1, 2 – *Published by Japan Library Association – Edited by various*