

Selections from NDL collections

## Comparing variations of a *chirimen* (crepe paper) book by Takejiro Hasegawa: "The Smiling Book" (2)

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### *The smiling book.*

Editor: Takejiro Hasegawa; [NDL Call No. B-248]

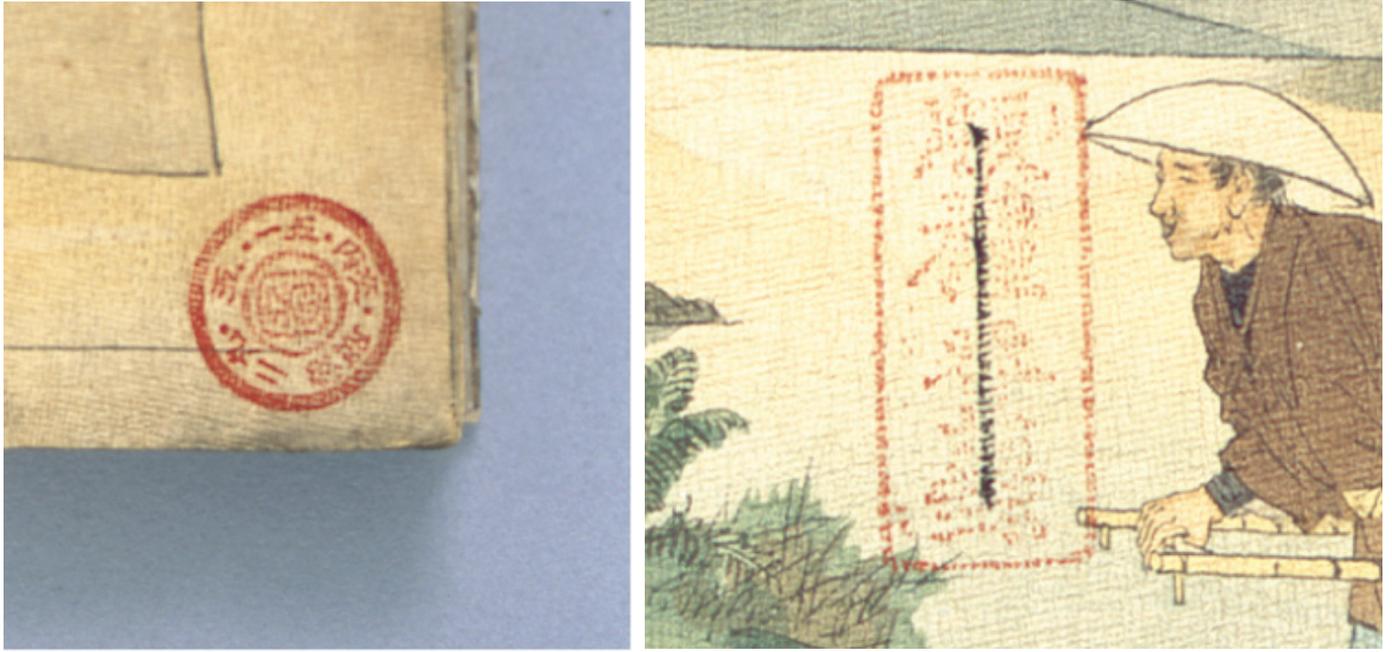
Published in 1896; One volume 17×22 cm, 26 pages

\*Available only on microfiche

In the June 2016 issue of the NDL Newsletter, we introduced *The Smiling Book*, a book of illustrations printed on *chirimen*, or Japanese crepe paper, published by Hasegawa Takejiro, through comparison with its draft copy, which we feel shows that *The Smiling Book* might have originally been intended to be an illustrated collection of quotations from various sources, including *Kokin wakashu*, an early anthology of Japanese poems, western poems, and Shakespeare's plays.

In this article, we will introduce another version of *The Smiling Book* that differs from the copy held at the NDL.

The version of *The Smiling Book* at the NDL was originally a part of the collection of the former Imperial Library. On one of its pages is a stamp showing that it was handed over from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Imperial Library on May 15, 1896 (left image below). On the front cover, there is another stamp stating that the publication rights to the book have been registered, but this has been crossed out with a vertical line. Thus, this book might have been deposited with the Ministry of Internal Affairs under the Copyright Law at that time as part of a report of copyrighted property.



From *The Smiling Book* held at the NDL

Although the multi-colored illustrations in Hasegawa's books are woodblock prints, the text varies and was inserted afterwards, some of it printed with movable type and some of it using a method similar to a stencil, called *kappa zuri* (合羽刷り). During the Edo period, copyright protection comprised the right to own the printing block used to publish a book. This might have led some people to believe that only the block-printed illustrations themselves were protected by copyright but not the text or other things inserted afterwards. If so, it would not be unreasonable for all three books—*Images Japonaises*, *Glimpses of Japan*, and *The Smiling Book*—to share the exact same colophon,<sup>1</sup> even though they were published at different times and with different text. Also, the copy of a book that publishers deposited for copyright registration often contained only the block-printed content. This might be one reason why the copy of *The Smiling Book* at the NDL has only a limited amount of text.

If this is true, there might be a copy of *The Smiling Book* somewhere that was sold with the same poems and verses as those in the newly discovered draft copy introduced in the last issue of the NDL Newsletter. We searched the collections of a number of other libraries, but the NDL was the only library in Japan with a copy of *The Smiling Book*. We then searched the collections of foreign libraries on [Worldcat](https://www.worldcat.org/),<sup>2</sup> and found four university libraries in the United States with a copy of *The Smiling*

*Book* by Lu Wheat.

Of these four copies, we were able to identify the front cover, the inside cover, and the colophon of three copies: the one held by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries (UWM Libraries), the one at the Vassar College Libraries, and the one at the Florida State University Strozier Library. In fact, we were able to see the full content of the copy held at the UWM Libraries, and thus deduced that the copies held at these three libraries closely resemble the draft copy owned by Nishiyama Yusaku, the grandson of Hasegawa.

These three copies, however, lack the description "Frank Hastings, Sole Agent, Yokohama, Japan," which appeared in the first page of the draft copy. What is more, under the words "copyright ownership" in the colophon, it says:

Author/Publisher: Hasegawa Takejiro, 10 Hiyoshi-cho,  
Kyobashi-ku, Tokyo City  
Illustrator: Suzuki Munetaro  
Printer: Komiya Yasu  
Printed in May 1, 1896  
Published in May 7, 1896

The printed and published dates are the exact same as the *Images Japonaises* and *Glimpses of Japan* held at the NDL.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The printed and published dates of *The Smiling Book* at the NDL differ from those of the other two books. The colophon of *The Smiling Book* says that it was printed on May 10 and published on May 20. It is assumed that, for some reason, the book was not submitted to the Ministry of Internal Affairs by May 7, the scheduled publish date, and so the description on the colophon was changed respectively.

<sup>2</sup> WorldCat is the world's largest library catalog website and supports integrated searches of more than 10,000 library collections form around the world. (<https://www.worldcat.org/>)

<sup>3</sup> Some researchers have pointed out that the actual year of publication for *Images Japonaises* is 1900, which disagrees with the

Meanwhile, as we compared the copy held at the UWM Libraries with the draft copy, we found that there were poems written on pages that did not have any text in the draft version:

### (1) pp.9-10

Whom would your cries, with artful calumny,  
Accuse of scatt'ring the pale cherry-flow'rs?  
'Tis your own pinions flitting through these bow'rs  
That raise the gust which makes them fall and die!

This is an English translation of a *waka* poem by a Buddhist priest named Sosei, included in the spring section of the *Kokin Wakashu*. It was translated by Basil Hall Chamberlain and was published in page 119 of *The Classical poetry of the Japanese* (Trübner, 1880). In the original foreword, it is written that the theme of the poem is the song of a bush warbler. Since the bush warbler is closely associated with the beginning of spring, the flowers which appear in the original poem are most likely to be plum blossoms. However, cherry blossoms appear

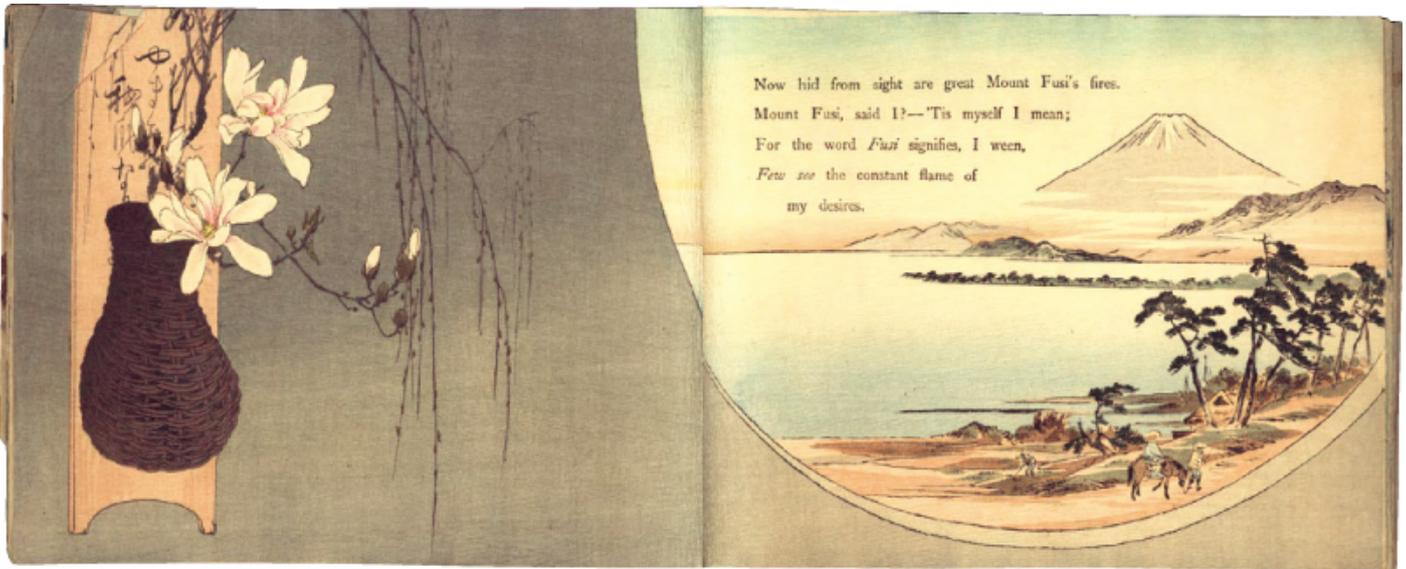
in the translated version instead. There are no flowers visible in the illustrations, and the leaves are colored in brown. The bird also appears to be larger than a bush warbler.

### (2) pp.17-18

On page 18, an illustration of Mt. Fuji is accompanied by a poem printed in movable type:

Now hid from sight are great Mount Fusi's fires.  
Mount Fusi, said I? — 'Tis myself I mean;  
For the word Fusi signifies, I ween,  
Few see the constant flame of my desires.

A strip of paper with a *waka* poem written is visible behind a vase of flowers. From the printed words and the English translation on page 18, it is assumed to be a poem from the *Kokin Wakashu*. This translation is included on page 127 of *The Classical poetry of the Japanese* (Trübner, 1880).



Pages 17-18 of *The Smiling Book*

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By comparing the draft version and the copies of *The Smiling Book* that differ from the one at the NDL, we were able to deduce that *The Smiling Book* was originally scheduled to be published in 1895, and was probably published before *Images Japonaises* and *Glimpses of Japan*, which share the same illustrations and colophon. It was published not as a collection of illustrations but as a collection of translations of *waka* poems, English poems and verses, and lines from stage plays accompanied by illustrations which derived from the images of the text.

Meanwhile, Tsuneaki Oba, a researcher of the poet Emile Verhaeren, comments as below:

Hasegawa requested Verhaeren to write poems in 1898. It is assumed that Hasegawa sent Verhaeren the illustrations with some blank space left out for writing in Verhaeren's poems as captions, the same illustrations used in *The Smiling Book*. (Oba, p. 103)  
It is possible that, based on Oba's comments, the wood-

date of 1896 in the colophon. Oba compared the copy of *Images Japonaises* at the Royal Library of Belgium with that at the Yokohama Port Opening Memorial Hall and determined from differences in the illustrations on pages 19 and 20 as well as from Hasegawa's home address that the former was exhibited at the Paris Expo in 1900, and the latter was published sometime after 1911, when Hasegawa moved to Kaminegishi.

block prints sent to Verhaeren were originally illustrated on the themes of other poems and were accompanied by different poems when published as *Images Japonaises*, a book in French that included poems and illustrations. The illustrations by a Japanese artist which derived from Shakespeare's lines might have been perceived by Verhaeren as simply depicting Japanese scenery. This is an extremely interesting case to look at from the perspective of comparative cultural studies.

Although the illustrations in *The Smiling Book*, *Images Japonaises*, and *Glimpses of Japan* all seem to be the same at first glance, there are some differences, such as in the patterns of the kimonos and the details of the flowers and scenery. Since the origin of these three books is still unclear, further examination of dissimilarities in the colophons is necessary.

In conclusion, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to: Nishimiya Yusaku, who granted us

permission to present the content of the draft copy of *The Smiling Book*; Ms. Kuniko McVey of the Harvard-Yenching Library; Mr. Max Yela of the UWM Libraries; and Ms. Lee Wagner of the University of Wisconsin-Washington County Library; Mr. Dean M. Rogers of the Vassar College Libraries; and Mr. Stuart Rochford of the Florida State University Strozier Library, who kindly offered help in comparing the pictures of the different copies. We would also like to thank everyone who contributed to the publication of this article.

#### Related articles on the National Diet Library Newsletter:

- [Japan's image transmitted abroad: Picture books by Hasegawa Takejiro](#) (No. 198, February 2015)
- [Comparing variations of a chirimen \(crepe paper\) book by Takejiro Hasegawa: "The Smiling Book" \(1\)](#) (No. 206, June 2016)



The colophon of *The Smiling Book* held at the NDL