Western Knowledge in Translation


Vaccination

1. HIROSE, Genkyo, ed. [From the title]: Shintei gyuto kiho; [from the Preface]: Shintei
Following the general introduction of vaccination by Edward Jenner, the practice spread widely, and it was warmly received by the Chinese. The first tract on vaccination in China was prepared by Alexander Pearson, a surgeon to the East India Company, and was based on Jenner’s books. It was translated into Chinese by Sir George Staunton and published in Canton in 1805 as *Yingjili-guo Xinchu Zhongtou Qishu* [Novel Book on the New Method of Inoculation, Lately out of England]. There were numerous editions in China and Keisuke Ito published a version in Japan in 1841.

This is the first edition to be edited by Hirose (1821-70), a physician trained in the Dutch tradition of medicine and a prolific translator of Dutch medical works. It is printed in Chinese, with Japanese reading marks, and contains Hirose’s Preface, a summary of the practice of vaccination, Pearson’s translated text, and numerous notes by Hirose added to the text. Hirose issued the book to ensure that the newly introduced method of vaccination was correctly performed in Japan.

The fine woodcut illustrations depict the vaccination knife, the doctor removing material from lesions of one patient and inoculating another patient, and containers for storing the virus.

This is a very rare book; WorldCat locates one copy outside of Japan.

Very good copy. One leaf is a little soiled and a modern annotator has made several careful notes on several pages in both black and red ink.


---

First edition to be published in Japan of a quite fascinating book. Hobson (1816-73), after studying medicine at University College, London, served with the London Missionary Society in China. Hobson arrived in Macao in 1839 and spent about twenty years in China in hospitals in Macao, Hong Kong, Canton and Shanghai. He was a pioneer in proposing the establishment of a medical school in Hong Kong for Chinese students and wrote many books, including an English/Chinese medical dictionary.

A serious student of the Chinese language, Hobson also wrote in Chinese a series of four original medical books with two Chinese collaborators: Outline of Anatomy and Physiology (Quanti xin lun, 1850), First Lines of the Practice of Surgery in the West (Xiyi lieluun, 1857), Practice of Medicine and Materia Medica (Neike xinshuo, 1858), and the present work (1858). These books were not translations of individual European medical works but entirely new and unique distillations of what Hobson considered to be the best in Western medicine. They were widely used within the Chinese missionary medical schools for the rest of the century.

Their immediate success caused the present work to be quickly published in Japan as well. A copy had been presented by one of Hobson’s Chinese assistants to the Japanese publisher Fukuchi who added the Japanese reading marks and issued it in Tokyo for the Japanese market in 1859. Vol. I deals with conception, pregnancy, and birth. The second volume is concerned with pediatric medicine.

The fine woodcuts depict many views of the pelvic girdle, the fetus in utero, and birth positions.

Fine set.

3. HUXHAM, John. Taisei netsubyoron [An Essay on Fevers]. Translated by Shigenori Yoshida (or Choshuku). Four full-page woodcut illus. of distillation equipment. 51; 41; 20; 36; 49; 62 folding leaves. Seven parts in six vols. Large 8vo, orig. green wrappers, orig. block-printed title labels on upper covers, new stitching. Edo, Kyoto, & Osaka: Suharaya ihachi et al., 1814. $2750.00

First edition in Japanese, translated by Shigenori Yoshida from an unknown Dutch
translation, of Huxham’s best-known work, *An Essay on Fevers* (1st.: 1750). In this work, Huxham (1692-1768), who studied under Boerhaave, “gave careful and original observations of many infectious diseases, differentiating, in particular, between the ‘putrid malignant’ and the ‘slow nervous’ fevers, that is, between typhus and typhoid. Huxham devised the familiar tincture of cinchona bark with which his name is associated.”–Garrison, *History of Medicine*, pp. 360-61.

The translator, Yoshida (1779-1824), a court doctor for the Kaga fiefdom, had studied Dutch and Chinese medicine and practiced at the Kaga fiefdom mansion in Edo. In the final volume, he has provided an addendum containing his own commentaries and descriptions of various original medicines.

Fine set and rare; WorldCat lists no copy in North America.

*Woodcuts of the Organs of the Body in Color*

4. KOSAKA, Eisho (or Gen’yu). *Jing xue zuan yao* [trans. in Japanese: *Keiketsu san’yo*; trans.: *Chinese & Japanese Acupuncture explained*]. Numerous fine woodcut illus. (18 of which are finely handcolored). 48 (irregularly paginated); 33; 39; 26; 28, 3 folding leaves. Five vols. 8vo, orig. wrappers (some worming in upper margin of each vol.), orig. block printed title label on each upper cover, new stitching. Edo: Mankyudo Hanabusa Heikichi, [Preface dated 1810]. $8500.00

First edition of one of the three most important early Japanese books on the history and technique of Chinese and Japanese acupuncture. This work is very different from all earlier Chinese and Japanese books on the subject. For the first time, the illustrations are finely and realistically rendered and are anatomically accurate, clearly influenced by European medical works which had circulated in Japan. Another important aspect of this book is that eighteen of the woodcuts, each depicting organs of the body, are finely handcolored. Also, the body is described in full, from head to foot, and is not entirely dependent on the fourteen
Kosaka was a court physician of the fiefdom of Kameyama, who had studied under the famous physician Motonori Taki (1731-1801), who was himself a member of a distinguished family of doctors.

The publisher of this work was the exclusive publisher for the government sponsored medical school.

Very good set.

**The First Japanese Exposition on the Whole System of Human Anatomy, Based upon Original Observation**

5. MITANI, Soshu. *Kaitai hatsumo* [trans: *Explanation of Human Anatomy*]. Many fine woodcuts printed in color. Five vols. 8vo, orig. patterned wrappers (some occasional worming, mostly confined to the margins), orig. block-printed title labels on upper covers, new stitching. Osaka: Kawachiya Mohei & others, First Foreword dated 1810 [published in 1813]. $30,000.00

First edition of this important anatomical work which collects the records of three dissections performed in Kyoto in 1783, 1798, and 1802. The author explains them based on theories of both traditional Chinese medicine as well as Western medicine.

“A Japanese treatise on anatomy and anatomical dissection in five volumes was published in 1813 by Shoshui or Boku or Koki Mitani (1774-1823) with the title *Kaitai hatsumo*. This was not the first original Japanese work on dissection, since priority in that respect had been established by the appearance in 1759 of the Zo-shi of Toyo Yamawaki. But that earlier work was short and its illustrative material limited to a few crude drawings of the viscera. *Kaitai*
hatsumo appears, however, to be the first Japanese exposition on the whole system of human anatomy, based upon original observation (including dissection) and knowledge of other anatomical works. An inserted advertisement for this book [not present in this and many other copies] is translated to read as follows: ‘This book is Kaitai hatsumo, on some new Dutch theories and moreover some dissections of a real dead body to make it sure. And it has become clear that the Dutch theories are right and the traditional Japanese and Chinese theories which [have been] with us for 3000 years are quite wrong.’ (Somehow one gets here the impression of a persistent reluctance to relinquish the traditional anatomical beliefs in favor of the European knowledge which had come into Japan. After all, the gross inaccuracies of the traditional teachings had been firmly established by the work of Gempaku Sugita and his friends in the previous century)…

“Scattered throughout the text of Kaitai hatsumo is a series of anatomical plates printed in color. These drawings were very well executed, and illustrate the following structures: thoracic and abdominal viscera, in situ; the lungs, with a careful dissection of the bronchial tree; the heart; the diaphragm; the spleen; the stomach; the liver and gall bladder; the kidneys, with their blood supply, and the ureters; the urogenital system, in male and female, with the plexus of veins draining testes and ovaries; the uterus, with Fallopian tubes and ovaries (the ovaries are shown as contained within the uterine tubes); the urinary bladder in the male, with testes and accessory organs of reproduction (seminal vesicles, prostate), and penis; the small and large intestines, with the vermiform appendix; the blood supply to the intestine through the mesentery; the pancreas; a schematic diagram of the lymphatics (called ‘water-ducts’) associated with the small intestine (the function of the lymphatics, it was believed, was to control blood volume of the body); the general vascular system of the entire body; the system of spinal nerves; and, finally, the gross appearance of the brain…

“The last volume of Kaitai hatsumo is in the form of an appendix, written by one of Mitani’s pupils named Konsei Minamoto. This work was of sufficient historical importance to be entirely reprinted in a facsimile edition as recently as 1930.”–Mestler, *A Galaxy of Old Japanese Medical Books with Miscellaneous Notes on Early Medicine in Japan Part I. Medical History and Biography. General Works. Anatomy. Physiology and Pharmacology*, pp. 316-18.

Fine set preserved in a chitsu.


First edition in Japanese of this collection of translations from a variety of Western ophthalmological texts. NLM suggests the author was Paul Silex (1858-1929), but this is clearly impossible. The present work is the earliest work published in Japan on Western techniques in ophthalmology, preceding the *Ika zensho ganka-hen* of 1879 (see Mestler, *A Galaxy of Old Japanese Medical Books*, IV, p. 336.

The attractive plates, all finely hand-colored, depict ophthalmological instruments and a series of surgical procedures.

Fine and fresh set.

“Important”

7. PLENCK (or PLENK), Joseph Jacob, Ritter von. *Yoka shinsen* [trans.: *New Selection on Surgery*]. 37; 22; 17; 25; 21 folding leaves. Five vols. 8vo, orig. wrappers, orig. block-printed title labels on upper covers, new stitching. Edo, Osaka, & Kyoto: 1832. $5500.00
First edition in Japanese and an important book. “Kincho or Rikkyo [or Rikkei or Ryukei] Sugita (1786-1846), the son of the famous Gempaku Sugita, published a work in five volumes in 1830 [this is wrong or a typo; the correct date is 1832] entitled Yoka shinsen, which was a translation of [the Dutch translation] of Joseph Jakob von Plenck’s Compendium institutionum chirurgicarum… (Viennae: R. Graeffer, 1780). The Yoka shinsen was important as the first complete translation of a Dutch surgical work into the Japanese language.”–Mestler, A Galaxy of Old Japanese Medical Books. III, p. 157.

Vols. I and II are concerned with tumors; Vol. III with ulcers; Vol. IV with wounds; and the fifth volume deals with pharmacology. In this volume, many of the drugs appear with Latin and Dutch names and Japanese translations.

Plenck (1738-1807), a member of the Viennese School, was, at one time or another, professor of chemistry, botany, surgery, anatomy, and obstetrics at the Joseph Academy at Vienna.

Fine fresh set.

Sugimoto & Swain, Science & Culture in Traditional Japan, p. 386–“the crucial work on surgery was Yoka shinsen (New selections on surgery) by Sugita Ryukei (1786-1845; Genpaku’s son by a mistress), which was printed in 1832.”

The Treatment of Infections

8. TAKEBE, Yu. Happo dano ko [trans.: Study of Drainage from Western Medicine]. Seven full-page woodcuts & a few smaller text illus. 49 folding leaves. 8vo, orig. wrappers, orig. title label on upper cover with title in manuscript, modern stitching. Wakayama: Kasedaya Hiemon et al., 1818. $2950.00

First edition of Takebe’s translation and commentary of Lorenz Heister’s writings on infections and their treatment. Heister (1683-1758), wrote one of the best and most complete works on surgery of the 18th century. Translated into Japanese, it was enormously successful, introducing Western methods to many Japanese surgeons.

Takebe (1782-1842), a samurai, has included here all of Heister’s writings on infections and has provided a number of his own cases histories. A number of pharmaceutical recipes are described including aloe (the plant is illustrated on two pages). Methods of lancing are illustrated along with a number of Western surgical instruments.

Very nice copy.
9. TANABE, Ryosuke (or Yoshisuke), trans. & editor. *Furansu keihofei teishiki* [Light Infantry in the French Style]. 28 folding engraved plates. 74; 86; 60; 35 folding leaves. Four vols. Oblong 8vo, orig. patterned wrappers, orig. block-printed title labels on upper covers, new stitching. Tokyo: Government Publication issued under the Author's name [Yosoda Masayoshi, a pen name for Tanabe], 1869. $2500.00

First edition in Japanese, translated from an unidentified French text, which, according to the Preface, was issued in 1863, with a sequel in 1867. Tanabe also states that this work includes information gained from the French military mission of 17 men (four officers, ten non-commissioned officers, and two soldiers, led by staff captain Charles Sulpice Jules Chanoine), who came to Japan in early 1867 at the request of the Japanese Shogunate for training in Western warfare. Several of these men became deeply involved in Japanese politics, unsuccessfully fighting on the side of the Shogunate.

Tanabe wrote several works on military subjects, including military formations (1865), a glossary of French military terms with Japanese translations (1867), military gymnastics and training exercises (1868), and our work. This is a complete work on infantry drills and tactics, including training of new soldiers, how to form tactical units and deploy them effectively, how to operate a variety of weapons, etc. The fine copper-engraved plates depict military formations, tactical positions, military stances, etc. Fine set.

"An Outstanding Achievement"

10. YAMAWAKI, Toyo. *Zoshi, narabini furoku* [trans.: On the Viscera]. Four finely handcolored full-page woodcuts in the text. 40 folding leaves; 44 folding leaves. Two vols. 8vo, orig. wrappers (minor rubbing), orig. block printed title labels on upper covers, new stitching. Kyoto: Yojuin, 1759. $50,000.00

First edition of the first book to describe the first officially sanctioned dissection in Japan. Until the 18th century, Japanese medicine closely followed Chinese practices which did not regard anatomy as relevant to pathology or therapy. Additionally, there were strong social pressures against the use of dissections for medical research.

Yamawaki (1705-62), a member of one of the greatest medical families of Japan, studied traditional medicine under both Goto Gonzan and Kagawa Shuan but was far more interested in what could be achieved on an empirical basis. He developed a healthy skepticism toward the theories of the internal organs as used in Chinese medicine and wanted to know more about the structure of the human body and the functions of its organs.
“Toyo’s opportunity came in 1754 when five thieves were executed in Kyoto, and three medical men from Obama fief asked for and received, for the first time, official permission to dissect one corpse. This permission was granted by the lord of Obama fief. Toyo was invited to join this group for the observation. Their interest focused mainly on the internal organs…

“...Toyo recorded his observations in 1759 in his Zoshi (on the viscera) which consisted of six pages of explanation and four pages of sketches drawn by his pupil Asanuma Sukemitsu. The sketches were reproduced by wood-block printing…The content was simple, elementary, and limited. Nothing of the head, muscles, nerves, or skeleton (except the spine) was recorded — all these had only minor places in Chinese medicine. Still, as the first record of a human dissection observed by Japanese medical scholars, it was an outstanding achievement. The impact on the Japanese medical world was extensive…

“...Despite the criticism of more conservative doctors, the implications of Toyo’s work were clear, namely, that the few Chinese crude illustrations of the organs were unreliable, that there was much to be learned from further research based upon dissections, and that anatomical charts in Dutch medical books merited careful study due to their accuracy and precision.”–Sugimoto & Swain, Science & Culture in Traditional Japan, pp. 380-81.

The sketches for the plates were taken on the spot by the author’s disciple, Asanuma Suketsune, who was also a painter of the Maruyama school, famous for his works on anatomy.


◆ Mestler, A Galaxy of Old Japanese Medical Books, I, pp. 300, 310, & 316.