



History of older Japanese books and the Oslo University Library's collection

Japan-Norway Society

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University of Oslo Library

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Program

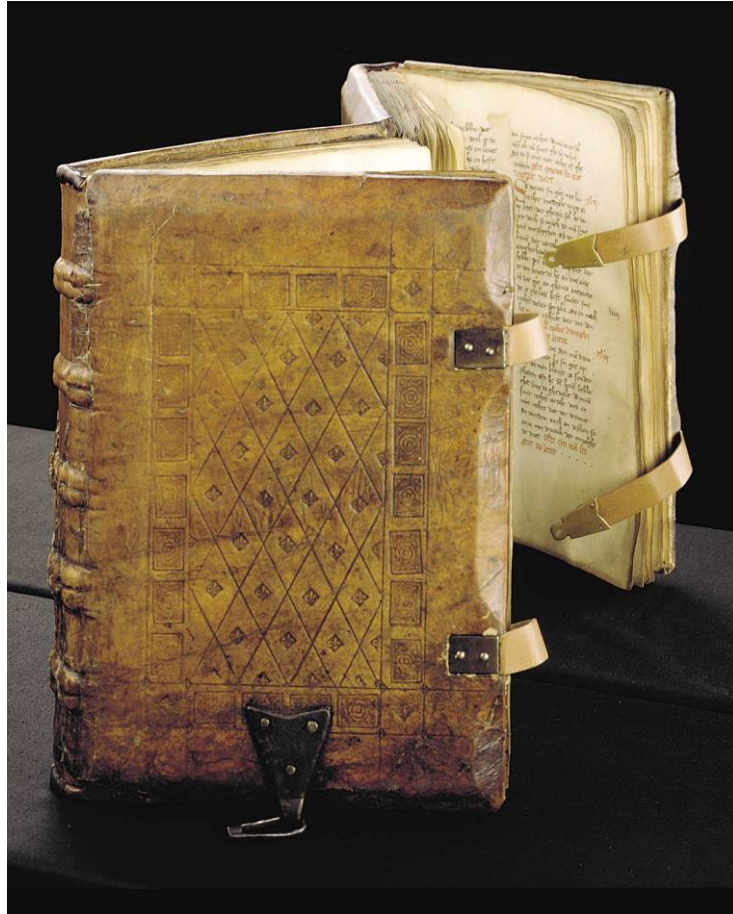
- Media? Stone, parchment, ceramics, papyrus, wood, bamboo, **paper** and screen.
- Japanese book history: a short glimpse
- Woodblock books in Edo period

Break

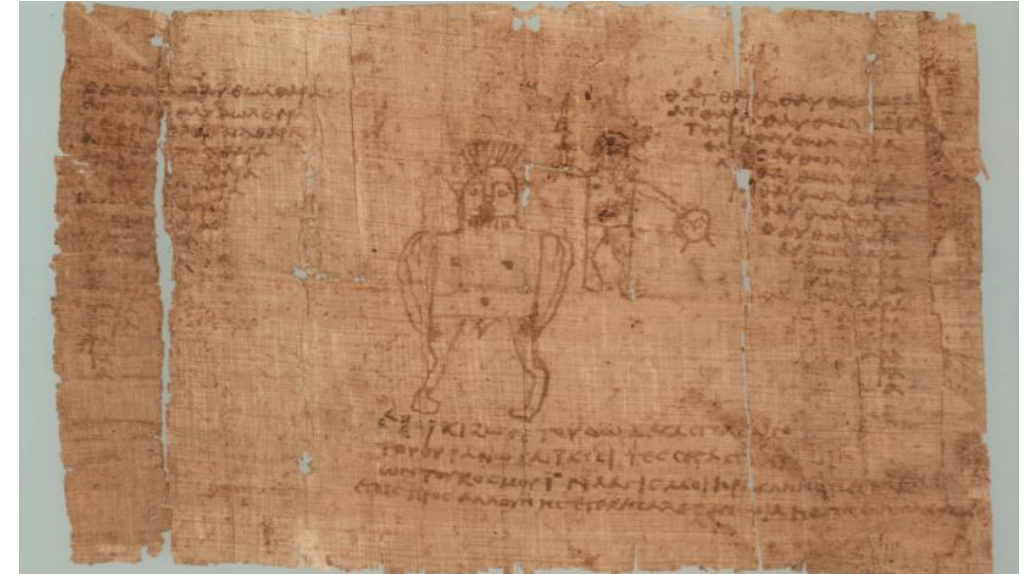
- Older Japanese books at the University of Oslo Library



Parchment and papyrus in West/Middle east



Wikimedia



<https://www.ub.uio.no/bibliotekene/humsam/samlinger/papyrus.html>

Wood and bamboo slips in East Asia

Mokkan 木簡 = wood tabels/slips in Japan

Chikukan 竹簡 = bamboo slips in China

Cai Lun 蔡倫 (63-121) improved paper making process around 105

In China around 3rd century, in Japan around 8th century, paper replaced mokkan and chikukan gradually.



<https://bunka.nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/144824>



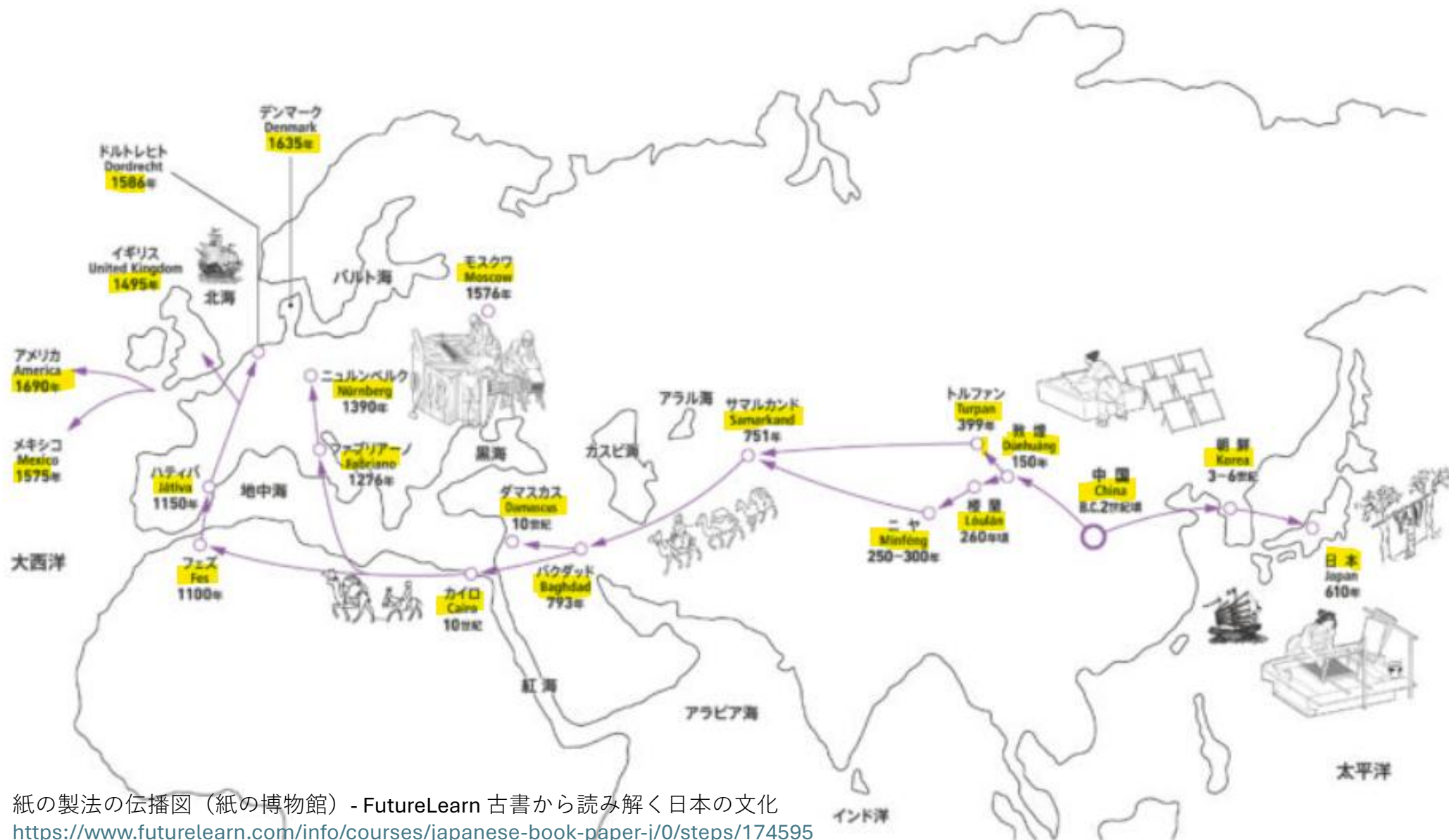
<https://www.osaka-up.or.jp/book.php?isbn=978-4-87259-475-1>



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cai_Lun

紙の製法の伝播図(中国から東方と西方への紙の伝わり)

Illustration of the dissemination of the paper manufacturing process (starting in China, then moving east and west)



Japanese book history: a short glimpse

- Hyakumantô darani/百万塔陀羅尼



= One million Pagodas and Dharani prayers

764-770, oldest dated printed material.

Pagodas ca. 21cm x 11cm.

Sutra – four types



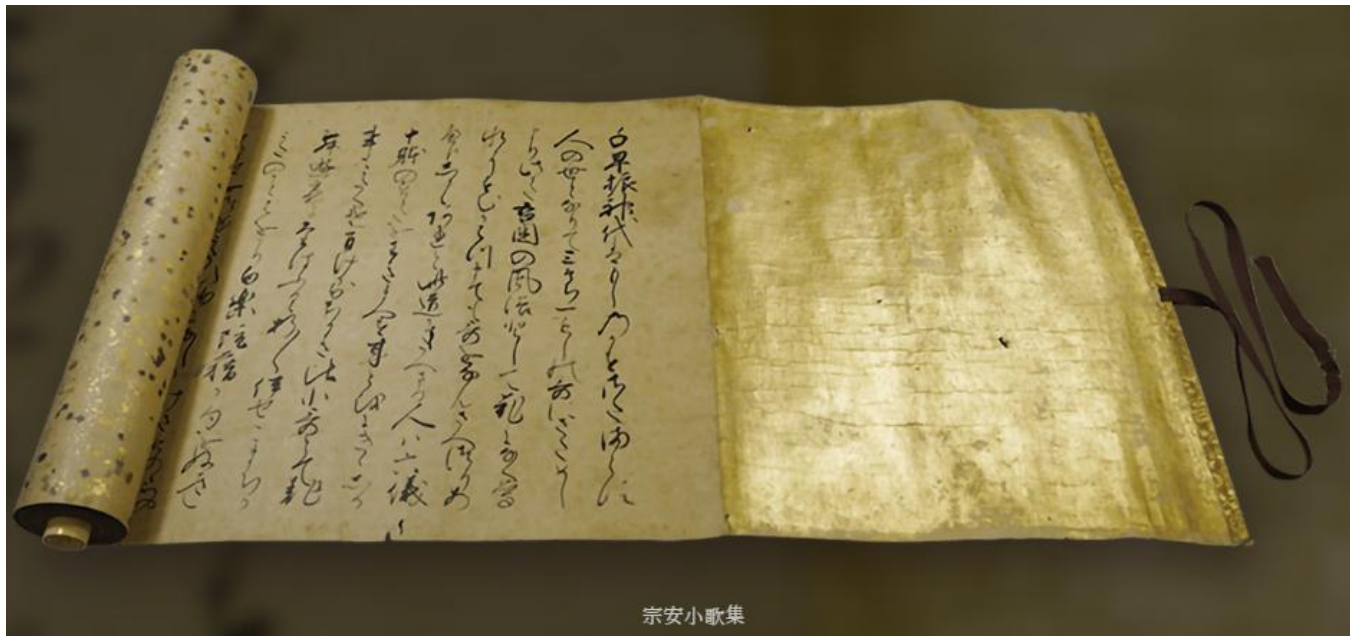
Writing on paper

- Religious writings – buddhist texts – sutra
- Document from 8th century shows:
Copying the sutra was hard work, poorly paid...
- Heian period – sutra copying became more of a religious activity



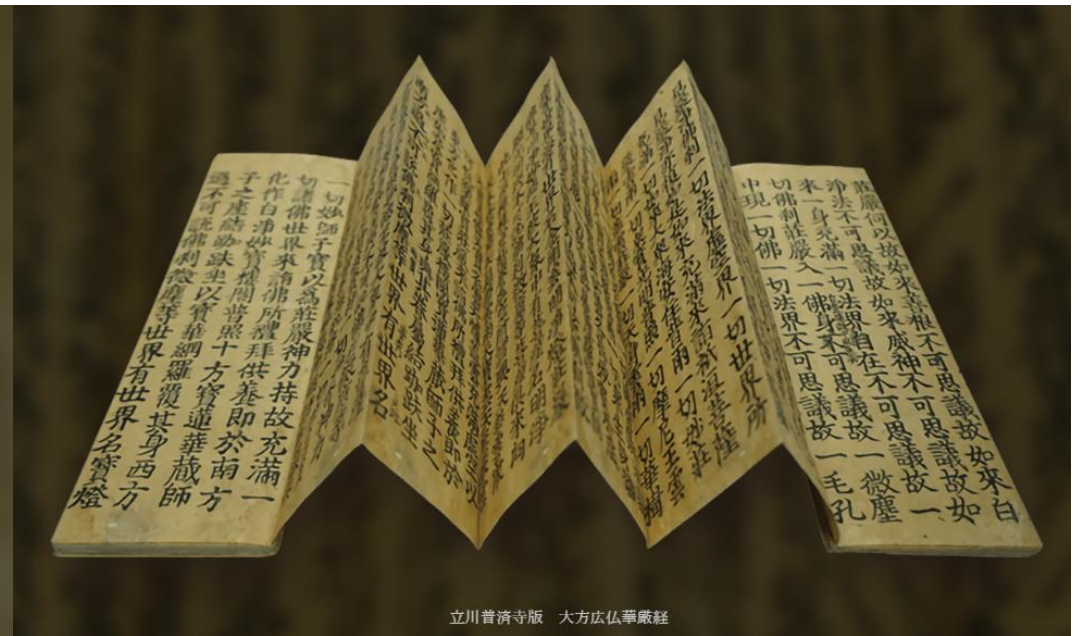
National Museum of Japanese History

Scroll – Makimono, Kansu bon 巻物 卷子本



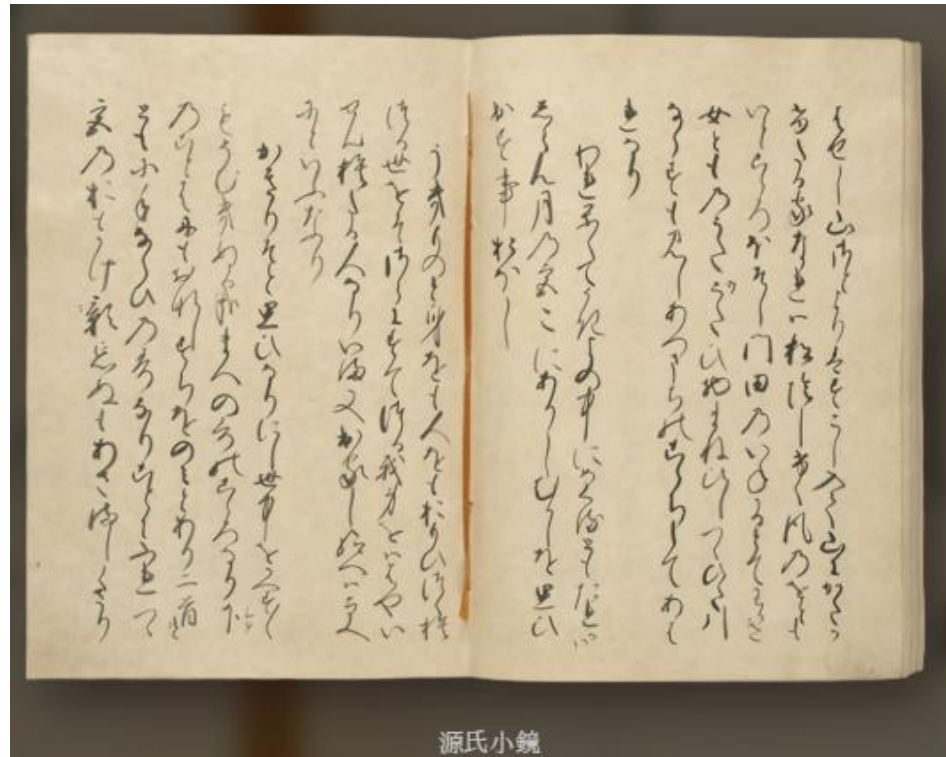
宗安小歌集

Folding book – Orihon 折本



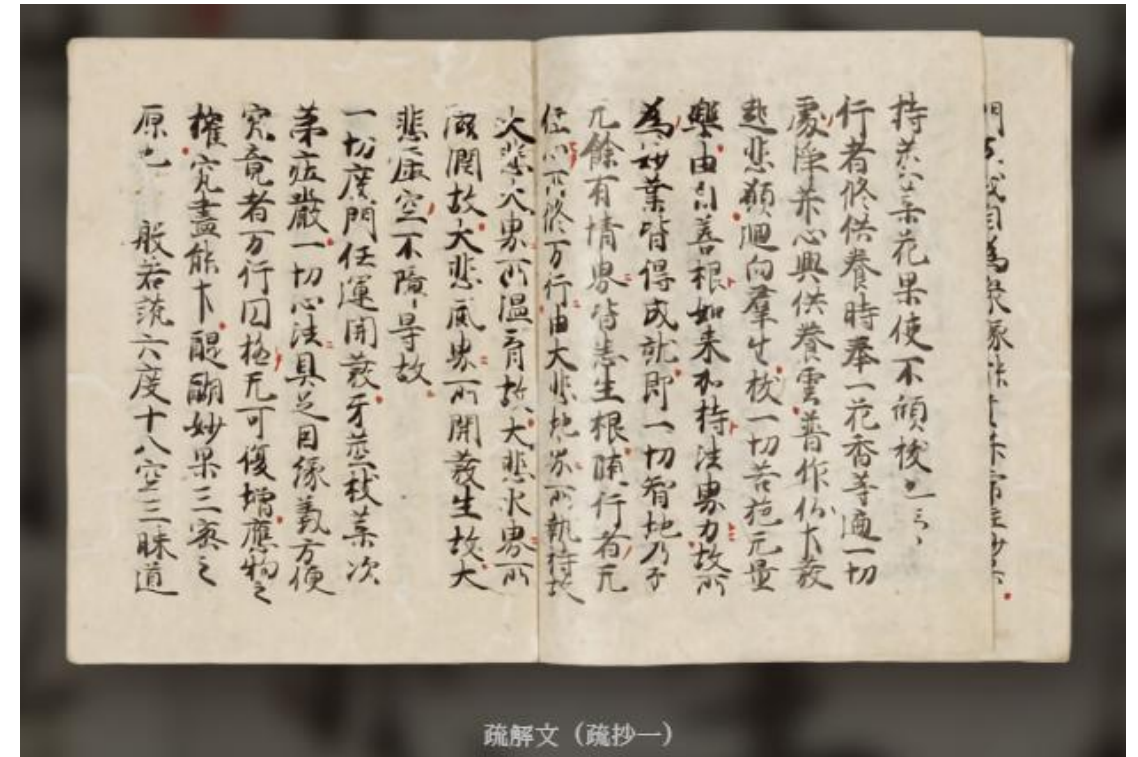
立川普濟寺版 大方広仏華嚴經

Recchôsô 列帖装



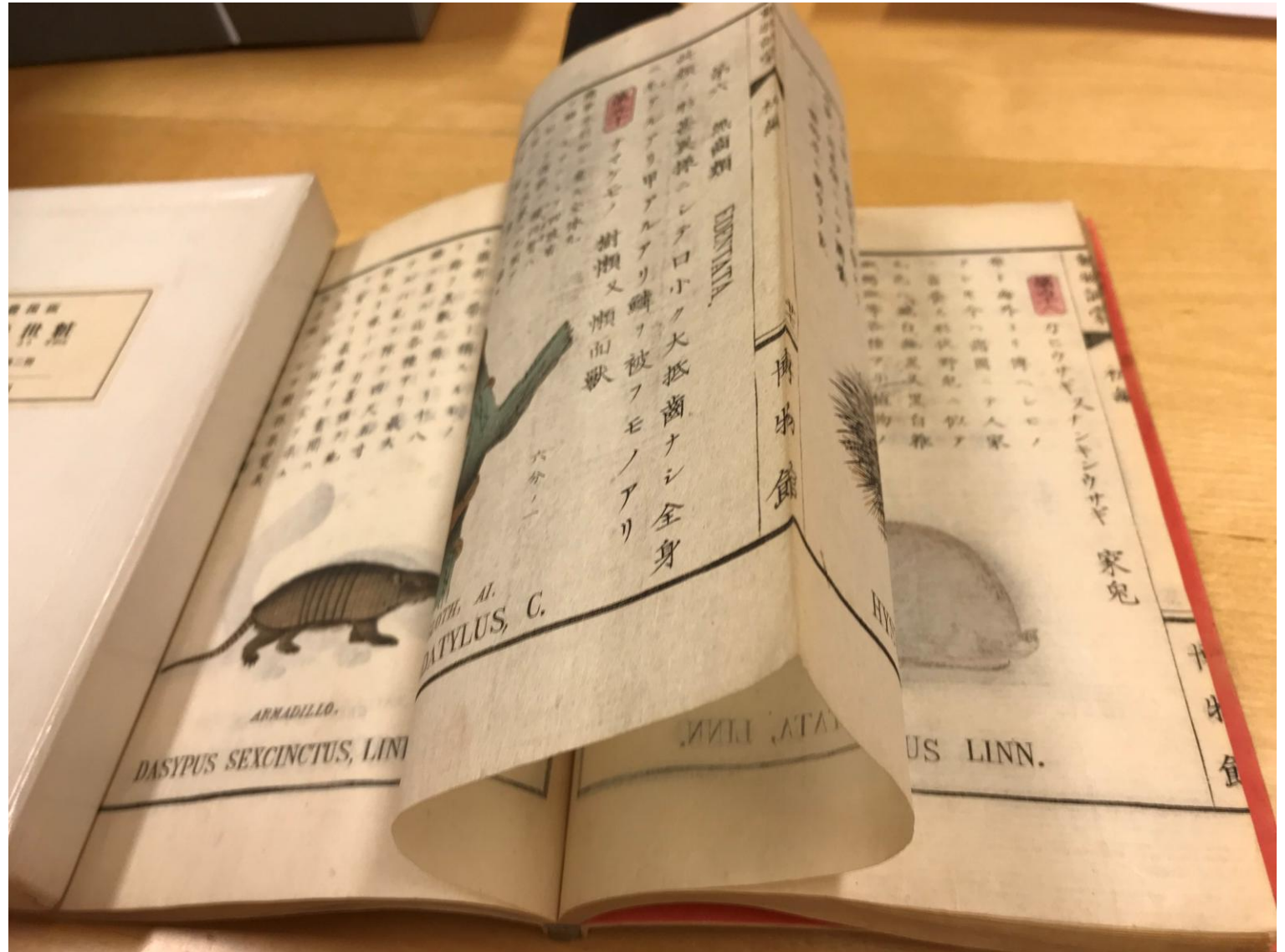
源氏小鏡

Decchôsô 粘葉装



疏解文（疏抄一）

Fukurotoji 袋綴



Kokatsuji 古活字 (old movable type in Japan)

Used from 16th century to the
early 17th century in Japan.
Came from:

- Europe (1590, Gutenberg press) – adopted and used by missionaries
- Korea (Imjin war 1596/97) – used to make exclusive books like Saga-bon instead of hand writings

Woodblock printing

- Movable types more or less replaced by already existing woodblock printing
- Used mostly for Buddhism texts before Edo period
- Edo period – peace and economical growth broadened publishing to include leisure literature
- Peaceful period – reading ability increase
- In Kyoto many temples already had publishing activities – spread to Osaka, Edo and small local cities
- Emerging production of leisure books to common people



<https://www.nijl.ac.jp/etenji/washo/exhibition/1-6/index.html#show>



<https://www.tosho-bunko.jp/column/research/column07.html>



[Utagawa Yoshiiku](#) (1833–1904) Brooklyn museum, public domain
Wikimedia

A textbook for elementary school from the Edo period



Multiple layers color printing



1. 本藍で主版を摺る



2. 黄色で船を摺り、次に空の黄色を摺る



3. 船に淡墨を重ね、次に空に淡墨を重ねる



4. 墨色をぼかし摺りする



5. 波の淡藍を摺る



6. 波をベロ藍(明るい色調の藍)で摺って完成

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<https://takahashi-kobo.com/edomokuhanga/technique/process/>

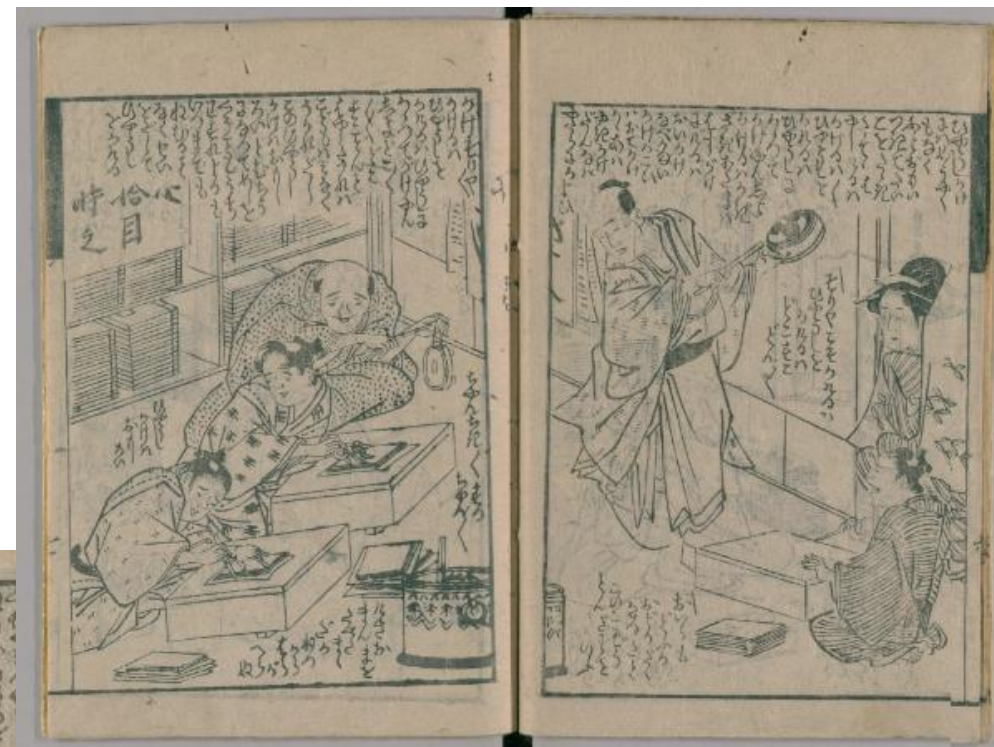
Process of the layers:
UKIYOE MOKUHANGA / PRINTER KENJI TAKENAKA
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DQbcvGkcpYF/?igsh=MTdycGpobmJteHM4bg%3D%3D> 竹中木版 竹筴堂

Tōri Sanjin (author), Katsukawa Shunsen (illustrator)
 The Golden mast of the treasure ship
 「宝船黄金の帆柱」 1818
 From Exhibition «Manga Hokusai Manga»



Gōkan 合巻





Jippensha ikku author and illustrator
 Atariya shitajihon doiya
 的中地本間屋 (あたりやしただほんどいや)
 1802

Edo meisho zue 江戸名所図会 1834-1836



Shôkaku anagakumon 倡客竅学問, 1802



Esôshi mise
絵さうし見世

Edo to Meiji - adopting new printing technique

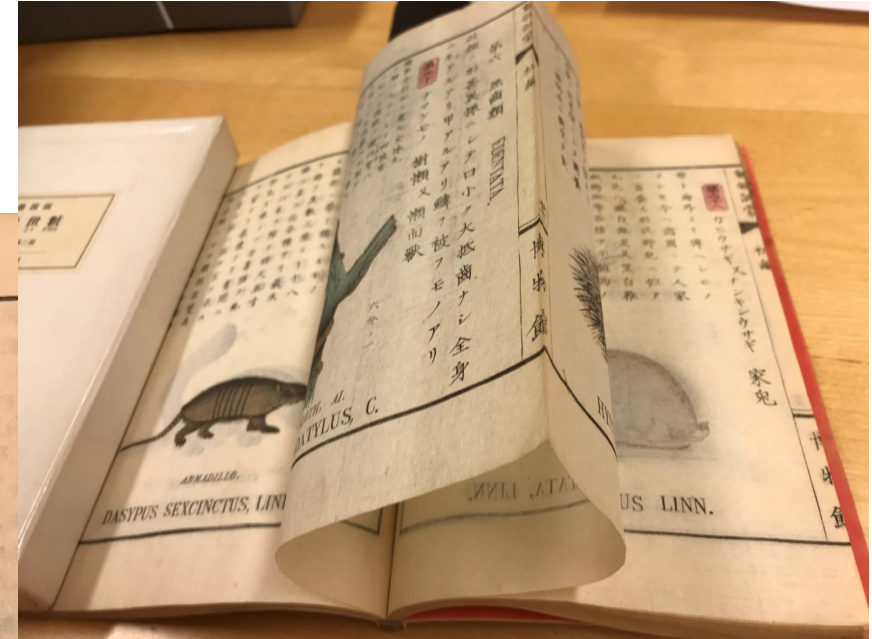
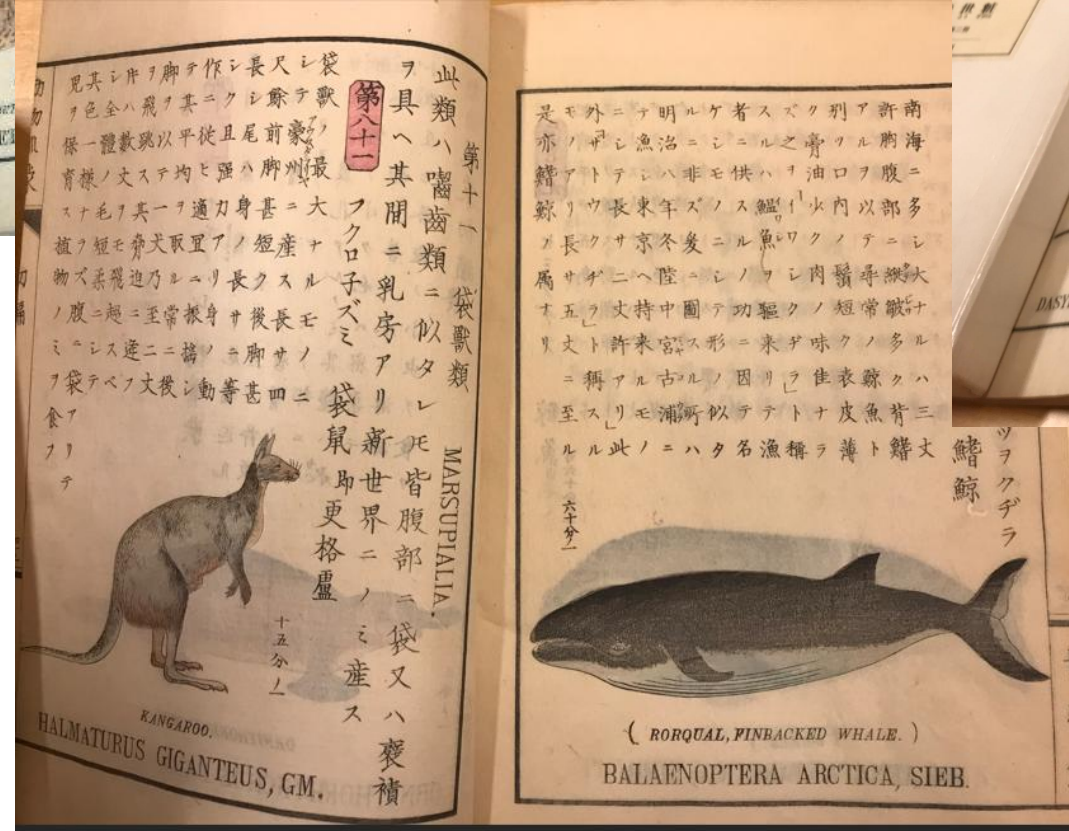
- Until around 1900, woodblock printing was used especially in teaching and illustrated material for schools. Easier to combine illustration and text and reasonable to publish
- Printing of illustration techniques developed gradually and woodblock was replaced by modern printing – printing on both side of paper, a lot of information per page, quick, quantity, precise, and cheap

Older Japanese books in the Oslo University Library

- Around 70 titles, more than 50 titles from Edo period (1603-1868), others are from Meiji(1868-1912) and Taisho (1912-1926) period.
- Most of them are «[fukuro-toji](#)»
袋綴じ
- Theme of books: dictionaries, religion, popular literature, botanics, metalworks, flower arrangements, pictures, etc...



『動物訓蒙』, 1875 Tokyo University Library
https://www.lib.u-tokyo.ac.jp/html/tenjikai/josetsu/2005_04/gazo/T86_96_1.jpg



Selected digitalized Japanese elder books from our collection

Wakan sansai zue 和漢三才図会 1715? Encyclopedia

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/13vfukn/BIBSYS_ILS71511889940002201

Kwai 花彙 1759 Botany

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71542109620002201

Kannongyo hayayomi eshō 観音經早読絵抄 1748? 1790? Buddhism for children and women

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/13vfukn/BIBSYS_ILS71490406620002201

Kwaitai shinsho 解体新書 1774 anatomy, translation from Dutch «*Ontleedkundige Tafelen*»

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71461572460002201

Bokuchiku shinan 墨竹指南 1821 Painting bamboo

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71721014690002201

Koromo no ka 衣の香 1825? Flower arrangement

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/13vfukn/BIBSYS_ILS71722502020002201



Zattai gafu 雑体画譜 山水, 花鳥 ca. 1820-40? Copy of paintings, hand drawings

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71542759400002201

Fugō senshi 符号泉志 1827 Chinese coins

<https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:565907>

Hokusai gafu 北斎画譜 ca. 1840 Illustrations

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71722471800002201

Sōken bikō 装剣備考 1846 Swords

<https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:554692>

Yumiharizuki 弓張月 1861 Novel

<https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:565906>

Buyū sakigake zue 武勇魁圖會 1868? Famous people from Japanese history

https://bibsysalmaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/13vfukn/BIBSYS_ILS71722764560002201

Momotaro Chirimenbon 1896 In Swedish, souvenir book for foreigners in Meiji-period

https://bibsys-almaprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/8ger6o/BIBSYS_ILS71497046100002201

Not digitalized

Tōsho jii 頭書字彙 ??? Dictionary

Ehon taikōki 絵本太閤記 1798-99 Novel about Toyotomi Hideyoshi

Tokai setuyō hyakkatū 都会節用百家通 1801 Encyclopedia

Morokoshi meishō zue 唐土名勝図会 1802 Famous Chinese destinations

Eidai setsuyō mujinzō 永代節用無尽蔵 1809 Encyclopedia

Tōdō ihitsu 桃洞遺筆 1850 Botany and zoology by Ohara Tōdō

Ehon toyotomi kunkōki 絵本豊臣勲功記 1857-1860 Novel about Toyotomi Hideyoshi

Hokusai manga 北斎万画 illustrations by Hokusai

Dōbutsu kunmō 動物訓蒙 Zoology school textbook in Meiji-period

Jinjō shogakkō tokuhon 尋常小学校読本 Reader, school textbook in Meiji-period

Resources

[Eldre japansk litteratur](#)

By University of Oslo Library

[Washo no samazama](#) 和書のさまざま

By National Institute of Japanese Literature

[Bound by tradition Fukuro-toji](#)

By University of Hawai'i, Manoa

